

# 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)

### Meeting Agenda

Thursday, October 19, 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.	Budget update
4:50 p.m.	Discussion
5:25 p.m.	Closing and next steps

### Committee Members Present

Susan Johnson  
Sean Sweat  
David Stein  
Delanie Graham  
Timothy Bowers  
Mariah Dula  
Kara Helgren  
Trevor Luu  
Theodore Labbe  
Josh Roll  
Rob Martineau  
Rambod Behnam

### Committee Members Absent

Jennifer Young  
Jodi Ballard-Beach  
Ignacio Simon  
James O'Laughlen



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**City Staff**

Millicent Williams, PBOT Director  
Matt Grumm  
Shoshana Cohen  
Hannah Schafer  
Jeremy Patton  
Kevin Bumatay  
Marianna Lomanto  
Mel Hogg  
Mark Lear

**Bureau/Office**

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**Attendees**

Eric Wilhelm	Kailyn Lamb
Rob Martineau	Marisa Trujillo DeMull
Maria Hernandez	Rachel Whiteside
Ruthanne Bennett	Rachel Koroloff
Jonathan Maus	Cynthia Castro
Megan Cummings	Sarah Figliozzi
Erick Moe	Frank Stevens
Cathy Tuttle	Kalise Rucker
Katie Root	Shahzad Dey
Joseph Bicycles	Shannon Ruark
Will Terry	William Roberts
Ashleen Mcgirk	Sebastian Juarez Castellanos
Kristin Hull	Will Terry

**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 and public participation is welcomed. Public comments are accepted at the beginning of each meeting. Members of the public have the option to submit their comments in advance via [email](#) or present them in person during the meetings. No public comment was provided at the October BBAC meeting.

**Director's Update**

Following public comment period Director Williams conducted the Vision Zero reading of the names of the individuals who have died in traffic crashes since the September BBAC meeting. A moment of silence was observed in their honor.

After the Vision Zero reading, Director Williams announced that the committee will dedicate the meeting to going over the proposed cuts presented by PBOT leadership to City Council on September 26th.

Specifically, the BBAC will review the proposed reductions and what work will continue in each service area of the bureau.

Director Williams underscored that the presented plan is just a proposal, and PBOT leadership is actively engaging in conversations to minimize these cuts. Furthermore, Director Williams also expressed her desire to hear feedback from BBAC members about the current proposal, which was the main agenda item of the meeting.

Before delving into the main agenda item, Director Williams shared a couple of updates from the bureau. PBOT began preparations and training for the upcoming winter season. Next week the training will continue, with crews practicing installing snowplows and salt spreaders onto their trucks and doing an in-depth equipment check.

As PBOT starts preparing for winter, they are asking the public to begin preparing as well. Director Williams urged the BBAC to help spread the word and directed the committee's attention to a detailed website with information and tips for winter weather preparation at [www.portland.gov/winter](http://www.portland.gov/winter).

Director Williams then transitioned to her second update about the city's charter transition. Since the last BBAC meeting, there have been some additional updates to the proposed organizational chart of the city. PBOT will still be in the Public Works service area with Water and Environmental Services. Parks & Recreation has moved to its own service area with the Portland Children's Levy. Further details can be found on the city's website at [www.portland.gov/transition](http://www.portland.gov/transition). The new date for bringing the proposed changes to City Council is Wednesday, Nov. 1. Members of the public can sign up to receive emails and track these important changes to the City of Portland government.

Director Williams switched her focus back to the budget and emphasized that the role of the BBAC is to advise her related to budget decisions. She is looking forward to today's discussion and hearing the Committee's feedback.

Director Williams reiterated that PBOT is facing tough decisions. She recognized that PBOT does not like any of these proposed cuts, as they would have a significant impact on all PBOT policy goals, making them significantly harder to achieve.

Director Williams acknowledged that many members of the BBAC have asked the bureau to prioritize safety and multimodal transportation options. Director Williams expressed that PBOT wants to prioritize these aspects but noted that when the public was polled in the summer about their priorities, maintenance ranks on top. Maintaining PBOT's existing assets is the foundation on which all other work including safety and climate work, is built. Director Williams reiterated that progress on safety or multimodal goals cannot be achieved if infrastructure is not properly maintained.

Director Williams recognized that PBOT still has proposed cuts to maintenance right now, but they have tried not to go too deep in that area. She emphasized that they are not happy with the package they will discuss today.

Director Williams announced that there would also be an update on the budget timeline. She recognized that while the idea of a revenue subcommittee came up again at the end of the last meeting, what is most needed related to revenue is to build support for some existing revenue ideas, such as more general fund support, raising parking fees, a small street fee or something along those lines. These ideas have been previously shared by PBOT staff. Director Williams clarified that these ideas have been discussed in work

sessions with Council, and the committee delve deeper into them and discuss how the BBAC can show support for these ideas in the upcoming meeting, provided there is interest. Director Williams stressed that this discussion should involve the entire committee to gather input from all BBAC members.

Director Williams then transitioned to the topic of BBAC's leadership. Director Williams announced that BBAC Chair, Susan Johnson, had decided to step down from her leadership role having served as Co-chair for the committee for over a year. Susan will remain engaged with the committee as a member. Director Williams expressed her profound appreciation for Susan's leadership.

Director Williams provided an overview of what the role and responsibilities of the Co-chairs and invited committee members interested in assuming a leadership role to contact the BBAC staff coordinator. The appointment of the committee leadership is made by the PBOT director.

Finally, Director Williams expressed her appreciation to the committee members for their service and dedication to the BBAC, to PBOT, and to the City of Portland. Following Director Williams' update, the meeting transitioned to the next agenda item, a budget update.

### **Budget Update**

Business Services Group Director, Jeramy Patton, began the budget update by presenting a budget development process timeline. The timeline and presentation slides can be found here: <https://www.portland.gov/transportation/bbac/documents/bbac-october-2023-meeting-presentation/download>

Jeramy discussed the impacts of budget cuts on the bureau. He provided a high-level overview of the transportation budget breakdown, budget restricted resources, and a summary of the proposed reductions.

Jeramy summarized the proposed reductions for each group area, starting with Business Services and the Office of the Director. These groups are facing a 44% reduction in services and a potential loss of 33 of 89 positions (37% reduction).

Under this proposal, PBOT will offer minimal support for core systems, but will drastically reduce technology support for program specific software, increasing the risk of system failures and data breaches. This could result in more errors and delayed payments to vendors due to limited capacity for follow-up on unpaid invoices or explore new revenue options.

Other considerations include a service reduction in PBOT's bureau-wide equity work, communications, and data analytics, as well as a reduction in PBOT budget advisory committee meetings and responsiveness to state and federal inquiries.

Asset risk management efforts will have less support, and PBOT's campsite cleanup funding will be eliminated, leading to delays in hiring processes, onboarding, offboarding, FMLA, and other employee support efforts will fall to the manager.

A BBAC member asked about the city's payroll system. PBOT staff clarified that each bureau coordinates and manages its specific bureau accounting and payroll services.

A BBAC member raised concerns about the potential reduction in the campsite cleanup funding, which PBOT staff acknowledged would be quite significant.

Questions were raised about the potential cuts to equity programming and the state/regional coordination. PBOT staff indicated that existing vacancies in the equity program would not be filled, and there may need to be a focus change and triage PBOT's engagement. As far as the state/regional coordination, impacts may require reductions in the number of staff in the Intergovernmental, Resources and Policy Affairs Team. Some of these potential cuts may affect services rather than the delivery of physical products.

Other questions included whether bureau projects have an equity line and regarding the percentage of full-time employees affected by the potential cuts.

Jeremy transitioned to discussing the Right-of-Way (ROW) management/Streetcar impacts. The proposed cuts in this area include eliminating the Group Director position and shifting some costs to cost recovery models. Community Event permitting (which includes citywide parades, Farmers Markets, Street Fairs) and block parties will increase, and there would be a reduction in funding from the Portland Streetcar by approximately \$1M. Jeremy noted that this reduction will impact the long-range plan to replace future Streetcar purchases, which in turn will create more delays in streetcar operations.

The next group that Jeremy presented on included Engineering. In this proposal, PBOT is considering the complete reduction of pavement preservation which includes 30 lane-miles of a combination of Slurry Seal and Micro-surfacing on local streets. There would also be a cut to the partnering fund, which allows PBOT to partner on ramp costs with the Bureau of Environmental Services and the Water Bureau when they need to cut into the street to construct their capital projects. Finding and funding an alternate means to construct this loss of ramps will be necessary.

In the Maintenance Operations Group, proposed cuts include to stairways and retaining wall maintenance. The bureau would continue to do only minor structural repairs going forward. In this scenario, PBOT would be eliminating all contracted landslide repairs and any major emergency repair work on structures. There is also a proposed \$3 Million reduction in paving work and cuts that would impact pothole filling timelines and cuts to vegetation management. We would still cut vegetation for safety reasons but not for aesthetics.

We would also eliminate crack seal paving maintenance and maintenance of street furniture. There is a traffic striping reduction, a decrease in winter weather response, and a reduction in Maintenance Operations 'work' conducted on behalf of other parts of our bureau, including parking signage and small capital projects.

A BBAC member asked how the winter weather response reduction on PBOT's ability to deploy gravel on the streets and the bike network. In response, PBOT Director indicated that the goal of PBOT is to make roads passable and ensure safe travel for people, regardless of their mode of transportation. The goal is not to reduce the gravel that is deployed, but there will be fewer routes. The Director emphasized that maintenance and safety go hand in hand.

Comments from the BBAC members included questions about the costs of not investing in the proposed reductions and the possibility of implementing weight restrictions on local roads. PBOT staff indicated that the proposed reductions present short-term savings and will have longer term implications. There

were questions about road reconfigurations to save on paving, but staff discussed that weather has the most significant impact on road maintenance and disrepair.

After discussing maintenance operations, Jeremy transitioned to reviewing the impacts of the proposed cuts to the Parking and Regulatory group. Regarding Parking Enforcement work, there would be reduced parking enforcement and reduced routine enforcement in parking meter and permit districts, residential enforcement. The impacts of these reductions include abandoned vehicles, derelict RVs, and other vehicles in violation may remain in the right of way for extended periods of time, impacting safety and community livability.

In the proposed scenario, PBOT would be unable to move forward with the development or expansion of new parking districts, metered and non-metered. Parking studies, data collection, outreach, and planning would not be funded, and there would be a reduction in replacements, repairs, and graffiti removal of parking meters.

A BBAC member asked for clarification about the reduction of parking enforcement and its impacts on revenue collection, as it appears people aren't paying at the meter. PBOT staff clarified that the positions being cut are vacant positions and would not be filled. Staff also noted that the bureau is exploring different strategies to encourage people to pay at the meter.

A BBAC member noted that the work that parking enforcement officers do in addressing abandoned vehicles, derelict RVs, and other violations not only affects neighborhood livability but also has a significant impact on people's parking behavior. This in turn, impacts parking revenue if the vehicle users do not pay or deter others from parking in the area.

Reductions being considered in the Policy, Planning and Projects group include:

- A significant cut in small safety project investments, resulting in position reductions in both this group and in other engineering, traffic, and operations departments.
- A significant reduction in support and engagement for bike, pedestrian, transit and ADA initiatives, as well as Public Plazas, and collaboration with community, business, and neighborhood groups to develop projects that address dire safety, health and economic needs.
- A reduction or elimination to programs such as Sunday Parkways, Safe routes to school, transportation wallet, equity partnerships and PSU transportation class.
- Less ability to prepare and apply for federal grants.

A BBAC member expressed concern about the adverse consequences of cutting programs that define and that people love about Portland. They strongly encouraged PBOT convey to Council the importance of these programs to the community.

PBOT Director Williams acknowledged that the proposed cuts that are being considered are extremely challenging. The bureau is exploring alternative funding sources and potential sponsorships to support beloved educational and community events and programming.

Another BBAC member indicated that PBOT's programs are integral to what makes Portland "Portland". Removing these programs will negatively impact on other areas of the city. For example, programs like the PSU Transportation class contributes to building community advocacy capacity. Reductions in this program would diminish community advocacy power.

The committee turned its attention to discussing potential cuts in the Traffic Systems group. Jeremy explained that in this scenario, the bureau is looking at a 50% reduction to signals and street lighting maintenance, including graffiti removal. With these reductions crews will typically only be able to respond to emergency events. Additionally, partnering funds to assist developers with expensive signal upgrades would be eliminated. Other impacts would include:

- The elimination to 823-SAFE – PBOT's traffic safety community response
- The elimination of the Traffic Systems Group Director position, assuming Traffic will merge with another PBOT Group. Remaining Traffic Divisions and Sections are supported by permit fees and CIP project funding and will remain intact to support those programs.

A BBAC member asked about the next steps in the budget process for the bureau.

PBOT Director shared that they are currently engaging in discussion with Council Offices to educate and help them understand PBOT's budget. PBOT will also soon be conducting a poll for Fixing Our streets (FOS) and will also ask questions about the public's receptibility to a street fee or similar mechanism for revenue generation.

The budget request will be due in January. In February, the City Budget Office reviews the budget submittal, and in March/April, City Council holds its work session, where council delves deeply into the budget.

A BBAC member asked about a potential Utility Fee and its structure. PBOT staff said it could be integrated onto the water and sewer bill.

Another BBAC member observed that PBOT's dire financial challenges have been known for over a year or years. They expressed great disdain about the Council's seeming surprise about PBOT's funding challenges and questioned whether the Council was finally taking notice or if they would allow PBOT to bear the brunt of the cuts.

The PBOT Director shared that there is a growing interest from Council in understanding the budget more thoroughly, and there seems to be support for problem-solving. The director recognized that the bureau has been transparent about its budget challenges for years,

A BBAC member asked about the communication plans moving forward. In response, PBOT staff shared that PBOT has released a new budget website: <https://www.portland.gov/transportation/budget>. They encouraged the group to share this information with the communities they are in touch with. Educating people about the basics of how PBOT is funded, is vital and they hope the website will help with that.

A BBAC member asked if one of the solutions that council might be open to include revisiting the parking fee.

Director Williams indicated PBOT is considering a range of options and will be exploring if there is public and council support for them.

A BBAC member noted that this year the mayor rejected a 40-cent parking meter increase fee that had been previously agreed upon, which raises concerns. They cautioned about the importance of ensuring community support for any proposed strategies.

PBOT Director underscored that the BBAC's voice and advocacy in addressing the impact of the choices that PBOT is facing will be key, especially given the recent significant visibility around PBOT's budgetary challenges.

Before adjourning the meeting, a BBAC member asked about the process for appointing the BBAC Co-chairs. PBOT director clarified that any BBAC member interested in serving in a leadership role should let the PBOT staff know. The Director will review the nominations and decide the BBAC leadership appointment.

PBOT staff thanked the BBAC members for their dedication to the BBAC and announced the next meeting will take place on Thursday, November 16, 4pm at the Portland Building. Following this announcement, the meeting was adjourned by 5:39pm.

### Meeting Reminders

- Sign up [here](#) to receive BBAC meeting notices and reminders.
- BBAC meetings are open to the public. BBAC meetings allocates the first minutes of each meeting for public comment. To submit written public comment electronically or to sign up to provide live comment at the meeting email: [marianna.lomanto@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:marianna.lomanto@portlandoregon.gov).