

# Chapter 1: Guiding Tenets and Planning Framework



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# Introduction

*All of Gresham's residents, neighbors and visitors, whether as pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit riders or large freight and service drivers, rely upon a transportation network that's safe, efficient and accessible. This document, Gresham's updated 2035 Transportation System Plan (TSP), is a 20-year blueprint for implementing this multimodal transportation network. It establishes policies and provides strategies that support the development of Gresham as an economically vital and livable community.*

A key objective of the TSP is to create a balanced transportation system where pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists have equal opportunity to get around. The TSP also identifies strategies to facilitate freight and goods movement, improve neighborhood connections and provide a realistic funding forecast. The TSP not only provides the framework for addressing the transportation needs for Gresham's diverse and vital community, but is also consistent with state, regional and surrounding local plans.



The MAX arrives at Gresham City Hall

Gresham City Council adopted the City's first TSP in 2002 and updated it in 2013. That TSP served the Gresham community in the development of its multimodal transportation system. During that period Gresham and the region experienced substantial growth and change:

- Gresham's population grew.
- Gresham adopted the Springwater, Pleasant Valley and Kelley Creek Headwaters Plan Areas, which include transportation infrastructure plans for each of these new communities.

- Gresham obtained jurisdiction from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Multnomah County of all roads within its boundary with the exception of Interstate 84 and Highway 26 south of Powell Boulevard.
- Regionally, in 2023 an update to the Regional Transportation Plan was adopted by Metro, the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- More recently, the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) introduced the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) that now requires state agencies to reduce emissions, address climate change, and support vulnerable communities. Future major Transportation System Plan (TSP) updates of cities above a certain population and size must comply with CFEC regulations.

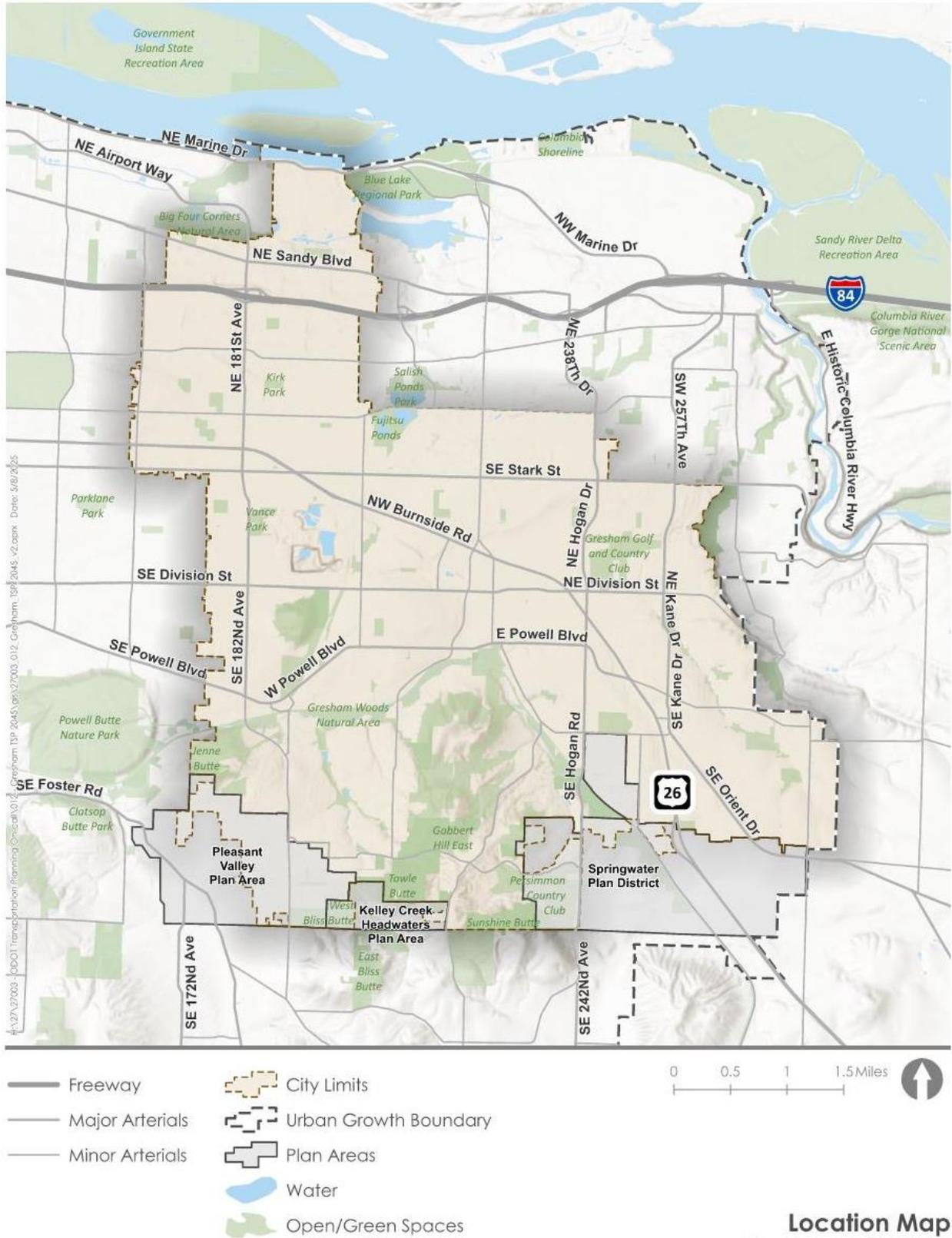
The 2013 TSP update included major review and refinement of the 2002 document, as well as the transportation components of the Springwater, Pleasant Valley and Kelley Creek Headwaters concept plans. Those plans address areas that are planned for future annexation into the City of Gresham. In 2024 Gresham refreshed the Pleasant Valley Plan with recommendations for reaching the original vision for Pleasant Valley and align it more with market realities

In 2024, the City began updating the TSP to update policies based on industry best practices and local emerging trends related to climate, equity, safety, and emerging technologies. The City also updated its TSP goals to reflect community feedback as well as new state and regional requirements. Lastly, the City made minor updates to the project lists to reflect changes in transportation needs, then reprioritized these projects using criteria tied to the new goals.



People cross Burnside Street near the Rockwood/E 188<sup>th</sup> Avenue MAX Station.

Figure 1. Plan Area Location Map



## Vision

Gresham's Transportation System Plan will support the growth and development of the City of Gresham as an economically vital and livable community by providing its residents and all transportation system users' safe, pleasant and convenient access and travel within, to and through the city.



## Guiding Principles

- Ensure the transportation system provides a safe, secure and attractive travel experience that supports livability and community interaction.
- Ensure access and mobility by increasing multimodal travel options and providing a continuous, interconnected transportation system.
- Facilitate development of a transportation system that aligns with adopted local and regional land use plans, is responsive to the surrounding community and is cost effective to develop and maintain.

These guiding principles provide a bridge between the vision statement and the more specific policies and strategies in Chapter 4.



Purchasing a MAX light rail ticket in Gresham. A TSP goal is easy accessibility to reaching destinations.

## Goals

The TSP's vision is further defined by the following goals that are explicit themes woven through the TSP's system plans, policies, action measures, project list and funding forecast. The TSP aims to ensure:

- **Connectivity, Mobility, And Accessibility** - Providing the ability to reach desired goods, services, activities and destinations with relative ease, within a reasonable time, at a reasonable cost and with a full range of mode choices.
- **Economic Development** - Constructing and maintaining a transportation system that supports new business as well as business retention, expansion and relocation.
- **Climate Action** - Meeting the transportation needs of the community and minimizing adverse effects on the climate.
- **Equity** - Providing all community members access to safe, comfortable, affordable, sustainable, and reliable transportation choices to meet their daily transportation needs.
- **Safety** - Eliminating all transportation-related serious injury and fatal crashes through design, education, and enforcement.

# Community Involvement

The City of Gresham's current update to the Transportation System Plan (TSP) is part of ongoing efforts to prioritize investments based on community needs. This update builds upon the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), the Comprehensive Plan, and previous TSP iterations to guide growth, as summarized below.

## TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN UPDATE (2025)

As part of this minor TSP update focused on policies and adjusting project priorities, the 2024-2025 outreach included four major outreach milestones and several continuous activities. Outreach strategies were as follows:

- **Project website and social media postings** – Throughout the project, a webpage dedicated to the TSP update was available on Gresham's EngageGresham.org platform, where participants could learn more about the project process and how to get involved.
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** – A TAC comprised of staff at Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Multnomah County, TriMet, and other City of Gresham staff provided technical review of materials and insights into how the Gresham TSP worked with other local and regional plans.
- **Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC, as part of the Transportation Subcommittee)** – The existing Transportation Subcommittee was advertised on the TSP webpage and through City channels with a special call to action for participation, serving as the SAC to the TSP. This group included community members and representatives from local organizations to speak to the day-to-day transportation experiences throughout the community.
- **Policy Subcommittee Work Sessions** – In late summer 2024, several special work sessions were held to workshop through existing policies and new policy language related to climate, safety, equity, and emerging technology. TAC and SAC members were invited, and the meetings were open to other interested parties. The feedback helped to form the ultimate policy language presented in this TSP.
- **Planning Commission Work Sessions** – The project team met with Planning Commission at key milestones to report back on progress and refine policies and TSP content. **This bullet will be updated following remaining work sessions.**
- **In-person outreach events** – Eight in-person events across the outreach milestones helped to gather input on community needs and prioritize values and projects. A booth at existing community events helped to "go where the people are", capturing a wide range of community members in an approachable setting.
- **Online surveys, open house, and comment form** – Online feedback platforms helped to supplement in-person outreach, providing another platform for community members to learn more about the TSP and provide their feedback. The platforms were advertised on social media, posted at in-person events, and advertised via community engagement liaisons.
- **Community Engagement Liaisons** – Community engagement liaisons helped to spread awareness and interest in the TSP, reaching out to their networks and organizations as trusted members of the community. In addition to building interest and participation in the platforms, they also facilitated focus groups,
- **Focus groups** – Focus groups were held at key outreach milestones to provide a live venue for information sharing to the community, feedback about their needs and thoughts on projects, and

discussion of how the TSP ties into broader community goals. These focus groups targeted different communities and included several Spanish-speaking sessions.

## PRIOR PLANS

### Pleasant Valley TSP (2019)

- **Project website and notifications** – Throughout the project, a webpage dedicated to the Pleasant Valley TSP Refinement update was available where participants could learn more about the project process and how to get involved. Email blasts, social media postings, and mailouts also helped spread the word about this project.
- **Technical Advisory Committee:** TAC members included transportation plus natural resources planning and engineering staff from the coordinating agencies (City of Gresham, City of Portland, City of Happy Valley, Clackamas County, Multnomah County, Metro, and TriMet). The TAC provided technical input and review and developed recommendations for the Project Team, Community Advisory Committee, and the Gresham City Council.
- **Community Advisory Committee:** The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed to provide community-based recommendations. The CAC developed recommendations to the Project Team and Gresham City Council. All meetings were open to the public and included a public comment period. The CAC included a range of neighborhood, environmental, and economic development representatives.
- **Gresham City Council and Planning Commission:** Gresham City Council was the project's final decision maker. Throughout the project, both City Council and Planning Commission received briefings on project status, draft findings, and recommendations.
- **In-person and virtual public workshops:** A series of workshops helped to present the project background, gather input on initial alternatives, and refine evaluation of alternatives to come to a consensus-based, community-built plan.

### Active Transportation Plan (2017)

The City undertook its first Active Transportation Plan in 2016 and 2017. The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) used a mix of traditional engagement methods and a new approach with Community Liaisons.

- Traditional engagement such as a **Stakeholder Advisory Committee, outreach at community events, and maps and questionnaires posted online**, all gathered significant input as detailed in the ATP.
- After learning about transportation planning issues, community-based participatory practices, and leadership skills, community liaisons were able to apply those skills by planning community events and gathering community input. The liaisons then:
  - Led 3 neighborhood walks
  - Conducted surveys
  - Talked with 161 community members door-to-door
  - Organized 3 community events, including the ATP Youth Jam
  - Created a short documentary film about residents' transportation experiences
  - Conducted 77 interviews

The community liaisons' work helped to draw out unique challenges the community faces, and develop strategies to meet their needs.

## Transportation System Plan (2013)

Throughout previous TSP updates, the Gresham community played an integral role in the TSP update through several venues. Key groups that provided input during the last major TSP update included:

- **Transportation Subcommittee** – The Transportation Subcommittee advises the City Council and City staff on transportation and traffic issues, federal, state and local policies, standards, plans and capital programs. The Transportation Subcommittee advised staff on the update of all components of the TSP.
- **Neighborhood Coalition and Associations** – Staff visited the Neighborhood Coalition and all active Neighborhood Associations throughout the TSP update process to receive feedback regarding the current transportation system and proposed changes to address identified opportunities and issues. Staff also attended Neighborhood Information Fairs held by the Neighborhood Associations in order to provide TSP update information and to receive feedback.
- **Business Associations** – Staff visited Gresham business associations, including the Gresham Downtown Development Association, Historic Gresham Downtown Business Association, the Gresham Redevelopment Commission and the Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce throughout the TSP update process to receive feedback regarding the current transportation system and proposed changes to address identified opportunities and issues.
- **Active Transportation Stakeholder Team** – An Active Transportation Stakeholder Team was established for the TSP update and comprised of Gresham's regional partners and health experts including representatives from: Upstream Public Health, Coalition for a Livable Future, Bicycle Transportation Alliance, Willamette Pedestrian Coalition, TriMet, Metro, Multnomah County and the City of Portland. The team advised on refinements to the 2035 TSP's vision, goals, guiding principles, policies and action measures with a focus on further integrating the bicycle, pedestrian and transit travel modes into the City's multimodal transportation system.
- **Gresham Transportation Fair** – The Transportation Planning Division held two Transportation Fairs during the TSP update process. The Fairs included a bike rodeo, bike helmet sales for children, a semi-truck set up to show blind spots and TSP update project information.
- **Community Forums** – Staff held two TSP community forums to present and receive feedback regarding all elements of the TSP. Staff also participated in two forums held for the City's Urban Design and Planning Department's Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) project, as the transportation system plays an important role in each resident's ability to access such amenities as parks and grocery stores and to live actively.
- **Metro and the East Metro Connections Plan (EMCP)** – Metro led a two year planning effort to analyze present and future transportation challenges within the east-Metro area. The study boundary included the cities of Gresham, Fairview, Troutdale and Wood Village and portions of Multnomah and Clackamas Counties. Plan partners included the study area jurisdictions as well as the City of Portland, ODOT, the Port of Portland, TriMet, Multnomah County Health Department, East Metro Economic Alliance, Coalition of Gresham Neighborhoods, Mt. Hood Community College, Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee, the cities of Happy Valley and Damascus, El Programa Hispano, local businesses and the Columbia Slough Watershed. The EMCP was the first mobility corridor refinement plan to be conducted following adoption of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. It implemented a new approach to allocating limited

transportation dollars to ensure regional transportation investments support local land use, community, economic development and the environment. The EMCP analysis contributed to the baseline and forecasting data utilized for this TSP update. It also helped to frame the TSP update's policy direction. Finally, findings from the EMCP included a list of transportation projects that is incorporated into the 2035 TSP project list as prioritized projects.

- **Freight Stakeholders and Freight Expert Panel** – Staff coordinated with Metro through the EMCP to convene a Freight Expert Panel and to reach out to freight stakeholders. The freight experts identified two types of freight movement with differing needs: regional and local. Regional freight movement prefers continuous movement while local freight must be able to access the local businesses. Above all, the freight community values safety, maintaining capacity and mobility on roadways, and limiting conflicts between large service vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists.
- **School Expert Panel** – Staff coordinated with Metro through the EMCP to convene a Schools Experts Panel comprised of members from the Centennial, Reynolds and Gresham-Barlow School Districts. Members stressed the importance of sidewalks, recognition of year-round school transportation needs, varying times school days start and end, limited funding for transportation needs, and safety.
- **Social Media** – Staff used several social media outlets throughout the TSP update process including a project webpage providing project updates and materials for public review, Facebook, Twitter, newspaper ads and email groups. Staff also coordinated with Metro through the EMCP to launch and promote an online survey available to all of East Metro residents and transportation system users. The online survey gathered feedback regarding opportunities and constraints within the transportation existing system as well as priorities for future improvements.

## Regulatory Framework

The following documents provided a regulatory framework for the TSP update:

### TRANSPORTATION PLANNING RULE

The state of Oregon has adopted 19 statewide planning goals that are required to be implemented through a comprehensive plan for each city and county. These comprehensive plans must specify the manner in which the land, air and water resources of the jurisdictions will be used and must also determine the need for improved public facilities.

With the adoption of the statewide Goal 12, the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR), Gresham must adopt and maintain a Transportation System Plan (TSP) that complies with the TPR, the State of Oregon Transportation System Plan (OTP), and Metro's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In addition, the TPR describes specific elements and analysis that local and regional transportation system plans must include. It requires the plans to target enhanced transportation choices, reductions in vehicle miles traveled and a strong connection between land use and transportation planning.

Local and regional transportation system plans must also examine possible land use solutions to transportation problems and identify multimodal, system management and demand management strategies to address transportation needs.

## Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC)

The Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) significantly updated Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) through the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) rulemaking. The rulemaking resulted in amendments to the TPR, primarily focused on the eight metropolitan regions in Oregon – Albany Area, Bend Area, Central Lane (Eugene-Springfield), Corvallis Area, Middle Rogue, Rogue Valley, Salem-Keizer, and Portland Metro. The key desired outcomes of the amendments included:

- Meeting legislative climate policy and goals, including monitoring and reporting progress over time
- Increasing housing and employment options
- Fostering vibrant downtowns and neighborhood centers
- Improving transportation choices and infrastructure for electric vehicle charging
- Creating connected, safe, and complete networks
- Promoting equitable outcomes
- Prioritizing transportation investments in climate-friendly areas (CFAs), in neighborhoods with underserved populations, and to create access to key destinations

To reach these desired outcomes, the TPR amendments included six edited sections, one deleted section, and 64 new sections. The new requirements apply to metropolitan areas (which includes Metro and the jurisdictions within Metro) and are primarily related to :

- Long-range planning requirements (OAR Sections 660-012-0100 to -0115, -0140 to -0215, -0500 to -0820)
  - **Complete:** OAR Sections 660-012-0100 to -0115. This minor TSP update is consistent with **general transportation system plan update guidelines**.
  - **Underway:** -0140 to -0215. **Metro-specific planning requirements, transportation options planning, transportation system inventories, VMT modeling to finalize project lists, and performance measure adoption** will occur separately from this minor TSP update.
  - **Underway:** -0500 to -0820. **System inventories** will occur separately from this minor TSP update.
- Outreach and equity analysis requirements (OAR Sections 660-012-0120 to -0135)
  - **Underway: Outreach** under this minor TSP update meets the new state rules.
  - **Complete:** An **equity analysis** as defined by the new requirements will occur separately from this minor TSP update.
- Land use planning requirements, including CFAs, parking reform, and electric vehicle charging (OAR Sections 660-012-0300 to -0450)
  - **Complete: CFAs** in the Portland Metro area are the Regional and Town Centers, which are set in Gresham as Downtown, Rockwood, and Pleasant Valley.
  - **Underway: Parking reform** and **electric vehicle** charging are being updated separately from this minor TSP update.
- Enhanced Review of Select Roadway Projects (OAR Sections 660-012-0830)
  - **Underway: Enhanced Review** will occur separately from this minor TSP update. Projects requiring Enhanced Review under a major TSP update have been identified.
- Reporting requirements (OAR Sections 660-012-0900 to -0920)
  - **Ongoing: Metro is responsible for reporting** and this will occur separately from any TSP process.



A freight truck passes through Gresham on Interstate 84. The City must maintain a TSP that complies with the state's transportation system plan.

## REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is developed and maintained by Metro, the Portland regional Metropolitan Planning Organization. Gresham participates on regional committees responsible for the on-going development of the Regional Transportation Plan. These include the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), comprised of elected officials, and the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC), comprised of technical staff.

The key objective of the Regional Transportation Plan is to identify a transportation system that will adequately serve the travel needs of the Portland Metropolitan area for the next 20 years. The RTP is based on projections for 20-year regional population and employment growth, evaluates expected travel demands and patterns, and examines the impacts of expected travel on the current "committed" transportation system (i.e., projects with committed construction funding). It also recommends an alternative plan needed to meet Year 2045 travel demands and regional goals and recommends funding mechanisms and other implementing options to achieve the preferred regional plan. Gresham's TSP must maintain consistency with policies established by the RTP.



Families head to school on safe, comfortable facilities developed through Safe Routes to School efforts. Gresham's TSP must maintain consistency with policies established by the Regional Transportation Plan

## URBAN GROWTH MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONAL PLAN

The Urban Growth Management Functional Plan establishes regional policies that apply to all 24 cities and three counties within the Metro region. The purpose of the functional plan is to implement regional goals and objectives adopted by the Metro Council as the Regional Urban Growth Goals and Objectives (RUGGO), including the Metro 2040 Growth Concept. The functional plan is the primary regional policy tool and contains both "recommendations" and "requirements" for changes in local transportation plans.

## REGION 2040

The Region 2040 Growth Concept Plan states the preferred form of regional growth and development and identifies the location of future land uses and activity centers. Fundamental to the Growth Concept is a multimodal transportation system that assures mobility of people and goods throughout the region.

Within the framework of the Growth Concept is a network of multimodal corridors and regional through-routes that connect major urban centers and destinations. Through-routes provide for high-volume auto and transit travel at a regional scale, and ensure efficient movement of freight. Within multimodal corridors, the transportation system will provide a broader range of travel options, including auto, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian networks that allow choices of how to travel in the region. These travel options will encourage the use of alternatives to the auto, a shift that has clear benefits for the environment, the quality of neighborhoods and urban centers, and addresses the needs of those without access to automobiles.

# OREGON TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Oregon Transportation Plan sets policies and investment strategies for Oregon's multimodal transportation system. The statewide plan calls for a transportation system marked by modal balance, efficiency, accessibility, environmental responsibility, connectivity among places, connectivity among modes and corridors, safety, and financial stability.

