

TransPlan Chapter 1: Introduction

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The Importance of Transportation

Transportation is one of the key contributors to the Eugene-Springfield region’s quality of life and economic viability. Generally, the need for transportation stems from our need to access goods, services, and other people within and beyond the region. The ease by which we are able to get from home to school, to a job, to medical services, to shopping and back again is dependent upon the efficiency and effectiveness of the region’s transportation system.

As the region grows, additional demands are put on the system. With limited resources, determining the best means for improving the system and meeting future demand is challenging. The framework for making decisions on the future of the region’s transportation system has become more complex in recent years. Federal, state, and local policy calls for consideration of a wide range of factors in the preparation of a regional transportation plan, including:

- ⇒ Identifying the means to reduce reliance on the automobile by increasing the transportation choices available in the region,
- ⇒ Consideration of the interrelationships among the region’s land use and transportation,
- ⇒ Consideration of the financial, environmental, and neighborhood impacts of future plans, and
- ⇒ Identifying strategies to maintain and improve the safety of the transportation system.

Ultimately, the most successful transportation plan will be one that enables us to minimize the time and resources required in the future to access the goods and services we need.

Trends and Issues

The region is anticipating significant population and employment growth. The population of the Eugene-Springfield area is expected to grow by 41 percent by 2015. Employment in the region is expected to grow by 43 percent during that same period. A forecast of trends during the planning period points to several issues should land use patterns and travel behavior continue as they exist today.

- ⇒ Congestion would rise dramatically, increasing the cost of travel and reducing the efficiency of the region's roadway network. Congested miles of travel would increase from 2.7 percent of total miles traveled to 10.6 percent, a 293 percent increase. Vehicle miles traveled per capita would go from 10.99 to 11.83, a 7.7 percent increase.
- ⇒ One of the primary roles played by public agencies is in the provision of transportation system infrastructure. Without a balanced approach to the development of future improvements, little change will be made in the transportation choices available to the region. With little improvement in choices, the proportion of drive alone auto trips would increase while the proportion of alternative modes use would decrease.
- ⇒ Shorter trip distance is one factor that contributes to making the use of alternative modes more attractive. The percentage of total trips under one mile in length would decline by 9.2 percent.

Overview of the Regional Transportation System Plan

The *Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan (TransPlan)* guides regional transportation system planning and development in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area. *TransPlan* includes provisions for meeting the transportation demand of residents over a 20-year planning horizon while addressing transportation issues and making changes that can contribute to improvements in the region's quality of life and economic vitality.

There is a great deal of flexibility in choosing how the region's transportation demand is met via supply decisions and demand management strategies. With the balanced and integrated combination of land use, transit, demand management, and bicycle strategies included in *TransPlan*, significant progress can be made away from the trends. Notably, while congestion will still increase significantly over existing conditions, *TransPlan's* proposed combination of strategies will help reduce future congestion by 48 percent over forecasted trends.

Compared to the future Trend Conditions, there will also be:

- ⇒ 8 percent less vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita,
- ⇒ 20.5 percent more trips under one mile in length,
- ⇒ 9.3 percent fewer drive alone trips,
- ⇒ 29 percent more non-auto trips, and
- ⇒ 11 percent less carbon monoxide emissions.

In addition, *TransPlan* calls for significant increases in the amount and convenience of transit service, increases in the amount of bikeways and sidewalks, and an expansion of the existing program of transportation demand management (TDM) travel incentives.

The *TransPlan* theme, *Improving Our Transportation Choices*, reflects the plan's focus to provide citizens with a range of safe, convenient, and efficient transportation options characterized by smooth connections between modes. *TransPlan* strives to support the need to diversify transportation choices, while avoiding reliance on any one transportation mode or method of managing the transportation system.

TransPlan establishes the framework upon which all public agencies can make consistent and coordinated planning decisions regarding inter- and intrajurisdictional transportation. The regional planning process ensures that the planning activities and investments of the local jurisdictions are coordinated in terms of intent, timing, and effect. *TransPlan* sets forth the long-range policy framework for decision making for the following elements of the region's multi-modal transportation system:

- ⇒ Regional roadways,
- ⇒ Regional transit system,
- ⇒ Regional bikeways and pedestrian circulation,
- ⇒ Regional goods movement (multiple modes), and
- ⇒ Regional aspects of other modes, including air, rail, and inter-city bus service.

Other policy documents and ordinances, such as refinement plans, set forth guidelines for elements of the transportation system that are local rather than regional in nature.

Implementation actions accompany the **policy element** as a core component of *TransPlan*. The implementation actions consist of adopted multi-modal capital investment actions and recommended (optional) planning and program actions for carrying out plan policies. The range of implementation actions ensures that local jurisdictions have flexibility in implementing regional policies.

During the *TransPlan* development process, extensive analyses were completed on a wide range of alternative strategies. Based on these analyses, a series of conclusions were drawn about transportation and land use planning in the region that prepared the way for development of the draft *TransPlan* policy framework. The conclusions resulted from consideration of several factors, including: staff research and professional experience, input from *TransPlan* stakeholders and appointed and elected officials, community survey results, results of studies conducted as part of the *TransPlan* update process, and output from the computer models.

Key transportation planning conclusions are summarized below:

The region can lessen the impact of the transportation challenges by implementing a balanced and integrated set of land use, transportation demand management (TDM), and transportation system improvement strategies.

TransPlan strategies include nodal development and transit-supportive land use patterns, new and expanded TDM programs, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), in addition to roadway projects that benefit pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. All of these strategies can increase the attractiveness of transportation modes other than the single-occupant vehicle (SOV). The integration of transportation and land use planning is especially important to support compact urban growth, which provides for more pedestrian-, bicycle-, and transit-friendly environments, rather than urban sprawl that supports auto dependency.

TransPlan recognizes that sole reliance on more and bigger roadways to meet the transportation demand is short-sighted. Even if adequate funding was available, given the growth anticipated in the region, it is unreasonable to assume the region can build its way out of traffic congestion. The technical evaluation of *TransPlan* alternatives indicated that the travel demand associated with growth will overload the transportation system, even with major capacity-increasing projects.

Experience from cities all over the world suggests that building roads encourages more people to use cars, thereby perpetuating the transportation challenges. In addition, public sentiment indicates resistance to expanding existing roadways and building new roads that would impact open space and neighborhoods.

The technical evaluation of the alternative plan concepts indicated that implementation of a balanced set of strategies, such as those mentioned above, will enable the region to reduce reliance on the auto. Projections indicated fewer VMT system-wide, fewer miles of the transportation system experiencing traffic congestion, decreased number of drive-alone auto trips, increased amounts of shared auto trips, and an increase in shorter trip lengths.

The ability of the region to fund capacity-increasing roadway projects will be limited by other allocation decisions.

The region lacks the financial capacity to add enough streets and highways to maintain existing levels of service (LOS). Funding for capacity-increasing projects is impacted by other funding decisions, including the priority and the amount of resources allocated to operations, maintenance, and preservation of the existing system.

Implementation and expansion of TDM strategies can contribute to greater use of transportation modes other than the single-occupant vehicle.

It is unrealistic to assume that automobile dependency can be eliminated, but it can be managed and complemented with cost-effective modes of transportation other than autos. Encouraging the use of transportation modes other than the SOV will become more important as the region grows and traffic congestion levels increase. The technical evaluation of alternative plan concepts indicated that TDM strategies can contribute to greater use of modes such as bicycling, walking, transit, and carpooling.

TransPlan focuses on voluntary demand management strategies, such as incentives (e.g., free or reduced-cost bus pass programs). In the future, the region may explore opportunities to establish market-based, user-pay programs to offset subsidization of the true cost of automobile use and other transportation services.

The region can maintain conformity with air quality standards over the next 20 years.

The EMME2 Travel Forecasting Model indicated that the region will be able to maintain conformity with existing national air quality standards through implementation of any of the alternative plan concepts. Despite traffic growth, the offsetting effects of less-polluting and more fuel-efficient new vehicles will cause a net decline in emissions, even under trend conditions. The attainment and maintenance of air quality standards is primarily due to improved auto emission technology, rather than reduced reliance on autos.

Participating Agencies and Geographic Area

TransPlan represents a coordinated effort of public agencies and citizens. The local jurisdictions involved in regional transportation planning include the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), the cities of Eugene and Springfield, Lane County, and Lane Transit District (LTD). Other agencies involved in the planning process include the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority (LRAPA), Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Agency (FTA).

The *TransPlan* study area is illustrated in Figure 1.

Because *TransPlan* serves as both the federally required Regional Transportation Plan for the Eugene-Springfield area and as the Transportation Functional Plan for the *Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan (Metro Plan)*, two planning horizons are referred to in the document: 2015 and 2021. The 2015 planning horizon is used to be consistent with the 2015 *Metro Plan* planning horizon. In particular, forecasted regional land use allocations use the *Metro Plan*'s 2015 land uses as a basis. The 2015 planning horizon is used in conjunction with

the Performance Measures contained in Chapter 4 that are a requirement of the Land Conservation and Development Commission's (LCDC) Transportation Planning Rule (TPR).

A 2021 planning horizon has been developed to meet federal requirements for maintaining at least a 20-year financial constraint and air quality conformity determination. Because there is no official land use allocation beyond 2015, the 2021 forecasts represent an extrapolation of 2015 population and employment. Revenue and Cost estimates used in *TransPlan* are for 2021.

***TransPlan* Legal Status and Adopted Sections**

Local jurisdictions will adopt *TransPlan* as the region's transportation plan. The portions of *TransPlan* that will be adopted as *Metro Plan* policy amendments include goals, policies and 20-year fiscally constrained Capital Investment Action project lists (programmed and unprogrammed projects).

Under state law, *TransPlan* is a functional plan of the *Metro Plan*. The *Metro Plan* is the official long-range general plan (public policy document) for the region comprised of the cities of Eugene and Springfield and metropolitan Lane County. The *Metro Plan* establishes the broad framework upon which Eugene, Springfield, and Lane County make coordinated land use decisions. As a functional plan, *TransPlan* must be consistent with the *Metro Plan*. *Metro Plan* amendments required for consistency will be adopted by the elected officials concurrent with the adoption of *TransPlan*.

See Appendix F: *Metro Plan* Text Amendments for a description of proposed amendments.

Regulatory Framework and Ongoing Nature of Regional Transportation Planning

Federal, state, regional, and local requirements comprise the regulatory framework that shapes the Eugene-Springfield region's transportation planning process. The two most influential pieces of legislation are the federal *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century* (TEA 21) (successor to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act [ISTEA]) and the Oregon TPR. Urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more people are required by federal statute to have a regional transportation plan that demonstrates consideration of several factors, such as system preservation and efficiency, energy conservation, and congestion relief. The plan must also be in compliance with National Ambient Air Quality Standards and be constrained to financial resources reasonably expected to be available.

In compliance with provisions in TEA 21 and the TPR, *TransPlan* contains transportation policies and expected actions and is financially constrained to revenues reasonably expected to be available. *TransPlan* includes demonstration of compliance with federal and state air quality requirements, a description of the plan amendment process, and documentation of the plan update public involvement process.

The ongoing nature of regional transportation planning allows *TransPlan* to be a dynamic plan of action for the future transportation system, rather than a static snapshot in time. The range of implementation actions and plan amendment and update processes ensure that *TransPlan* will adapt to meet changing conditions within the region, as well as adapt to residents' changing needs. The plan's implementation and further refinement will continue through the collaborative efforts of citizens and organizations that own, operate, regulate, and use the transportation system.

TransPlan is particularly important for guiding transportation public policy and investment decision making over the three- to five-year period following plan adoption, until the next plan update. Section 450.222 of the federal metropolitan planning regulations requires the transportation plan to be reviewed and updated at least every three years in maintenance and nonattainment areas and at least every five years in attainment areas. The Eugene-Springfield region is designated as a maintenance area for carbon monoxide and designated as a nonattainment area for particulate matter (PM₁₀).

Figure 2, Context for *TransPlan*, illustrates how *TransPlan* is integrated into the overall transportation planning regulatory framework.

Fundamental Components of Transportation Planning

The *TransPlan* **policy framework** (Chapter Two) and **implementation actions** (Chapter Three) are structured around three fundamental components of transportation planning:

1. Land use,
2. Transportation demand management, and
3. Transportation system improvements.

TransPlan uses these components in a balanced and integrated manner to achieve results. These components can be visualized as the three sides of a balanced triangle, as illustrated in Figure 3. The triangle is supported by a foundation of finance policies and implementation actions. Finance policies provide the direction needed to fund implementation of the land use, demand management, and system improvement policies.

The **land use** component of transportation planning is addressed by *TransPlan* policies and implementation actions that encourage meeting the need for transportation-efficient development patterns, such as nodal development and transit-supportive land use patterns. These development patterns reduce trip lengths and auto dependency and support transit, bicycling, and walking.

The **demand management** component is supported by *TransPlan* policies and implementation actions that strive to meet the need to reduce demand on the transportation system. This reduced demand can occur through actions that eliminate the need for vehicle trips and increase the use of transit, carpooling and vanpooling, bicycling, and walking.

System improvements are supported by *TransPlan* policies and implementation actions that address the need for improved operations and maintenance of the existing system and investments in system infrastructure and services. *TransPlan* emphasizes the integration and coordination of system improvements and development patterns.

The *TransPlan* Update Process

TransPlan addresses trends and issues related to growth and changes in the community's needs and attitudes since the last transportation plan was adopted in 1986. *TransPlan* is the result of an extensive update process that represents a comprehensive and integrated approach to transportation planning. The update process encompassed extensive public involvement, a broad range of technical analyses and studies, and the expertise of staff, consultants, public officials, and stakeholders. See Appendix C: *TransPlan* Update Process Documentation for a detailed description of the update process, including public involvement.

A timeline of the four phases of the *TransPlan* update is presented in Figure 4.

Phase I, Issues Identification, began in June 1992 and focused on publicizing the kickoff of the *TransPlan* update and identifying the issues, needs, and concerns of community residents about

transportation and land use planning. Phase I included identification of federal and state requirements with which *TransPlan* needed to comply.

Phase II, Alternatives Development, began in July 1993 and focused on identifying a range of strategies to address issues. Public involvement work in Phase II was centered around the stakeholder process. Phase II work included a number of special studies that supported strategy analysis.

Phase III, Alternatives Evaluation and Draft Plan Direction, began in October 1995 and focused on developing and evaluating alternative plan concepts and obtaining direction on the policy framework for the draft plan.

Phase IV, Draft Plan Development, Review, and Adoption, focused on developing, reviewing, and revising the draft plan and adopting the final plan. The public review began in February 1998 with release of the draft plan. Two open houses were conducted and four public hearings and two joint worksessions were held with the planning commissions of Eugene, Springfield, and Lane County, and the Lane County Roads Advisory Committee (RAC). In addition, 21 individual combined worksessions were held with the planning commissions and RAC. This review resulted in a set of recommendations from those advisory bodies to their respective elected officials.

The May 1999 Revised Draft *TransPlan* went through an extensive public and adopting official review. A variety of techniques were used to inform and involve the public including direct mail, broad distribution of *TransPlan*, website information, direct contact in-person and via e-mail; Metro TV; distribution of *TransPlan* summary to all Register-Guard, Springfield News, and Business Week subscribers; display ads; news releases; active contact with print, radio, and television media; public comment periods; and public hearings. Throughout the deliberations of the Revised Draft *TransPlan* by the adopting officials, the public was informed of all meetings and any opportunities for public comment.

TransPlan adopting officials first opened the public record on May 1, 1999, and closed it on October 29, 1999. Public hearings were conducted on September 29, 1999, and October 20, 1999, in which approximately 685 people submitted testimony in the form of an oral presentation at one of the two public hearings, e-mail testimony, by letter, or by petition. *TransPlan* staff prepared a response to the public testimony, which was provided to the adopting officials and the general public.

TransPlan adopting officials held an extensive amount of worksessions to review and deliberate on the public comment and the Revised *TransPlan*. Fifty-four individual worksessions were held prior the LCOG Board adoption scheduled for June 28, 2001. In addition, the adopting officials conducted three joint worksessions to resolve any outstanding issues that resulted from the individual meetings. Adopting officials then forwarded the outstanding issues to the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) for dispute resolution. All adopting officials received agendas and materials for all MPC meetings. The public was kept informed of the MPC meetings and opportunities for public comment.

MPC formed two sub-committees to resolve the outstanding differences. One committee was assigned to resolve the seven outstanding issues and the other was directed to identify and recommend Alternative Plan Performance Measures, which were ultimately approved by the LCDC. Both committees met several times prior to sending their recommendations to the full MPC. All issues approved by MPC were sent to the adopting officials for concurrence by the four adopting agencies.

Plan Organization and Contents

The remaining sections in *TransPlan* are summarized below:

Chapter Two: Policy Element

- Presents goals, objectives, and policies that comprise the regional transportation planning policy framework for the region

Chapter Three: Plan Implementation

- Describes adopted Capital Investment Actions
- Describes optional Planning and Program Actions
- Presents a financial plan
- Describes air quality conformity
- Presents a parking management plan

Chapter Four: Plan Performance and Implementation Monitoring

- Describes anticipated plan impacts and achievements
- Discusses the program for monitoring plan progress over time
- Summarizes the plan update cycle

Appendix A: Maps

Contains the following maps:

1. Potential Nodal Development Areas
2. Financially Constrained Roadway Projects:
3. Future Roadway Projects
4. Federally Designated Roadway Functional Classification
5. Bus Rapid Transit System
6. Financially Constrained Bikeway System Projects
7. Priority Bikeway System Projects
8. Future Bikeway System Projects
9. Goods Movement and Intermodal Facilities

Appendix B: Level of Service Standards

- Describes application of the level of service policy.

Appendix C: *TransPlan* Update Process Documentation

- Documents public involvement and technical analysis efforts undertaken to develop *TransPlan*.

Appendix D: List of Supporting Documents

- Lists supporting documentation that was developed during the update process, including related plans, working papers, and final reports.

Appendix E: Glossary and Acronyms

- Provides acronyms and a glossary of key transportation and land use terminology used in *TransPlan*.

Appendix F: *Metro Plan* Text Amendments

- Provides proposed amendments to *Metro Plan*.

Appendix G: LCDC Order Approving Alternative Plan Performance Measures

Chapter 1 Figures

Figure 1

TransPlan Study Area Map

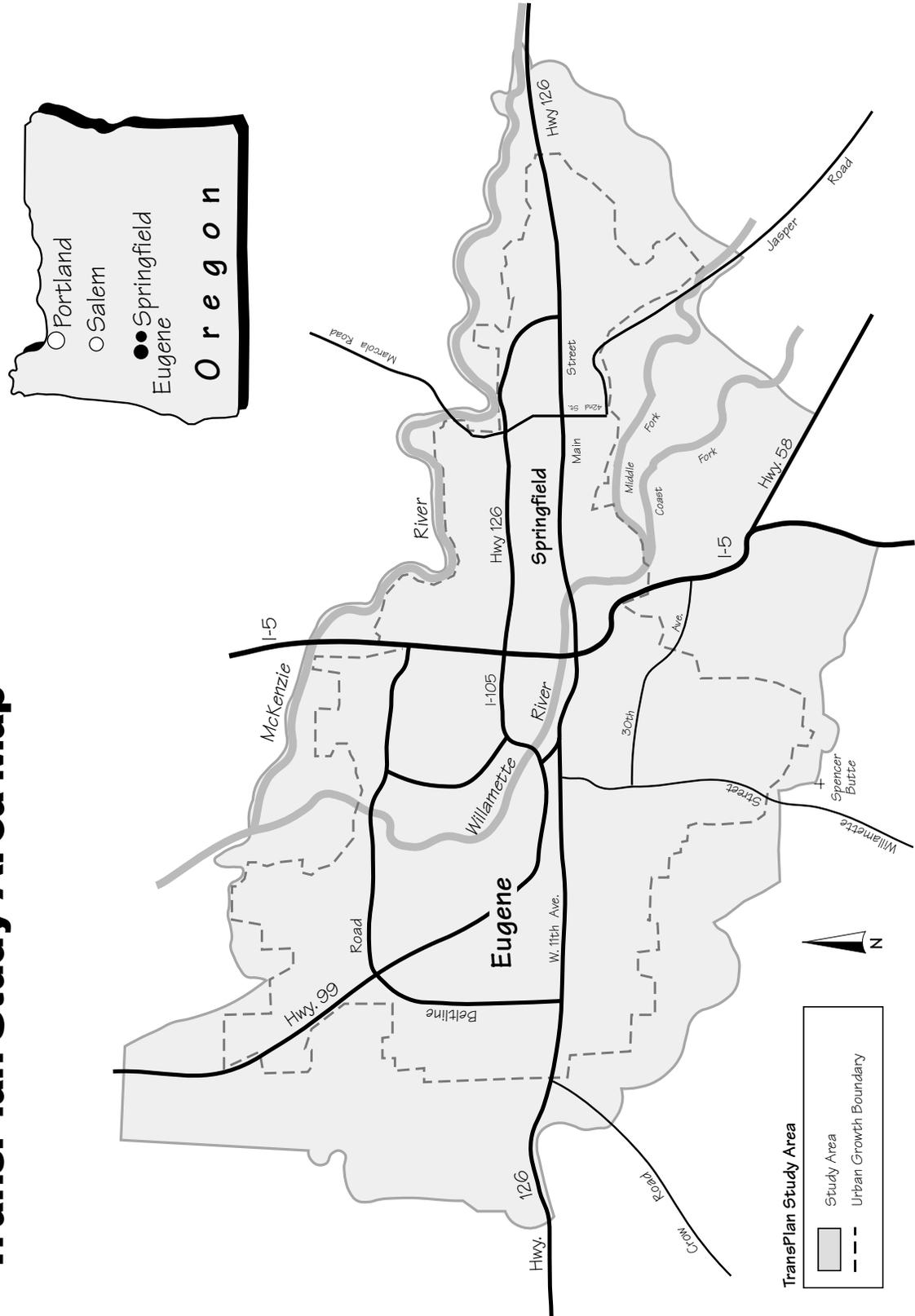


Figure 2

Context for TransPlan

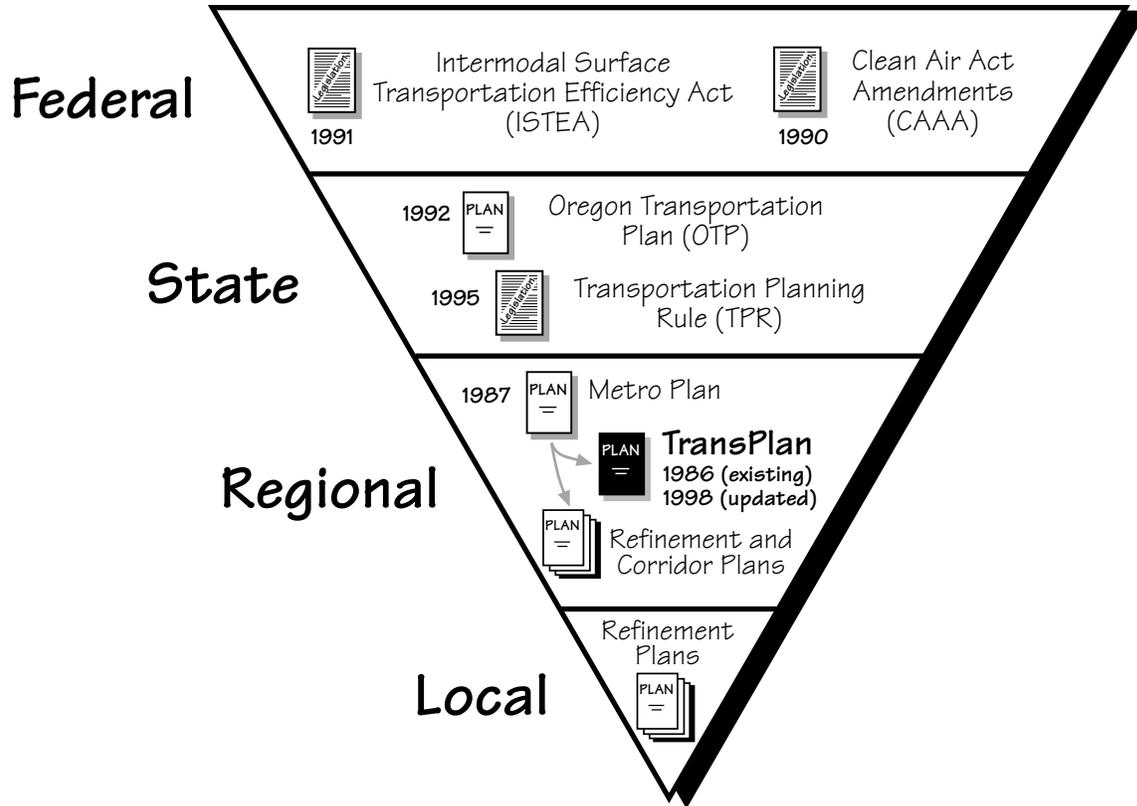


Figure 3

Fundamental Components of Transportation Planning

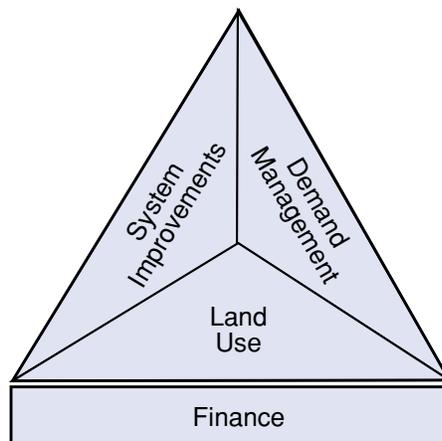
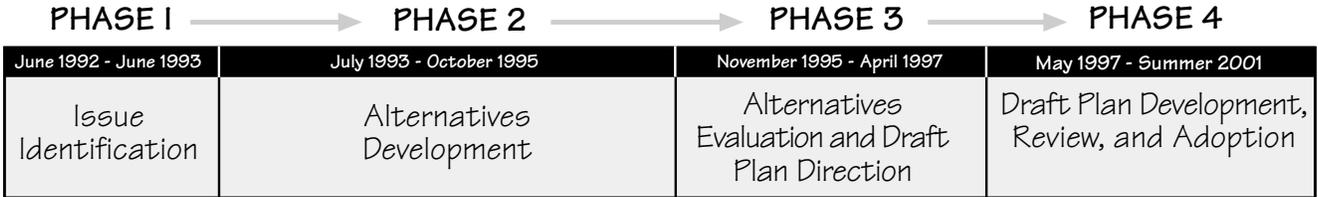


Figure 4

TransPlan Update Timeline



Agency Logos

