



# Planning for transit

This factsheet is intended to assist cities and counties in updating their local transportation system plans to align with the Regional Transportation Plan.



Increasing transit service and making it more convenient, accessible, affordable, and frequent—especially for those who rely on it—are critical to the future of the region.

As outlined in the RTP, transit is key to supporting the region's 2040 Growth Concept, which calls for focusing future growth in regional and town centers, station communities and corridors. A regional transit network, coupled with development patterns and policies that support taking transit, biking and walking, will be necessary to help the region:

- Provide more housing and transportation choices;
- Decrease dependency on automobiles;
- More equitably serve communities of color and other marginalized communities;
- Reduce overall transportation and housing costs;

## Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) transit policies

### RTP section 3.3.5.3

- Policy 1** Provide a high-quality, safe and accessible transit network that makes transit convenient and comfortable for everyone to use.
- Policy 2** Equitably prioritize service for those relying on transit or lacking travel options; ensure safety and security; improve quality of life (e.g. air quality); and support community stability, especially for marginalized communities.
- Policy 3** Create a transit system that encourages people to use transit instead of driving alone and aims for a clean, net-zero emissions fleet to support climate goals.
- Policy 4** Maintain the region's transit infrastructure to improve safety, reliability and resiliency while minimizing life-cycle cost and impact on the environment.
- Policy 5** Complete a well-connected network of local and regional transit on most arterial streets – prioritizing expanding all-day frequent service along corridors and main streets linking town centers to each other and neighborhoods to centers.

- Lead healthier lives; and
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### Regional transit vision

The regional transit network includes a variety of transit modes, each with a special function in the overall system, to help the region concentrate growth and development in line with the 2040 Growth Concept.

**High capacity transit (HCT)** is defined by its function to carry high volumes of passengers quickly and efficiently from one place to another. It includes light rail (MAX), rapid bus (FX) and commuter rail (WES). Transit Policy 6 describes its role in the vision. The [HCT Strategy](#) (see page 37) urges partners to take action on land use and corridor planning, transit priority investments, anti-displacement policies, and bicycle and pedestrian access improvements to get identified corridors ready for investment.

**Frequent bus** has service typically 15 minutes or better throughout the day. It is the top choice for Better Bus roadway priority treatments improving speed and reliability. Transit Policy 5 describes its role in the vision. The [Regional Transit Strategy](#) (see pages iii-iv) urges partners to take action on transit oriented development, transit supportive street designs, better bus investments and coordinated access projects.

**Regional and local bus** has service typically 30 minutes or better throughout the day connecting people via regional or local routes. Transit Policy 5 describes its role in the vision. The [Regional Transit Strategy](#) (pages

The [Local HCT-supportive TSP Toolbox](#) includes specific guidance on best practices in transit planning (including but not limited to HCT).

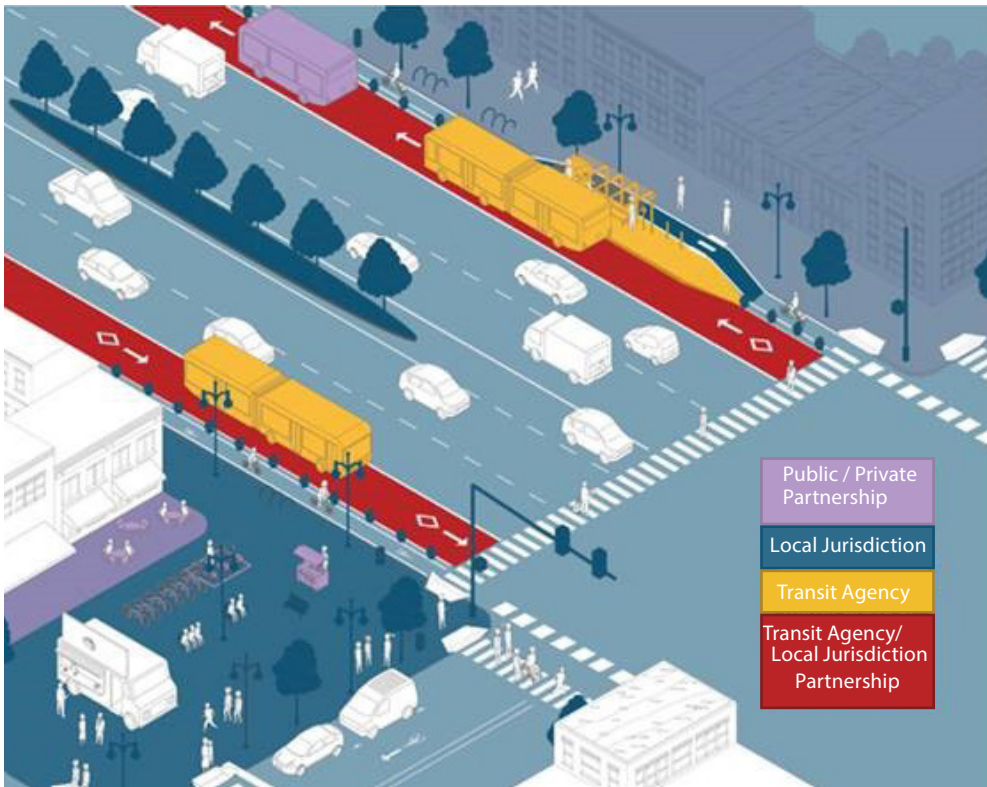
iii-iv) urges partners to take action on prioritizing ensuring comfortable access for people walking and bicycling and facilitating convenient transit connections.

**Community connectors** includes smaller, more flexible shuttles, vanpools and microtransit. They connect people to local destinations and to frequent transit in identified areas shown in the vision map. The 2026 [Community Connector Transit Study](#) will explore the ways they could play an expanded role in improving transit accessibility and recommend partner actions.

**Intercity transit** includes rail or bus services along mobility corridors. Transit Policy 8 describes its role in the vision. The [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (see Chapter 3 page 3-123) and [Oregon State Rail Plan](#) call for partnership, study, investment and financing action.

Implementing the vision will require the following:

- *Service improvements:* local and regional transit service improvements designed to meet current and projected demand in line with local and regional visions and plans
- *Capital investments in transit:* enhanced transit strategies that make Better Bus such as signal priority and/or dedicated lanes, or high capacity transit options



## Measures of success

- Increase of transit mode share
- Increase of daily transit trips
- Increase in homes, jobs, and essential destinations near transit
- Share of the transit network that is complete
- Share of the pedestrian and bicycle networks near transit that are complete
- Change in transit travel time
- Share of investments filling gaps in the transit network and/or gaps in walking and bicycling connections near transit stops
- Comparisons for equity focus areas and non-equity focus areas

See the [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (Chapter 7) for more measures.

- *Transit-supportive elements*: including programs, policies, land use, capital investments, incentives to use transit and physical improvements such as sidewalks, marked crossings and bicycle parking at stations

## Local transit plans

Prioritization of public transit projects to receive federal funding occurs through the regional decision-making process with participation of the public, cities, counties and transportation agencies of the region. Service providers such as TriMet and South Metro Area Regional Transit (SMART) may only apply to receive federal funds for projects that are included in the RTP and must consider the needs of

## Overview of local transit plan requirements

Local transportation system plans shall include a transit plan and the following actions and investments:

- Adopt a transit system map consistent with the Regional Transit Network Map (RTP Figure 3-26)
- Amend development code regulations to require commercial development to locate buildings near major transit stops
- Adopt site design standards for new retail, office, multifamily and institutional buildings located near or at major transit stops
- Provide marked pedestrian crossings at major transit stops and direct and logical pedestrian crossings at other transit stops
- Consider transit facility needs and Metro's

[Designing Livable Streets and Trails Guide](#) when designing street improvements

- Investments to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to all existing transit stops and planned major transit stops (see Figure 3-26 the Regional Transit Network Map in Chapter 3 of the Regional Transportation Plan on page 3-109)
- Improvements for transit access, transit stops and stations and transit service speed and reliability at light rail station areas and along rapid, frequent and regional bus corridors

For complete language, refer to the [Regional Transportation Functional Plan](#) section 3.08.120 Transit System Design.