



Better Streets for People & Businesses: Highway 99

With **Dylan McCarthy**



* and also River Road, Franklin Boulevard & Main Street in Springfield

Agenda for today

1. Background and process
2. Main themes
3. Frequent responses
4. Discussion
5. Next Steps



Who is BEST?

- 501(c)3 nonprofit
- Have a grant from ODOT to:
 - Listen to the community
 - Share that back
 - Emphasis on “historically underserved groups”



The Context: Why we do this work

LOCAL

Highway 99 sees another pedestrian crash in Eugene as safety concerns grow



Haleigh Kochanski

Eugene Register-Guard

Updated March 4, 2025, 3:40 p.m. PT

Northbound Highway 99 closed at Prairie Road due to fatal vehicle versus pedestrian crash

By: Ryan Borham **Nov 1, 2024** Updated **Nov 1, 2024**

Bicyclist's death another grim reminder of Highway 99 danger



BY BEN BOTKIN

January 9, 2026



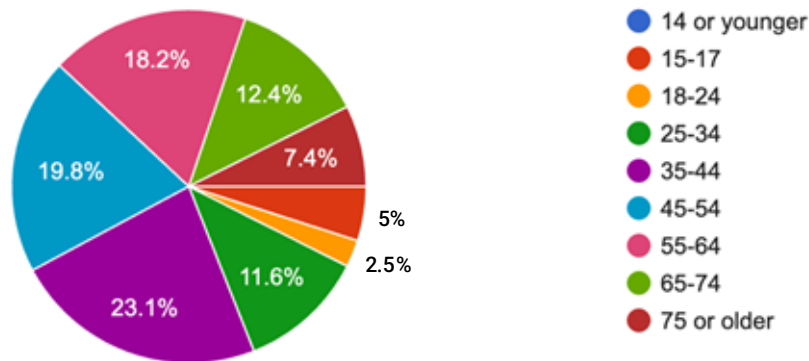
How we listened

- Survey
- Interviews
- Town Hall
- Walking Conversations
- Lane Youth Transportation
Advisory Committee



Who we listened to - Survey Respondents

- 55% live in Bethel
 - 8% Trainsong/Industrial Corridor
- 9% have disability
- Gap: 2% Hispanic or Latino v 15% in census



Passage vs. Place

- Tension of identity between:
 - Throughway for car traffic and industrial vehicles
 - Street with businesses, social services, and nearby residential neighborhoods with homes and schools



Passage: Car

- **95%** of people identified driving or being driven on Highway 99
- Ratings of quality were highest for driving
 - Only **41%** approval rating for driving
 - Most frequent response was Fair (**33%**)

“It seems like [Highway] 99 is doing what it was designed to do. It's got a high throughput of cars.”

Eugene Resident

Passage: All other modes

- Fewer people are using bus (**19%**), bike (**34%**), and walking (**55%**) to get around
- Quality ratings for:
 - Bus (**46%** negative)
 - Bike (**88%** negative)
 - Walking (**87%** negative)
 - Mobility assistive devices (**91%** negative)

“[Highway] 99 is not family friendly at all and that's part of the main issue with the area. It's not safe to bike or walk with kids.”

Junction City Commuter

Passage

“I currently drive most places, but would love to walk or bike more. [The m]ain issue is walking takes forever and biking doesn't have fully safe infrastructure in the area.”

4J Student



Place

- **95%** viewed crashes as a major or minor problem
- **70%** described noise as a major or minor problem
- **81%** viewed unattractiveness as a major or minor problem
- These problems affect feelings of comfort and safety

“There is very little on 99 that is pleasant to look at. It does not feel welcoming. The number of pedestrian and bike-involved accidents/fatalities is very concerning.”

Trainsong Resident and Social Service Professional

Place



“Because it is a place where many unhoused walk/bike, the speed limit seems much too fast. The intersections are SO large and even with a crosswalk, it is still frightening to cross them, particularly in the dark. If it would be more walkable, I think more restaurants and stores would set up business, which would help create more of a neighborhood feel than [the] current feel of it.”

Bethel Resident and Social Service Professional

Unhoused Population

- In survey responses and interviews, the unhoused population was the subject of many comments we received

“This travel route was- and is- intended to be a highway (hence the name) with the primary purpose of allowing fast, efficient travel. This route is not intended to be a low speed residential area. Not to victim blame, but current conflicts are largely the result of impaired pedestrians and cyclists generally from the unhoused community.”

Bethel Resident

Unhoused Population

- In survey responses and interviews, the unhoused population was the subject of many comments we received

“I am worried about how many people have been harmed/killed on Highway 99 the last several years. I don't know how safety could be increased in this regard, and I know some of the issue is folks who need mental help stepping/walking out into busy traffic (especially at dawn/dusk/night). It's hard.”

Employee of Bethel School District

Final Thought

“I think it's important that everyone's opinion does get heard. It's okay for people to be wrong too. It's okay for me to have an idea or be wrong about something... And then we can come together and come up with a solution.”

Junction City Resident and Social
Service Professional



Opportunity for feedback

Are there any major themes that I missed? Or themes you disagreed with?

What issue discussed today is the highest priority?

Anything else you would like to share?

Our next steps:

1. Expect a FAQ from us soon
2. Formal report end of summer
3. City is starting their work...

Your next steps:

1. Consider donating or following our newsletter
 - a. [Best-oregon.org](https://best-oregon.org)
2. Keep showing up for your community

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