



HELP OREGON CREATE HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

In 2007, the Oregon Legislature adopted House Bill 3543, creating a statewide policy to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) that cause climate change. Transportation accounts for over one-third of Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions. Oregon cannot meet its GHG reduction targets without significantly reducing transportation GHGs.

Community design is key to community livability. When communities are designed with better opportunities to walk, bike or take transit, residents don't have to drive their cars for every trip. Ensuring better community design with greater transportation options is key to meeting the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals and providing a positive legacy for future generations.

Transportation planning in Oregon's largest urban areas is done by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). Oregon has six regions served by MPOs - Portland, Salem/Keizer, Eugene/Springfield, Corvallis, Bend, and Medford.

In 2009, the Legislature adopted two bills to address transportation, land use and climate change. HB 2001 requires Metro, the MPO for the Portland region, to develop land use and transportation scenarios that will meet the region's share of necessary reductions in transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. Metro is then required to work with local governments to adopt the preferred scenario through scheduled updates to transportation and land use plans.

HB 2186, also passed in 2009, created the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Greenhouse Gas Emissions Task Force and charged the task force with making recommendations to the 2010 Legislature on how Oregon's other MPOs can use scenario planning to reduce GHG emissions. The Task Force was comprised of a geographically and philosophically diverse group of stakeholders. This panel reached consensus that a combined state and local government approach, phased in over time, has the best chance of achieving the Legislature's goals. It recommended the following actions to the Oregon State Legislature:

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MPO GHG TASK FORCE:

- Phase 1 (2010) – The state, through the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), will prepare “scenario planning” guidelines, create a toolkit or menu of GHG reduction actions, develop modeling and analysis tools, and support local governments with public education and outreach. MPOs will engage the public on the need for GHG reduction and evaluate their regional transportation plan (RTP) for possible reductions in GHG emissions.
- Phase 2 – MPOs will conduct scenario planning, select a scenario, and model effects of the scenario on GHG emissions as well as consider possible additional GHG reduction actions. (To begin after LCDC adopts light vehicle GHG reduction targets, scenario planning guidelines, a GHG reduction toolkit, and adequate funding is determined.)
- Phase 3 – MPOs will evaluate the performance of their plans and actions and based on the evaluation, apply best management practices and identify needed changes, conduct additional scenario planning if needed to meet goals, and identify any additional actions needed. (This evaluation will continue to occur at each MPO RTP update.)

BENEFITS OF PLANNING HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Reducing GHG emissions through better land use and transportation planning has numerous additional community benefits, including:

Reduces infrastructure costs and protects valuable farmland: Many studies comparing compact growth to sprawl have found that compact development generates net savings on the total costs of buildings, land, infrastructure and transportation.¹ And curtailing sprawl helps reduce pressure to expand urban areas onto Oregon's valuable farmland.

Reduces household costs and generates economic benefits: Transportation is the second largest expense for most households. In communities with better transportation choices, families can save a bundle. In the Portland region, where residents travel about 20% fewer miles by car than residents of other major U.S. metropolitan areas, transportation cost savings are calculated at \$1.1 billion per year². Every dollar saved on imported oil is money available local goods and services that benefit Oregon's economy.

Supports healthy lifestyles and more time with family: In many communities, people have no choice but to drive. Even short trips can't be done by foot or on a bicycle. This has led to more sedentary lifestyles where people don't get the exercise they need. And when people have to drive long distances in heavy traffic, they have less time to spend with their families. Smart growth reduces commute times and supports walking and bicycling.

Gives consumers what they want: A 2007 study by the National Association of Realtors found 83% of Americans want to live in communities that allow them to use their car less often.³

Protects the environment: Transportation generates more than one-third of Oregon's global warming pollution⁴ and is a major contributor to air quality problems like smog. Every mile not driven keeps about one pound of heat-trapping carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.



¹ *Cost-Effective GHG Reductions through Smart Growth & Improved Transportation Choices*, Center for Clean Air Policy, 2009. <http://tinyurl.com/mql5d6>

² *Portland's Green Dividend, a White Paper from CEOs for Cities* by Joe Cortright, 2007. <http://tinyurl.com/nvchyd>

³ National Association of Realtors, *2007 Growth and Transportation Survey*. <http://tinyurl.com/yjmr658>

⁴ *A Framework for Addressing Rapid Climate Change*, the Governor's Climate Change Integration Group, 2008. <http://tinyurl.com/yh6n8na>