

Opportunities in equitable development: Southwest Corridor

Overview

Historically, decisions on major public investments have not fully involved the people impacted by the immediate or downstream effects of these investments.

Without bringing in the perspectives of the full range of impacted stakeholders, the social and economic implications of major transportation, land use and economic development decisions are not adequately explored. This lack of direct dialogue results in missed opportunities to effectively address key concerns, develop sustainable solutions and, ultimately, achieve equitable outcomes.

An opportunity in the Southwest Corridor

Housing and education costs are rising significantly in the greater Portland region, and changes in workforce demands and rising population growth continue to put pressure on the region's existing infrastructure and social services.

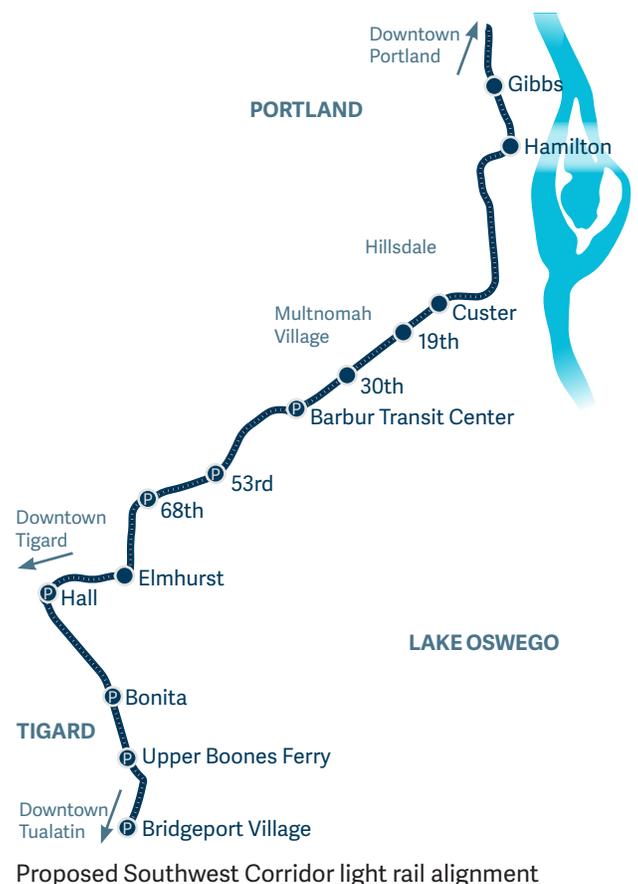
The Southwest Corridor – stretching from downtown Portland to Tigard and Tualatin – is home to more than 10 percent of the region's population and more than 250,000 jobs. One of the fastest growing areas in the state, the Southwest Corridor is experiencing increased traffic congestion, growing demand for transit service and unsafe conditions for people walking and biking.

Thanks to an initial Federal Transit Administration grant, Metro has worked with its partners to explore how a proposed light rail and other investments in the Southwest Corridor can support community development and improve the quality of life for people of all incomes and backgrounds.

Emerging best practices in equitable community development demonstrate that new approaches are needed to engage with and ensure that planning efforts – and the public benefits – extend to people of all incomes, races and ethnicities. The Southwest Corridor Equitable Development Strategy continues to be an unprecedented opportunity to engage community as active partners in developing and implementing a strategy to achieve more equitable outcomes as the light rail extension is built.

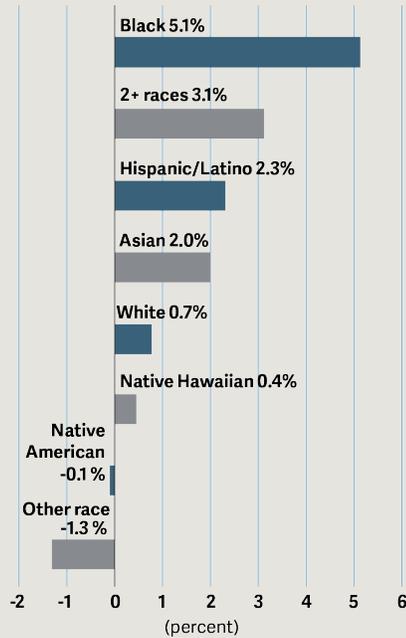
Southwest Corridor Equitable Development Strategy goals

- Expand the breadth and depth of influence among affected people
- Reduce disparities and improve conditions for affected people
- Preserve and expand affordable housing
- Advance economic opportunity and build community capacity for wealth creation
- Address residential and business displacement
- Promote transportation mobility and connectivity
- Develop healthy and safe communities



SW Corridor population growth and diversity

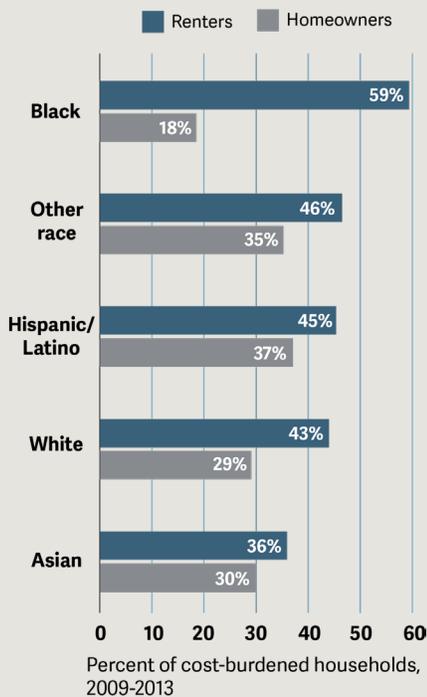
2000, 2011-15 population growth by race



Source: SW Corridor Equitable Housing Strategy, Cities of Portland and Tigard, 2018.

SW Corridor cost-burdened households by race and ethnicity

Households spending more than 30 percent of income on housing, 5-year ACS estimate, 2011-2015



Percent of cost-burdened households, 2009-2013

Source: American Community Survey (ACS)

Implementation

Southwest Equity Coalition

The vision for building on the existing community oversight of the Southwest Equitable Development Strategy, or SWEDS, is for a Southwest Equity Coalition to continue forward through the implementation of the strategy.

The coalition will work to prepare current residents in the Southwest Corridor for the economic forces that will accompany the new light rail line and to ensure that existing residents are able to remain and experience the opportunities that this major public investment will bring. This work is beyond the reach of any single agency or organization – advancing equitable development in the corridor requires a more intentional and collaborative approach.

The coalition leverages existing partnerships and action plans in the SWEDS to stabilize existing residents and businesses while offering opportunities for new residents of all incomes and backgrounds to participate in the community's prosperity.

The 10-year vision

The Southwest Equity Coalition would serve as the collaborative organization for implementation and advocacy in the corridor over the next 10 years.

The goal for the initial two years of local government assistance is to test effective methods and establish a sustainable, community-led, collective impact model with a 10-year, \$10 million target (combining the initial local government support and staffing with new resources from philanthropic investment).

This support and fundraising would allow community-based organizations in the corridor to continue ownership and leadership of SWEDS implementation.

The design of the coalition will be up to partner organizations that can lift up the voice of the community and leverage existing efforts to advance equitable development.

Considerations for the coalition include:

- the future vision of the Southwest Corridor and this initial strategy
- existing and ongoing commitment or involvement by public sector partners
- community-led or collective impact model
- the long-term (10+ years) local and national philanthropic, federal government and philanthropic resource commitment.

Coalition 2-5 year action initiatives and current status


 Early concept Pilot/early work Partially resourced Resourced/underway

	2-5 year initiative	Lead/possible lead organization	Status
Influence	Formation and operationalization of the Southwest Equity Coalition	Unite Oregon and Community Alliance of Tenants	
	Leadership trainings and targeted engagement to empower low-income residents, communities of color and community-based organizations	Unite Oregon	
Equity	Community Preservation Work Group to provide anti-displacement services and provide parity of tenant protections	Community Alliance of Tenants	
	Implementation of the Southwest Equitable Housing Strategy	City of Portland and City of Tigard	
Equitable housing	Implementation of Regional Affordable Housing Bond in the Southwest Corridor	Metro, Washington County and City of Portland	
	Multi-jurisdictional Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate acquisition and redevelopment of public properties and station area planning	TriMet, Metro, cities and counties	
	Extension of SWEDS pilot projects to implement housing design and siting criteria refinements identified through outreach on culturally specific needs	Home Forward and Community Partners for Affordable Housing	
	Identification of sites for directing outside capital to affordable housing in Southwest Corridor through a Real Estate Investment Trust	Meyer Memorial Trust	
Workforce stability	Major employers engagement to train entry level workers from diverse backgrounds for middle skill/wage career advancement pathways among major employers	Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, Worksystems Inc. and OHSU	
	Aligned and expanded workforce development resources and programs between Multnomah and Washington counties	Worksystems Inc.	
	Exploration of community and/or public benefits agreements in the Southwest Corridor	Metro and O'Neill Construction	
Business stability	Inventory and survey of disadvantaged businesses to establish improved representation and activate anti-displacement financial and technical resources	Prosper Portland and Mercy Corps Northwest	
	Improved access to affordable commercial space for disadvantaged businesses	Craft 3 and Prosper Portland	
Community Development	Exploration of Community Investment Trust to leverage successful model in East Portland to capture increased property values for community wealth creation in the Southwest Corridor	Mercy Corps	
	Establishment of community land bank organization to secure property for community assets such as affordable housing and/or job/service centers	Proud Ground	
	Groundwork for a tax increment finance district in the Southwest Corridor that advances equitable development outcomes	Prosper Portland	
	Tigard Triangle equitable tax increment finance district implementation	City of Tigard	
Health	Collaboration with coordinated care organizations to improve healthy food access and address other health equity needs in corridor	Oregon Health Authority	
Mobility	Identification of resources and construction of MAX light rail line along with walking, biking and roadway projects in the Southwest Corridor	Metro and TriMet	

Next steps

The current model seeks to provide resources to a specific set of engaged SWEDS oversight committee partners dedicated to racial equity to develop, staff, and structure the Southwest Equity Coalition as it gets off the ground.

The coalition members are applying for philanthropic funding to support the initial phase of work. This group is exploring how to partner together as a funding or executive committee that can advance the initiative. The goal is for each organization to receive funding to staff and support the Southwest Equity Coalition in these crucial first years. This support will help leverage and enhance existing work to advance leadership training and empowerment.

This funding would also help advance developing a Community Preservation Work Group for anti-displacement services and tenant protections and would pay for staff time to participate in the committee.

The group is seeking additional resources to fund an Equity Coalition Coordinator to be housed at Unite Oregon. This position would be an external co-manager of the Southwest Equity Coalition, representing the overall coalition and managing the project alongside Metro staff.

Additional fundraising from local philanthropies will support specific implementation efforts prioritized by the coalition.



Prospective Southwest Equity Coalition members

These current Southwest Project Oversight Committee members have expressed strong interest in continuing on as part of an equitable development coalition.

- Ascent Funding
- Business for a Better Portland
- City of Portland
- City of Tigard
- City of Tualatin
- Coalition for Communities of Color
- Community Alliance of Tenants
- Community Housing Fund
- Community Partners for Affordable Housing
- Constructing Hope
- Craft3
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco
- Greater Portland Inc.
- Home Forward
- Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
- Metro Regional Solutions Center
- Mercy Corps Northwest
- Meyer Memorial Trust
- Momentum Alliance
- Multnomah County Health Department
- Multnomah Village Business Association
- Muslim Education Trust
- Neighborhood House + Hillsdale Neighborhood
- Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
- O'Neill Construction
- OPAL Environmental Justice
- Oregon Health and Science University
- Portland Community College
- Prosper Portland
- Proud Ground
- Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.
- State of Oregon
- TriMet
- UNITE Oregon
- Venture Portland
- Washington County
- WorkSystems Inc.