

# NORTH PORTLAND IN MOTION



## COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #1

**When:** October 5, 2021, 6-7:30p

**Where:** Virtual meeting over Zoom

### Attendees:

Stephanie Blair (St Johns Center for Opportunity)  
Jonna Lynn Bransford (Resident - University Park)  
Ally Holmqvist (Bicycle Advisory Committee)  
Aaron Brown (Oregon Walks, St Johns)  
Paul Buchanan (Portsmouth Neighborhood Association)  
Jennie Cambie (University of Portland)  
Nic Coti (Bike Loud, Overlook)  
Kali Glenn-Haley (Resident, University Park)  
Pat Jewett (Resident/NP Greenway, St John)  
Jesse Neilson, Resident, Kenton,

Ryan Northam, Resident, Arbor Lodge  
Liz Smith, St John's Boosters  
Lauren Smith Plinski (PCC)  
Rebecca Small (Friends of Columbia Park, Kenton)  
Beth Status (Arbor Lodge Neighborhood Association)  
Ethan Stuckmayer (Resident, St Johns)  
Carol Tricoch (St Johns Boosters)  
Jennifer Vitello (Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association)  
Libby Winter (WTS, Arbor Lodge)

### Staff and Consultant Team:

Mike Serritella, Shane Valle (PBOT); Jessica Pickul, Nicole Metildi, (JLA Public Involvement)

## MEETING SUMMARY

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jessica Pickul (JLA) opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves and share why they wanted to be a part of the North Portland in Motion (NoPIM) Community Advisory Group (CAG). Jessica reviewed the agenda and informed the committee that the first meeting would provide a chance to get to know the CAG members better, receive an orientation to the project and outreach goals and a discussion on how the CAG can work effectively together over the course of the project.

### PROJECT PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

NoPIM is PBOT's fifth "in motion" project. "In motion" projects take city wide, long-term goals and apply them to a specific geographic area. They are also an opportunity for PBOT to convene the community, confirm priorities for the study area, and identify and understand the multimodal transportation needs for the area (which helps direct funding).

Mike Serritella (PBOT) then shared **NoPIM's project purpose**: North Portland in Motion is a planning effort to identify transportation needs and near-term investments to improve access to community destinations, improve the safety of our streets, and support walking, biking, and transit use in the North Portland peninsula.

Through this project, PBOT hopes to engage people in diverse ways to make sure they reach as many people as possible, quickly deliver projects that will make a difference in people's daily lives and build new relationships in the community and elevate voices. **NoPIM's project goals are:**

- Engage deeply with North Portlanders to understand transportation needs and barriers to meeting daily mobility needs.
- Identify a near-term prioritized investment strategy of projects and programs to improve conditions for walking, biking, and transit.
- Build new relationships with community-based organizations to represent the diverse neighborhoods and communities within North Portland.

NoPIM's project study area focuses on residential and commercial areas of north Portland that are west of Interstate 5 and defined by both natural and human-made edges, including rivers, bluffs, highways, railroads, and industrial areas. However, we should think of these boundaries as blurry and how these barriers can be overcome.

**Equity is a priority of this project.** North Portland, as a whole, is **more racially diverse** and has a **higher share of people living on lower incomes** than the city of Portland as a whole. New Columbia, the largest planned affordable housing area in Oregon, is within the study area.

The project is in the planning stages and there is not a clear investment direction in North Portland. **Through NoPIM, PBOT will document community support and needs for transportation safety improvements in this area.** PBOT will then be able to develop projects that have community support, which will help the projects be more competitive when searching for funding opportunities.

Jessica asked the group if they had any questions about what had been shared so far.

- **What is outside the scope of this project?** *Mike responded that it is hard to say (at this point) what is and is not in scope, but projects that can be built in the next 5-10 years are generally in scope. This includes better bus stops, bike lanes, etc. NoPIM may identify larger, multi-year projects through this process, which can then be pursued outside of NoPIM.*
- Another participant asked that CAG members be sent the links to the other "in motion" plans. *Mike will send those links.*

Mike then shared the **initial takeaways from the project's kick-off survey**, which was open from June 23-August 15 and had over 750 responses. The purpose of the survey was to better understand what community members see as the main barriers to walking, biking, and using transit within the study area. This **feedback will help determine NoPIM's key priorities, which will be used to identify projects within NoPIM.**

The survey was promoted through a variety of avenues, to several stakeholder groups, and at several events (i.e., Pop-Up Tabling Event at New Columbia, Pedalpalooza North Portland Bike Tour with BikeLoud, St Johns – N Lombard Business Canvassing, etc.).

**Takeaways from the kick-off survey included:**

- **Pedestrian network:** There is a lack of safe crossings, gaps in the sidewalk or inaccessible sidewalks and a need for amenities such as street trees, lighting, and wayfinding.
- **Biking network:** Network is incomplete and has gaps and does not serve important community destinations. Interest in adding new connections, upgrading bike lanes to add more protection, and expanding and improving the neighborhood greenway network. There is an opportunity to look at the existing network and upgrade to make it safer, more comfortable, etc.

- **Transit services:** Long travel times and frequency of service were issues people raised. There is a need for increased reliability and faster service, better amenities around bus stops, and a desire for new and modified service to provide more direct service to important destinations.
- **Vehicles and parking:** There was concern about high speed, cut-through traffic through neighborhoods, need for traffic calming measures, desire for better parking management (especially around high density housing), and a general desire to see more traffic enforcement and addressing illegal speeding and reckless driver behavior. People would like to be able to access basic needs without a car.
- **Beyond infrastructure:** Community placemaking, car free streets, pop-ups, desire to have better maintained public areas, lack of new mobility services (bike/share).

PBOT has learned a lot from **18 months of pandemic response and implementing programs that make streets safer**. These include initiatives like Slow Streets, Safer Busy Streets, and Healthy Business / Healthy Blocks Program, and Neighborhood Greenways. Mike would like PBOT and the CAG to **take these initiatives into consideration when identifying projects for NoPIM**

Mike wrapped-up by sharing the project timeline. The project is in the “Listening and Learning” phase, which aims to work with the community to identify needs and understand priorities.

Jessica asked the group if they had any questions or comments about what they heard.

- **Did PBOT look at Cathedral Park Strategy from 2019?** *Mike said that they had and that it is a part of the existing conditions work, which he will share with the CAG. Jessica added that this group will dig more into the survey results in the future.*
- **The comments people made in the survey resonate with CAG members.** There are many intersections and crossing locations that need to be added.
- **Heavy truck and freight usage is a perennial issue in North Portland.** People seemed to be really focused on walking, biking, and transit in the survey.
- A participant was glad that we are keeping COVID in mind during the project and **thinking about how we can reclaim space for people**. *Mike shared that NoPIM will be launched alongside other PBOT projects, so this can be a space to experiment, test ideas, etc.*
- **Cuts to transit service have been made since COVID**, which is a concern. Bus 16 to downtown is less frequent than the bus to Sauvie Island.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Jessica shared the public involvement goals, which mirror the project goals. They are:

- Engage people in non-traditional, non-elite, and community trusted places.
- Seek to establish non-transactional relationships with people and communities.
- Be intentional about how resources are spent.
- Represent North Portlanders.
- Intentionally place new, emerging, and disenfranchised community organizations and voices on a level playing field with more traditional community power structures.
- Value all types of information and data. (For example, stories, experiences, etc.)
- Be clear about decision-making at every step so that people understand what is being considered

Public engagement for **NoPIM will focus on building lasting, trusting relationships with community members and seeking out and building the capacity of BIPOC-led and non-traditional groups**. The hope

is that this project creates a space for PBOT to engage with North Portlanders on an ongoing basis so that engagement continues through implementation of NoPIM.

PBOT will also work to make sure that **project materials represent North Portlanders and represent a broad user base and constituency**. Creating a level playing field for new, emerging, and disenfranchised organizations may look different for different communities. The team will work to create more space and time for these community groups to participate.

**PBOT held a series of racial equity workshops when the project kicked off in the spring.** These workshops helped the team determine how they want to engage the public, understand who lives in North Portland, and help ensure that PBOT will be able to understand the community's needs and wants through the project's public engagement. One of the opportunities identified in these workshops was investing BIPOC-led organizations to build capacity.

A committee member mentioned that the CAG seems very focused on transit and biking, but the majority of North Portlanders drive to get around. They are concerned that CAG and project team decisions may upset North Portlanders.

Mike shared that one way to address this will be to **help community members work through changes in the transportation network by helping them understand the tradeoffs and benefits**. PBOT knows that change is not always easy or happy, but clarity around decision making helps. While it is true that a lot of people drive to work in North Portland, people should be able to walk, bike, or take transit to get to destinations within North Portland.

Another participant mentioned that CAG members should help community members understand that **safe streets benefit drivers as well as pedestrians**.

Jessica briefly shared some demographics about North Portland and mentioned that the NoPIM project area is one of the most diverse project areas in Portland. To serve this area and reach and engage North Portlanders, the team will:

- Host activities and events that are family-friendly.
- Translate all materials into Spanish and make them highly visual. Aim to make graphics to be understandable regardless of language.
- Utilize interpreters as needed at stakeholder specific meetings/events.
- Meet community where they already are.

Jessica outlined **planned and in-progress outreach activities**:

- Community Advisory Group meetings (7)
- Community Walks / Rides
- Neighborhood Tours: Gives people an opportunity to explore opportunities and project ideas.
- Focus Groups + Interviews: PBOT and JLA will start mapping out who we will engage with early on and will share that at the next CAG meeting. Mike mentioned that **PBOT is working on a New Columbia-specific engagement strategy and could use the CAG's help recruiting someone from that community** to be on the CAG. A youth workshop, interviews, and focus group is planned for New Columbia.
- Online (and in-person) Open Houses

- Pop-Up Workshops and Events

At the next meeting, CAG members can talk more about other ideas they have for outreach activities. CAG members can also email Mike with any ideas they have or events that are happening between now and the next CAG meeting.

## COMMITTEE PROCESS AND AGREEMENT PACKET

Jessica reviewed the **role of CAG members and what this committee hopes to achieve.**

- This committee is a place for CAG members to **share their thoughts, input, advice, as well as the viewpoints of the organizations they represent.** PBOT will use the CAG's feedback and recommendations to identify projects within the NoPIM plan. The CAG is an advisory body and therefore does not have a formal decision-making role; however, PBOT will work towards creating a plan that everyone supports.
- CAG members will **promote project outreach activities** to their network of friends, neighbors and colleagues to get them involved.
- There will be a total of **7 CAG meetings** total, held at least quarterly. PBOT will schedule meetings out in advance so that members can plan accordingly.
- CAG feedback will be considered for integration into the **NoPIM Plan, which is anticipated go before City Council in spring 2023.**

Jessica asked if anyone had any questions.

- **Can CAG members volunteer to host pop-up events?** *Yes, community members hosting PBOT would be awesome.*

During this process, **PBOT staff are committed to:**

- Providing CAG members with an agenda and materials in advance of our meetings.
- Advertising CAG meetings to the public and building in space for public comments.
- Preparing meeting summaries at the conclusion of each meeting.
- Providing genuine input opportunities and considering all CAG input with project solutions to get the best plan for North Portland.

Jessica then shared some **ground rules for how CAG members and staff will work together** as a group. These included:

- Listen to each speaker and ensure that only one person speaks at a time
- Remain respectful of all people and groups
- Raise issues honestly, clearly and early in the process
- Focus on the subject at hand and help the group stick to the agenda
- Be willing to learn
- Separate the issue from the person
- Agree to disagree when necessary
- Use "I" statements (everyone speaks from their own experiences)
- Avoid making generalizations (especially about groups of people)
- After an absence, read materials from the missed meeting and contact the project team with questions or for a more in-depth briefing
- Understand that confidentiality is limited at best in this public setting

A CAG member acknowledged that not all communities are represented on the CAG at this time. The group added the following ground rule: **Make a conscience effort to reach out to communities that are represented on the CAG.**

## **WRAP UP, NEXT MEETING + NEXT STEPS**

Mike shared that **in the next meeting, existing conditions will be shared**, and the CAG will have the opportunity to raise more questions and bring up other areas they want PBOT to research.

In the weeks between now and the next meeting, **PBOT is relaunching the project website**. Mike asked that CAG members be sure to join the project mailing list. He will also create a CAG-specific newsletter to keep people up-to-date about the project in the months between meetings. CAG members are free to share this newsletter with their friends and the organizations they represent.

Mike asked that people review the documents shared and reach out with question. Mike will also share the other “in-motion” plans for people to review.

Jessica and Mike wrapped up the meeting and thanked everyone for being a part of the NoPIM project.