

# PBOT

PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

1120 SW Fifth Ave, Suite 1331, Portland OR 97204  
Phone: 503-823-4000 Portland.gov/Transportation

## PBOT Bureau and Budget Advisory Committee (BBAC)

Committee Chair Susan Johnson

### Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 17, 2023, | 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Location: The Portland Building (1120 SW 5th Ave, Room 216).

A virtual option will be provided for those who cannot make it in-person. Online participants can register for this meeting at this [website](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

### Meeting Agenda

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
4:00 p.m.	Welcome and public comment
4:05 p.m.	Vision Zero reading
4:10 p.m.	Director's update
4:20 p.m.	PBOT Budget & Revenue poll results
4:40 p.m.	Discussion
5:25 p.m.	Closing and next steps

### Committee Members Present

Josh Roll  
Sean Sweat  
David Stein  
Delanie Graham  
Rob Martineau  
Timothy Bowers  
Maria Hernandez  
Kara Helgren  
Trevor Luu  
Theodore Labbe  
James O'Laughlen

### Committee Members Absent

Susan Johnson  
Rambod Benham  
Jennifer Young  
Jodi Ballard-Beach  
Ignacio Simon  
Mariah Dula



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<b>City Staff</b>	<b>Bureau/Office</b>
Millicent Williams, PBOT Director	Transportation
Matt Grumm	Transportation
Shoshana Cohen	Transportation
Mark Lear	Transportation
Jeremy Patton	Transportation
Jill Hutchinson	Transportation
Marianna Lomanto	Transportation
Mel Hogg	Transportation
Meg Cummings	Transportation
Sara Figliozzi	Transportation
Jacob Sherman	Transportation
Dylan Rivera	Transportation
Renata Tirta	Transportation
Roger Geller	Transportation
Kristin Hull	Transportation

### **Other attendees**

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Jonathan Maus (BikePortland)	Joseph Bicycles
Jeanette de Castro (Protec17)	Ashley Mcgirk
Taylor Griggs (Portland Mercury)	Ruthanne Cummings
Eric Wilhem	

### **Welcome, Public Comment and Check-ins**

PBOT BBAC Staff welcomed committee members and guests, both those who were joining in-person and virtually. Staff went over the Zoom meeting guidelines for attendees who were joining virtually and reviewed the meeting agenda.

### **Public Comment**

BBAC meetings are open to the public. Public comment is welcomed at meetings. No members of the public came forward to provide public comment.

### **Vision Zero reading of the names**

Matt Grumm, Intergovernmental Affairs Manager read the names of the people that were killed due to traffic violence since the last BBAC meeting in July 2023 and the group honored them in a moment of silence.

### **PBOT Director Williams Update**

Director Williams joined the BBAC in her new role as Director of PBOT. It's Director William's fourth week back at the bureau after a brief stint in the private sector. Since Director Williams has been back, she has spent a lot of time visiting our various facilities, chatting, and learning from staff while being reintroduced to work PBOT does to keep our city moving.

Director Williams thanked Budget and Bureau Advisory Committee (BBAC) members for serving on the BBAC. Director Williams reiterated PBOT is facing a tough budget situation and while PBOT has already made some hard budget decisions over the last few years, PBOT will be continuing to navigate through challenging conversations. Director Williams acknowledged BBAC's contributions to these conversations so far and she is looking forward to hearing from the committee as they continue through this year's budget process.

Director Williams also took a moment to express her expectations for the BBAC and encouraged BBAC members to attend the meetings in person if possible so that they can have richer conversations when everyone is able to engage face to face. Director Williams shared her expectations around engaging virtually, including expecting members to turn on their cameras (especially when speaking) so that they can help to build more community and rapport with one other.

Director Williams thanked Susan Johnson who has been serving as the Co-Chair without a Chair for the last few months since Co-Chair James Ellis had to step down. Director Williams will be working with staff on next steps as she gets to know all of you on the committee.

Director Williams went on to share regular bureau updates:

- PBOT is deep into construction and outreach season. PBOT has had multiple well-attended open houses on 82nd Avenue and will be sharing out what PBOT staff heard from the public in the coming months.
- PBOT completed construction on multiple projects, including the East Burnside and SW Jefferson Bus and Bike Lane projects and the SE 162nd Safety and Access to Transit Project. This interactive community game is getting Portlanders outside to explore our transportation safety work and experience it for themselves in a culturally relevant and fun way.
- The temporary closure of the SW 3rd and Alder parking garage starts August 18, will allow PBOT to make the best use of public facilities while enhancing security and maintenance at the city's four downtown garages that will remain fully operational. PBOT parking revenue continues to remain flat. With parking occupancy rates being consistently below pre-pandemic levels, PBOT is consolidating resources and will redirect people driving to the nearby SmartPark garages at SW 4th and Yamhill Street - just two blocks away - and at SW 10th and Yamhill Street. As far as what we are going to do with the garage, Director Williams shared they are excited about the idea of some sort of alternative activation of the facility. It's still too early to say what could be, but she is optimistic that with the creativity and goodwill of Portlanders they can find new uses for the space that will continue to benefit downtown and Portland. More details will be shared as this effort moves forward.

Director Williams took a moment to recognize PBOT staff, particularly PBOT field staff which make up about 50% of our bureau's workforce. This week has been hot. PBOT crews have been starting work at 5 a.m. all week to avoid the extra-hot afternoons but are largely still out in the field doing the work they do each day.

Director Williams then transitioned to PBOT's budget. She reminded the group that the bureau has been gathering information from the public about their thoughts about PBOT, about priorities for our funding and about the potential for raising new revenue. PBOT also has a work session scheduled with City Council for September 26th. At that time, PBOT staff expect that they will be sharing ideas with council about how PBOT can make the budget cuts that will be necessary to balance our budget this year. PBOT anticipates having to make up to \$32 million in cuts.

## **PBOT Budget & Revenue Poll Results**

Shoshana Cohen, Intergovernmental, Resources and Policy Affairs Manager, provided an overview of the main takeaways from the PBOT Budget & Revenue poll results report. The survey included 600 Portland respondents. Key takeaways included maintenance and safety considered top transportation issues. Few respondents had a clear understanding of the primary sources of PBOT's transportation funding. Interestingly, when given the choice, Portlanders say PBOT should prioritize an increase in spending, but the majority are opposed to specific funding options. The survey results report can be found [here](#).

During the review of the survey results report presentation, a BBAC member suggested that in the future, it might be valuable to ask the public what they are willing to pay. PBOT staff then mentioned that they previously included a question about what people are willing to pay in past City of Portland Gas Tax Surveys and intend to incorporate it once again in an upcoming Gas Tax renewal survey.

A BBAC member expressed feeling unsettled with the survey report results. They pointed out that some of the survey responses seem to run counter to PBOT's and the City of Portland's goals. They raised the question of what steps will be taken next in response to these findings.

Director Williams emphasized that the current financial situation demands an urgent intervention in the bureau's funding model. She also stressed the importance of seizing this moment to educate the public about the current financial challenges and circumstances.

Another BBAC member expressed their bewilderment concerning the survey results report. They were surprised by the number of respondents who believe PBOT has sufficient funding to finance the work to keep Portlanders moving. This member noted it is hard to take the results seriously including giving credibility to a small number of people (respondents) who seem to be uninformed.

A BBAC member raised their concern regarding the apparent lack of lack of understanding among the respondents. They noted that the survey questions were highly technical, leading to a potential for subjectivity in their responses. They recommended a shift towards framing survey questions based on values and aimed at educating the public.

Another members' comment underscored the challenges of changing people's perspectives and values, which are typically associated with their lived experiences. They noted the significance of considering where PBOT is focusing their targeted education efforts, including who the efforts are aimed at and at what point in time.

Before concluding the meeting PBOT staff reminded BBAC that PBOT will presenting a City Council work session on September 26 about their path forward. Director Williams recognized these are challenging times for PBOT, but she believes that by working together the bureau can find solutions, which start with listening and engaging with PBOT partners, stakeholders, the public, and, of course, the BBAC.

A BBAC member made a final comment about the devastating news about a City of Portland employee at the Portland's fleet vehicle maintenance shop who was in critical condition after being seriously injured while on the job and asked for the city's and community support while they recover. PBOT Director thanked them for sharing this information and shared the bureau will do what they can to support them.

The meeting adjourned by 5:30pm. The next scheduled meeting will take place on Thursday, September 21.