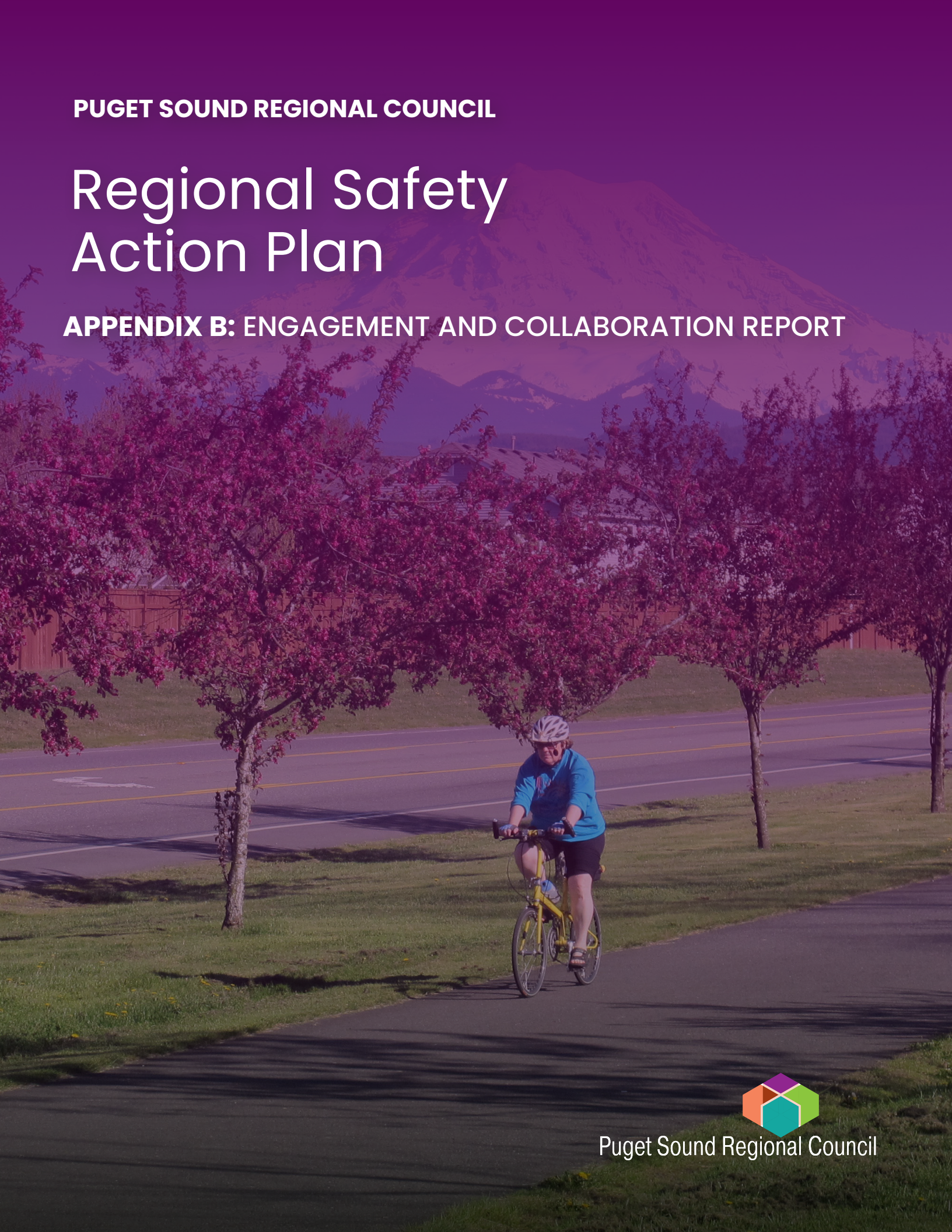


PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL

Regional Safety Action Plan

APPENDIX B: ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION REPORT



Puget Sound Regional Council

Engagement and Collaboration

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DATE MAY 1, 2025

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
PSCi	Proven Safety Countermeasures initiative
RSAP	Regional Safety Action Plan
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council

Introduction

For the regional safety plan to be effective, safety and transportation planning professionals had to understand and include the needs and values of local communities. A key part of this effort was talking directly with community members to hear about their safety concerns. By engaging with a wide range of voices, especially from underrepresented groups, we could develop fairer solutions and meet the needs of everyone. PSRC's approach to community engagement helped create more inclusive safety recommendations that can work for all neighborhoods in the region. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) developed a detailed plan to engage with the community and partners about the PSRC Regional Safety Action Plan (RSAP), which is located in Appendix B.

PSRC outreach and engagement focused on understanding levels of risk tolerance, potential policy shifts, and programmatic interventions such as traffic calming,

infrastructure improvements, shifts in how jurisdictions design and permit roadways and highways, and other initiatives that take motorized vehicles off the road. This expansive engagement model led to robust community and partner conversations and resulted in impactful recommendations and a clear roadmap toward implementation throughout the region.

Guiding Principles for Regional Safety Action Plan Public Engagement

PSRC developed a community engagement strategy through a foundation of equity, race, and social justice principles. Engagement with the community had to be additive, not extractive, and drew on a menu of engagement options that could be tailored or nuanced to the targeted community. It is by designing engagement through a comprehensive lens that communities can be most successful in accessing information and informing policy and programs.

The engagement team committed to:

- Working in partnership. We are proud of the relationships we have cultivated and recognize that our strength is in our collaboration.
- Being accountable to those closest to transportation safety impacts.
- Acknowledging that relationship and capacity building are essential to the long-term success of any project.
- Acknowledging that course correcting is inherent. We strove to plan with the end in mind and acknowledged that emerging issues might require flexibility and adaptability.
- Acknowledging that conflict is an important element of growth. To address and combat social inequities, many of these issues needed to be tackled head-on.

Safe System Approach

PSRC's safety work follows the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe System Approach, which takes a holistic view of improving traffic safety and mitigating risk. It anticipates human mistakes, acknowledges that humans are vulnerable, and promotes redundancies in traffic safety, so if a crash happens, it is less likely to result in serious injury or death. Founded on the principles that death and serious injuries are unacceptable and responsibility is shared, the Safe System Approach considers the design, infrastructure, and systemic issues behind crashes.

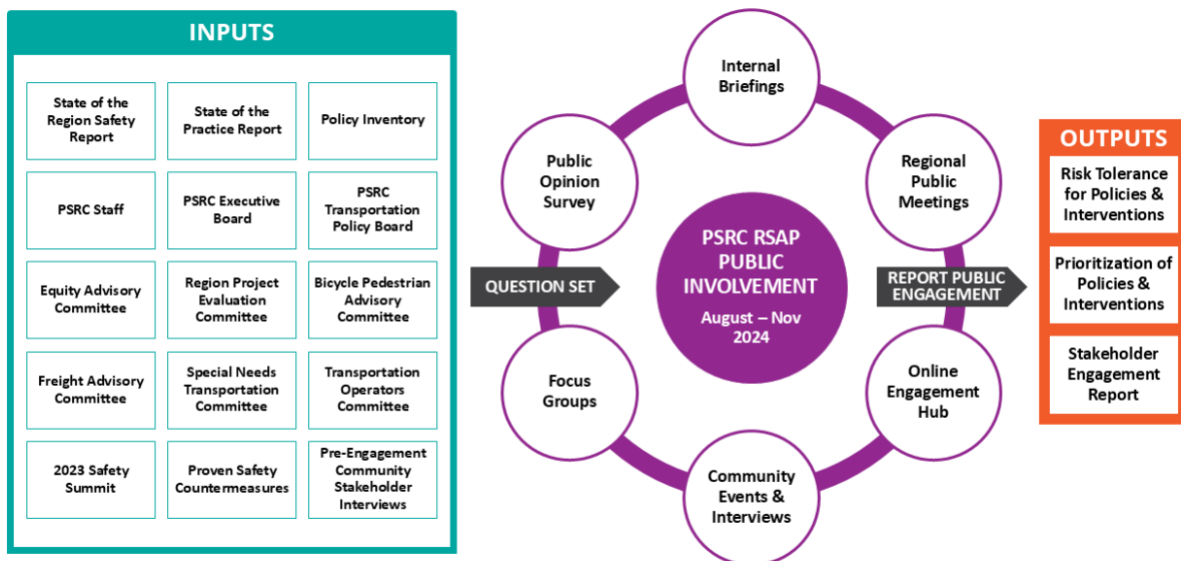
Facilitating Shared Understanding

Proactive engagement prioritized project outcomes by ensuring analytical and research conclusions were reviewed and vetted by partners at multiple points during the project before findings were communicated with stakeholders and final reports were produced.

Public Involvement Plan Framework

The Public Involvement Plan Framework is a tool we used to convey how public engagement was intended to occur before public engagement begins. The Public Involvement Plan Framework laid out how engagement would occur with the public around updated crash data and road safety best practices (Figure 1). The framework was designed so that engagement would result in an understanding of the public’s risk tolerance and prioritization of a variety of road safety policies and programmatic interventions.

Figure 1. Public Involvement Plan Framework



Inputs

Boards and Committees

PSRC boards and committees provided critical inputs to the public engagement process and the creation of the RSAP. These groups helped fine-tune the engagement framework and were key partners in analyzing the engagement results:

- PSRC Executive Board
- PSRC Transportation Policy Board
- Equity Advisory Committee
- Region Project Evaluation Committee
- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Freight Advisory Committee
- Special Needs Transportation Committee
- Transportation Operators Committee

State of the Region Safety Report

The RSAP technical team worked closely with PSRC to organize data around regional priorities, specifically to consider fatalities and serious injuries. The technical team consolidated the system inventory, crash mapping, trend analysis, and equity analysis to develop a State of the Region Report, which provides information and data to local partner agencies in the region to support their traffic safety efforts.

State of the Practice Report

The RSAP technical team developed a state-of-the-practice review that included an overview of safety planning and implementation best practices from across the state and the country, the state of national policies and research, and highlights from peer safety efforts. This review included an analysis of the methods used by other states, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and local jurisdictions (both within and outside the region) to plan for safety, develop targets, and assess the most effective methods to achieve outcomes. The analysis also reviewed how other MPOs considered safety as a criterion in project selection and funding awards. Successes, lessons learned, and opportunities to leverage previous research and efforts were highlighted.

Policy Inventory

The RSAP technical team also created an inventory of safety plans from different modal agencies, cities, counties, and tribes within the Puget Sound region, as well as other state agencies. Information from the Washington Highway Safety Improvement Program and other similar inventories for the state was included. The technical team summarized unique features as well as qualitative descriptions, including how well.

Public Involvement Touchpoints

Throughout the engagement process, an effort was made to connect with all corners of the region across the four counties. In-person and virtual engagement was conducted with communities in our metropolitan cities, rural areas, and everywhere in between.

The Public Involvement Plan Framework used six engagement touchpoints between August and November 2024 (see Figure 3-1) to present up-to-date road safety data and to collect partner feedback on potential road safety interventions.

The engagement team applied a foundational question to address the RSAP engagement objectives, set across all engagement touchpoints. Both the question set and individual plans to execute each activity were refined until the launch of public engagement, with a full breakdown of both outlined in the final RSAP Public Engagement Report.

The following sections summarize the purpose and content of the six engagement touchpoints.

Internal Briefings

PSRC internal boards and committees had the opportunity to review and engage in the public involvement process at two critical moments in June 2024 and September 2024 during presentations given by PSRC staff.

Community Events and Interviews

The engagement team provided a list of regional community events where early, light-touch outreach on the RSAP was completed through PSRC tabling events. Interviews were used to explore emerging themes of public feedback and to target engagement of specific partner types that may have been underrepresented.

Online Engagement Hub

The engagement team built and hosted an online open house space using a customized online engagement platform to provide information about the Regional Safety Action Plan's background, purpose, and components. The open house included an online comment feature to capture public comments.

Public Opinion Survey

Following the public comment period slated for January 2025, the engagement team, in close coordination with PSRC, will develop, execute, and analyze a public opinion survey. The survey tested resident awareness, attitudes, and opinions on traffic safety issues, as well as priorities at county and sub-county levels. The public opinion survey was oversampled in areas where additional feedback was requested, such as in non-English speaking, low-income, and other BIPOC communities.

Regional Public Meetings

The engagement team coordinated and hosted four regional public meetings to hear from the public and solicit public comment on road safety behaviors, enforcement, and interventions. Meeting publication and location selection were carried out with deep attention to equity focus areas.

Focus Groups

The engagement team coordinated seven focus groups to explore findings from the public opinion survey and to hear from different stakeholder groups regarding their perspectives on safety issues and tolerance for prospective interventions.

Public Engagement Findings and Results

2023 Regional Safety Summit

On June 29, 2023, PSRC gathered 140 participants for a Regional Safety Summit to discuss transportation safety issues, challenges, and opportunities facing the region. The event convened elected officials, transportation experts, engaged citizens, agency staff, and others. The purpose of the event was to foster a shared understanding of the state of road safety in the region and to advance conversations on how to best move the region forward to achieving zero fatalities and serious injuries on its roadways.

The summit featured speakers from federal and state agencies to provide perspectives on national- and state-level safety policies and programs. These included presentations on the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy and various roadway safety programs administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Safety Council, Vision Zero Network, and Washington State Department of Transportation. Attendees participated in breakout sessions to provide input on challenges and opportunities for improving safety at the local and regional levels, as well as priorities for development of the RSAP.

Key takeaways from the summit include:

- Expectations, roles, and responsibilities need to be identified across all stakeholder groups involved in improving traffic safety.
- Infrastructure improvements are expensive, and current funding is insufficient to meet needs.
- Coordination and consistency across local, regional, and state jurisdictions are important.
- Context matters: there is no one-size-fits-all solution. A regional toolbox should be developed with a range of solutions that can be scaled and contextualized to fit specific issues and situations.
- Safety means different things to different people, and everyone has their own vision and priorities.
- Planning efforts should acknowledge the array of challenges for improving safety, including legal concerns and the pressures of being a fast-growing region.

These takeaways informed the next steps for regional safety data analysis and wider partner and public engagement. Please see the 2023 Regional Safety Summit [webpage](https://www.psrc.org/our-work/regional-safety-summit) for more detailed information on this event: <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/regional-safety-summit>.

Elected Regional Leadership and Agency Staff Comments

PSRC's boards and committees provided critical inputs on the RSAP and accompanying public engagement process. At various meetings in summer and fall 2024, PSRC staff presented updates on plan development and asked for feedback from members of PSRC boards and committees.

PSRC's Executive Board serves as the governing board for the agency. Membership is made up of elected representatives from PSRC's member governments. The

Executive Board is advised by its two policy boards on key transportation and growth management issues, the Transportation Policy Board and the Growth Management Policy Board. The policy boards are made up of representatives from member jurisdictions, including elected officials, and regional business, labor, civic, and environmental groups.

In addition to the boards, PSRC has multiple committees to engage staff from local governments and agencies and users of the transportation system. PSRC seeks input from these committees on ways to address regional challenges, research and resolve technical issues, and review and recommend major transportation projects for funding. PSRC staff provided regular updates on RSAP development to the committees that cover topic areas most relevant to transportation safety:

- Equity Advisory Committee
- Regional Project Evaluation Committee
- Regional Staff Committee
- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Coordinated Mobility and Accessibility Committee
- Transit Operators Committee

Common themes emerging from board and committee feedback included the need for continued data analysis and sharing, questions about factors that contribute to crashes, the role of enforcement and education, and the importance of community engagement in the development of the plan. PSRC's boards also emphasized the need to incorporate findings and recommendations from the Regional Safety Action Plan into other PSRC plans and policies, the importance of coordinating safety planning across jurisdictions, and questions about how recommendations would be incorporated into project selection and prioritization. Common themes emerging from the feedback provided by board and committee members at these meetings include the following key topics:

- **Data Analysis:** Members had several questions regarding the regional safety data presented, including how rates and trends compare to similar regions and how statistics vary across different land use contexts (e.g., rural vs. urban). Several members asked for clarification on the sources and methodologies used to produce the safety data analysis and strategies presented, particularly related to the consideration of equity focus areas and vulnerable road users. Additionally, members asked how the RSAP data and analysis would be made available to

local jurisdictions for their planning efforts, and whether the analysis incorporated data on local contexts, such as current gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

- **Contributing Factors:** Members sought to better understand how various factors have contributed to worsening safety trends in recent years. Specifically, members questioned why there have been increases in rates of distracted driving and speeding. They also suggested several additional factors that may be contributing to safety trends, such as seasonality, time of day, and vehicle weight and size. Some noted that the regional data presented reflects both regional and national safety trends.
- **Enforcement and Education:** Related to contributing factors, members asked how current driver education and roadway safety enforcement practices have impacted safety trends, such as the lack of compulsory driver training in the state. Some members expressed support for expanded safety enforcement, particularly automated solutions like red-light cameras.
- **Engagement:** Members emphasized the importance of equitable and comprehensive community and partner engagement. Plan outreach should be designed to seek input from all residents in the region, with robust efforts to involve historically underserved communities, such as translation and interpretation services, partnership with community-based organizations, etc. There were also questions on how the safety data presented would be used for outreach efforts.
- **Planning and Policies:** Several questions related to how the RSAP would be incorporated into planning and policy development at the regional and local levels. Members asked about the goals of the RSAP and whether it would include recommendations and/or guidance to inform local planning and policy efforts. Some noted that the RSAP's recommended safety policies may be compromised by other current policies, such as ones related to congestion reduction and setting vehicular speed limits.
- **Coordination:** Members emphasized the importance of coordinating safety planning and implementation across different levels of government. This collaboration would allow PSRC to learn from similar local, state, and federal efforts within and outside the region, such as local safety plans and programs. It would also help ensure coordination and consistency between different jurisdictions and agencies.

- **Implementation:** For implementing planned projects, members noted that safety benefits should be considered for every infrastructure project, rather than only specific transportation safety projects. There were also multiple questions on whether the RSAP would be used to prioritize projects for the distribution of PSRC's federal funding sources. Further, members suggested that PSRC could provide training for local jurisdictions on how to use the RSAP data for prioritizing the implementation of local safety projects.

Community Partner Interviews

To complement internal PSRC voices and technical knowledge, the engagement team conducted a series of interviews with community partners and local jurisdictions representing a subset of the larger stakeholder database. The purpose of these interviews was to preview our engagement approach, test early assumptions of community priorities, and understand organizational traffic safety priorities. The roster for engagement interviews included the following:

- Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety
- Commute Seattle
- Disability Rights Washington
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Cascade Bicycle Club
- Disability Rights Washington
- Asian Counseling and Referral Service
- Chief Seattle Club
- Downtown on the Go
- Snohomish County Transportation Coalition and Everett Station District Alliance
- Duwamish River Community Coalition
- Kitsap Transit Community Advisory Committee
- Kitsap Board of Commissioners
- Bremerton
- Poulsbo
- Port Orchard
- Tacoma
- Lakewood
- Puyallup
- Bonney Lake
- Pierce County

- Seattle
- Bothell
- Auburn
- Bellevue
- Issaquah
- Everett
- Mountlake Terrace
- Lynnwood
- Monroe
- Snohomish County

Community Events and Interviews

The RSAP engagement interviews highlighted various perspectives and priorities from different partners regarding traffic safety in the region. Key issues discussed included the need for multimodal interventions, the impact of traffic on returning to office work, and the importance of improving the quality of surface streets. There was a significant focus on the intersection of freight and pedestrian/bicycle safety, with suggestions for safer options between neighborhoods and employment centers. Distracted driving enforcement, car-centered traffic safety culture, and the effectiveness of traffic cameras and driver education were also major concerns.

There was a consensus from community members that lower volumes of traffic do not necessarily result in fewer collisions, and that there has been an increase in drug and alcohol use among drivers. The need for a complete and safe network for biking and walking was highlighted, along with the potential benefits of car technology, such as speed control and emission locks. Automated enforcement and equitable implementation of safety measures were seen as crucial, especially in high-crash, low-income neighborhoods.

Interviewees underscored the importance of road design and the Safe System Approach, and the need for better data collection, targeted enforcement, and public education campaigns, with a particular emphasis on reducing speed limits and improving infrastructure to create safer urban and rural environments.

Key issues discussed included the need for multimodal interventions, the importance of improving the quality of surface streets, and the intersection of freight and pedestrian/bicycle safety. Distracted driving enforcement, car-centered traffic safety culture, and the effectiveness of traffic cameras and driver education were

also major concerns. Community members identified distracted driving, unsafe speeds, and the need for complete and safe networks for biking and walking as key concerns.

Online Engagement Hub

In the fall of 2024, PSRC launched an online engagement hub to continue conveying project information, ongoing engagement efforts, and gathering community feedback. The online engagement hub served as a central hub for project updates and the distribution of other information, such as project flyers in 7 different languages. As of January 2025, the hub had 3700 visits and is scheduled to close on June 30, 2025.

An online questionnaire, resulting in 1,278 responses, was included as part of the online engagement hub. This questionnaire asked respondents to share information on how traffic safety was impacting their community, if the traffic data presented was indicative of their experiences, while also collecting important demographic data. Below are the questions, along with the summarized findings.

Approximately 50 percent of respondents believed the crash data analysis in the State of the System Report matched what they see in their communities. The top three safety concerns selected by respondents were distracted driving, speeding, and running red lights at stop signs. Approximately 80 percent of respondents selected distracted driving as a top concern.

The hub questionnaire opened on September 4, 2025, and closed on October 15, 2025.

Online Engagement Questionnaire

Traffic Safety

Does the information we've shared with you match with what you see in your community?

- Approximately 50 percent of respondents believe the information shared matches what they see in their community. Only approximately 5 percent of respondents do not believe the information shared matches what they see in their community.
- There are a variety of factors that may contribute to a crash that results in a serious injury or death, depending on location, roadway conditions, and the people involved. What are the factors that concern you the most? (pick top three)

- The top three factors selected by respondents were distracted driving, speeding, and running red lights at stop signs. Approximately 80 percent of respondents selected distracted driving as a top factor of concern.

Which do you feel would be most effective in your community? (Select all that apply)

- The top three approaches selected by respondents were bicycle lanes, sidewalks and pathways, and safe crossings for pedestrians.

Are there any that you feel would not be effective? (Select all that apply)

- The top three strategies selected by respondents as not effective were setting speed limits to reduce risk, using speed safety cameras, and roundabouts.

Demographics

What is your racial/ethnic heritage? (Select all that apply)

- Respondents identified with a range of racial and ethnic heritages. The majority of respondents identify as White or European, followed by Asian, multiracial, and Black, African American, or African. A portion of respondents chose not to respond.

What is your annual household income?

- Respondents reported a range of household incomes. Many respondents reported a household income of more than \$150,000, followed by \$100,001 to \$150,000, and \$50,001 to \$100,000. A portion of respondents chose not to disclose their incomes.

What is your gender identity?

- The majority of respondents identified as male, followed by female, with approximately 3 percent of respondents identifying as gender non-binary, non-conforming, or another identity.

Please select your age range

- The largest group of respondents is between the ages of 35 and 44, followed by those aged from 25 to 34 and 55 to 64.

What is the primary language you speak at home?

- Most respondents reported speaking English at home. Approximately 5 percent of respondents declined to answer or reported speaking a language other than English at home.

Regional Public Meetings

PSRC, in collaboration with Uncommon Bridges, hosted four regional public meetings across King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties, inviting community members to discuss traffic safety trends and solutions over a shared meal. Participants identified speeding and driver behaviors—such as distraction, aggression, and impairment—as primary safety concerns, alongside inadequate infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists.

While the regional safety report's key findings resonated with attendees, they emphasized the need for county-specific data to inform decisions. Community members advocated for data-based, holistic strategies that ensure safe streets for all users, including drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, freight drivers, and public transit users, with tailored solutions for specific locations. The planning and implementation of strategies should be intentional, coordinated, and consistent, ensuring connectivity. They also stressed the importance of education and public awareness campaigns to address driver behavior, because infrastructure improvements alone may not suffice.

Key recommendations included implementing traffic-calming measures, ensuring enforcement, improving public transit access, and developing dedicated bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, all guided by local data to provide comprehensive and effective transportation planning that considers access to essential services.

Participants identified speeding and driver behaviors—such as distraction, aggression, and impairment—as primary safety concerns, alongside inadequate infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. While the regional safety report's key findings resonated with attendees, they emphasized the need for county-specific data to inform decisions. Community members advocated for data-based, holistic strategies that ensure safe streets for all users, including drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, freight drivers, and public transit users, with tailored solutions for specific locations.

Focus Groups

Seven focus groups with agencies, Tribal Nations, and impacted communities were hosted in November 2024. They are listed below:

1. Kitsap County - Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 6 p.m.
2. Tribal Community - Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at 1 p.m.

3. Snohomish County – Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 6 p.m.
4. Pierce County – Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 6 p.m.
5. King County – Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 4:30 p.m.
6. Law Enforcement and First Responder – Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 6.30 p.m.
7. Rural Community – Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 5 p.m.

While there were differences between responses around the region, five topics emerged as consistent areas of concern for central Puget Sound residents, regardless of whether they were in more urbanized or rural areas. These included speeding, traffic law enforcement, disregard of social norms and expectations around obeying traffic laws, poor street maintenance and design, and lack of pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure. However, the top two concerns identified by community focus group participants around the region are important and should be considered when addressing safety (Table 1).

Table 1. Community Focus Group Top Two Safety Concerns by County and Rural Areas

King	Kitsap	Pierce	Snohomish	Rural
Speed (50%)	Street design, development, and maintenance (100%)	Speed (54%)	Pedestrian and Cyclist infrastructure (67%)	Inattentive drivers (33%)
Disregard for traffic laws (50%)	Speed (33%) Pedestrian and Cyclist Infrastructure (33%)	Pedestrian safety (31%)	Speed (56%)	Street design and maintenance (22%)

Top concerns for law enforcement and first responders were the increasing number of collisions, clogged streets making it difficult for first responders to get to emergencies, and education for new drivers on car and traffic safety.

Tribal government leaders shared concerns around inconsistent or unbuilt road shoulders that put pedestrians and cyclists at risk, more driver education on roadway safety, and adjusting to new safety infrastructure, such as roundabouts.

Public Opinion Survey

A regional public opinion survey was conducted in March of 2025 to better understand public perspectives on transportation and safety. It included questions about:

- How people travel (modes of transportation)
- What they value most in the transportation system
- How safe they feel using the transportation system
- Perceived transportation safety concerns in their communities
- Opinions on how transportation funding is allocated
- Modes of transportation used, transportation priorities, perceptions of safety by mode relative to mode of transit, perceptions of safety problems, and opinions on how financial resources are spent on transportation.

EMC Research administered the survey using a mixed-mode approach, online and by telephone, in both English and Spanish. The survey reached 2,000 total respondents across four counties: King (n=750), Snohomish (n=450), Pierce (n=500), and Kitsap (n=300). The overall margin of error was $\pm 2.8\%$.

Key Takeaways

- Traffic congestion, public transit, and road maintenance are dominant concerns in the region when it comes to transportation.
- While not as top-of-mind, residents are concerned about road safety. Improving safety for road users is a priority for residents across the region, especially for drivers, but also for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Residents tend to see other drivers' behaviors as a bigger contributor to safety problems than a lack of safety infrastructure.
- That said, most support changes to the built environment when connected to how those changes can alter driver behaviors and build safer driving into the system.

Transportation priorities and other observations

- Traffic and public transportation issues top the list of transportation problems in Puget Sound, with over a quarter of residents mentioning each.

- Traffic is a top-of-mind concern across counties, while public transportation is more of a concern in King County. Ferry-related issues are mentioned by about one-in-five Kitsap residents.
- About 1-in-5 residents say road conditions/maintenance are their biggest local road safety concern. A third reference to other drivers' behavior.
- The top 5 local road safety concerns are consistent across counties, including road conditions, bad and reckless driving, speed and street racing, traffic, and infrastructure.
- Over a third of residents mention other drivers' behavior as their biggest concern when it comes to regional road safety. Around one in six mentions road conditions.
- Regional concerns are similar across counties. Speeding and street racing are more of a concern to Kitsap and Pierce residents.

Regional Safety Action Plan Draft Public Comment

Upon the release of the Regional Safety Action Plan Draft, the engagement team collected comments on the document via the online engagement hub, via email, and by letter. Overall, there were a total of 203 comments from 67 unique respondents. Key topics of discussion in the public comments related to the need for adequate engineering for safer transportation infrastructure, increasing driver awareness through education and law enforcement, and using limited resources to maximize the implementation of traffic crash countermeasures.