

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How is Oregon's modeling program managed?

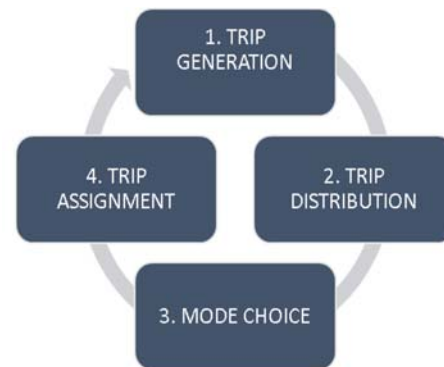
Statewide transportation models, as well as models for small to mid-size metropolitan areas and small cities, are managed by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). This centralized approach, which is unique to Oregon, supports regions with limited technical staff and provides significant advantages for model consistency, quality and cost.

For example, in order to handle the increasing demand for travel models in small to mid-size metropolitan areas, ODOT used Portland Metro's regional model to develop a template. The template is an empty shell that is then filled with local data and calibrated to match travel conditions in each unique location. This cost-effective approach expedites the development of new models, and provides Oregon's metropolitan planning organizations and other small and mid-sized communities with sophisticated planning tools that out-perform those used in comparable areas of the country.

## The RVMPO model is a "4-step model." What does that mean?

The RVMPO model's calculations are performed in four steps representing major household travel behaviors:

1. **Why** we travel (*trip generation*). The RVMPO model estimates the number of trips made from each origin by trip purpose, based on household size, income and employment type.
2. **Where** we travel (*trip distribution*). The RVMPO model estimates a destination choice for each trip.
3. **How** we travel (*mode choice*). The RVMPO model estimates whether each trip will occur by car or truck, bicycle, walking or transit.
4. **Which way** we travel (*trip assignment*). The RVMPO model estimates the route taken to accomplish each trip.



## How do we know the RVMPO model's forecasts are reasonable?

Before future travel forecasts are made, the model is run to provide a picture of existing travel patterns. The results are given a reality check where modelers confirm the numbers make sense and cross-check how well the model represents current "observed" patterns. This checking process is called validation.

## Can we expand the RVMPO model's capabilities?

When it comes to model development, there is a point at which the additional information to be gained simply cannot justify the level of effort required for model enhancements. It is important to make a clear distinction between information that is essential for planning purposes and information that may be helpful or interesting, but would take resources and model runtime that is not commensurate with the value that would be added.

While ODOT's modeling resources are limited, we welcome partnerships and resource-sharing opportunities with customers who may desire custom outputs or enhanced model functions.



# ROGUE VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MODEL

A Regional Computer Model for Transportation Forecasting

## What is the RVMPO model?

The Rogue Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RVMPO) model is an analysis tool used to forecast travel patterns (auto, walk, bike, transit) on the transportation system. The RVMPO model forecasts how travel and transportation system conditions are likely to respond to changes in land use, population, employment, new transportation facilities, transit service, and public policy.

By showing the impacts and benefits associated with potential improvements, this powerful tool helps transportation planners and policymakers make the most of limited funds and avoid unintended consequences.

## How is the model used?

Planners use the RVMPO model when preparing long-range transportation plans to evaluate transportation projects and strategies for accommodating growth. The RVMPO model forecasts travel changes in response to future land use and transportation assumptions. The model provides objective, quantitative information that enables communities to explore the potential impacts of alternative transportation system investments.

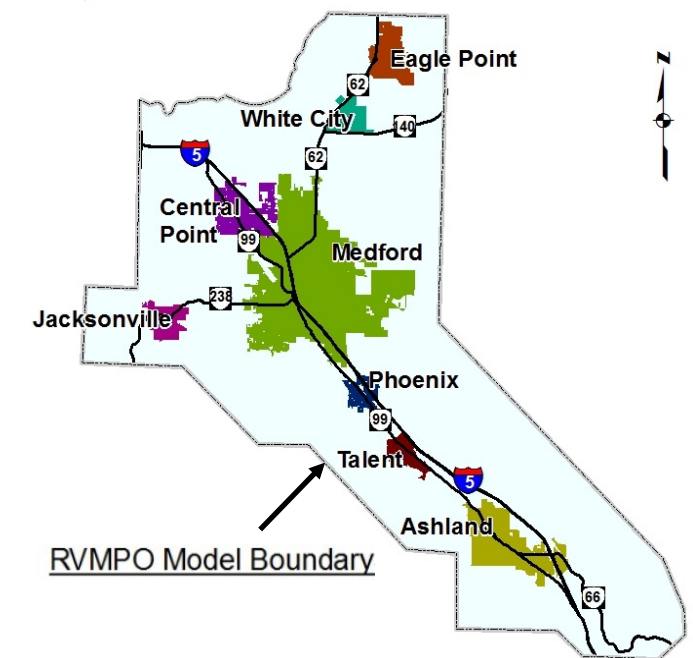
Information from the RVMPO model can be produced for an individual jurisdiction or the entire RVMPO area. RVMPO model information can also be used as input to other models, such as regional air quality models.

Like all transportation models, the RVMPO model is an informational tool to assist with decision making. While information on the impacts of different investment options is valuable for planning purposes, the model does not provide the "right answer." It simply provides information to enable better decision-making.

**The RVMPO model can provide:**

- ◆ Trips by private vehicle, bus, bike, and walking
- ◆ Roadway volume and demand-to-capacity estimates
- ◆ Regional travel patterns
- ◆ Peak hour and daily travel forecasts
- ◆ Regional vehicle miles and vehicle hours travelled
- ◆ Average trip distances
- ◆ Transit park & ride lot usage
- ◆ Routing for specific vehicle trips
- ◆ Daily transit ridership by route

*Other outputs are available.*



### RVMPO MODEL AREA

- ◆ Ashland
- ◆ Central Point
- ◆ Eagle Point
- ◆ Jacksonville
- ◆ Medford
- ◆ Phoenix
- ◆ Talent
- ◆ White City
- ◆ Surrounding unincorporated areas of Jackson County

## Contact

Jin Ren (503) 986-4120  
Oregon Department of Transportation  
Transportation Planning and Analysis Unit  
Jinxiang.Ren@odot.state.or.us

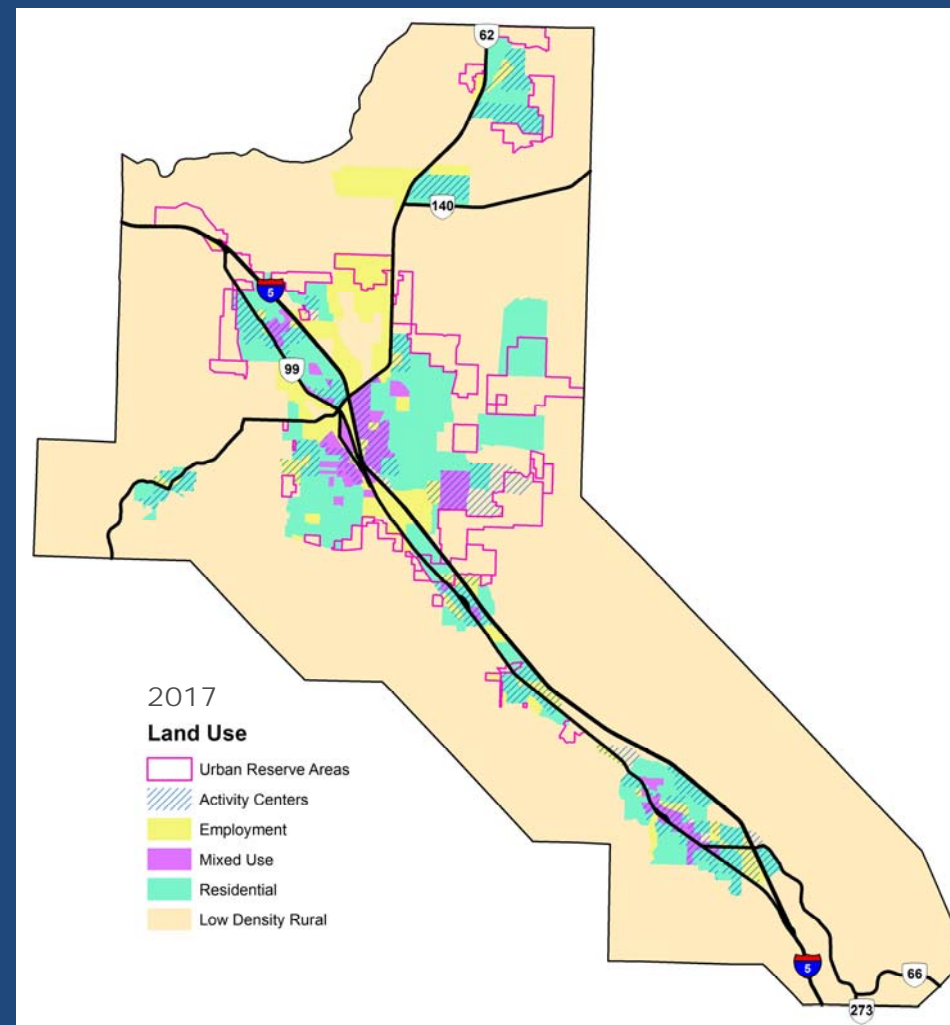


# Activity Patterns Impact Travel

The location, mix, and density of population, employment and land uses define the region's transportation needs. Trips starting from homes and businesses lead to job locations, schools and shopping areas, while goods are shipped from, to and through the region. These activity patterns are critical inputs to the travel model.

The Bear Creek Regional Problem Solving Plan sponsored by RVMPO, along with other development plans for urban reserve areas in the region, helps to shape urban growth. Mixed use centers near transit, roadways to key freight distribution centers, and quality walking and biking environments are regional planning objectives.

## LAND USE IN THE RVMPO AREA



Source: Land use information based on PlaceType data provided by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. Urban Reserve and Activity Center information from RVMPO.



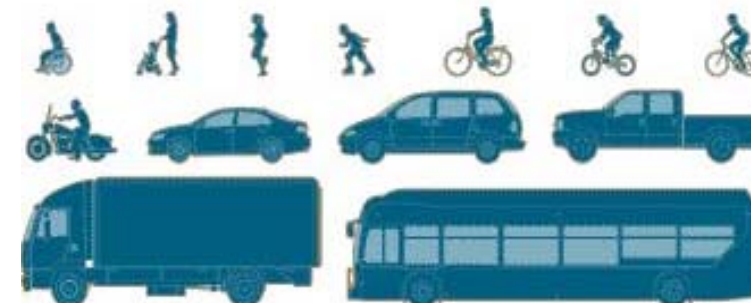
## RVMPO Transit Modeling

The detail and complexity of a large metropolitan transit model is not necessary for regional transit planning in small metropolitan areas such as the Rogue Valley. However, the RVMPO model supports a higher level of analysis than is typical for similarly sized metropolitan areas across the country.

The RVMPO transit module enables communities to examine how major transit investments, such as new routes or significant changes in service frequencies, may affect future ridership, while accounting for interaction and competition with other modes.

## Different Travel Needs

A diverse mix of people and goods share the region's multimodal transportation system. In addition to peak hour commuting and off-peak shopping, long-haul freight and local delivery trucks keep the economy moving.



A local delivery truck, for instance, might make many stops across the region throughout the day, in contrast to the peak hour home-to-work or work-to-home trips of a commuter. As new data becomes available, travel models are refined to better account for these different travel patterns.

### LEVELS OF TRANSIT MODELING

Metro Area Size

1 Model predicts regional transit trips and mode share only. This level is suitable for regional planning in most small metropolitan areas.

#### RVMPO MODEL

2 Model may be used for corridor-level transit analysis and to predict mode shares by trip purpose.

3 Model may be used for corridor multi-modal planning, projecting route-level ridership, and estimating boarding and transfers.

4 Model is needed to perform complex multi-function transit route and stop analysis for large metropolitan systems.

SMALL

LARGE