

II. Regulatory Framework

This Regional Transportation Plan is intended to meet both federal and state requirements for regional transportation system plans. This section describes the federal and state rules, regulations and policies that influence the content of this document.

A. Federal Regulation

According to the 23 CFR, §450.322:

“The metropolitan transportation planning process shall include the development of a transportation plan addressing at least a twenty-year planning horizon. The plan shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods...”

In order to comply with this mandate, the Corvallis Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan must:

1. Identify the projected transportation demand of persons and goods in the metropolitan planning area over the period of the plan;
2. Identify adopted congestion management strategies including, as appropriate, traffic operations, ridesharing, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, alternative work schedules, freight movement options, high occupancy vehicle treatments, telecommuting, and public transportation improvements that demonstrate a systematic approach in addressing current and future transportation demand;
3. Reflect the consideration given to the results of the management systems;
4. Reflect, to the extent that they exist, consideration of: the area's comprehensive long range land use plan and metropolitan development objectives; national, State, and local housing goals and strategies, community development and employment plans and strategies, and environmental resource plans; local, State, and national goals and objectives such as linking low income households with employment opportunities; and the area's overall social, economic, environmental, and energy conservation goals and objectives;
5. Indicate, as appropriate, proposed transportation enhancement activities;
6. Assess capital investment and other measures necessary to preserve the existing transportation system and make the most efficient use of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and enhance the mobility of people and goods;

7. Include design concept and scope descriptions of all existing and proposed transportation facilities. Proposed improvements shall be described in sufficient detail to develop cost estimates. For major transportation investments for which analyses are not complete, indicate that the design concept and scope (mode and alignment) have not been fully determined and will require further analysis;
8. Reflect a multimodal evaluation of the transportation, socioeconomic, environmental, and financial impact of the overall plan, including all major transportation investments in accordance with §450.318;
9. Include a financial plan that demonstrates the consistency of proposed transportation investments with already available and projected sources of revenue. The financial plan shall compare the estimated revenue from existing and proposed funding sources that can reasonably be expected to be available for transportation uses, and the estimated costs of constructing, maintaining and operating the total (existing plus planned) transportation system over the period of the plan. *In compliance with 23 CFR, §450.322 (11), a Financial Plan for the Corvallis Area Metropolitan Transportation was developed and included as Appendix B;*
10. Provide adequate opportunity for public official (including elected officials) and citizen involvement in the development of the transportation plan before it is approved by the MPO, in accordance with the requirements of 23 CFR §450.316(b)(1). Such procedures shall include opportunities for interested parties (including citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, and private providers of transportation) to be involved in the early stages of the plan development/update process. The procedures shall include publication of the proposed plan or other methods to make it readily available for public review and comment.

The long-range transportation plan must be adopted by the MPO Policy Board by a resolution and must be made available to the public. Although transportation plans do not need to be approved by FHWA or FTA, copies of any new/revised plans must be provided to each agency.

New Federal Requirements

On August 10, 2005 the President signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) which introduced a set of new Transportation Planning Requirements. All Metropolitan Transportation Plans must be in full compliance with the new SAFETEA-LU requirements by July 1, 2007. The major requirements of the new ACT are:

- **Environmental Mitigation:** Metropolitan and statewide transportation plans must include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities

for their recommended projects, to be developed in consultation with Federal, State and Tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies.

- **New Consultations:** MPOs and States must consult "as appropriate" with "State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation" in developing long-range transportation plans.
- **Consistency of Transportation Plan with Planned Growth and Development Plans:** Revises the previous planning factor related to environment to add promoting consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- **Transportation System Security:** SAFETEA-LU calls for the security of the transportation system to be a stand-alone planning factor, signaling an increase in importance from prior legislation, in which security was coupled with safety.
- **Operational and Management Strategies:** Metropolitan transportation plans shall include operational and management strategies to improve the performance of the existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods.
- **Participation Plan:** MPOs must develop and utilize a "Participation Plan" that provides reasonable opportunities for interested parties to comment on the content of the metropolitan transportation plan and metropolitan TIP prior to approval. Further, this "Participation Plan" must be developed "in consultation with all interested parties".
- **Visualization Techniques in Plans and Metropolitan TIP Development:** As part of the transportation plan and TIP development, MPOs shall employ visualization techniques in presenting transportation issues and documents.
- **Publication of Plans and TIP/STIP:** MPOs shall publish or otherwise make available for public review transportation plans and TIPs, "including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web".

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects: SAFETEA-LU specifies that the development of the annual listing "shall be a cooperative effort of the State, transit operators, and the MPO" and also shall include two new project types, "investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities" for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year.

B. Oregon's Transportation Planning Rule (TPR)

The Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) (OAR660-012), requires MPOs to develop a Transportation System Plan (TSP) for a coordinated network of transportation facilities and services of regional significance. The TSP is to provide for a safe, convenient and economic transportation system that reduces reliance on the automobile so that air pollution, traffic and other livability problems typically faced by urban areas might be avoided. The Transportation Planning Rule aims to

“improve the livability of urban areas by promoting changes in land use patterns and the transportation system that make it more convenient for people to walk, bicycle and use transit, and drive less to meet their daily needs.” ORS 660-012-0000

As a TSP, this document must address the road system, public transportation, bicycles and pedestrians, air, rail and pipeline services, transportation system management and demand management, and parking. It must include a financing program and policies and land use regulations for implementing the TSP.

The Transportation Plan must be based on the needs of the planning area, including those of the transportation disadvantaged and the movement of goods and services to support existing and planned industrial and commercial development.

The planning process must consider alternatives for meeting current and future needs and evaluate improvements in the existing system, new facilities and services for a variety of modes, transportation system management measures, demand management measures, and a “no build” alternative. The TPR also specifies the standards to be used in evaluating and selecting system alternatives. The TPR also requires the Transportation Plans include specific measures for increasing the modal share of non-auto trips, increasing average auto occupancy and other criteria.

The TSP's financing program must list planned projects, provide an estimate of timing and cost, and discuss the potential of existing and new funding mechanisms to meet transportation needs.

The MPO must coordinate with affected state and federal agencies, special districts and transportation providers in the development of the plan. The Transportation Planning Rule requires cities and counties within the MPO to adopt the TSP as part of their Comprehensive Plans.

The Regional Transportation Plan is required to include interim benchmarks to assure satisfactory progress towards meeting the plan's objectives at five-year intervals over the planning period.

The plan is to include policies to guide selection of transportation facility and service improvements for funding. These policies must consider the priority to be given to facilities and improvements that support mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development and increased use of alternative modes.

The TPR also requires regional TSPs to provide for coordinated project development among affected local governments and specifies necessary components of that coordinated process.

The regional transportation plan must also be consistent with the Oregon Transportation Plan and the State's modal plans, such as the Oregon Highway Plan. See Appendix A for information on these plans.