Understanding Spatial Equity in Portland, Oregon

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Executive Summary

Research Aims

This research began as a catalyst for understanding how to best generate opportunities to enhance social equity outcomes within the Green Loop planning process. Qualitative focus groups and participatory mapping exercises were utilized to engage the following research questions:

1. What mobility barriers do residents outside of the central city--particularly those in neighborhoods at risk of or currently undergoing gentrification--experience that might limit active transportation choices such as walking or biking?
2. How do these barriers impact perceptions or interest in central city investments in the Green Loop?
3. What ideas do residents have for overcoming these barriers?

Participatory mapping exercises with residents in targeted neighborhoods were utilized to clarify neighborhood-level patterns of mobility and to identify problem areas in movement both within neighborhoods and from neighborhoods to the central city.

Data

This report is based upon data gathered in Portland, OR between October of 2015 and March of 2016. Findings presented here draw from 8 focus group discussions that also integrated community-based participatory mapping exercises. Groups were convened in areas that had previously been identified as vulnerable to displacement (Bates 2013). A total of 82 participants were recruited; the engagement of low-income and minority individuals was a central goal of this research as such voices are typically marginalized within standard channels of public outreach and engagement.

Key Findings

- More than 2/3 of participants in this study, a majority of whom are low-income and racial/ethnic minorities, did not report travelling downtown in a typical week.
- There are key demographic differences in patterns of mobility.
- Participants in this study reported multiple barriers to daily mobility, including a lack of safe and accessible sidewalks, inadequate lighting and shelter at transit stops, concerns about traffic congestion, issues of affordability linked to parking fees and the cost of public transit, and issues with language barriers and discrimination on public transit.
- Participants highlighted ongoing concerns about the inequitable distribution of resources and a perception that city resources are most likely to benefit residents who are more affluent and live closer to downtown.
- Residents in North and outer SE Portland want their neighborhoods to thrive; community members have clear ideas about how to enhance livability, while also maintaining economically and racially diverse communities.
- Targeted investments to support ongoing community work, while creating spaces for community participation in planning processes, are critically important to creating a city that is safe, affordable, and accessible for everyone.

Implications

As a means of reducing carbon emissions, Portland's Climate Action Plan sets an objective for 2030 calling for vibrant neighborhoods in which 90% of Portland residents can easily walk or bicycle to meet all basic daily, non-work needs. As of 2015, however, 40 percent of Portlanders lived in neighborhoods that lacked access to the goods and services that would fulfill this objective (Climate Action Plan 2015: 72). The current research study suggests that significant challenges remain in pursuit of the Portland Climate Action Plan's vision and that the barriers to "complete neighborhoods" are particularly acute for low-income and minority residents living in North and outer Southeast Portland.

Individuals represented in this study have limited accessibility to safe and walkable streets, lack access to robust public transit lines, and face a number of cumulative disadvantages (such as rising rents and increasing cost of living across the city) that place them farther afield from the vision set forth in the Portland Plan. Planning for the future requires fuller attention to the demographic and spatial inequities in Portland.

Recommendations

In the closing sections of this report, we detail a series of recommendations drawn from the findings of this research. In pursuit of meeting city-wide goals for neighborhood livability, these recommendations are meant for any city agencies or offices working to address inequity in relation to gentrification, housing and environmental justice. We provide five recommendations. In brief, we recommend that city offices must:

1. **Address Perceptions of Inequity:** This research finds that residents in N/NE and outer SE neighborhoods believe city investments to be inequitable when it comes to infrastructure and development. City agencies must make efforts to both distribute resources more equitably; to be transparent in the rationale behind investments across the city; and make efforts to address the legacies of disinvestment and displacement that impact our most vulnerable residents.
2. **Encourage Economic Development in Neighborhood Hubs:** A consistent finding across neighborhoods in this study was the desire to develop jobs and opportunities within neighborhoods, not just in the central city. Targeted investments in small businesses N/NE and outer SE neighborhoods would help to distribute economic resources more equitably, while also enhancing neighborhood livability.
3. **Make Targeted Investments to Enhance Ongoing Community Work:** Community organizations and non-profits are already working hard to make neighborhoods more livable for residents. City agencies, when considering new projects in vulnerable neighborhoods must continue to look to local organizations for their knowledge and expertise and work to support and supplement community work, not supplant it. This may mean providing financial resources to community organizations to continue their work.
4. **Enhance Strategies for Public Outreach and Engagement:** In relation to the recommendation above, community organizations already know how to engage communities. When considering new infrastructure projects or development, city agencies should work with community organizations to determine the best methods of outreach and communication, while also working to provide the financial resources for a robust public engagement process. This

often means providing food, child-care, transportation and other financial resources to help solicit the fullest community engagement possible.

5. **Develop and Implement Anti-Displacement Strategies:** Given Portland's ongoing housing crisis, city agencies contemplating infrastructure changes must begin to consider the impacts of such projects on housing and rental markets; if property values are predicted to rise with the implementation of a particular project, the city must make a concerted effort to prevent displacement. This may require that the city engage with property owners or landlords, as well as tenants.

Overview

This investigation is part of a research partnership between the Institute of Sustainable Solutions at Portland State University and the City of Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, with the goal of discerning how public investments in the Central City might be enhanced to serve marginalized residents.

One such investment is the Green Loop, a proposed 6-mile biking and walking path to encourage active transportation in the Central City, providing a safe connection through "the region's hub of civic, cultural, and recreational attractions and activities" (BPS 2015c).[1] This research seeks to clarify how the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability might best ensure that this amenity is accessible to everyone. This study began by exploring barriers to the utilization of public space and active transportation for low-income communities and communities of color. It also sought to clarify how investment in future Central City public infrastructure—such as the Green Loop—might merge with, and expand upon, existing community efforts to enhance accessibility of public spaces.

Through partnerships with local non-profit organizations and stratified recruitment of diverse participants via face-to-face and online outreach, we enlisted more than 80 participants from areas in North, Northeast, and Southeast neighborhoods experiencing gentrification, or at increased risk of gentrification or displacement. We conducted eight focus groups that included both discussion and community-mapping components.

The research evolved in response to encompass the emergent finding that many participants did not feel investments in Central City transportation infrastructure were relevant to their daily lives. Community members reported significant mobility barriers within their own neighborhoods that took precedence over any budding interest or desire to travel downtown. In response, the research team shifted the focus from the idea that increased access (via greenways and other related amenities) was key to inciting downtown travel, to encouraging a broader dialogue about how people utilize facilities in their own neighborhoods, and what mechanisms might increase mobility and active transportation within these specific areas. This modified trajectory allowed us to ask questions about people's patterns regarding alternative modes of travel and transportation in their own communities, with the notion that understanding how to enhance mobility in a more localized manner might also help contribute to increased traffic in the Central City.

The following report is a summary of our findings, and addresses the following research questions:

- What might increase active transportation outside of the Central City?
- What mobility barriers persist in North, Northeast and Southeast Portland neighborhoods?
- How might the city amplify ongoing efforts in different neighborhoods to increase overall mobility and active transportation?

The findings presented here indicate participants' overwhelming concerns regarding inequitable investments in the Central City while barriers to active transportation persist in their own communities, with special attention paid to safety concerns such as the lack of sidewalks, lighting, safe routes to school, and bike facilities and infrastructure. Participants reported great affection and a deep sense of pride for their respective neighborhoods, but desire additional resources that would enhance safety while subsequently aiding in increased connectivity with the rest of the city. The participatory mapping data collected illustrates the patterns of movement within the city, revealing that much of our respondents'

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[1] See Appendix for additional information about the Green Loop

daily travel behaviors are contained within their own neighborhoods, be it due to personal preference, barriers to mobility and downtown travel, or a combination of both.

Vulnerability and Gentrification in Portland

The Portland metropolitan region is experiencing rapid urban growth. For instance, the region attracted 33,500 newcomers in 2014 alone (Christensen 2015). Longitudinally speaking, the area has fielded a 35% growth in population since 1990, with median home prices and rents continuing to surge at a pace incongruous with median incomes. Additionally, the last three decades have seen a significant decrease in the number of affordable housing units (Berube et. al. 2003; Leo 1998 as cited in Northwest Pilot Project 1994). Portland's housing crisis and resultant displacement have been an ongoing concern, and leave an estimated 1,800-2,700 individuals houseless on any given night (PHB, 2015b).

Given these rapid changes within Portland, research has sought to uncover how ongoing investments and developments impact low-income and minority communities. Bates' (2013:9) report establishes the following definition of gentrification that informs this study:

> Gentrification occurs when a neighborhood has attractive qualities—for example, location or historic architecture—but remains relatively low value. This disconnect between potential value and current value (called "the rent gap") may occur due to historic disinvestment by public and private sectors. When the area becomes desirable to higher-income households and/or investors, there are changes in the housing market. As demand rises for the neighborhood, higher-income households are able to outbid low-income residents for housing, and new development and economic activity begins to cater to higher-income tastes. Lower-income households and/or households of color migrate out of the neighborhood and new in-migrants change the demographics of the neighborhood.

Bates (2013) clarifies the dynamics by which neighborhoods become less affordable over time, and articulates how housing and rental prices have broader impacts on a range of neighborhood-level changes. She argues that Portland must become proactive in planning around growth and development, through both the use of market and regulatory mechanisms, in order to meet its goals for livability and equity. She notes that the Portland Plan's vision for livability "recognizes that the city is healthier with mixed-income and racially/ethnically diverse neighborhoods" (p.16). Building upon Bates' work, this report draws upon qualitative data in order to better understand the on-the-ground dynamics of mobility and active transportation in the neighborhoods that are most vulnerable to gentrification and displacement.

Planning for the Future: Climate Change, Neighborhoods and Mobility

Portland's Climate Action Plan sets an objective for 2030 calling for vibrant neighborhoods in which 90% of Portland residents (and 80% of Multnomah County residents) can easily walk or bicycle to meet all basic daily, non-work needs. This goal functions as a means of reducing carbon emissions and increasing neighborhood livability (BPS 2014). In pursuit of such, the city has made efforts to make the 20-minute neighborhood accessible for all.[2] However as of 2015, 40 percent of Portlanders lived in neighborhoods that lacked access to the goods and services that would fulfill this objective (BPS 2015a: 72). Highlighted

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[2] "20-minute neighborhoods" mean that one can fulfill daily needs within a 20-minute walk from home. BPS measures the "completeness" of a neighborhood in achieving this goal by taking into account proximity to grocery stores, schools, libraries, parks and gathering places, as well as the range of choices linked to housing or transit.

below, the neighborhoods that rank lower on the "completeness" scale have more limited access to amenities.
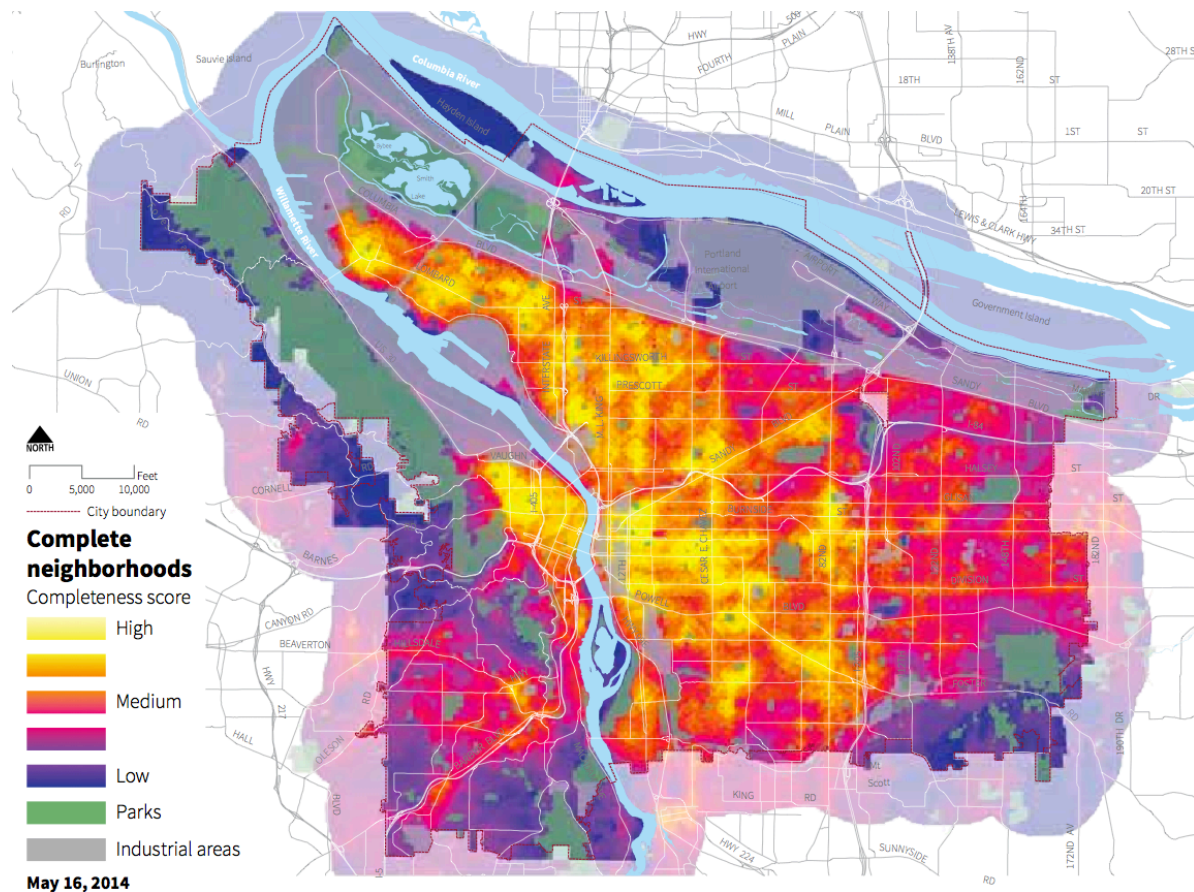
Figure 1 Mapping "complete neighborhoods" from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

For the current study, neighborhoods selected to host focus groups were primarily located in areas that have lower "completeness" scores or (as detailed below) have features that make the neighborhoods more vulnerable to displacement.3 As such, the data presented in this report: 1)illuminates the specific mechanisms that limit accessibility and mobility in underserved neighborhoods; 2) generates insights about which barriers to active transportation remain most significant in these neighborhoods; and 3) clarifies where people do and do not travel on a routine basis. These data sets reveal important insights about how to build upon existing neighborhood strengths in an effort to reach climate-related goals, and convey the notion that inspiring residents to embrace active transportation requires an understanding of daily behavioral patterns, as well as the challenges that our most vulnerable community members face.

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[3] See Appendix for a combined map of completeness score and vulnerability risk.

Methods and Demographics

This report is based upon 8 large focus groups conducted in the city of Portland between October 2015 and March 2016. The engagement of low-income and minority individuals was a central goal of this research, as such voices are typically marginalized within standard channels of public outreach and engagement. Also of importance to this project was a focus on Eastside neighborhoods either currently experiencing or at-risk of displacement and gentrification.

Focus groups were held either in partnership with a local non-profit or service organization, or at a public library branch with adequate meeting space. In two different instances, two groups were held concurrently. Groups were convened in areas that had previously been identified as vulnerable to displacement (Bates 2013). Below, the neighborhoods that hosted focus groups are highlighted by yellow circles, overlaid upon the number of vulnerability risk factors identified by BPS. Two groups were held in the Cully neighborhood, two were held in the Hazelwood/Centennial area, and the remaining four groups were held in the Kenton, Montavilla, Lents, and Powellhurst-Gilbert neighborhoods.
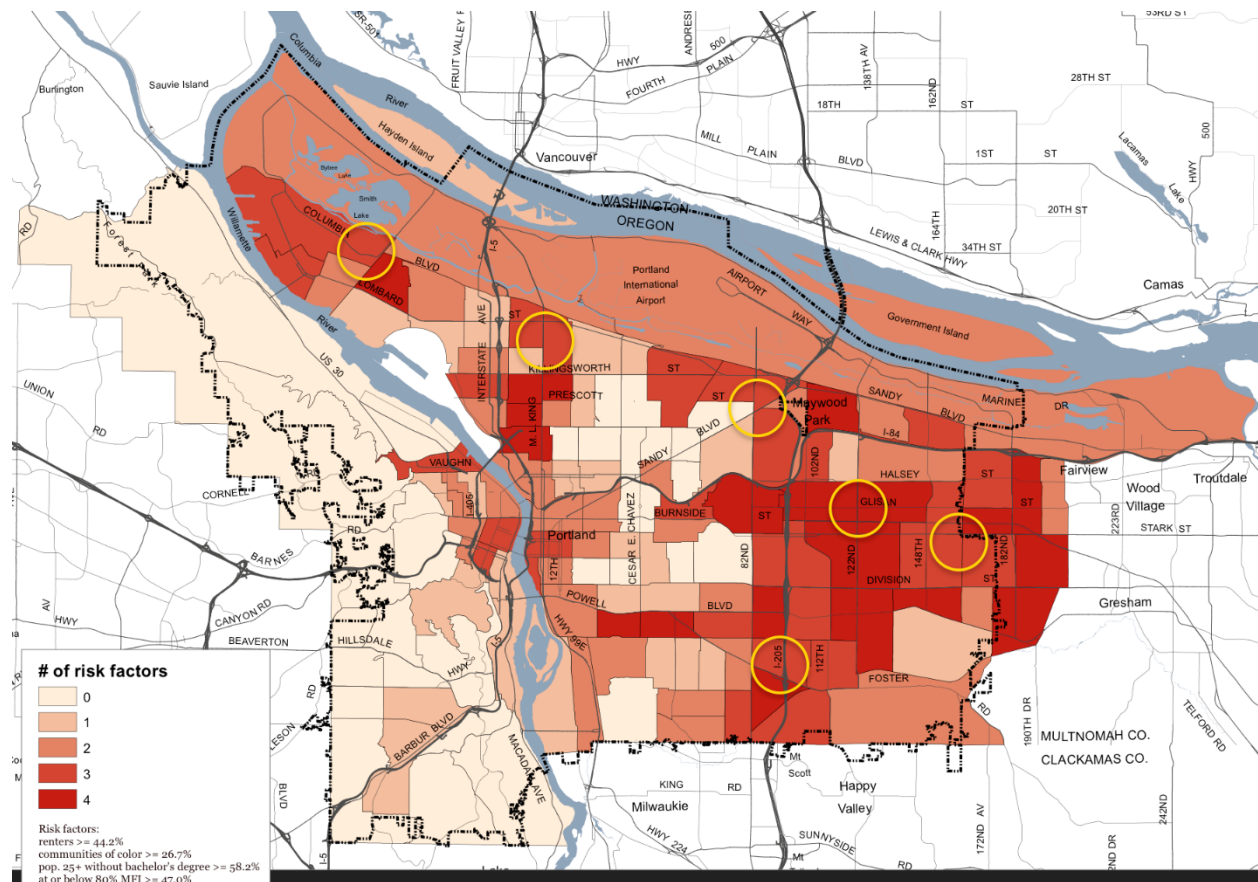
Figure 2 Bates 2013, Appendix A: Vulnerability Risk, with the current study's focus group neighborhood sites identified in yellow circles. 2 focus groups were held in Cully and 2 in the easternmost area of Hazelwood/Centennial.

Participant Recruitment and Community Engagement: A total of 86 participants were recruited with the goal of soliciting many diverse viewpoints. Initial outreach to non-profit organizations and those

entities that serve immigrants, low-income individuals, racial and ethnic minorities, and women was done in the fall of 2015 to discern where partnerships to conduct the research might be built.

This outreach resulted in semi-formal partnerships whereby the local organizations (Rose CDC, Rosewood Initiative, and Hacienda CDC) clarified their own research interests and the PSU research team worked to support their goals. In the Lents neighborhood, a community bike ride was organized with Rose CDC (with support from Bicycle Transportation Alliance) prior to the focus group discussion. In the Cully neighborhood, the PSU research team worked to train Cully community members to facilitate two focus group discussions in Spanish. These collaborations generated valuable insights and a culturally responsive research design that centered on community engagement. Participants were recruited through the common channels of communication in each of these organizations, with additional support and management from the PSU research team.

The remaining 3 focus groups were conducted in the public meeting spaces at the Kenton, Midland, and Gregory Heights library branches. Recruitment for these focus groups relied upon research team announcements at public meetings, fliers posted in the public library, in-person outreach at each library branch 1-2 weeks before the focus group, and through various online platforms such as neighborhood Facebook pages. Interested participants were screened via a demographic questionnaire that asked basic questions about race, income, and their neighborhood; participants who were racial or ethnic minorities or were had a reported annual household income of less than $40,00 were prioritized for inclusion in the groups, which filled quickly. All focus groups provided food, childcare, and a $25 grocery store gift card, and translation services were offered during participant recruitment.

Participant Demographics: All participants were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire on the day of the focus group, though not all participants elected to complete every demographic question. As such, we report on the data we do have from our 86 total participants. Please see Appendix for additional demographic information.

- A majority of participants were non-white, with 59 individuals identifying as black, Latino/a, or other non-white racial/ethnic group (out of 86 reporting).

- More than 75% of participants reported an annual household income below $39,999 (57 out of 73 reporting).

- A majority of participants were women: Of our 86 participants, 23 were men and the remaining 63 participants were women.

- There was an even spread of participants across age groups. Of the 80 participants who reported their age, 34 were between the ages of 18 and 34; 38 were between the ages of 35 and 54; and 18 participants were 55 or older.

Discussion and Mapping Exercise: Focus groups lasted approximately two-and-a-half hours. Questions were asked about barriers to mobility, neighborhood livability, movement to and from the Central City, and perceptions of infrastructure changes in Portland. Discussions also solicited suggestions for enhancing movement and mobility.

Following initial discussions of around 45 minutes, participants were given instructions about the mapping exercise. Each participant had a series of sticky dots that were coded and linked to the demographic information they provided (though all information remained anonymous). Participants were asked to place four different types of sticky dots that corresponded to four different sets of places: a)

places they go in an average week; b) places they don't go or avoid; c) areas that restrict mobility; d) barriers traveling to downtown from their neighborhood. After the mapping exercise, participants were then asked to discuss their placement of dots and to articulate their reasons for placing dots in certain areas.

Figure 3 Research Assistant Santiago Mendez leads community members in the mapping activity.

Spatial Analysis and Geocoding: The location and participant code of each sticky dot were entered into a table for spatial analysis. Sticky dot locations were manually geocoded using the QGIS open source geographic information systems (GIS) software package. The table included the location, as a latitude and longitude, participant code, and type of sticky dot. Using the MMQGIS plugin for QGIS, a hexagonal grid was created that represented the distance that a person was willing to walk in 20 minutes. Each hexagon was approximately 1.66km in area and 1.6km along the diagonal. The count of each point type was computed for each hexagon.
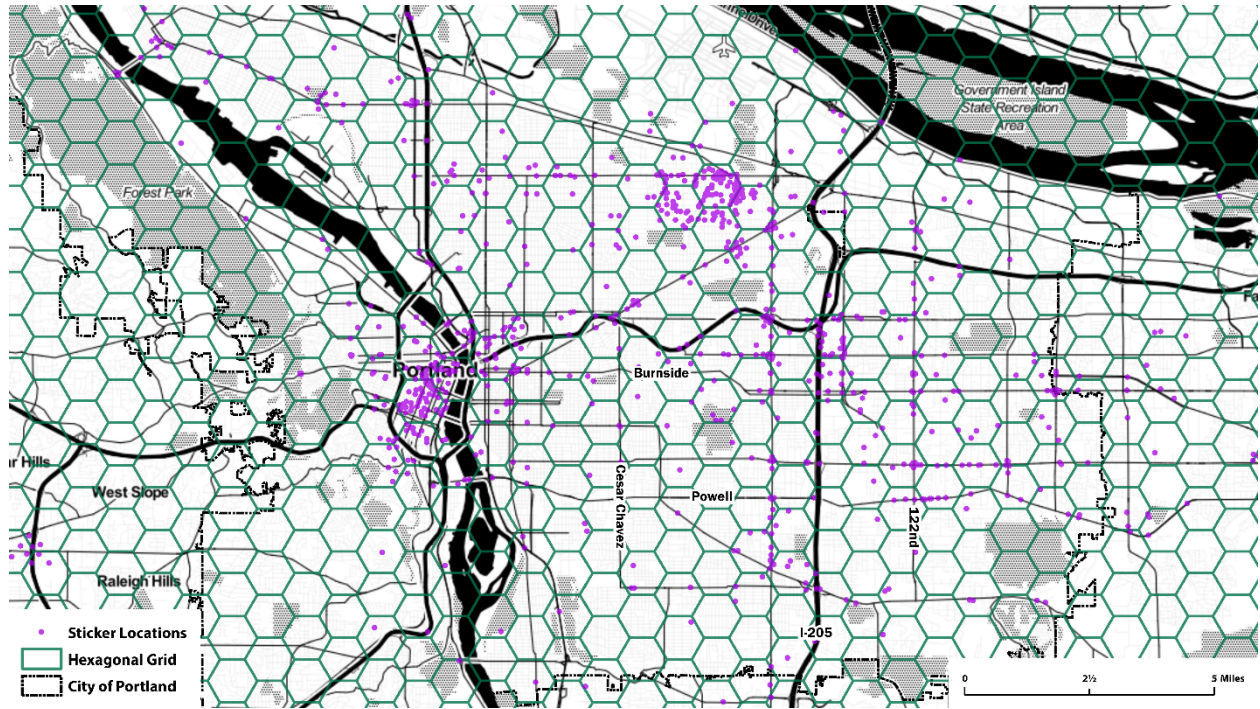
Figure 4 A hexagonal grid and the points representing each sticky dot location after geocoding.

In total, 919 sticky dots were placed across the 8 focus groups, 67 of those dots were excluded because they were more than half a mile outside the city of Portland boundary (map which includes the city boundary). Of the 852 used in this analysis, 818 were inside the Portland city limits and the remaining were just east or just south of the city boundary. With the resulting dataset, maps were created to determine: 1) the places that a participants reported travelling to regularly in an average week using a minimum bounding geography (coverage); 2) hexagonal and point-based heatmaps for each type of sticky dot; and 3) clustering analysis for barriers to getting downtown.

Findings

In the following section, we detail a range of themes that emerged in the focus group discussions, and maps where appropriate.

Patterns of Mobility: Where Do People Go?

In each focus group, participants were asked to identify (using sticky dots on the map) the primary places they traveled to in a "typical week." Participants could place up to seven dots on the map. Most participants placed 3-5 dots, though a small minority placed just 1 or 2 dots (most of whom were retirees) or placed all 7. After placing these dots on the map, group discussion asked people to reflect on where they did (or did not) travel, and any challenges they encountered along the way. We also asked people to think about hypothetical travel, inquiring about where they *might* go in the city and what might make it challenging for them to get there. We reflect on common themes related to these questions below.

Travel to downtown: When residents of outer Portland travel downtown, they do so for specific shopping or entertainment reasons. Many residents in neighborhoods with easy access to light rail regularly utilized public transportation to get downtown, though many also reported driving to the central city as well. A small minority of participants reported using a bike to travel to the downtown area; the participants who did bike downtown typically did so for work or business. Overall, despite some travel to downtown for special cultural or music events on the waterfront or specific shopping excursions (Powell's and the Saturday market in particular), the residents we spoke with did not travel to the central city with much frequency, noting a clear preference to have access to additional entertainment and shopping amenities in their own neighborhoods.

The following map illustrates the range of places that people reported going in an average week. The hexagons capture the number of points placed within the hexagon on the map. To better visually understand these results, however, in the map below, the larger the hexagon, the higher the number of points placed on the map.[4] Of note is the fact that, while a number of individuals did report going to the Central City in a typical week, the majority of destinations people travel to are either in their neighborhood (which explains the high concentration of points in the Cully neighborhood where we had a large number of focus group participants), or spread across the East side.

This means that 88.6 percent of reported travel destinations in a typical week are on the east side of the Willamette River and more than two-thirds of participants did not report travelling downtown in a typical week.

Of the 370 sticky dots placed on locations people reported traveling to (within our study area), 42 points (placed by 27 individuals) were on the West side of the Willamette River. This means that 88.6 percent of reported travel destinations in a typical week are on the east side of the Willamette River and more than two-thirds of participants did not report travelling downtown in a typical week.

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[4] The hexagons were distorted in size after the points were aggregated below it in order to help better visualize primary travel destinations.
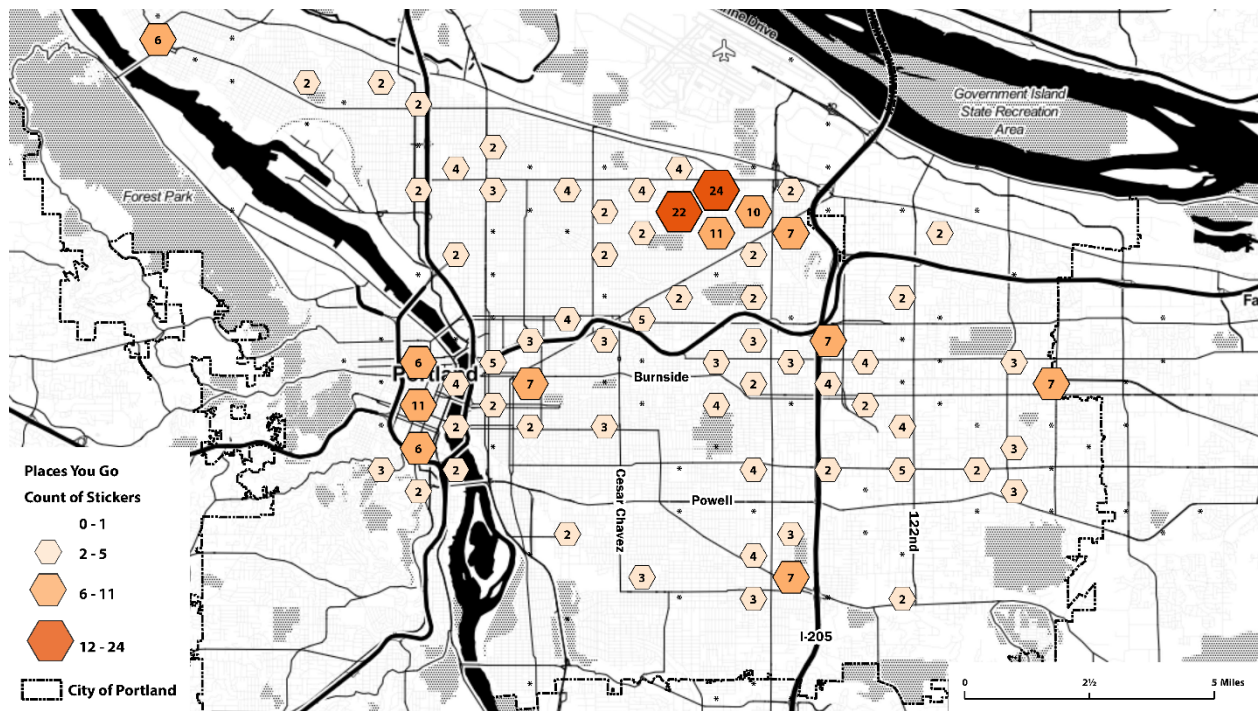
Figure 5 Places respondents reported travelling to in a typical week. 27 of 86 participants (31.4%) placed dots West of the Willamette River, meaning that 2/3 of participants do not report traveling downtown in a typical week.

Barriers to Mobility: Walking, Biking & Public Transit on the East Side

In every focus group, participants were asked about challenges or barriers to getting where they needed to go. These questions were posed with regards to destinations both within their own neighborhoods, and those located in other parts of the city or downtown. As Figure X demonstrates, mobility barriers were widely distributed across the East side, with a majority of the challenges to movement being placed in and around the neighborhoods that hosted the focus groups.
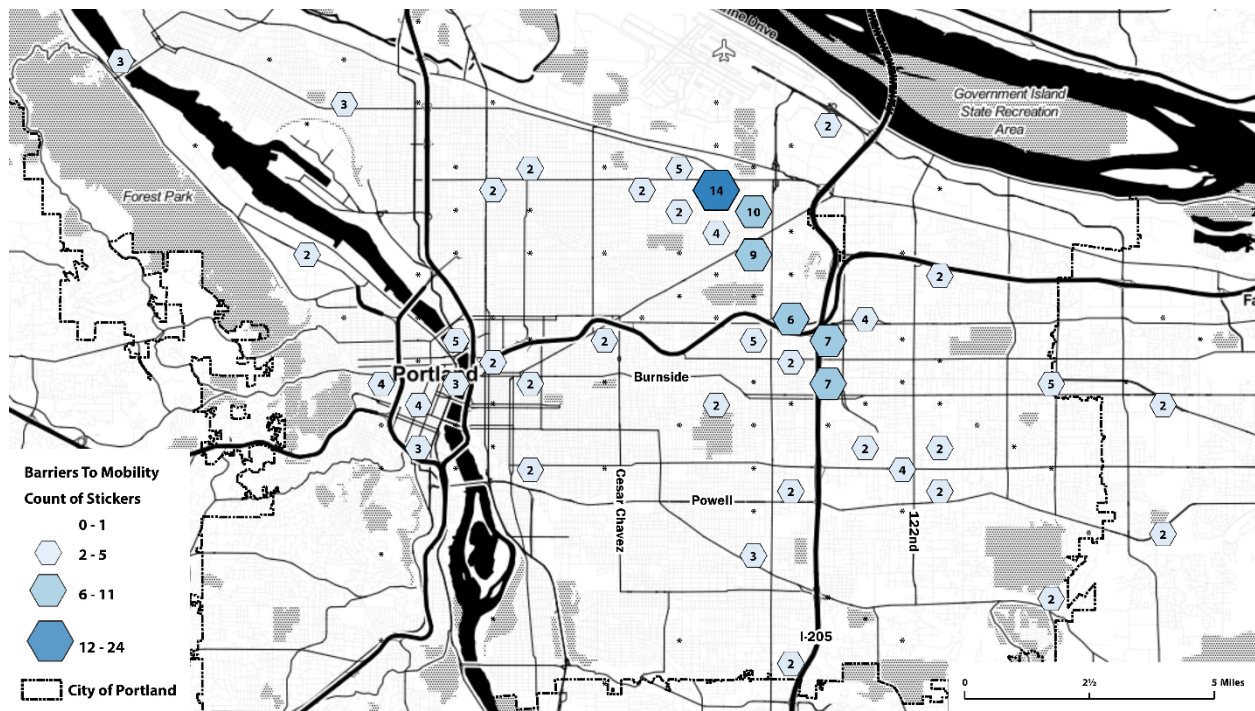
Figure 6 Barriers to mobility.

Barriers to Walking: Across all focus groups, participants reported being very concerned about a lack of safe and accessible infrastructure for walking. This concern was amplified for those participants with disabilities or with small children.

At the Rosewood Initiative group, one person noted:

> "They need to improve on sidewalks. I mean, they're putting bike lanes out here. But you can't…You're putting a bike lane right next to a rocky road with potholes and… People can't even walk, let alone ride a bike…out here."

In the Midland Library focus group, two participants offered their insights on sidewalks when the conversation focused on walking:

> Respondent 9: "There's actually one spot that I walk everyday on Foster. And there's no sidewalks. And it's so sketchy. And it's just a short amount of time. But I feel so scared when I'm like walking on that because I'm so close to traffic. And, you know, it's before the sun comes up, you know. So it's dark."

> Respondent 3: "Sidewalks aren't really an issue because there aren't any… My wife is blind with a cane. And it's pretty hard to navigate around there when everything looks the same. So that's a big issue for her."

In both Cully focus groups, concerns about unsafe infrastructure emerged. This quote from one mother summarizes the comments made by many others:

> "The main barrier we have is that there are a lot of streets that don't have sidewalks. There are a lot of potholes. Sometimes you can't even walk with a stroller or ride a bike… There's many streets that have been constructed that are good, but there are also many that truthfully are bad.

> You can't even drive through them by car. That's one of the main barriers for me, personally. The streets and sidewalks to ride by-bike and to be safe with the kids."

The lack of safe and accessible walking infrastructure was discussed in every focus group. Participants noted that the lack of safe spaces to walk deterred them from making certain non-essential trips, created anxiety about their children's safety, and reduced their active transportation choices (as many people reported resorting to driving or getting a ride for even small distances).

Barriers to Public Transit Use: Coupled with the lack of safe walking infrastructure, many participants described a lack of affordable and frequent transit service as a significant barrier to their daily mobility. While this research study did not explicitly ask questions about the public transit system, participants consistently steered discussions toward their concerns about the bus and light rail systems.

Participants reported being afraid of certain transit stops or transit centers after dark, particularly the Gateway transit center, 122nd and Burnside, and many of the major intersections on 82nd Avenue.

A common thread to these conversations was the lack of frequent and extensive service on the east side of the river. In many discussions, participants reported needing to take multiple transit lines in order to get to school, work, or the grocery store, often finding that they would have to wait a long time between transfers. Also of concern to many people was the lack of shelter and lighting at transit stops; across multiple groups, participants reported being afraid of certain transit stops or transit centers after dark. Of particular concern were stops around the Gateway transit center, 122nd and Burnside, and many of the major intersections on 82nd Avenue.

One woman from the Rosewood Initiative group sums up the common concerns of many:

> "So I can get off bus 20 on 122nd and Stark. And I have to wait another thirty, thirty-five minutes for bus 71. And it's not in the safest place. Like, they have no lights surrounding their bus stop leaving it very like…I don't feel safe."

In addition to the lack of frequent service, many participants reported that paying for public transit was often quite challenging. Given the low-incomes of many of our participants, the cost of a full adult fare could be a significant deterrent to travel. Participants also discussed the fact that the many amenities in relation to public transit tend to be available only to those with smart phones and that, without such technology, necessary informational tools (such as maps, schedules, and arrival times) are difficult to access.

In the Cully focus groups, many participants also noted that language barriers and previous negative experiences with discrimination made it challenging to routinely take public transit. Highlighting these language barriers, one person noted:

> "I've noticed that on the MAX they speak both Spanish and English and I think that that similarly, bus stops should be said in both Spanish and English on the bus because there are people that are recent immigrants that don't yet speak English. And also other languages like Vietnamese, or other languages because not all of us speak Spanish or English. There are many different languages."

Cully participants, all of who identified as Hispanic or Latino, discussed their experiences with discrimination and many shared negative experiences they had on public transit. In the examples they gave, participants perceived that drivers gave differential treatment and service based. The following

example shared by one woman was not uncommon, as other participants responded that they had had similar experiences:

> "I was leaving the store right across the street and an American lady came walking by me and started to signal for the bus to stop. The bus stop was where I was standing. So the bus stopped for her. And then when I crossed the street to also get on the bus, since the bus driver saw a Mexican person running to get on the bus, she didn't stop. It's something like discrimination for us Hispanics. Not all, some bus drivers are really nice, but some are really mean. They prefer their own race."

Overall, despite the fact that public transit was the focus of this research, participants consistently reported numerous ways that their daily movements and experiences were impacted by the public transit system's inadequacy.

Barriers to Biking on the East Side: Not all focus group participants owned a bike. However, those who did were asked about specific challenges they experienced riding in both their neighborhoods and downtown (cycling downtown is discussed in further detail below). Participants who biked consistently pointed that debris and broken glass in the bike lanes in their neighborhoods was an ongoing problem. One participant in Lents conveys how the unsafe bike infrastructure is a real challenge:

> "I ride my bike quite a lot and have the same troubles as walkers. It's kind of frightening on the main streets. Like one right out here, coming up from that way, I don't know if there's a dedicated bike lane on 122nd. But even if there is, right next to somebody who's doing forty or forty-five it's kind of nerve-wracking. And a lot of the times, to be safe, I'll stay on the sidewalk. But all of a sudden, the sidewalk ends sometimes with a curb. It will drop with no way to get back up. So you're going to have to ride…You have to kind of share the curbs. There's a lane. There's a car parked here. Then that little bit of space between the car, you know."

At the Rosewood Initiative group, participants discussed concerns about unsafe bike lanes but also noted that a lack of bike shops in the area (and the expense of maintaining a bike) meant that many people rode on unsafe bikes. Two participants, who volunteer at Rosewood Initiative's bike repair night had the following discussion:

> Respondent 20: "I see kids ride up. No brakes or lights. Tires that are… just off the rims, like so flat… getting kids in the local neighborhood schools in here with their bikes …It can't be near as fun as it could be when you're riding a bike that have tires that have like five PSI pressure in them when they're supposed to have like fifty, you know? It just doesn't work right."
>
> Respondent 18: "You see kids breaking [with] their feet."
>
> Respondent 20: "Flintstone style, yeah."
>
> Respondent 18: "We get a lot of that here. We get bikes where we make sure the tires aren't about to blow, make sure the brakes work properly. So just try to keep them safe."

This conversation highlights the complex issues surrounding barriers to bicycling. On the one hand, a lack of clean and safe infrastructure deters potential riders and makes existing riders feel unsafe. On the other hand, financial barriers and a lack of bike-related services means that those who do ride bikes may be doing so in unsafe ways, or without having access to fully functioning equipment.

"I don't know if there's a dedicated bike lane on 122nd -- but even if there is, right next to somebody who's doing forty or forty-five, it's kind of nerve-wracking. And a lot of the times, to be safe, I'll stay on the sidewalk."

In keeping with many participant's broad requests for additional sidewalks and enhanced infrastructure, cyclists in these focus groups reported a desire to see improved bike lanes to increase mobility choices and to respond to the needs of low-income residents who have been pushed out of the city's core. A biker in the Rosewood Initiative group offered this:

> "Especially in this neighborhood, I'm wanting to see… Knowing the changing demographics of a lot of these neighborhoods in outer Portland, because we're always talking about downtown…Like, forget downtown. Let's look at outer Portland. How do we change this built environment that's a suburban car-oriented environment, when we have a lot of people who aren't car drivers, mostly because you can't afford it?"

To summarize, the participants in these focus groups are some of the more marginalized residents of the city. Participants reported a number of everyday barriers that reduced their mobility. From a lack of safe and accessible walking and biking infrastructure, to larger economic concerns about the affordability of public transit and bike ownership, the circumscribed patterns of mobility highlighted earlier are better understood when these challenges are taken into account.

Barriers to Traveling Downtown

In an effort to understand how or why residents outside of the central city might choose to travel downtown, a series of questions and mapping exercises sought to isolate how residents moved outside of their communities and into the downtown area. Questions were asked about what might bring someone to downtown, what might make it harder to travel downtown, and their overall interest in seeing investments in the downtown area.

Although a number of individuals reported traveling to the Central City in a typical week, participants typically described a range of barriers to traveling downtown that were significant. These barriers span from mobility-related interferences—such as infrequent bus service, freeway congestion, or the high cost of parking—to broader safety concerns. However, many participants also expressed a general disinterest in traveling downtown altogether. It should also be reiterated that many Latinos and Latinas in the Cully focus groups—most of whom do not speak English as their first language— felt that language barriers and discrimination when riding public transit greatly discouraged or prevented them from getting around the city/downtown. Figure 7 below (Barriers to Downtown) reflects responses to the request to have participants place sticky dots on specific barriers they experience when traveling from their neighborhood to the central city area. These are distinct points from those reflected in Figure 6 (Barriers to mobility) above.

Across all focus groups, traffic congestion on highways and bridges were pointed out as key deterrents to downtown travel, as was the cost and availability of parking. A number of participants also placed "barriers to downtown" dots on areas they found to be unpleasant to visit (areas on the waterfront and in the downtown area where many houseless individuals tend to congregate was repeatedly brought up as a concern when visiting downtown).

Figure 7 Barriers to Downtown.

The most common deterrent to traveling downtown were concerns about traffic congestion and a lack of parking at an affordable rate. In one of the Cully focus groups, a Latina mother with small children noted,

> "I like to go downtown, to the stores that are in downtown but it's really difficult to find a parking spot. And when you're walking, there's a lot of traffic. So, since I travel with my two kids, that's why I avoid going [downtown]."

This sentiment was repeatedly expressed across many focus groups, but a woman from the Gregory Heights focus group exemplifies the general frustrations nicely, as she actually finds it more convenient to walk across the river rather than find parking downtown:

> "I hate paying for parking [group chuckling with her]… Like I would seriously rather park on the East side and walk across or something like that. I hate just paying for parking. It's finding parking, also."

This notion of parking on the East side and walking or riding public transit into downtown was repeated in at least three focus groups.

Barriers to Bicycling Downtown: When participants who owned bikes were asked about what prevented them from biking in the Central City, respondents consistently cited concerns about a lack of safe places to lock bicycles, as well as overall safety issues related to biking more broadly. As one participant in the Powellhurst-Gilbert area noted,

> "Everybody don't like to drive cars [sic]. If I could ride a bike, I'd ride a bike. I mean, but you know it's not really safe, in a lot of spots to ride a bike. Nothing is marked. And it's just like somebody said, a free-for-all out there."

Similar sentiments were echoed by others who noted the difficulty in transitioning across multiple types of bike infrastructure, like this quote from a woman in the Kenton focus group:

"[The city is not] consistent with the bike lanes. Downtown gets a lot of love for the bike lanes but hardly anywhere else… So like just riding into St. Johns, I can't take Lombard. But I have to like zigzag through all the neighborhoods, all the streets…because otherwise, I can't get across the cut. That doesn't make sense… Why do I have to ride for forty minutes just to get to St. Johns [group laughing] when it's ten minutes away!?"

A final complication mentioned as barrier to bicycling to or from downtown was the lack of bike racks on public transit. This was a particularly acute problem for the participants in the Kenton area and in further East neighborhoods. Participants who did wish to travel downtown by bike often wanted to be able to bike one half of their trip and then take public transit for the other. However, the small number of bike racks on the bus and MAX lines meant that many people reported being passed by multiple busses that already had the limited number of bikes aboard. This was challenging primarily for those who wanted to ride less frequent bus lines or who wished to put their bike on transit in the evening hours. As one Kenton participant summed up:

"It's kind of tricky to do a bike and bus, because the buses usually only have two bike racks. So if those are full, you're stuck waiting for the next bus. Or you're just stuck. So I mean that's a barrier for me, because I would like to bus and bike. But I know there's areas where I can't do that."

Overall, participant's collective responses suggest that while some individuals would like to travel downtown and would do so with some infrastructure enhancements, a majority of individuals find the barriers to downtown travel to be cumbersome enough that they infrequently choose to travel to the central city.

Perceptions of Downtown Investments as Inequitable

When asked explicitly about their interest in additional biking and walking investments in the downtown area, residents of outer East and North Portland were overwhelmingly opposed to additional infrastructural investments within the central city, and certainly did not feel that such would increase the frequency of their downtown travel. In fact, the question often dredged up feelings of inequity experienced by participants, prompting them to openly question them the city of Portland's funding priorities. During the focus groups, participants were given a short primer on the Green Loop concept and asked about their perceptions of the proposed idea. In the Kenton focus group, a respondent again noted the "love" that the central city receives:

"Like I said… I feel like downtown Portland gets a lot of love already. And I know that there are needs, particularly Greeley [Avenue]. And I know the City is aware of that. And why that's not prioritized is not clear to me." [Group agreement]

In the Gregory Heights focus group, a similar conversation emerged:

Respondent 9: "They kind of need to stop paying attention to [downtown]." [Lots of agreement] [Group laughing]"

Research Facilitator: "So investing in the Central City is not necessarily going to encourage you to go down there more?"

Respondent 3: "No."

Respondent 5: "It's just going to piss us off."

Respondent 8: "It's just magnifying inequity in the city. The city is so inequitable. It really is."

Respondent 8 above went on to say,

> "Any time we talk about like where we're putting money, it's always about the West Side. You know, everybody is getting displaced out this way… And they're getting pushed to places that still don't have bus…You know, once that infrastructure comes in, it seems like those are the people that are leaving, you know, they just continue to get pushed and pushed. Whereas, I think anytime we start talking about West Side stuff and putting more money in West Side it really, to me, magnifies what Portland does to people."

There were some who expressed a desire for increased bike safety downtown and half a dozen people did note that enhanced central city infrastructure would encourage them to ride their bikes downtown or make them more likely to ride. Overall, participants in focus groups would rather see allocated resources funneled into rudimentary improvements—such as more sidewalks and bike lanes—in outer east side neighborhoods.

In particular, many participants noted the impact that enhanced bicycling infrastructure within each neighborhood would have a more significant impact on their daily lives and would increase livability within their local area. At the Rosewood Initiative focus group, for example, this participant points out the interconnected nature of safe streets, bike lanes, and neighborhood vitality:

> "Maybe if that kind of stuff they're doing in the bike lanes [downtown], if it was out here, then I think the environment would change. Number one, I don't think there would be as much crime. I think people would be more aware and how… they can't just…come driving down here real fast anymore, you know what I'm saying? [This neighborhood] needs to change… in order for it to change, the city is going to have to do something about the bike lanes, this street [162nd Avenue]."

Discussion

The 20 Minute Neighborhood: An Ideal for Everyone

At the beginning of every focus group, participants were asked what they liked the most about the neighborhood they lived in, and at the conclusion of each group, asked how they would spend city resources to enhance mobility and livability.

Given the fact that many of the neighborhoods that hosted these focus groups are located in areas with a lower "completeness" score, it is not surprising that residents defined their favorite things mostly in terms of people and relationships, rather than the accessibility of amenities (BPS 2010b). For many participants, knowing their neighbors and feeling that other people were looking out for them were the main benefits of their communities.

One participant from Kenton described a small town feel in her neighborhood: "I really like my block because everybody kind of knows everybody. And we all watch out for each other." Here, she illustrates the importance of not only *knowing* everyone in her neighborhood, but also having a sense of reliance upon her neighbors. Neighborhoods were also detailed as having an "interconnectedness" and "different and strong circles of a helping community."

Many participants have lived in their neighborhoods for several years. These data indicate that once they build connections with their neighbors, residents place those relationships at high value and come to depend on each other for varying reasons. Along with enjoying these connections, some participants added that their neighborhoods were "pretty" and "tranquil."

Participants also cited diversity as a value in their neighborhoods. One respondent articulated this sentiment in the Rosewood Initiative group: "What I like about this community, it is very diverse, colorful, interesting. No matter who you are, you can basically find whatever you want whether it's food or other things. I just really like the diversity of this community."

In the Lents focus group, a surprising amount of excitement emerged in relation to the Belmont goats' presence in the neighborhood. The small herd of goats currently resides on land owned by the Portland Development Commission, and people noted that these animals provided a unique and affordable cultural amenity from which they derived much joy. People used the example of the goats to clarify their interest in additional activities, investments, and mechanisms to increase a sense of community within their local environment.

Despite the fact that participants were highly critical of the lack of infrastructure and safe places for walking and biking, people did consistently point out that they felt that they had access to amenities that they appreciated, even if they wished for additional accessibility. One woman who had recently moved back to the Cully neighborhood said this:

> "I lived in this community and I came back for the activities that take place. Participating in ABC (Andando en Bicicletas en Cully- a community organization) gives you the opportunity to get out as a family, you have fun… I come all the way [to the organization's offices] daily, and I'm always on the bus because my daughter goes to a school that is far away from our home. Every day from Monday to Friday. And since I buy the monthly transit pass, I find it easy to go to the library, the church. In other words, I don't depend on my husband. I am independent. I love Cully."

These comments reflect the dialogue that emerged as people sought to clarify what they wanted to see in the future of their neighborhood and Portland more broadly. A number of residents explicitly discussed the 20-minute neighborhood as an ideal. People did not feel that their neighborhoods should be excluded from the density of amenities and transportation choices just because they were located further from the central city.

Promoting Active Transportation in Neighborhood Hubs

The findings of this report suggest that many low-income and minority residents do not frequently travel to the central city--both because of a lack of interest and barriers to doing so. However, the residents represented in this study do desire a greater range in active mobility, by way of walking, biking, and using public transit.

The ethos of Portland has traditionally been one in which all forms of active transportation are celebrated and supported. However, we find that this ideal is not equally available to all Portlanders. As such, finding mechanisms to support active transportation within neighborhoods hubs is a critical first step in encouraging people to be active, to take fewer car trips, and to integrate a multiplicity of modes of travel into their routines. If, for instance, residents in a range of geographically-dispersed neighborhoods can begin to feel safe traveling to their local grocery store by bike, there will then be fewer challenges to encouraging trips across integrated bike lanes and greenways as that infrastructure is built. Additionally, when people feel safe walking to the library or to school, such will become a more viable mode of transportation.

When it comes to central city development and infrastructure, the findings of this report suggest that, while individuals throughout the city would like a downtown that they can take pride in, there are more pressing and urgent needs that they would prefer to see addressed in order to enhance safety and access in their respective neighborhoods. And as such, these needs take precedence over additional downtown investment. It is plausible that participants in this study can and will be able to take advantage of the improved public spaces that the Green Loop concept might provide, but it is clear that sufficient mobility barriers persist throughout North and outer SE Portland areas, and deter many people from electing to integrate multiple forms of active transportation into their daily lives.

Policy Recommendations

Address Perceptions of Inequity

The findings presented here suggest that residents of participating neighborhoods perceive there to be ongoing issues of inequitable distribution of city resources. This sentiment was expressed in all 8 focus groups and reflected overarching feelings that many neighborhoods were not prioritized for safety and infrastructure enhancements. Given this finding, it is critical that, as the city continues to develop and grow, there is increased transparency in decision-making around planning projects. This, along with enhanced opportunities for public engagement that strives to make participation feasible for low-income and minority residents, would likely aid in building trust and cooperation across neighborhoods, and work to better unify the city.

In order to offset the feelings of inequality repeatedly conveyed in focus groups, specific plans for targeted investments in geographically diverse neighborhoods are crucial. As such, in this process, it is important to partner with community organizations to support neighborhood-level ideas for increasing active transportation, and make subsequent progress towards meeting comprehensive planning goals. To

this end, we offer some final suggestions about how to move towards a more comprehensive and equitable approach to planning.

Encourage Economic Development in Neighborhood Hubs

Aside from the identification of infrastructural needs in the neighborhoods that hosted focus groups, participants frequently discussed the need for additional jobs and opportunities for people in their communities. Some of this work is already being done through the Portland Development Commission's Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative & Main Street Network – which is a citywide initiative to foster economic opportunity throughout Portland (including the Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative areas in Hollywood, Cully, Parkrose, Rosewood, Division-Midway, and 82nd and Division). The development of business districts in these areas is already in progress, and additional investment, support, and engagement from city agencies will be needed to ensure that opportunities for new businesses are shared amongst diverse groups of people.

We would suggest that, given the noted barriers to public transit utilization in many of the neighborhoods represented in this study, a collaboration coordinate between TriMet and PDC might ensure that the any business development that occurs is accessible by way of public transit. In some cases, higher frequency bus lines or additional lighting or shelters at bus stops might be important in driving and sustaining local businesses.

Make Targeted Investments to Enhance Ongoing Community Work

The neighborhoods represented in this study are incredibly unique, diverse, and innovative in their own ways. Although this report highlights residents' calls for additional investment, support, and engagement in their neighborhoods, it is also critical to augment and support the ongoing work that many communities are already engaged in. The future of Portland is dependent upon neighborhood livability across an increasingly large geographic space. As such, we highlight the important work of the three organizations whose partnerships made this research possible.

The Rosewood Initiative, a non-profit organization aimed at strengthening the Rosewood neighborhood community, continues to make concerted efforts to support bike accessibility, commuting and safety in east Portland. On Thursday evenings, for instance, the Initiative hosts a bike repair night, where volunteers not only fix bikes free of charge, but also teach community members the skills necessary to repair and maintain their bikes themselves. Additionally, the Rosewood Initiative holds bicycle faires, part swaps, commuter workshops and other related events, such as the 2014's well-attended Bike Safety Fiesta—over 800 people from the surrounding communities came to enjoy festivities with their neighbors while learning about the logistics of safe biking, which was one of the main concerns our focus group participants relayed when asked about barriers to cycling in Portland. The organization is a vital resource for the outer Southeast Portland neighborhood.

Rose Community Development Corporation has done significant work to increase community cohesion in the Lents neighborhood. Rose CDC, in partnership with Livable/Green Lents, is responsible for increased utilization of the Green Ring, a six-mile loop that connects many of the neighborhood's hubs, including Glenwood, Bloomington and Lents parks, which houses the Lents Community Garden, as well as the Foster Floodplain Natural Area. The bike route also provides easy access to the Holgate branch of the Multnomah County Library, the Green Lents Tool Library and the Lents Farmers Market, in addition to many schools in the neighborhood.

Despite the marked progress of these organizations in increasing the visibility of the Green Ring, the route itself is in need of infrastructure improvements. In September, members of our research team rode the Green Ring with Lents residents, as well as from leaders from Rose CDC, the Bicycle Transportation Alliance and Livable Lents, and all agreed that the route would feel easier to traverse with additional signage, well-defined bike lanes and protected crossings—for instance, the route intersects with busier sections of both SE Foster road and SE Woodstock boulevard at pedestrian crosswalks, where cars do not feel compelled to stop. Residents specifically expressed that they would feel more secure if there were beacons or bicycle signals in such high-traffic areas. Rose CDC (who also supports the Lents Youth Initiative) and Livable/Green Lents have done important work to promote active transportation. Additional resource and support for this work will undoubtedly enhance active transportation in the Lents area.

In the Cully neighborhood, Hacienda CDC has proven their efficacy in many avenues of community enhancement. However, they have specifically championed bicycling and active living within the surrounding Latino and immigrant populations by way of the organization Andando en Bicicletas en Cully (ABC), which translates in English to "Riding Bikes in Cully." ABC aims to encourage and fortify the Cully cycling community by leading group bike rides in the neighborhood and hosting maintenance and training workshops, which in turn empowers residents to feel apart of the greater Portland community, as bike culture is certainly an integral part of the city's ethos. They have also successfully advocated for safe bicycle storage and better infrastructure in Cully.

These three organizations reflect just some of the ongoing community organizing and local level leadership that make Portland varied neighborhoods unique. These organizations have clear ideas, organized leaders and reflect the needs of the community. City agencies and offices should continue to find ways to support and facilitate the efforts of these groups.

Enhance Strategies for Public Outreach and Engagement

Marginalized communities often experience a range of barriers to participating in planning processes, therefore efforts to enhance equity must include extensive public outreach work in order to engage a diverse range of community members. The most important strategies to achieve effective public involvement are in the targeted recruitment methods, community partnerships, and incentives, which should be tailored to reflect the needs of different communities and populations.

In an effort to engage a diverse group of people for this study, face-to-face interaction proved to be the most successful recruitment strategy. In this project, we partnered with libraries and community organizations with existing programs that supported active transportation programs. To recruit participants for library-based focus groups, we left in informational flyers with accompanying slips of paper with a link to the survey in key locations throughout the building, and conducted face-to-face recruitment for one evening several days before and the hour right before the focus group.

In this way, the research team was able to meet and engage community members that already made use of public library facilities, expressed palpable interest in the study's subject matter, and might be open to coming back over the weekend to participate in a focus group. Face-to-face interactions also reduce anxiety about the research process, and allow for people to receive immediate answers regarding any concerns they may have.

In soliciting community partnerships, the research team worked with BPS, as well as a panel of advisors from a number of city agencies and offices, to generate a longer list of community organizations that had

existing programs in support of active transportation in targeted neighborhoods. Following discussion and engagement, successful partnerships were established with Rosewood Initiative, Rose Community Development Center, and Hacienda Community Development Center. In these cases, we made ourselves present at meetings and built rapport with their community leaders. Additionally, when working with Hacienda, there were always one or two bilingual members of the research team present to aid in translation. The success of these partnerships can largely be accredited to research team's effort to augment existing community work.

A final tactic for increasing the participation of underrepresented groups--especially in marginalized communities--is the provisioning of resources to support a wide range of participants. Low income and minority individuals often have low representation in public involvement processes for several reasons-- whether it be insufficient knowledge of participation opportunities, necessary childcare, inadequate leisure time, or a lack of trust in the research process—and it is the responsibility of the entity conducting outreach efforts to provide resources to make participation possible. In this study, this meant providing translation services, food, financial incentives in the form of a gift card, and child-care services.

In sum, community outreach efforts must be thorough, flexible, and strategically tailored to each target audiences. Personal connections and face-to-face recruitment should be coupled with financial incentives and other resources that make participation possible for vulnerable populations.

Develop and Implement Anti-Displacement Strategies

A significant contributing factor to inequitable access to transportation infrastructure and public spaces stems from the ongoing problems linked to gentrification and displacement. As a result, community organizations have galvanized around efforts to mitigate the consequences of these phenomena. Organizations such as the Community Alliance of Tenants, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, APANO, and Portland Tenants United have been at the forefront of many of these discussions and sustained engagement with community organizations is essential as city agencies work to develop policies and solutions to our housing crisis.

Intended to guide equitable investment practices and encourage broad public involvement, policies include resolutions to "create a stronger voice for underrepresented communities in decision-making and planning"; "anticipate gentrification and displacement, and take measures to prevent and mitigate it" as well as "restore communities that have suffered" from the harms of these devastating trends; and finally to fund these anti-displacement measures by "capturing increased property value as revenue" when plans and investment drive up the cost of housing" (PHB 2015a). The current study suggests that such anti-displacement policy suggestions have significant traction across many East side neighborhoods, where residents demonstrate the desire to transition from the "neighborhoods as spokes" planning model towards one with self-sustaining "lively neighborhoods" (Jacobs 1973).

While a thriving city center is undoubtedly salient to the sustainability of commercial, business, and tourism economies, these investments should not outpace investments in neighborhood centers. The Anti-Displacement PDX campaign phrased this in terms of a need to "ensure that new development and investment creates more opportunities for communities of color and low-income residents," and builds upon the idea of the 20-minute neighborhoods in order to promote "walkable access to commercial services and amenities." (PHB 2015a). With that, investment in active transportation infrastructure is most equitable when it aids in connecting residents to services and amenities within their own neighborhoods.

Concluding Thoughts

- **Equity Is Not a Trade-Off**: While investments in the central city are important for a variety of reasons, there does not need to be an "either/or" approach to planning for the broader metro area; as investments and plans are made to develop cycling and pedestrian infrastructure downtown, simultaneous efforts can and should be made in other parts of the city. We suggest building upon current discussions around walkability, cycling, and public safety to generate plans and investments outside the city's core. For both planners and residents alike, broader messages about larger, comprehensive plans and efforts to enhance safety and recreational facilities are vital to assuaging feelings of distrust amongst local residents. When local residents can see that their concerns and interests are taken seriously, and when requests for additional investments are realized, perceived inequities in investment may lessen.

- **Investments Outside the Central City Will Enhance Mobility City-Wide**: A key finding in this study is that many residents outside the downtown area simply don't travel to the central city with much frequency. However, investments that develop pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and enhance public transit access will increase neighborhood-level mobility which can, in turn, increase mobility patterns more broadly. If residents in outer SE and N/ NE Portland feel safe riding their bike to a grocery store in their neighborhood, it's then plausible that they might consider walking or riding a bike in other parts of the city. A connected and mobile city requires safe and accessible infrastructure throughout the entire city.

- **Community Building Is Part of Planning for the Future:** The 2.5 hour focus groups that were convened for this study were loud, engaging, and exciting events. Participants shared a variety of visions for the future, concerns about current development in the city, and had a chance to share dinner and meet new people in their neighborhood. Participants overwhelmingly reported that the event was enjoyable, that they learned something new, and that they felt that getting together with their neighbors to talk, voice concerns, and think about the future was a positive experience. We would suggest that every effort is made to continue to allow residents to voice opinions and share their stories with decision-makers. For many residents, being heard by city staff and city officials would be vital in reducing feelings of inequity. The focus groups convened for this study met in local neighborhoods, in public libraries and community spaces, offered childcare and food, and generally provided as many supports as possible for people to participate. As we think about building and equitable and inclusive city, it is important to convene meetings for residents where they live, at times that are convenient, and to also provide child care and food for residents who lead busy lives with multiple obligations. We would also again like to highlight the great work being done by many local organizations to help build community; we would encourage the city to learn from the work community members are already doing and to supplement and add on to those efforts.

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Appendix: The Green Loop

The "Green Loop" is conceptualized as a six-mile linear park meant to invite "residents, employees and visitors to experience Portland's urban core in an entirely new way" (BPS, 2015:4b). The Green Loop will encircle the central city including the north and south park blocks, the Moda Center coliseum by the Broadway Bridge, Lloyd District, Central Eastside, the newly developed Tilikum Bridge, and finally, multiple encirclements within and around the south waterfront business district and Portland State University, a campus of around 28,000 students over 50 acres (Portland State University, 2016). The Green Loop is overseen by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and the City of Portland office. The funding of design of the Green Loops Project is currently in flux and evolving (BPS, 2015a). PBOT's report indicates that the Green Loop will reduce transportation costs and increase healthy lifestyles for Portland residents, advancing equity and accessibility.