



ST. HELENS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN

MEMO #1

DATE: August 10, 2026

TO: Alex Bird | City of St. Helens
Caroline Crisp | Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

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SUBJECT: Memo #1: Goals, Objectives, and Evaluation Criteria for Transportation System Improvements Project #24440-000

The purpose of this memorandum is to initiate the process of developing the transportation-related goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria that will help guide the update to the St. Helens Transportation System Plan (TSP) and future investment decisions. This effort will continue through the planning process, shaped by input received from the project management team, Project Advisory Committee (PAC), and the general public.

THE REASON FOR GOAL SETTING

The intention of goals within the TSP is to state what the community wants to focus on within the TSP update process, as well as what they want the TSP to address once completed. Once the TSP is updated, the objectives produced through this process can be used to guide the future transportation and land use decisions for the City of St. Helens.

Goals and objectives allow for a City vision to become more manageable through smaller, actionable ideas. Goals are broad statements that should focus on outcomes and describe a desired end state. Goals should be aspirational for the City, but not unreasonable. Each goal must be supported by a more pragmatic objective. In contrast to goals, objectives should be specific and identify key issues or concerns that are related to the accomplishment of the goal.

The solutions recommended through the TSP must be consistent with the goals and objectives. To accomplish this, evaluation criteria based on the determined goals and objectives will be developed. For the St. Helens TSP, these evaluation criteria will be used to inform the selection and prioritization of projects and programs within the TSP by assessing how well the alternatives support each goal.

DEVELOPING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following section provides a draft set of goals and objectives. These potential goals and objectives are provided as an initial starting point to generate discussion and will be revised based on feedback from the community.

The TSP goals and objectives provided below will be shared with the PAC, with further input sought to refine them. Objectives are considered to be of equal importance when evaluating and prioritizing TSP projects and Programs.

PLAN FUNCTIONALITY AND IMPLEMENTATION

In addition to the goals presented below, by the end of the TSP planning process, the City of St. Helens aims to have a plan that can efficiently communicate City transportation standards, community transportation priorities, and is comprehensible for all users.

ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES

- Develop a Transportation System Plan that serves as a practical implementation and decision-making tool, resulting in a prioritized, fundable, and achievable Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Provide a clear implementation toolkit, including project sheets, funding strategies, and code recommendations
- Conduct a comprehensive audit of St. Helens municipal code and engineering standards and recommend updates
- Identify economically viable and politically feasible funding mechanisms to support capital improvement projects and prepare a funding gap analysis and implementation strategies to address shortfalls

GOAL 1 - CAPITAL INVESTMENTS, MAINTENANCE, AND PRESERVATION

To prioritize financially feasible future transportation investments and account for their associated maintenance costs.

ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Develop Capital Improvement Projects that are financially feasible and fiscally responsible
- 1.2 Recommend transportation solutions that consider the required maintenance needs for the longevity of the project
- 1.3 Propose solutions that anticipate future population growth and development and proactively improve the system before potential degradation
- 1.4 Ensure the CIP includes maintenance and preservation, not just expansion
- 1.5 Suggest updates to address long-term maintenance responsibilities for the St. Helens Street Tree Program

- 1.6 Develop transportation performance measures and monitoring strategies to support future decision-making and CIP updates

GOAL 2 - THE ECONOMY

To strengthen the City's economy by facilitating the means for transporting industrial goods, promoting economic development, and supporting tourism.

ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Provide facilities that support the development and revitalization efforts of the City that are consistent with the City's development code and comprehensive plan, while also aligning with county, state, and regional plans
- 2.2 Implement cohesive wayfinding and signage that is in line with previous planning efforts and improves the ability to confidently navigate the transportation network by residents and visitors
- 2.3 Develop realistic project phasing and prioritization criteria based on cost, funding feasibility, safety benefit, community impact, and implementation readiness

GOAL 3 - ACCESSIBILITY, MOBILITY, AND EQUITY

To develop and maintain the transportation system that moves people and goods in a way that responds to the needs of individuals, businesses, and industry while remaining safe, economical, convenient, and well-integrated into the fabric of urban communities.

ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Improve the functionality of the Riverfront District and Houlton's transportation system in a way that addresses all needs (parking, freight, and delivery access, etc.)
- 3.2 Provide and implement clear and comprehensive roadway sections that correspond to their classification and reflect their intended use, provide safe mobility for all users, and are compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods
- 3.3 Enhance user connectivity for all modes of transportation, with an emphasis on walking, biking, micromobility, and public transit
- 3.4 Focus investments on older, underserved, or disconnected areas of the transportation network
- 3.5 Identify opportunities to improve connectivity between neighborhoods, schools, employment areas, parks, the Riverfront District, Houlton, and industrial areas

GOAL 4 – SAFETY

To improve the safety of the transportation system for all users.

ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Coordinate with law enforcement and emergency services to improve access and emergency response operations
- 4.2 Construct traffic calming solutions to reduce speeding and crash rates
- 4.3 Design streets and intersections to reduce pedestrian, bicycle, and micromobility levels of stress
- 4.4 Address safety and accessibility for vulnerable roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities
- 4.5 Identify opportunities to reduce excessive vehicle speeds through roadway design, corridor planning, and operational improvements
- 4.6 Consider opportunities for safety enforcement of key intersections and corridors

GOAL 5 - REGIONAL COORDINATION

To coordinate with other jurisdictions to plan and fund projects that better connect St. Helens with the region while also being consistent with local, regional, and state plans.

ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 Cultivate new and existing partnerships, locally and regionally, for better communication, efficiency, and support
- 5.2 Develop grant-ready project frameworks to improve competitiveness for state and federal funding
- 5.3 Develop solutions that are consistent with City, County and State Plans

EVALUATION CRITERIA

For the St. Helens TSP, evaluation criteria will be developed to better assess how projects and programs align with the previously outlined goals and objectives. While some goals include more objectives than others, all goals will be weighed equally unless the Stakeholder Group decides that some goals are more important. Using the criteria, considered projects and programs will be rated and categorized as high, medium, or low priorities according to their ability to meet this broad range of community objectives. Evaluation criteria can be both qualitative and quantitative.

GOAL 1 – CAPITAL INVESTMENTS, MAINTENANCE, AND PRESERVATION

A project or program helps meet this goal by providing added benefit to the community while remaining at a low cost.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Project Implementation Cost
- Project Durability
- Project Feasibility

GOAL 2 – THE ECONOMY

A project or program helps meet this goal by providing benefits for economic generators in the City, like employment, freight, and tourism.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Adds signage or markings to improve wayfinding
- Maintains or improves the ability for freight to move by maintaining or improving the Level of Service (LOS) or volume to capacity (v/c) ratio

GOAL 3 – ACCESSIBILITY, MOBILITY, AND EQUITY

A project or program helps meet this goal by improving access to the transportation system for all users.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Improves connectivity for walking, biking, micromobility, and public transit
- Improves Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress
- Improves infrastructure in an underserved area

GOAL 4 – SAFETY

A project or program helps meet this goal by improving the safety of the transportation system.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Reduces frequency and/or severity of crashes
- Decreases intersection conflicts
- Improves the ability for emergency response vehicles to navigate the network
- Decreases undesired behavior in key areas (e.g., speeding or failure to adhere to traffic signals)

GOAL 5 – REGIONAL COORDINATION

This goal does not have direct applicability to individual projects or programs. Due to this reason, this goal does not have any evaluation criteria.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

None