

Key focus areas for the next RTP

2035

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
www.oregonmetro.gov/rtp

RTP FACT SHEETS: ONE IN A SERIES

The 2035 Regional Transportation Plan sets the course for using innovation and creativity to build a sustainable transportation system. It calls for making transportation investments that serve downtowns, main streets, job centers and other areas of urban activity. It sets out the importance of offering a range of affordable transportation options for everyone. It suggests that transportation investments should boost our economy, increase access and opportunity for underserved communities and clean our air. And it calls for on-going monitoring to ensure that as time goes on our investments are effectively coordinated across communities to make the most of past investments and keep this region a great place.



Metro, the regional government, crosses city limits and county lines to build a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Representing a diverse population of 1.5 million people in 25 cities and three counties, Metro's directly elected council gives voters a voice in decisions about how the region grows and communities prosper.

New directions in transportation planning

Transportation planning is an evolving field. Several issues have emerged for which regional direction has not been resolved, but that will impact future regional and local plans. The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide a status update and brief description of regional efforts around several of these issues, including: active transportation, climate change, mobility policies, equity and safety.

Active transportation

Active transportation provides options for traveling in the region. It is the non-motorized element of the transportation system and integrates bicycle and pedestrian networks with connections to public transit. A national emphasis on active transportation has emerged in recent years, acknowledging its health, environmental and economic benefits.

Regional Active Transportation Action Plan

Metro and local partners have identified the need for a strategy and framework for identifying priorities and funding for active transportation. A regional active transportation action plan will identify the principal regional active transportation network, increasing and enhancing opportunities for walking, bicycling and using public transit, connecting people to school, work, essential services and other destinations. As part of identifying the principal regional network, the action plan will further develop the

bicycle parkway concept (described in the Planning for Bicycles fact sheet), and will identify these routes and prioritize their development. The plan will also update pedestrian policies including developing an equivalent high-level design concept for the pedestrian system.

Climate change

Climate Smart Communities Scenarios project

Regional and local leaders in the Portland region agree that Oregon must continue to provide leadership in addressing climate change. The Climate Smart Communities Scenarios project supports this goal by supplementing state actions with a collaborative regional effort that will advance the aspirations of communities throughout the region and implementation of the 2040 Growth Concept.

Directed by House Bill 2001, the scenarios project is organized into three phases. Phase 1 (2011) consists of testing strategies and identifying policy options for further evaluation in Phase 2. Phase 2 (2012) will include developing and evaluating alternative land use and transportation scenarios for achieving state-mandated greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. Phase 3 (2013 and 2014), will entail selection of a preferred alternative and implementation of recommended policies at the regional level.

HB 2001 requires cities and counties in the region to update future local land use and transportation plans to be consistent with the preferred alternative. More information about this project can be found online at www.oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios

Mobility policies

The regional transportation plan (RTP) establishes a new outcomes-based framework (described in the Performance Measurement fact sheet of this series), and includes policies, tools and actions to guide future planning and investment decisions. While the RTP defines a more comprehensive framework of measures to gauge success and guide investments, more work is needed.

Existing volume-to-capacity focused mobility standards have limited applicability and flexibility under the new outcomes-based RTP and do not address many regional goals and objectives besides mobility. To successfully implement this new approach, the region needs new tools to evaluate and diagnose the transportation system. Several actions are underway to bolster the interim regional mobility policy (RTP Table 2.4) to better align with RTP outcomes:

Regional mobility efforts

Regional requirements within Metro's Transportation Functional Plan and Urban Growth Management Functional Plan allow local governments to:

- identify alternative mobility standards through TSP updates or corridor refinement planning such as the Southwest Corridor plan
- use a lower mobility standard when considering amendments to comprehensive plans or land use regulations if they've adopted regulations allowing a mix of uses and a boundary for their center, corridor, station community, or main street.

State mobility efforts

The Oregon Transportation Commission and the Land Conservation and Development Commission established a joint subcommittee in early 2011 to respond to concerns from local governments that existing rules and plans are having unintended consequences, specifically the interaction of section 0060 of the state Transportation Planning Rule with the mobility standards in the Oregon Highway Plan.

Both commissions are expected to adopt changes by the end of 2011 that streamline TPR 0060 and OHP mobility standards. Additionally, ODOT Region 1 is conducting a research project to identify potential alternative or supplemental measures for consideration by Metro and local jurisdictions as they develop transportation system plans and corridor plans.

Equity and environmental justice

Equity is one of the six desired outcomes for the region and a goal of the RTP. The RTP aspires to create a region where the benefits and adverse impacts of transportation plans, programs and investment decisions are equitably distributed among population demographics and geography.

Metro has recognized the need to improve how it addresses equity and federal Environmental Justice requirements. During a recent Regional Flexible Fund Allocation process, the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and the Metro Council placed greater emphasis on prioritizing the needs of environmental justice and underserved communities.

Regional environmental justice & underserved workgroup

To better incorporate environmental justice into its funding allocation process, Metro staff convened a work group to help understand the needs of these communities, and advise Metro on ways to approach mapping where populations live in the region. The result was a new methodology for mapping environmental justice populations, which helped influence local project decisions and will help inform future regional planning efforts.

Safety

Regional safety workgroup

As part of U.S. Department of Transportation's quadrennial certification review, Metro received recommendations to better incorporate safety in its long-range planning. In response, Metro has convened a work group of local jurisdictions and agencies to develop a regional safety action plan and establish Metro's role in safety planning. The work group shares innovations, best practices and case studies in transportation study. Highlights include:

- collecting and aggregating ODOT safety data specific to the Portland region
- developing safety performance measures
- drafting a State of Safety in the Region report.