
CHAPTER 2

GOALS & POLICIES

FAST Act Sets National Goals

Metropolitan planning areas are required to carry out a *continuing, cooperative* and *comprehensive* transportation planning process that provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies and services to address national transportation goals:

(1) Improve safety by achieving a significant reduction in fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads;

(2) Improve infrastructure conditions to achieve a state of good repair;

(3) Reduce congestion;

(4) Improve system reliability by increasing efficiency;

(5) Improve freight movement and economic vitality by improving the national freight network, strengthening the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and supporting regional economic development;

(6) Improve environmental sustainability by enhancing transportation system performance while protecting and enhancing the natural environment; and

(7) Reduce project delays to reduce costs and promote job growth.

A key feature of the FAST Act is the continuation of a performance- and outcome-based program. The expectation is for resources to be invested in projects that make progress toward achieving the national goals.

INTRODUCTION

The goals chapter of the Regional Transportation Plan provides the policy framework that guides development of the plan itself as well as subsequent decisions about system management, and project selection and implementation. The goals also provide a measuring stick to judge how well the plan reflects the values expressed by the community.

2.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Rogue Valley metropolitan planning functions within a framework of federal and state laws. The region is required to have a plan that is consistent with the 2015 transportation act, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). Through its goals and projects this update also maintains consistency with the previous RTP. On the state side, under Oregon land use law and specifically the Transportation Planning Rule, metropolitan planning is required to aim for specific outcomes relating to conservation and efficiency.

Federal FAST Act planning factors are listed in the box to the left. State Transportation Planning Rule requirements include:

- Provide and encourage a safe, convenient and economic transportation system;
- Encourage and support travel choice among a variety of mode options;
- Ensure that transportation planning is done in coordination with land use planning.

Additionally, the goals and policies are intended to support the state's transportation priorities as identified in the *Oregon Transportation Plan*, the state's long-range transportation policy document. "The goal: A safe, efficient and

sustainable transportation system that enhances Oregon's quality of life and economic vitality."

PURPOSE

The RTP goals and policies serve as a policy foundation not only for this plan, but other planning and project development carried out in the RVMPO planning area. They've been developed by the RVMPO's standing committees (Policy, Technical Advisory Committee and Public Advisory Council) to be consistent with local plans, especially state-required Transportation System Plans. Linkage to local planning is critical because of the significant, long-term impacts transportation decisions have on the region and the people who live and work here. Decisions about future transportation facilities will impact other development decisions.

ORGANIZATION

This policy statement contains four elements: goals, policies, potential actions and performance measures. The intent is to go beyond describing a desired outcome in general terms and to provide examples of specific consequences to the potential actions that may result from a particular policy position. This RTP, following the direction of MAP-21, and reinforced by the FAST Act, introduces performance measures to provide a gauge by which to assess how well decisions further regional goals.

Each element in detail:

Goals: These are broad statements about the region's desire for its future. Although a goal may not appear attainable, it is nonetheless useful as a description of an outcome the region is seeking to achieve.

Policies: These are statements describing some of the ways the region will seek to achieve its goals. Because transportation planning doesn't exist in isolation – land use decisions, for example, also are critical but not encompassed by this plan – policies listed here are not intended to represent the only actions that may be taken to achieve a goal.

Potential Actions: These are examples of the kinds of decisions, projects and other outcomes that can be expected by pursuing a particular policy line. These descriptions are intended to provide plan users with additional guidance as to the kinds of outcomes the region desires.

Performance Indicators: FAST Act continues a performance-based program to identify the most efficient investment of federal transportation funds. The act puts emphasis on national transportation goals, and increasing accountability and transparency. The intent is to improve decision making through performance-based planning and programming. Under the FAST Act, USDOT will establish performance measures, and states and MPOs will follow with targets to support the measures. The performance indicators in this plan continue the performance-based process for RVMPO that began with the prior transportation authorization bill, MAP-21.

GOALS, POLICIES & POTENTIAL ACTIONS

The goals and policies for the plan are listed below, along with the potential actions. The number of policies varies among the goals. Likewise the number of potential actions also varies. And not every policy has a corresponding performance indicator. The number of policies, actions or indicators (or, in some cases the absence of potential actions and indicators) is not a reflection of the importance or significance of a particular goal.

GOAL 1

Design, develop, and support a balanced multi-modal transportation system which will address existing and future needs.

POLICIES

1-1: Improve the accessibility, connectivity, efficiency and viability of the transportation system for all modes and users.

1-2: Utilize design standards, landscaping and other amenities as transportation facilities are developed in the urban areas to encourage transit, pedestrian and bicycle users.

1-3: Develop a user-friendly and comprehensive multi-modal transportation system by using the MPO structure as a forum.

1-4: Support multi-modal and public transportation options by encouraging land use design standards and funding opportunities.

1-5: Establish Long-Term Potential (LTP) corridor areas through the RVMPO where planning for future road connections beyond the planning horizon is apparent.

POTENTIAL ACTION

❖ Design projects with space reserved for current and future multi-modal transportation infrastructure connections.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- ✓ Increase the proportion of regional corridors serving no less than three modes.
- ✓ Continuing developed use of "streetscapes," such as benches, planters, and traffic calming.
- ✓ Growth in transit, pedestrian and bicycle use.
- ✓ Improved quality and safety of multi-use paths
- ✓ Improved conditions for the safety and mobility of freight routes.

GOAL 2

Develop, optimize, and coordinate current procedures for the Safety and Security of the Transportation System.

POLICIES

2-1: Coordinate with Federal, State and local agencies to promote traffic safety education and awareness.

2-2: Catalogue and rank crash-prone areas, placing a higher priority on transportation investments correcting safety deficiencies for all modes of transportation.

2-3: Coordinate with incident-response agencies to design and operate a transportation system supporting timely and safe incident response.

2-4: Reduce vulnerability to the public, goods movement, and critical transportation infrastructure to crime, incidents and natural hazards.

2-5: Plan, manage and support development of alternate transportation routes in response to regional incident needs.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

❖ Work together with local, state, and regional providers to maintain coordinated regional emergency and incident response plans.

❖ Examine all modes of transportation for security deficiencies. Recommendations for improvements are developed and implemented.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- ✓ Measured reduction in the number and severity of injury and fatal crashes.
- ✓ Measured reduction in the number of non-injury and property damage crashes.
- ✓ Increase in safety education.
- ✓ Incorporate crash history/safety concerns in project evaluation.

GOAL 3

Identify and utilize transportation investments to foster compact, livable, and unique communities.

POLICIES

3-1: Recognize and encourage the connection between transportation efficiency and varying land use types, mixes, and densities.

3-2: Plan and support street and pathway connectivity, including off-road corridors for non-motorized users.

3-3: Identify, plan and support environmentally sensitive and healthy regional transportation options.

3-4: Identify and support funding regional transportation projects which will promote and benefit healthier communities

3-5: Identify and study potential environmental impacts and mitigation to maintain and restore affected environmental functions in consultation with appropriate, Federal, State, and local agencies.

3-6: Identify and consider incorporating into design and planning, areas that represent features of historical value and community identity.

3.7: Identify and support regional strategies which will encourage more efficient use of existing parking facilities.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- ❖ Support local transit oriented development plans and similar measures that improve transportation system efficiency.
- ❖ Develop street networks by connecting new and existing neighborhoods
- ❖ Identify and engage special populations, especially low-income and minority communities, in the planning process.
- ❖ Consult with federal state and local land use management, natural resources, wildlife, environmental protection, conservation and historic protection agencies during the transportation project planning process. Emphasize mitigation actions.
- ❖ Support development of local parking management plans.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- ✓ Measure changes in mixed-use and downtown development.
- ✓ Measure impacts on open space and identified resource areas (Environmental Considerations chapter of the RTP) using most up-to-date data, including Rogue Valley Environmental Database.
- ✓ Measure expansion of off-network paths and increase in population and employment with access to paths.
- ✓ Improve air quality through projects that reduce carbon monoxide, particulates (PM10) and greenhouse gases.
- ✓ Improve lighting standards in urban areas, where it is appropriate, to reduce light pollution and to be consistent with roadway classifications.

GOAL 4

Develop a plan that can be funded and reflects responsible stewardship of public funds.

POLICIES

4-1: Develop innovative and sound funding policies to implement the RTP. Ensure that costs of planned improvements are consistent with policies.

4-2: Prioritize investments to preserve the existing transportation system.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- ❖ Encourage public-private partnerships and other innovative approaches to maximize resources.
- ❖ Support funding mechanisms such as System Development Charges to collect from new developments a proportionate share of facility improvement costs.

- ❖ Support, fund, and implement maintenance programs for transportation facilities.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- ✓ Track funding obligations, funding availability.
- ✓ Review and update project funding criteria using quantitative methodologies to the extent practicable.
- ✓ Maintain RTP project selection criteria to be consistent with state and federal funding eligibility.

GOAL 5

Identify, plan and develop transportation infrastructure which maximizes the efficient use for all users and modes.

POLICIES

- 5-1: Analyze the regional transportation system effectiveness by adding or removing traffic signals and signal networks, including interstate access ramp signals.
- 5-2: Consider and support measures to optimize intersection and interchange design.
- 5-3: Support an access management strategy to improve traffic flow.
- 5-4: Identify, develop and effectively integrate technology with transportation infrastructure consistent with the RVMPO Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) program.
- 5-5: Encourage and consider the use of alternative design standards to minimize the costs and impacts to existing communities.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- ❖ Coordinate and link signals to a master control system to optimize system efficiency.
- ❖ Utilize interstate ramp meters to control the amount of traffic entering the freeway to maintain acceptable traffic volumes on the interstate.
- ❖ Increase intersection capacity through geometric improvements and elimination of turn movements.
- ❖ Implement Transit Signal Prioritization on primary transit corridors, where appropriate.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- ✓ Measure improvements, upgrades to existing system.
- ✓ Measure implementation of ITS projects.
- ✓ Track projects that use innovative, emerging technologies.
- ✓ Track on-time performance for RVTD.

GOAL 6

Identify, develop and support diverse strategies to lessen dependence upon single-occupant vehicles.

POLICIES

- 6-1: Support Transportation Demand Management strategies.
- 6-2: Identify, develop and facilitate alternative parking strategies encouraging walking, car and bicycle sharing, bicycling, car and van-pooling, and transit.
- 6-3: Identify, plan and enhance bicycle, pedestrian, and transit systems in the region.
- 6-4: Strive to improve transit services in the region.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- ❖ Implement Transit Signal Prioritization on primary transit corridors, where appropriate Encourage infill development by supporting reduced parking requirements where appropriate.
- ❖ Support design standards with parking at side or rear of building so pedestrians can access entrances.
- ❖ Support park-and-ride standards to place facilities near transit routes.
- ❖ Promote regionally connected network of off-street bicycle/pedestrian facilities with minimal roadway crossings (Bear Creek Greenway).
- ❖ Plan for, build and maintain shared roadways for use by all modes.
- ❖ Use land use codes to promote bicycle and pedestrian travel by requiring amenities such as bike racks, crosswalks, showers and lockers at worksites and retail centers.
- ❖ Improve pedestrian access to transit.
- ❖ Support other forms of public and private transportation such as bus rapid transit, light rail, trolleys, and transit feeder and connector services as the region's population reaches higher thresholds.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- ✓ Track transit service hours and ridership.
- ✓ Track funding for bicycle, pedestrian and transit projects.
- ✓ Measure population living within ¼-miles of transit service.
- ✓ Implement a TDM self-evaluations and reporting process for local jurisdictions.
- ✓ Track the number of people who are participating in a TDM program

GOAL 7

Develop, coordinate, and administer an open and balanced process for planning and developing the regional transportation system.

POLICIES

7-1: Coordinate and support existing and future plans for the regional transportation system in conjunction with land use and development.

7-2: Obtain and organize public input in the regional transportation planning process with innovative outreach methods consistent with the RVMPO Public Participation Plan.

7-3: Coordinate local, state, and regional transportation planning through the RVMPO.

7-4: Formulate decisions which shall be consistent with Federal and State regulations, including the Oregon Highway Plan, the Transportation Planning Rule, and the Clean Air Act.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- ❖ Maintain a website with updated information about all regional planning.
- ❖ Support the RVMPO's Technical Advisory Committee, Public Advisory Council, and the Policy Committee for deliberation of regional transportation planning issues.
- ❖ Participate in local and regional and national organizations to support RVMPO actions.
- ❖ Involve transportation providers in the planning process.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- ✓ Record public participation, comments, attendance at meetings.
- ✓ Demonstrate linkage of public comments to decisions and plan content.

GOAL 8

Evaluate and support regional transportation investments to foster economic opportunities locally and regionally.

POLICIES

8-1: Accommodate travel demand to create a regional transportation system supporting a robust local economy.

8-2: Evaluate and analyze effects on freight mobility when prioritizing projects, regionally and locally.

8-3: Support transportation projects which will reduce and remove identified barriers to safe, reliable, and efficient freight movement including adequate roadway space for commercial vehicle deliveries, locally and regionally.

8-4: Support transportation projects which will serve commercial, industrial, and resource-extraction lands where an inadequate transportation network impedes freight-generating development.

8-5: Support a comprehensive and versatile regional transportation interface for the efficient movement of goods and people, both locally and regionally.

POTENTIAL ACTION

- ❖ Balance the demand for freight routes with the demands for local circulation.
- ❖ Explore the feasibility of developing interurban freight delivery systems.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

- ✓ Measure employment change in vicinity of projects.

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