

Clatsop County Transportation Safety Action Plan

Phase 1 Public Involvement Summary

November 10, 2025

The following summary reflects public input collected during engagement for the Clatsop County Transportation Safety Action Plan. This feedback will inform plan recommendations alongside technical analysis and County policies.

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INTRODUCTION

Clatsop County is developing a Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP) with the goal of eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes on county roads. Between July and October 2025, the County gathered input from residents about their biggest transportation safety concerns and what improvements would help them feel safer traveling throughout the county. This community feedback will help prioritize safety projects and policies.

Figure 1: Photos of staff interacting with attendees at public events



The engagement team—made up of staff from the County, Zan Associates, and DKS—used multiple approaches to reach people across the County. They attended community events with information tables, visited local businesses, launched an online engagement website, and promoted participation through social media and community partner channels. County staff also presented to community groups and met with local leaders. These combined efforts captured a wide range of ideas and concerns about transportation safety from people who live, work, and travel in the area. Table 1 summarizes the outreach methods used during this first phase of planning.

Table 1: Engagement strategies

Strategy	Description	Timing (2025)
Engagement Interviews	Interviews with staff who have conducted engagement or communications in Clatsop County to inform the development of the public engagement plan	May
Public Engagement Plan	A plan to teach people about the safety conditions of Clatsop County's transportation system and ask about what needs to be better	June
Online Engagement Site	Website to gather community input through interactive activities—a survey and comment map—that received participation from 235 unique contributors	July – October
Promotions	Visuals to promote the project virtually and at in-person events, including a handout, social media posts (Facebook and Nextdoor), e-newsletters, and direct emails (Figure 2)	July - October
Public Events	Tabling at community events (see Table 2 for details)	August – October

Figure 2: Example social media posts

Clatsop County Government Senior Communications Specialist Jennifer Benoit · 3 days ago

Clatsop County neighbors, it's time for us to update our Transportation Safety Action Plan to ensure our streets and connections are safe for everyone... see more

We want to hear from you!

bit.ly/ClatsopTSAP

Share your thoughts on how to make traveling in Clatsop County safer for everyone.

Posted to Subscribers of Clatsop County Government

2 Likes 1 Comment · 454 Impressions

D has anyone noticed the road sagging in the south lane of hwy101 on the last curve by Peterson's point. It has been steadily getting worse during the summer. When the rainy season gets here it will get really bad very fast unless something is done.

Like Reply Share

S Add a comment...

We want to hear from you!

bit.ly/ClatsopTSAP

Share your thoughts on how to make traveling in Clatsop County safer for everyone.

Help Shape Streets, Sidewalks, and Transit in Clatsop County.

The County is updating its Transportation Safety Action Plan to help make the County's roads and transportation system safer for everyone. We want to hear directly from you about what works, what doesn't, and what you dream our community could look like.

The County is offering opportunities to provide input on transportation needs during the plan development from summer 2025 through spring 2026. Right now is a great time to visit the project website, share your feedback through our quick survey (closing Friday, October 10), and sign-up for project updates. Make sure to follow along to find out when we'll be visiting your area of the County!

<https://bit.ly/ClatsopTSAP>

ENGAGEMENT KEY FINDINGS

Public input is a valuable data source that complements roadway crash data. While crash data shows us where serious injuries and deaths have already happened, community feedback helps to identify high-friction locations and common issues before the next crash occurs. When many people mention the same road or intersection as unsafe, it means drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists who use those routes recognize hazards that could lead to future crashes. This local knowledge is especially important for catching emerging safety issues. For more details on these key findings, see the Engagement Results section on page 7.

High Injury Network Locations

The County analyzed five years of crash data to identify the High Injury Network (HIN)—the roads and intersections where fatal and serious injury crashes have occurred. Public input affirmed the danger present at many of these locations. When community members report the same safety concerns shown in crash data, it strengthens the case for making improvements at these locations a top priority.

The following HIN locations also received many public comments, with community members describing near-misses, confusing traffic patterns, speeding, and poor visibility:

1. **Highway 101** - The main north-south connector in the County—running from Astoria to Arch Cape—has speeding, dangerous left turns, poor pedestrian crossings, and outdated infrastructure.
2. **Marine Drive** - Astoria's main street through downtown has speeding, poor pedestrian visibility, potholes, and confusing intersections.
3. **Highway 30** - Connects Astoria to Portland along the Columbia River and has excessive speeding, unsafe passing causing head-on crashes, and missing crosswalks.
4. **Highway 202** - Route from Olney to Astoria has dangerous speeds, no guardrails near water, narrow shoulders, and icy conditions in the winter.
5. **Highway 26** - The main route from the coast to Portland has numerous fatal crashes from unsafe passing on blind curves, speeding, and tailgating.
6. **Wahanna Road** - Used as a bypass route around Seaside; lacks sidewalks and lighting, has excessive speeding, and is also heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists.
7. **Highway 101 and Sunset Beach Lane** – The main Sunset Beach access point; this intersection has extremely heavy traffic, difficult left turns, and long waits that lead to risky driving behaviors.
8. **Highway 101 and Ensign Lane** – Often identified as Warrenton's busiest intersection, this area has high traffic volumes, vehicle-pedestrian conflicts, and frequent red light running.

Additional Priority Locations Based on Public Input

These locations are not currently on the HIN but received a high number of comments and likes from the community. The strong public concern about these locations suggests they may have future crashes if safety improvements are not made:

1. **8th Street** - Astoria street with steep hills, speeding, poor visibility from parked cars, and confusing traffic patterns at intersections.
2. **Miles Crossing Intersection** - Where Lewis and Clark Road, Youngs River Road, and Highway 101 Business meet; this was the most frequently discussed intersection during engagement due to its confusing design and poor visibility.
3. **Marine Drive/Highway 202/5th Street Triangle** - Three closely spaced intersections in Astoria which lead to poor sightlines, drivers not yielding, and crashes.
4. **Niagara Avenue and 8th Street** - There appears to be a 4-way stop where Niagara Avenue and 8th Street meet in Astoria but there isn't; as a result, near-misses are constant.
5. **Highway 202 and 7th Street** - Confusing right-of-way rules at the intersection of Highway 202 and 7th Street in Astoria cause inappropriate free-right turns and drivers running the stop signs.
6. **Marine Drive and 16th Street** - The Astoria intersection where Marine Drive meets 16th Street and splits into Commercial Street is busy with pedestrians and vehicle traffic.

Common Themes for Policies and Programs

Beyond specific locations, several themes came up repeatedly in public comments. These themes should guide the County's overall approach to transportation safety:

1. **Design** - Roads built for older traffic volumes can't handle today's loads and need more turn lanes, roundabouts, guardrails, and bypass routes.
2. **Behavior** - Dangerous driving includes running red lights and stop signs, not yielding to pedestrians, unsafe passing, and impaired/distracted driving.
3. **Speed** - Excessive speeding throughout the County, speed limits that are too high for road conditions, and minimal enforcement.
4. **Traffic control** - There is a need for more traffic signals, protected left-turn arrows, and center turn lanes throughout the County.
5. **Congestion** - Year-round traffic now overwhelms roads designed for seasonal use. There is also strong support for a bypass route around Astoria due sustained congestion on Marine Drive.
6. **Signage** - Missing or confusing signs at intersections, faded road markings which are impossible to see at night, and unclear right-of-way rules cause safety issues throughout the County.

PARTICIPANTS

To maximize participation and feedback, the County focused outreach efforts on both online strategies and in-person events. In-person conversations were held at times and locations tailored to reach people who face transportation challenges.

Online Participants

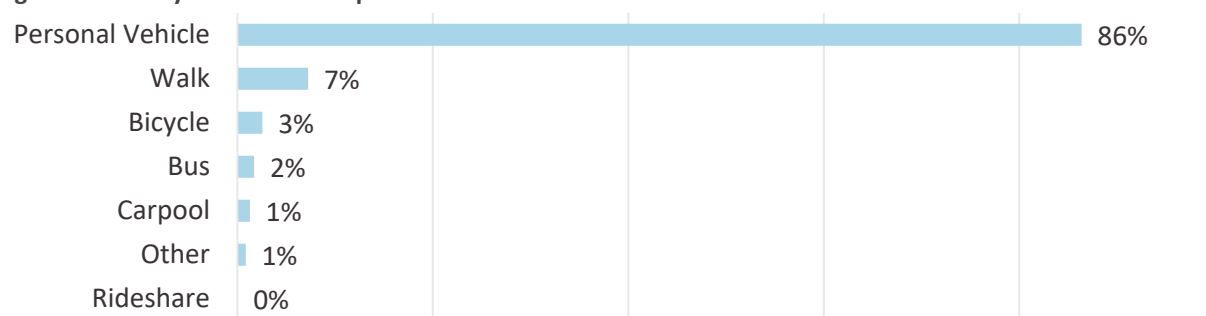
In total the project staff received nearly 400 unique responses through the survey or on the comment map and interacted with about 135 people at in-person events (Table 2). Online engagement opportunities were promoted through the County’s Facebook page, the County’s Nextdoor account, and through direct emails to community groups.

Table 2: Participation in online engagement

Dates (2025)	Strategy	Description	Count
Jul. 29 – Oct. 11	Online Survey	Online survey promoted through County social media, website, and in-person events	235 responses
Jul. 29 – Oct. 11	Online Comment Map	Online comment map promoted through County social media, website, and in-person events	162 comments

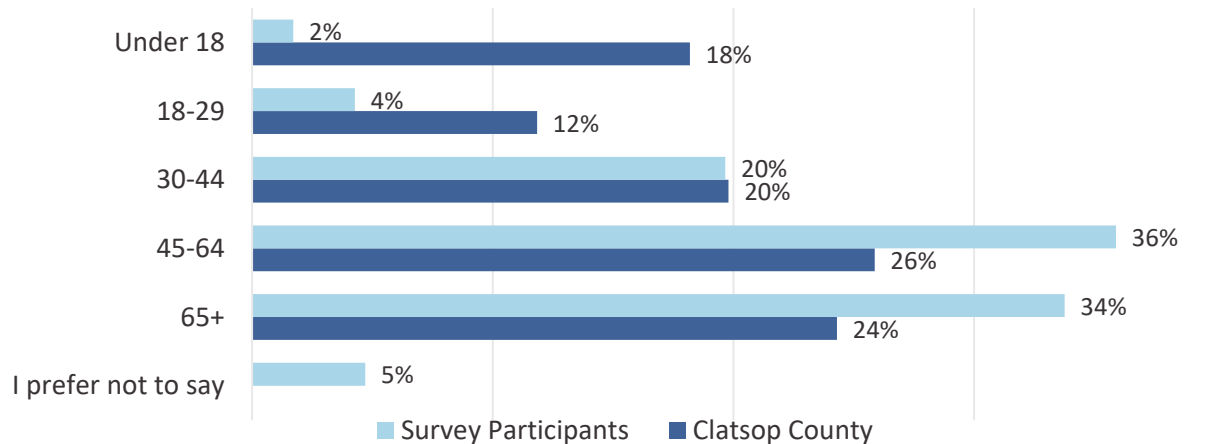
Almost all the online survey participants (94%) live in Clatsop County. Most survey participants (86%) said a personal vehicle was their primary mode of transportation in the County (Figure 3). Many survey participants also said they walk, carpool, bike, or bus as a secondary mode of transportation.

Figure 3: Primary modes of transportation



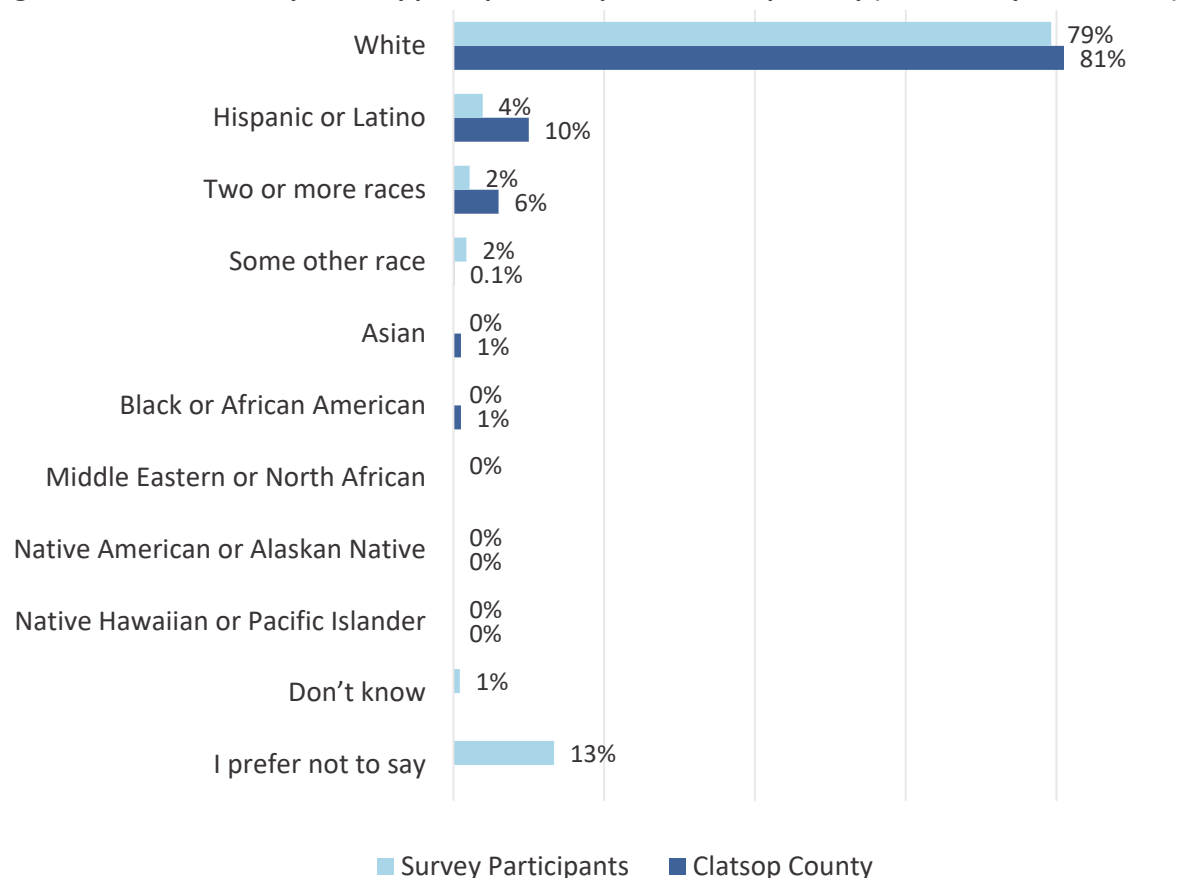
The people who took the online survey were different from the County's overall population in several ways. Survey participants were older than the average county resident (Figure 4). Only 2% were under 18, but young people make up 18% of the County's population. The most common age bracket among participants was 45-64 years old (36%), followed by 65 years and older (34%) and 30-44 years old (20%). More women participated in the survey (61%) compared to men (31%) and non-binary or gender non-conforming people (1%), with a number of respondents preferring not to say their gender identity (6%).

Figure 4: Age of survey participants compared to Clatsop County (2023 ACS 5-year Estimates)



Most survey participants were white (79%) which is in line with the overall portion of people in the County who identify as white (81%) (Figure 5). Fewer survey participants were Hispanic or Latino (4%) compared to the county overall (10%). Other participant groups included people of two or more races (2%) and people who identified as some other race (2%). Ten percent of participants reported having a disability.

Figure 5: Race and ethnicity of survey participants compared to Clatsop County (2023 ACS 5-year Estimates)



In-Person Participants

The County set up information tables at community events to connect with residents who might not participate through online surveys. Staff chose events strategically to hear from people who face the greatest transportation challenges, including Hispanic and Latino families, youth, and those living in rural areas. Through these in-person conversations, the project team interacted with approximately 135 community members (Table 3).

Figure 6: Table set-up at the Clatsop County Fair



Table 3: Participation at in-person events

Dates (2025)	Strategy	Audience	Interactions ¹
Aug. 2	Clatsop County Fair	Residents	60
Aug. 27	Seaside Farmer's Market	Residents	25
Sep. 2	Hilda Lahti Elementary Back to School	Rural residents and young people	25
Oct. 4	Latinx Event ²	Latinx people	25

(1) Interactions at public events are estimates based on people who stopped by and had meaningful interactions with the project, either through participation in the activity or conversation with staff.

(2) Event is referred to as "Latinx Event" to preserve the anonymity and safety of event attendees.

Although demographic data wasn't formally tracked at these events, the locations were selected specifically to include perspectives from groups that have been shown to experience significant transportation barriers and are less likely to use online engagement tools. The Clatsop County Fair drew diverse participants from across Astoria and surrounding communities. Conversations at the Seaside Farmer's Market focused on connecting with people from outlying areas. Staff visited the Hilda Lahti

Back to School event in Knappa to hear from rural families and students. Upon invite from community partners at Consejo Hispano (a local organization serving Latinx communities), the “Latinx event” (event specifics undisclosed for safety purposes) provided an opportunity to gather input from Latinx residents and their children.

ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Community members shared detailed feedback about transportation challenges throughout Clatsop County. The results are organized into two main categories: the most frequently mentioned locations that need attention and the common themes people discussed about transportation safety and accessibility. There were 458 unique comments collected through online and in-person engagement.

The summary information and quotes in this section reflect public input collected during engagement and do not represent views of County staff.

Location Findings

The County used crash data to identify a High Injury Network (HIN) of roads and intersections where fatal and serious injury crashes have occurred over the past five years. This section highlights the most frequently mentioned locations from community feedback—both those already on the HIN and those not currently on it.

Understanding which HIN locations also have strong public concern helps prioritize improvements. Equally important are the locations not yet on the HIN where community members report safety problems, as these may be crash sites of the future if left unaddressed.

Roads

This section discusses the most frequently mentioned roads based on both the number of comments received directly on the road and the number of likes those comments received from other participants. Table 4 shows the roads with seven or more combined comments and likes.

Table 4: Most frequently discussed roads during public engagement

Roads	Comments	Pct. of Total Comments	Likes ¹	Total Count ¹
Highway 101	103	23%	52	155
Marine Drive	31	7%	15	46
Highway 30	31	7%	7	38
Lewis and Clark Road ²	20	4%	15	35
Highway 202	21	5%	13	34

Roads	Comments	Pct. of Total Comments	Likes ¹	Total Count ¹
Highway 26	22	5%	11	33
8th Street	10	2%	14	24
Youngs River Road ²	11	2%	12	23
Wahanna Road	14	3%	8	22
Ensign Lane ²	8	2%	13	21
16th Street	9	2%	9	18
7th Street ²	7	2%	6	13
Broadway Street	11	2%	2	13
Niagara Avenue ²	4	1%	7	11
Sunset Beach Lane ²	5	1%	6	11
Exchange Street	5	1%	5	10
5th Street ²	6	1%	3	9
Avenue S	5	1%	3	8
Harbor Drive ²	3	1%	5	8
Hillcrest Loop Road	8	2%	0	8
Highway 104S	6	1%	2	8
17th Street	6	1%	1	7
Irving Avenue	3	1%	4	7
Ridge Road	5	1%	2	7

(1) Online participants were able to “like” map comments that they agree with.

(2) Counts represent the total number of comments each location received plus likes those comments received. For example, one comment describing a design-related issue with two likes adds up to a count of three.

(3) Nearly all the comments on these roads are about a single intersection.

The following describes in detail seven roads with the highest total counts of comments and likes. Lewis and Clark Road and Youngs River Road have been bypassed here since most of the comments about those roads relate to the Miles Crossing Intersection, which is detailed in “Intersections.”

Highway 101

Highway 101 is by far the most frequently mentioned road in the County, with safety concerns spanning its entire length from Astoria through Warrenton, Gearhart, Seaside, and south to Cannon Beach. The

primary issues are speeding, dangerous left turns without protected signals or dedicated turn lanes, poor road conditions including potholes, and a lack of safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Many commenters describe the highway as outdated for current traffic volumes, with infrastructure unable to handle today's heavy tourist and commercial vehicle traffic.

In Gearhart, residents call the highway the "Gearhart autobahn" because drivers regularly exceed the speed limit. The four-lane section is particularly dangerous when people try to make left turns, causing other drivers to swerve suddenly. There's almost nowhere safe to cross except at one traffic light, forcing pedestrians to cross illegally to reach businesses. In Seaside, the highway has minimal sidewalks and shoulders, forcing walkers and rollers to use the roadway. Multiple narrow bridges south of Seaside have no accommodation for pedestrians or cyclists. Throughout the corridor, making left turns is described as "time consuming" and "scary" due to heavy traffic and lack of protected signals or turn lanes. The Youngs Bay Bridge section has narrow shoulders that make crossing dangerous for bikes and pedestrians.

Common suggestions include: converting four-lane sections to three lanes with center turn lanes, reducing speed limits, adding roundabouts at key intersections, creating safe pedestrian crossings throughout, improving road surface conditions and striping, adding protected left turn signals, increasing enforcement, and considering alternative routes or one-way configurations through downtown areas to reduce congestion.

"I have only lived in this county for 15 years, but I have seen our main thoroughfare deteriorate and little maintenance to offset the damage. Hwy 101 holds such a high place among dangerous highways because these types of issues are not being addressed. The county has now grown to the point that infrastructure of our roadways must be improved."

Marine Drive

Marine Drive through Astoria has safety problems for both pedestrians and drivers. The main issues are: poor visibility of people crossing, speeding and illegal passing, dangerous pedestrian crossings without flashing lights, potholes and uneven road surfaces, and confusing intersections. The crosswalk at 17th Street has had a pedestrian fatality and continues to see near-misses between cars and pedestrians, primarily from drivers illegally passing around stopped vehicles. Multiple locations lack safe crossings, forcing pedestrians to cross dangerous stretches without protection. At several intersections (5th Street, 7th Street, 16th Street, 30th Street), poor sightlines, confusing traffic patterns, and drivers not yielding create hazardous conditions. The westbound bike lane near Hume Avenue ends abruptly with no warning to cyclists. Traffic calming measures are needed as drivers speed up after leaving the downtown area, an issue exacerbated by minimal enforcement of traffic laws.

“Marine Drive is dangerous due to speeding, congestion, and illegal passing at lights and crossings, not to mention, being riddled with potholes and uneven surfaces. We must prioritize the safety of residents in this county by securing and investing more money and resources to improve infrastructure and provide for increased law enforcement.”

Highway 30

Highway 30 faces severe safety challenges from excessive speeding (some drivers exceeding 100 mph), unsafe passing causing near head-on collisions, tailgating, and lack of enforcement. Many areas lack safe pedestrian crossings, particularly around Hillcrest Loop Road and near Svenson Market Road where children cross. The curvy sections are especially dangerous as drivers take curves too fast in poor weather conditions, running across center and shoulder lines. Potholes are common throughout, especially through Knappa. The Safeway intersection at 33rd Street causes major traffic backups, and several locations have poor sight lines for turning onto the highway. One commenter noted their sibling was nearly life-flighted to medical services after a serious crash at the Burnside Loop intersection. Many residents call for an Astoria bypass to relieve congestion.

“Driving on US 30 has become an awful experience due to excess speed, illegal passing and just plain stupidity. In recent years drivers have become literally feral. One time I found myself suddenly in the middle of a Formula 1 road race with several vehicles passing at very high speed, swerving in and out of traffic in no passing zones and on blind curves.”

Highway 202

Highway 202, particularly between Olney and Astoria, is consistently described as one of the most dangerous roads in the area. The section north of Olney runs right along the water with no guardrail, bumpy surfaces, and icy conditions in winter—residents desperately want guardrails installed. The road has minimal shoulders, and fog lines are hard to see at night in the rain. Speed limits are considered too high at 55 mph for the road conditions. The intersections at 5th Street and 7th Street with Marine Drive are confusing with unclear right-of-way rules, causing crashes—including one where a child was hit walking to school. Many suggest roundabouts would help at these problem intersections.

“This section of Hwy 202 north of Olney is very bumpy and rides right along the water. In the winter it gets icy. I desperately think a guardrail here is necessary. It is the scariest section of 202.”

Highway 26

Highway 26 from Elsie to Highway 101 has had numerous fatal crashes, with some residents avoiding it entirely. The primary dangers are unsafe passing on blind curves by impatient drivers unfamiliar with the road, excessive tailgating, and lack of enforcement. The first 10 miles eastbound is primarily bordered by residential areas, with frequent driveways, bus stops, and children present—its current treatment as a high-volume highway makes for unsafe conditions at the surrounding residences. One resident lost a neighbor in a crash in their own driveway and has witnessed "preventable accident after preventable accident" on blind corners. The infrastructure is inadequate with missing guardrails, narrow or absent shoulders, and insufficient passing lanes. Drivers going under the speed limit in passing lanes frustrate others into taking dangerous chances. Better signage about upcoming passing zones, extended no-passing zones near blind corners, wildlife crossings, and visitor education programs are needed.

"We have had a neighbor die in our driveway due to an accident that occurred on Highway 26. We have watched preventable accident after preventable accident happen on that highway on dangerous blind corners. I do not want to grieve the loss of any more community members and neighbors."

8th Street

8th Street in Astoria has dangerous conditions for pedestrians trying to cross at multiple intersections, combined with speeding drivers and severe visibility problems from parked cars. The biggest issue is confusing and poorly marked traffic patterns at Niagara Avenue, where it appears to be a four-way stop but isn't—leading to many near-misses. The perceived response from the City that "it's been that way for decades; locals know" is called negligent by residents. At Exchange Street near the Flavel House, tourists randomly cross without looking while drivers speed down the hill. Parked cars throughout create blind spots that make it difficult to see oncoming traffic or pedestrians. At Commercial Street, pedestrians face constant turning traffic from multiple directions.

"Lack of signage informing drivers that 8th St traffic does not stop at the Niagara Ave intersection. City has said 'it's been that way for decades; locals know.' Which is an unacceptable response. This is a city liability issue, apart from anything else. Current lack of signage is negligent."

Wahanna Road

Wahanna Road lacks basic pedestrian infrastructure along its entire length while experiencing serious speeding problems and crashes. There are no sidewalks, bike lanes, or shoulders for most of the corridor, forcing pedestrians (especially local teenagers, who spoke to project staff) to walk in the roadway with fast-moving traffic. Poor lighting makes it especially dangerous at night. The road is heavily used as a

bypass for Highway 101 traffic, increasing volumes beyond what the infrastructure can safely handle. Speed enforcement is minimal, and even a radar speed feedback sign failed to slow drivers. Some drivers perform dangerous stunts like donuts at corners. One resident died after sliding off an embankment, yet the road still lacks necessary guardrails. The turning lanes at Spruce Drive aren't long enough for school bus traffic during pick-up and drop-off times.

“Wahanna drive is in dire need of shoulder maintenance and safety guard rail asap and unfortunately one local resident perished sliding off that embankment already. It's eroding and needs attention.”

Intersections

This section discusses the most frequently mentioned intersections based on both the number of comments received directly on the intersection and the number of likes those comments then received from other participants. Table 5 shows the roads with seven or more combined comments and likes.

Table 5: Most frequently discussed intersections during public engagement

Intersection	HIN Ref. Num.	Comments	Pct. of Total Comments	Likes ¹	Total Count ¹
Miles Crossing Intersection	None	10	2%	12	22
Marine Drive/Highway 202/5th Street Triangle	None	8	2%	8	16
Hwy 101 and Ensign Ln	2	4	1%	10	14
Niagara Avenue and 8th Street	None	4	1%	7	11
Highway 101 and Sunset Beach Lane	1	5	1%	6	11
Highway 202 and 7th Street	None	5	1%	5	10
Marine Dr/Commercial St/16th St	None	4	1%	4	8
Highway 101 and Harbor Drive	3	2	0%	5	7
Hwy 101-Lewis and Clark Rd	6	4	1%	3	7

(1) Online participants were able to “like” map comments that they agree with.

(2) Counts represent the total number of comments each location received plus likes those comments received. For example, one comment describing a design-related issue with two likes adds up to a count of three.

The following describes in detail seven intersections with the highest total counts of comments and likes.

Miles Crossing Intersection

Where Highway 101 Business, Lewis and Clark Road, and Youngs River Road meet in Miles Crossing is one of the most frequently mentioned dangerous intersections in the County. Residents report seeing many accidents at this location, especially involving vehicles traveling around the bend on Highway 101 Business. The main problems are: confusing traffic patterns, poor visibility, and drivers going too fast through the curve. Many drivers don't understand the three-way stop rules or know when they need to yield to oncoming traffic. The intersection's design makes it hard for people unfamiliar with the area to navigate safely, and even locals find it dangerous when other drivers are speeding or not following traffic rules.

Many of the comments call for installing a roundabout at Miles Crossing. People believe a roundabout would eliminate the confusion about who has the right of way and help slow down traffic naturally. Several comments also mention that the signage for the "free-right" turn and the route to the old bridge is poorly marked, adding to driver confusion. This intersection is consistently described as one that desperately needs redesigning to improve safety for everyone using it.

"I see so many accidents in this area, especially between south-bound vehicles and vehicles going north around the bend. People drive so fast around that curve and it can be difficult to see. Additionally, many drivers do not follow the three-way stop rule and yield to south-bound traffic from the Hwy to Lewis & Clark / Youngs River."

Marine Drive/Highway 202/5th Street Triangle

The cluster of three closely spaced intersections where Marine Drive (Business 101), Highway 202 (Olney Avenue), and 5th Street meet in Astoria creates a confusing and dangerous area with poor sightlines and heavy traffic. The main safety issues are: drivers not yielding when merging, drivers having to look over their shoulders to see traffic coming, and cars speeding through from the Old Youngs Bay Bridge. Multiple people have witnessed crashes here, including a T-bone collision. There's also a need for a crosswalk on Marine Drive to connect apartments on one side to businesses on the other. Most commenters suggest that a roundabout would solve the visibility and yielding problems, while improving traffic flow for everyone trying to access the daycare, apartments, and businesses in this area.

"Pulling out from 5th St onto Marine Dr is super dangerous. People coming from the Bridge of Young River don't always see you while they're zipping by."

Highway 101 and Ensign Lane

The highway 101 and Ensign Lane intersection is described as having traffic volume far exceeding the road capacity. The main problems are: pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, confused out-of-town drivers, cars driving on the wrong side of the road, and people making risky left turns without protected signals. Cars frequently run red lights from all directions. The intersection backs up for multiple light cycles, and Ensign Lane itself needs more left turn lanes into businesses—currently cars get stuck in the intersection while waiting to turn, blocking through traffic.

“The busiest intersection in the county. The volume is so much for the capacity of the roads.”

Highway 101 and Sunset Beach Lane

The intersection of Highway 101 and Sunset Beach Lane in Sunset Beach serves as the main access point to Highway 101 for thousands of residents and visitors, but extremely heavy traffic makes it nearly impossible to safely enter or exit. Drivers trying to turn left onto northbound Highway 101 face long waits with no breaks in traffic, leading to impatient and risky driving that causes crashes. The sight distance is limited in both directions, and the turn lane frequently backs up beyond its length during summer. Turning right from northbound Highway 101 is also difficult due to heavy traffic. The intersection needs either a traffic signal or, as one commenter suggested, an underpass to solve these serious safety problems.

“Due to the high traffic levels on 101, it is very hard to get on to Hwy 101 Northbound. This results in accidents as people become impatient and take risky chances to get on the highway.”

Niagara Avenue and 8th Street

The intersection at Niagara Avenue and 8th Street in Astoria creates dangerous confusion because it looks like a four-way stop but isn't. Drivers travelling westbound on Niagara Avenue expect southbound traffic on 8th Street to stop, but it doesn't have to. This has led to many near-misses and makes crossing on foot especially dangerous since right-turning traffic doesn't stop. Multiple residents have complained about the complete lack of signage warning drivers about these unusual traffic patterns, with no productive response from the City. Better signage would be a simple fix.

“Very difficult intersection to cross on foot [at Niagara Ave and 8th St] as the right-turn traffic does not stop when heading north on 8th St and west on Niagara Ave. People also drive too quickly.”

Highway 202 and 7th Street

This intersection is extremely confusing with unclear right-of-way rules and inadequate signage. Some traffic can make free-rights while other directions must stop, but drivers can't tell who should do what. This confusion causes people to run stop signs in multiple directions, including through a flashing light. A child was hit by a car here while walking to school because there's no sidewalk to safely cross 7th Street. Many commenters suggest either adding clear signage about the free-right turn rules or, better yet, installing a roundabout or traffic light to eliminate the confusion entirely.

“My son used to walk to school and was hit by a car here as there is no sidewalk to cross 7th street. He was hit by a driver going south, turning east onto Highway 202.”

Marine Drive and 16th Street

This busy intersection at the Marine Drive and Commercial Street Split at 16th Street has especially high pedestrian usage. Unlike the crosswalk at Astoria Co+op on Marine Drive, which has push-button activated flashing lights, this crossing lacks any warning system for drivers. Heavy tour bus traffic turning onto 16th Street adds to the danger by blocking traffic on Commercial Street. Drivers also frequently make illegal left turns from 16th Street onto Marine Drive.

“Would be safer to have pedestrian crossing lights flash when someone wants to cross Marine Dr at 16th St.”

Themes

Beyond specific locations, respondents shared their thoughts on broader transportation issues that influence travel choices throughout Clatsop County. The feedback covered many different themes, from road conditions and safety concerns to public transit needs and enforcement challenges. This section groups the public comments by theme, organized roughly from most to least common based on how often each issue came up in the feedback. These themes reveal what types of safety improvements and policy changes matter most to people who live, work, and travel in Clatsop County. This section details the top six themes based on comments and likes from the community engagement.

Table 6: Most common themes during public engagement

Issues	Comments	Pct. of Total Comments	Likes ¹	Total Count ¹
Design	71	16%	24	95
Behavior	64	14%	30	94
Speed	76	17%	17	93

Issues	Comments	Pct. of Total Comments	Likes ¹	Total Count ¹
Traffic control	52	11%	21	73
Congestion	37	8%	34	71
Signage	53	12%	15	68
Crossing	45	10%	22	67
Sight	43	9%	24	67
Walk	44	10%	13	57
Roundabout	28	6%	23	51
Crash	29	6%	19	48
Sidewalk	37	8%	8	45
Bike	36	8%	7	43
Enforcement	29	6%	2	31
Bridge	18	4%	3	21
Transit	19	4%	2	21
Positive	14	3%	6	20
Lighting	17	4%	3	20
Potholes	16	4%	3	19
Parking	14	3%	4	18
Bike Path	8	2%	6	14
Environment	6	1%	4	10
Freight	6	1%	1	7

(1) Online participants were able to “like” map comments that they agree with.

(2) Count represents the total number of comments each theme received plus likes those comments received. For example, one comment describing a design-related issue with two likes adds up to a count of three.

Design

Roads and intersections throughout Clatsop County were not designed for today's traffic volumes and conditions. Many highways were built in the 1960s and '70s but now carry far more vehicles—especially large commercial trucks and RVs—than they were meant to handle. Key infrastructure problems include: missing or inadequate guardrails, narrow bridges with no room for pedestrians or cyclists, insufficient passing lanes, roads too narrow for simultaneous and safe two-way traffic when cars are parked, and turn lanes that are too short or missing entirely. Many intersections have confusing layouts where drivers don't understand who has the right of way, leading to crashes and near-misses. Residents frequently suggest that dangerous intersections would be safer as roundabouts, which naturally slow traffic and eliminate confusion about who should yield. There's strong support for adding center turn lanes on busy highways, widening narrow roads and bridges, and creating alternative routes or bypass options so that through-traffic doesn't clog downtown areas during emergencies or tourist season.

“Highways 101, 26 and 30 were designed and built to accommodate traffic volumes of the 1960s and '70s. The state needs to invest in those highways, adding travel lanes, passing lanes and pullouts for slow traffic. We will continue to have fatal crashes on those highways until the roads are rebuilt to accommodate the traffic.”

Behavior

Dangerous driving behaviors are causing crashes and near-misses throughout the County. The most common problematic behaviors are: running red lights and stop signs, not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks, making illegal turns, tailgating, unsafe passing, and distracted or impaired driving. Many drivers don't follow basic traffic rules like stopping at stop signs, yielding for right-of-way, or using turn signals. Out-of-town visitors are said to not understand local traffic patterns and make dangerous mistakes, while some locals drive recklessly because they're frustrated with slow traffic or congestion. Pedestrians and cyclists also contribute to dangerous situations by crossing streets without looking or riding against traffic. Impatient drivers dart out into traffic after waiting too long to make left turns, and some drivers perform dangerous stunts like "rolling coal" or doing donuts in residential areas. There's a sense that accountability is lacking—both for dangerous drivers who aren't being pulled over by law enforcement and for pedestrians who step into traffic assuming cars will stop.

“The noise from some of these popular vehicles are out of control and many are rage speeding, tailgating, and 'rolling coal' on roads throughout the county. Unchecked illegal passing and speeding on Highway 30 and 26 is causing far too many fatalities and accidents.”

Speed

Speeding is one of the most frequently mentioned safety concerns, with drivers regularly exceeding speed limits by 5-20 mph—and sometimes driving over 100 mph on highways like Highway 30. These problems are the worst on highways (101, 26, 30, 202) where people tailgate slow drivers and pass unsafely, though residential streets also have serious speeding issues that endanger children, pedestrians, and cyclists. Some roads have speed limits that are too high for existing conditions, especially curvy roads, areas with many driveways, and sections used by pedestrians without sidewalks. Highway 101 through Gearhart is nicknamed the "Gearhart autobahn" because speeding is so constant. Conversely, drivers going under the speed limit in passing lanes frustrate others into taking dangerous chances. Many people call for: lower speed limits in residential and rural areas, speed bumps in neighborhoods, variable speed limits based on weather conditions, more speed limit signs so drivers know what the limit is, and designated safety corridors with enhanced enforcement. The lack of enforcement is a major concern—people speed because they know they won't get caught.

"As someone who has lived in Clatsop County my entire life I can attest to the fact that the wider and straighter the roads become, the faster people drive and the more accidents occur."

Traffic Control

The County needs better traffic control devices at many locations. Common requests include: adding traffic signals at dangerous intersections where it's nearly impossible to turn left across heavy traffic, installing protected left-turn arrows where drivers currently must dart out dangerously, adding four-way stops where right-of-way is confusing, and keeping seasonal traffic lights turned on year-round in high-tourist areas like Seaside. Many intersections need longer or additional turn lanes so cars aren't stuck blocking through traffic while waiting to turn into businesses or neighborhoods. Traffic signal timing is also a problem—lights aren't coordinated, causing unnecessary backups, and some signals stop highway traffic too frequently for minor side streets or parking lots. Highway 101 needs more center turn lanes throughout its length so drivers don't have to stop in 55 mph travel lanes to turn into driveways and businesses. Some commenters note that making left turns anywhere on Highway 101 is "time consuming and downright scary" because of the lack of protected signals and gaps in heavy traffic.

"The high volume of traffic is a concern. Center turn lanes are helpful, but making a left hand turn anywhere on Highway 101 is challenging."

Congestion

Traffic congestion has become a year-round problem, not just during summer high-tourist season. Major bottlenecks occur at key intersections like Highway 101 and Ensign Lane (described as the busiest intersection in the county) and Highway 30 and 33rd Street by Safeway (which backs up all the way to the boat launch). Congestion is making people frustrated and impatient, leading to dangerous driving decisions. Many residents strongly support building bypass routes around Astoria and Seaside to move through traffic out of downtown cores, both for safety and to help emergency vehicles, school buses, and commuters get where they need to go. The County is too dependent on a few main roads with no viable alternate routes, such that when there's a crash or emergency, entire areas get gridlocked. Some suggest using one-way street pairs through downtown Seaside or upgrading Lewis and Clark Road to provide relief when Highway 101 has problems. The sheer volume and size of vehicles—especially commercial trucks and RVs—is overwhelming roads that weren't designed for current traffic levels.

"With the ever-increasing amount of vehicles on our highways into (and out of) the county, I would back any and all serious consideration for a BYPASS around downtown. The county cannot thrive as-is with what was once referred to as 'summer' tourism traffic now rapidly becoming a year-round epidemic."

Signage

Poor or missing signage creates confusion and dangerous situations throughout the County. The biggest problem is at intersections where right-of-way rules aren't clear—drivers don't know who must stop or yield, leading to judgements that cause crashes and near-misses. One notable example is the Niagara Avenue and 8th Street intersection where it has been said that the City of Astoria refuses to add signs explaining the unusual traffic pattern, saying "locals know," which residents call negligent. Other signage issues include faded or missing fog lines that are impossible to see at night in the rain, turn lanes that are poorly marked (especially in winter fog), dirty or moss-covered signs that can't be read, missing yield signs at confusing intersections, and a lack of signs warning drivers about upcoming passing zones on Highway 26 or alerting them to pedestrians on roads used for races and relays. Road markings and striping need more frequent maintenance. Some residents suggest clearer and more ubiquitous signage could solve problems more easily and cheaply than major road redesigns, while others note that education programs for visiting drivers unfamiliar with local roads could prevent crashes.

"There is a lack of signage on Hwy 101 headed south towards Glenwood Village - need turn [signs] at intersections [like Hwy 101 and Patriot Way]. Multiple heart-breaking accidents."

CONCLUSION

The public engagement process revealed clear patterns about where people feel unsafe and what types of improvements would make the biggest difference. These findings closely align with crash data in many cases—locations like Highway 101, Marine Drive, and Highway 30 appear both in the High Injury Network and in public comments, confirming that community members recognize real dangers on roads where crashes have already occurred. Equally as important, public input identified additional high-concern locations like Miles Crossing and the Marine Drive/Highway 202/5th Street Triangle that may not yet have serious crash histories but show warning signs of future tragedies. The common themes—especially around outdated road design, speeding, and the need for better traffic control—point to an opportunity for countywide policy solutions that can prevent crashes across multiple locations.

The County will use this engagement data alongside technical crash analyses, traffic studies, and engineering assessments to develop the Transportation Safety Action Plan's recommendations. Locations that appear in both the crash data and public feedback will be high priorities for near-term safety improvements. The community-identified locations without recent fatal or serious crash histories will be evaluated for proactive safety measures to prevent future deaths and serious injuries. The common themes will guide countywide policies and programs, from design standards and speed management strategies to signage improvements and enforcement approaches. By combining what the data show with what the community experiences daily, the TSAP will create a comprehensive roadmap for eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries in Clatsop County.