

## 2023 Regional Transportation Plan



# 2023 Regional Transportation Plan Chapter 2

## **Our shared vision and goals for transportation**

November 30, 2023

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

2.0 Introduction .....	2-1
Chapter organization.....	2-2
2.1 Outcomes-based framework to guide transportation planning and decision-making.....	2-3
2.2 Shared vision for the regional transportation system .....	2-5
2.3 Goals and objectives .....	2-6
Goal 1: Mobility options .....	2-9
Goal 2: Safe System.....	2-10
Goal 3: Equitable transportation.....	2-11
Goal 4: Thriving Economy.....	2-12
Goal 5: Climate action and resilience.....	2-14
2.4 Regional transportation performance targets.....	2-15

## FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Vision for the regional transportation system.....	2-5
Figure 2.2 RTP performance-based planning and decision-making framework .....	2-7

## TABLES

Table 2.1: RTP performance measures, targets and thresholds at a glance .....	2-15
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## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

*The 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) defines a shared vision for the greater Portland region's transportation system that reflects the values and desired outcomes expressed by the public, policymakers and community and business leaders engaged in development of the plan.*

Transportation shapes our communities and our daily lives, allowing us to reach our jobs and recreational opportunities, access goods and services and meet daily needs. This chapter presents a shared, long-term vision and supporting goals, objectives and performance targets that will guide planning and building the transportation system serving the Portland metropolitan region through 2045. The vision reflects the continued evolution of transportation planning from a project-driven endeavor to one that is framed by a broader set of outcomes that affect people's everyday lives.



Learn more about the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan at [oregonmetro.gov/rtp](https://oregonmetro.gov/rtp)

Rapid growth and change across our region have exposed and exacerbated longstanding economic and racial inequities, threatening to undermine the broader benefits of economic growth as well as our region's quality of life. The vision and supporting goals, objectives and performance targets in this chapter aim to better integrate transportation and land use efforts to protect the region's economic prosperity, environmental quality and quality of life and improve the lives of the people who call this region home.

To achieve the region's vision for the future, everyone must work together to address inequities to build vibrant, walkable, bikeable, climate-friendly communities with affordable homes and safe, reliable, healthy and affordable transportation choices that reduce pollution, address growing congestion and protect critical natural areas that surround the region.

Achievement of the plan's vision and goals will occur through ongoing partnerships, engagement and implementation of a variety of policies, strategies and actions at the local, regional, state and federal levels. The vision laid out in these pages will take sustained, focused work from every partner in the region. The various jurisdictions in the region are expected to pursue policies, strategies and projects that contribute to achieving the regional vision and goals of the RTP to ensure an equitable, prosperous and sustainable future.

## Chapter organization

This chapter is organized into the following sections:

- 2.1 Outcomes-based framework to guide transportation planning and decision-making:** This section describes the outcomes-oriented, performance-based planning approach the plan uses to link transportation to a broader set of desired outcomes for vibrant communities, a healthy economy, equity and the environment. This approach also responds to more recent federal and state performance-based planning requirements.
- 2.2 Shared vision for the regional transportation system:** This section describes how the RTP will serve a key role in implementing the 2040 Growth Concept and supporting local aspirations for growth.
- 2.3 Goals and objectives:** This section lays out five goals and supporting objectives for the region’s transportation system. The goals and objectives establish policy and investment priorities that will guide future planning, investment decisions and monitoring.
- 2.4 Regional transportation performance targets:** This section lays performance targets for the region’s transportation system organized by the RTP goal areas. The performance targets are numerical benchmarks to assess the region’s progress in achieving RTP vision and goals. These targets draw from federal and state requirements and regional policies and will guide future planning, investment decisions and monitoring.

## 2.1 OUTCOMES-BASED FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING

Maintaining and growing a transportation system to meet the region’s needs requires consistent, long-term investment and ongoing maintenance.

The planning process provides opportunities for individuals and communities to define and articulate collective desires and aspirations for enhancing the quality of life in the region and their communities and identify where investments are most needed to deliver the plan’s vision. It provides an opportunity for communities to take stock of the successes that have been achieved through years of coordination and investment. It also requires thinking carefully about and being accountable to future generations, ensuring we get the greatest possible return on public investments and that everyone benefits from those returns.

As a major tool for ensuring stewardship of public investments, the RTP identifies needed next steps to achieve each of the six desired outcomes for the greater Portland region and helps us understand whether we are on the right track.

### DESIRED OUTCOMES

**VIBRANT COMMUNITIES** – People live, work and play in vibrant communities where their everyday needs are easily accessible.

**ECONOMIC PROSPERITY** – Current and future residents benefit from the region’s sustained economic competitiveness and prosperity.

**SAFE AND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION** – People have safe and reliable transportation choices that enhance their quality of life.

**LEADERSHIP ON CLIMATE CHANGE** – The region is a leader in minimizing contributions to global warming.

**CLEAN AIR AND WATER** – Current and future generations enjoy clean air, clean water and healthy ecosystems.

**EQUITY** – The benefits and burdens of growth and change are distributed equitably.

*As recommended by the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and adopted by the Metro Council in 2008 by Resolution No. 08-3940.*

The 2023 RTP continues to broaden the way that outcomes are used to measure success and define transportation system needs. The plan calls for making transportation investment decisions based on achieving multiple outcomes to preserve and enhance quality of life, the economy and the environment now and for future generations.

This plan updates the outcomes-based policy framework, first adopted in 2010, to focus on five interconnected goals – equity, climate, safety, mobility and the economy. The region’s six desired outcomes are prominently interwoven into the RTP goals and objectives and the policies in Chapter 3 that support those goals.

These goals were used to identify needs and prioritize and evaluate performance of the investments recommended in this plan. These updated goals and their supporting objectives (and related performance measures) will also be used to monitor how the transportation system is performing between scheduled plan updates.



## 2.2 SHARED VISION FOR THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Transportation planning and investment decisions and the region’s desired land use, social, economic and environmental outcomes are so interconnected that success of the 2040 Growth Concept hinges significantly on achieving the plan’s goals and objectives.

The RTP’s vision statement shown in Figure 2.1 presents an aspirational view of the future of the region’s transportation system that reflects the values and desired outcomes expressed by the public, policymakers and community and business leaders engaged in development of the plan.

**Figure 2.1: Vision for the regional transportation system**



This shared vision for the future provides a benchmark for building a transportation system that serves all people and businesses in the greater Portland region. This vision and supporting goals and objectives will serve as a foundation for identifying investment priorities and policies and measuring progress toward building a transportation system that delivers the outcomes we want.

## 2.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

RTP goals were first adopted in 2010 after significant engagement with communities, residents, businesses and stakeholders throughout the region. In 2014, the Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee (JPACT) approved the addition of a goal to demonstrate climate leadership and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2018, the goals, objectives and related performance measures and targets were refined to address new policies and near-term investment priorities for transportation equity, safety, Climate Smart Strategy implementation and managing congestion. In 2023, the goals, objectives and related performance measures and targets were further updated to focus on five interconnected goals – equity, climate, safety, mobility and the economy.

While the vision and goals are vital components of the plan, equally important are measurable objectives and quantifiable performance targets to track the region’s progress. Investments that achieve objectives and performance targets are critical for the region to be successful in realizing a fully-integrated, multimodal transportation system that achieves the goals of the RTP.

### *Defining terms*

#### **Multimodal**

*A transportation system distinguished by having multiple ways to travel (e.g., such as walking, bike, motor vehicle, bus, train, truck, air, marine).*

Continuing the practice established with the RTP adopted in 2010, the 2023 RTP includes transportation performance targets that support the outcomes-based framework reflected in the plan’s goals and objectives. The goals, objectives and performance targets provided policy direction for developing the investment strategy recommended in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 reports findings on how well the RTP performs across a broad array of measures and relative to the plan’s performance targets.

Performance targets are numerical benchmarks to assess the region’s progress in carrying out the RTP vision. These targets draw from federal and state legislation and regional policies and provide useful information on whether the region is making progress toward the RTP goals and support the region’s performance-based planning and decision-making framework shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: RTP performance-based planning and decision-making framework



Each **goal area** that follows is arranged similarly:

- A statement of the **goal** that describes a desired outcome or end state toward which actions are focused to make progress toward the plan’s vision.
- **Objectives** that identify a measurable desired outcome and means for achieving the goal to guide action within the plan period.
- Key **performance measures** that are used in three different ways to support the region’s transportation planning and decision-making process:
  - System performance measures – These are performance measures that are used to predict the future as part of an evaluation process using forecasted data. They can be applied at a system-level, corridor-level and/or project level and provide the planning process with a basis for evaluating alternatives and making decisions on future transportation investments.
  - Regional performance targets and thresholds – These are numerical goals or a stated direction of performance to be achieved within a specified time period, assigning a value to what the RTP is trying to achieve. Targets provided policy direction for developing the investment strategy recommended in Chapter 6 and address regional and state policies. Performance of the plan’s investment relative to the targets is reported in Chapter 7 to track the region’s progress

toward the plan’s vision and goals. Appendix K provides an overview of the region’s targets.

- Monitoring and reporting measures and targets – These are measures used to monitor changes based on actual empirical or observed data between updates to the RTP. Decision-makers can use this information between updates to evaluate the need for refinements to policies, investments or other elements of the plan based on what is learned. Broad sets of multimodal monitoring measures have been identified in support of implementing the region’s Climate Smart Strategy (Appendix J) and Congestion Management Process (see Appendix L). Some monitoring measures have targets for purposes of meeting federal performance-based planning requirements. See Section 7.2 in Chapter 7 for more information about the region’s performance-based planning framework.

The individual RTP goals, objectives and key system performance measures for each goal area follows. Several measures relate to multiple goals.

## Goal 1: Mobility options

*People and businesses can reach the jobs, goods, services and opportunities they need by well-connected, low-carbon travel options that are safe, affordable, convenient, reliable, efficient, accessible and welcoming.*



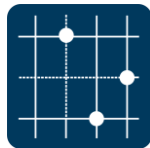
### Objectives

- **Objective 1.1 Travel options** – Plan communities and design and manage the transportation system to increase the proportion of trips made by walking, bicycling, shared rides and use of transit, and reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled.
- **Objective 1.2 System completion** – Complete all gaps in planned regional networks.
- **Objective 1.3 Access to transit** – Increase household and job access to current and planned frequent transit service.
- **Objective 1.4 Regional mobility** – Maintain reliable person-trip and freight mobility for all modes in the region’s mobility corridors consistent with the designated modal functions of each facility and planned transit service within each corridor.

### Key performance measures



**Vehicle miles traveled**



**System completeness**



**Throughway reliability**



**Mode share**



**Multimodal travel times**

Performance of the plan for these measures is reported in Chapter 7.

## Goal 2: Safe System

*Traffic deaths and serious crashes are eliminated, and all people are safe and secure when traveling in the region.*



### Objectives

- **Objective 2.1 Vision Zero** – Eliminate fatal and severe injury crashes for all modes of travel by 2035.
- **Objective 2.2 Transportation security** – Reduce the vulnerability of travelers and critical passenger and freight transportation infrastructure to crime and terrorism.
- **Objective 2.3 State of Good Repair** - Maintain or bring facilities for all modes up to a state of good repair.

### Key performance measure



Safety

Note: Metro has not developed the modeling tools to forecast crashes. Instead, the system evaluation identifies how much the region needs to reduce serious crashes in order to maintain progress toward its target of eliminating serious crashes by 2035 and compares the results to current data in order to assess whether the region is on track to meet its safety target.

### Goal 3: Equitable transportation

*Transportation system disparities experienced by Black, Indigenous and people of color and people with low incomes are eliminated. The disproportionate barriers that people of color, people who speak limited English, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, older adults, youth and other marginalized communities face in meeting their travel needs are removed.*



#### Objectives

- **Objective 3.1 Transportation equity** – Eliminate disparities related to access, safety, affordability and health outcomes experienced by people of color and other marginalized communities.
- **Objective 3.2 Barrier-free transportation** – Eliminate barriers that people of color, people with low incomes, youth, older adults, people with disabilities and other marginalized communities face to meeting their travel needs.

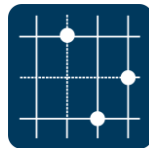
#### Key performance measures\*



Access to transit



Access to jobs



System  
completion



Affordability\*\*

Performance of plan for these measures is reported in Chapter 7.

\* Key performance measures compare RTP equity focus areas with areas outside RTP equity focus areas.

\*\* A performance measure for affordability is not included in the RTP system evaluation but will be included in future updates to the plan as a method is developed. Observed data is reported in Chapter 7.

## Goal 4: Thriving Economy

*Centers, ports, industrial areas, employment areas and other regional destinations are accessible through a variety of multimodal connections that help people, communities and businesses thrive and prosper.*



### Objectives

- **Objective 4.1 Connected region** – Focus growth and transportation investment in designated 2040 growth areas to build an integrated system of throughways, arterial streets, freight routes, intermodal facilities, transit services and bicycle and pedestrian facilities with efficient connections between modes and communities that provide access to jobs, markets and community places within and beyond the region.
- **Objective 4.2 Access to industry and freight intermodal facilities** – Maintain access to industry and freight intermodal facilities by a reliable and seamless freight transportation system that includes air cargo, pipeline, trucking, rail and marine services to facilitate efficient and competitive shipping choices for goods movement in, to and from the region.
- **Objective 4.3 Access to jobs and talent** – Attract new businesses and family-wage jobs and retain those that are already located in the region while increasing the number and variety of jobs that households can reach within a reasonable travel time.
- **Objective 4.4 Transportation and housing affordability** – Reduce the share of income that households in the region spend on transportation to lower overall household spending on transportation and housing.
- **Objective 4.5 State of Good Repair** – Maintain or bring facilities up to a state of good repair and avoid deferred maintenance to prevent future, more costly and resource intensive repairs to the system and impediments to moving people and goods.



**Key performance measures**



**Access to jobs**



**Access to  
industry and  
freight  
facilities**



**Multimodal  
Travel**



**Affordability\***

Performance of the plan for these measures is reported in Chapter 7.

## Goal 5: Climate action and resilience

*People, communities and ecosystems are protected, healthier and more resilient. Carbon emissions and other pollution are substantially reduced as more people travel by transit, walking and bicycling. People travel shorter distances to get where they need to go.*



### Objectives

- **Objective 5.1 Climate change mitigation** – Meet adopted targets for reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled per capita in order to slow climate change.
- **Objective 5.2 Climate-friendly communities** – Increase the share of jobs and households in walkable, mixed-use areas served by current and planned frequent transit service.
- **Objective 5.3 Resource conservation** – Preserve and protect the region’s biological, water, historic and culturally important plants, habitats and landscapes, **and** integrate green infrastructure strategies to maintain habitat connectivity, reduce stormwater run-off and reduce light pollution.
- **Objective 5.4 Adaptation and resilience** – Increase the resilience of communities and regional transportation infrastructure to the effects of climate change and natural hazards including seismic events, helping to minimize risks for communities.
- **Objective 5.5 State of Good Repair** – Maintain or bring facilities up to a state of good repair and avoid deferred maintenance to prevent future more costly and resource intensive repairs.

### Key performance measures



**Greenhouse  
gas emissions**



**Vehicle miles  
traveled**



**Potential  
resources  
impact**

Performance of plan for these measures is reported in Chapter 7. Appendix F reports on potential resources impacts.

## 2.4 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Table 2.1 summarizes the performance measures and targets that are included in the RTP, organized by the five RTP goal areas. These targets come from a variety of sources, but all are founded in the policies described in Chapter 3. Some of the targets listed below come from state and federal agencies that oversee the RTP process, some have been formally adopted through the RTP process and others are implicit in RTP policies that call for improving certain conditions or prioritizing specific investments. Some of the targets listed below are easier to achieve than others, but even the more aspirational targets help to clarify the region's goals and provide benchmarks against which to gauge progress.

**Table 2.1: RTP performance measures, targets and thresholds at a glance**

Measure name	Description
<i>Mobility</i>	
Mode share	The RTP aims to triple transit, bike and pedestrian mode shares relative to the performance targets base year of 2010 (7.7% for transit, 3.7% for walk, 2.3% for bike <sup>1</sup> ).
Access to jobs	The RTP prioritizes improving access to jobs via driving and transit relative to the current base year of 2020 the percent of regional jobs accessible by transit was 7% and by driving it was 41%.
Multimodal access	The RTP aims to provide the same level of access to jobs via transit (or greater) as via driving so that transit offers the same efficiency and convenience as driving.
System completion	The RTP aims to complete the motor vehicle, transit, bicycle, trail and pedestrian networks, with completion of bicycle, trail and pedestrian networks by 2035.
System completion near transit	The RTP prioritizes completing the bicycle and pedestrian system near transit (relative to the regional average) in order to provide safe and convenient access to stations and stops.
Access to options	The RTP aims to increase the share of households that are located near transit and bicycle or pedestrian facilities relative to the current base year.
Throughway reliability	The RTP aims to have no more than four hours in a day when average travel speeds fall below 35 miles per hour on the region's limited-access throughways (freeways) and 20 miles per hour on other designated throughways (signalized highways) so that the region's throughways are reliable. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> American Community Survey

<sup>2</sup> Figure 3.23 in Chapter 3 designates throughways in the region.

Measure name	Description
<i>Safety</i>	
Serious crashes	The RTP aims to eliminate transportation related fatalities and serious injuries for all users of the region’s transportation system by 2035 with a 16% reduction by 2020 (compared to 2015) and a 50% reduction by 2025.
<i>Equity</i>	
Serious crashes and equity	The RTP aims to eliminate transportation related fatalities and serious injuries for all users of the region’s transportation system in equity focus areas with a 16% reduction by 2020 (compared to 2015), and a 50% reduction by 2025.
Safe system completion and equity	The RTP prioritizes completing the bicycle and pedestrian system in equity focus areas (relative to other communities) to provide safe streets for the most vulnerable travelers.
Access to jobs and equity	The RTP prioritizes improving access to jobs within equity focus areas (relative to other communities).
<i>Economy</i>	
Travel times	The RTP aims to maintain driving and transit travel times along regional mobility corridors relative to the current base year.
System completion – job centers	The RTP prioritizes completing the bicycle and pedestrian system in job and activity centers (relative to the regional average) in order to provide safe and convenient options for short trips and connections to transit.
<i>Climate and environment</i>	
Climate	The RTP aims to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions from light-duty vehicles and per capita vehicle miles traveled in order to meet climate targets set by the State which are to reduce household-based vehicle miles traveled per person by 35% by 2050, with a 30% reduction by 2045 and a 25% reduction by 2040, compared to 2005.
Climate	The RTP aims to help meet revised statewide goals identified in the Governor’s Executive Order 20-04 that require accelerated reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to levels at least 45% below 1990 emissions levels by 2035 and at least 80 % below 1990 levels by the year 2050.
Air quality	The RTP aims to keep air pollution from mobile sources levels below thresholds set by the federal government.

All regional performance targets are for the year 2045, unless otherwise specified. The performance targets are the highest order evaluation measures in the performance-based policy framework – providing key criteria by which progress towards the plan goals can be assessed. The aspirational performance targets set quantifiable goals for the achieving

the plan's desired policy outcomes within a certain timeframe, though not all goals have targets, and several targets address multiple goals.

In comparison, system performance measures are used to evaluate changes between current conditions (in 2020) and future conditions (in 2045) with implementation of the transportation investments identified in the plan. Performance of the plan is reported in Chapter 7.

Complementary performance measures identified in Appendix J and Appendix L have monitoring targets that will help monitor progress towards meeting the RTP goals and objectives in the shorter-term, between and during scheduled updates to the RTP.

In accordance with federal regulations [23 CFR 450.320](#) and [23 CFR 450.324](#), Appendix F includes an environmental assessment that identifies natural, historic and culturally important resources that intersect with and may be affected by projects in the plan and mitigation activities to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

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If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we’ve already crossed paths.

**So, hello. We’re Metro – nice to meet you.**

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November 30, 2023