



Albany Area Regional Transportation Plan



Albany Area Regional Transportation Plan **Public Involvement Plan**

April 2015

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Albany Area Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transit Development Plan (TDP) is to plan for transportation improvements such as roads, sidewalks, bikeways, and transit, in the next 20+ years for the greater Albany area. The project will look at what exists today, forecast demand, identify and analyze future options, and make recommendations for a balanced and efficient transportation system. The project will collaborate between agencies and jurisdictions, build on good decisions that have already been made, and create a common vision for the future of transportation in the area. Involving citizens in the planning process is essential to build integrity in project outcomes.

The Regional Transportation Plan is required by the Federal Government, funded through the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), and managed by the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO). Metropolitan Planning Organizations encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of regional transportation systems that:

- Serve the mobility needs of people and freight;
- Foster economic growth and development; and
- Minimize transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution.

In addition to the inclusion of transit projects in the RTP, AAMPO is developing a Transit Development Plan to provide a framework for planning public transportation services in the greater Albany Area. The TDP will provide a roadmap for investments in new or expanded services to meet community needs.

PROJECT AREA

AAMPO is located in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, and the AAMPO ‘planning area’ covers portions of Linn, Benton, and Marion Counties and as well as the Cities of Albany, Jefferson, Millersburg, and Tangent. Major roadways within the AAMPO planning area include US 20, OR 99E, OR 34, OR 164, and Interstate 5. The transportation system includes roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, rail facilities, public transportation, and an airport.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS

Both the Federal Government and the State of Oregon direct public agencies to conduct planning activities in ways that ensure opportunities for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process. Connecting with a wide variety of Albany area citizens, businesses, and organizations to hear concerns about and vision for future transportation is the primary goal of the public outreach for this project. Maximizing public resources is very important, and this project will collaborate with related studies on public meetings and outreach. The project team is committed to a public engagement process that is:

- **Meaningful:** provide timely information
- **Accountable:** respond to input
- **Inclusive:** communicate outside of structured meetings
- **Transparent:** make decisions public; post materials on the website
- **Realistic:** inform about constraints and objectives
- **Outcome-oriented:** engage the public to maximize success

AUDIENCE AND STAKEHOLDERS

Pro-active outreach with materials that are easy to understand and input methods accessible to the public are essential. We will reach out to under-represented populations by providing notices in locations and media accessed by these individuals, providing direct emails to organizations including these stakeholder groups, and by being available to attend meetings of these stakeholder groups, as requested.

Project stakeholders include institutions, public agencies, advocacy groups, organized neighborhood and business groups and area residents. The project team will conduct active outreach to groups and individuals who represent the following interests: bicycle, freight, transit, pedestrians, mobility impaired, low income and underrepresented populations.

The project will allow for full and fair participation by all potentially affected community members in the decision-making process, including people with disabilities, low-income, limited English proficiency, minority and other underserved groups. This will include an analysis of the census data to report on the numbers of protected populations, as well as methods to conduct outreach to under-represented populations.

PROJECT DECISION MAKING

In all public communications, it is important to be clear who is making decisions for the project and how public comments will be considered and incorporated. At each step, the project team will communicate with stakeholders about:

- Who will make the decisions
- How can stakeholders influence the decisions
- When will stakeholders have an opportunity to participate
- How stakeholder input will be considered and who will respond

The AAMPO Policy Board will serve as the project's citizen advisory committee, reviewing and approving project reports. In addition, an *ad-hoc* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will review all Technical Memorandums and draft materials and provide recommendations to the Policy Board. The *ad-hoc* TAC is composed of members of the existing AAMPO technical advisory committee and additional transportation stakeholders. The Policy Board will review and approve project reports.

Other key elements of the project process:

- The Project Management Team guides the project and issues final reports and studies by the project.
- The project will connect at key points with Linn, Benton, and Marion Counties and the Cities of Albany, Jefferson, Millersburg, and Tangent.
- There are 2 major steps in the project:
 - The RTP Framework will identify preliminary vision, goals, priorities for projects, and short term list of projects in the next 10 years. This interim step will be reviewed first by agencies and jurisdictions.

- The RTSP will be long term and include potential opportunities in the next 20 years. It will be reviewed at the end of the process.

KEY PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TASKS

- Project website
- Interested parties list and email updates
- Presentations to public committees and boards
- Direct outreach with accessible visuals to people who don't attend meetings
- Stakeholder meetings
- Advisory Group meetings
- Community meetings at two key decision points
- Media contacts and communications
- Public comments and responses

The Project Website will be interesting, visually pleasing, and easy to navigate and understand. It will have a unique project masthead and include key project information, including a brief overview, meeting dates, other public involvement opportunities, and a library of technical memos and public involvement summaries. The website will provide the opportunity to sign up for email updates on the project, submit public comments and questions, and link to related projects.

Interested Parties List: The project will be actively develop a comprehensive list of individuals and organizations with an interest in the outcome of the plan. All interested parties will receive regular email updates with project information, online links, and invitations to the community meetings.

Presentations to Public Committees and Boards: The project team will keep key elected and appointed public bodies well informed. This will include, if requested, informational sessions prior to MPO adoption of the RTP Framework; and at a minimum, local agency briefings with each member jurisdiction prior to the formal process of RTP/RTSP adoption. As stated above, the RTP Framework will identify preliminary vision, goals, priorities for projects, and short term list of projects in the next 10 years. The RTSP will be long term and include potential opportunities in the next 20 years.

Stakeholder Meetings will occur as needed to identify creative solutions to core challenges and provide a venue for sharing ideas in a small setting. The meetings will be informal and structured to address the specific situation at hand – either one-on-one, or at other times as a small group.

Advisory Group Meetings will provide input throughout the course of the project. The AAMPO Policy Board and Ad-Hoc Technical Advisory Committee will serve this role. Topics will relate to the project reports and conclusions at key points in the process. See Decision Making above for details.

Community Meetings provide a venue for vetting ideas and recommendations at key decision points in the project. They differ from the standard public meeting because they are advertised as “community events” with an engaging agenda, pleasant atmosphere, and amenities designed to maximize attendance and variety, such as refreshments and Spanish translation if requested. Handouts, display boards, and other visuals will be used for both pre-meeting recruitment and at the meeting itself. The public will have the opportunity to offer input on the goals and policies of the plan, as well as the specific transportation system solutions to be considered to address the transportation system deficiencies. The goals of the meetings are to present and receive feedback on:

Meeting #1: Project goals, methods, existing conditions, and future transportation needs.

Meeting #2: Transportation solutions: methods, options, and next steps.

Media: The AAMPO will use media to advertise public events and seek to gain media coverage of public events to reach a broader audience. To the degree the project generates discussion in the media, the project will monitor and respond with accurate information.

Public Comments: AAMPO Staff will be the primary contact for all stakeholder and public inquiries. Calls and emails about the project will be received by the AAMPO via email, website, and phone and routed by AAMPO staff to the appropriate person to answer the question or respond to the comment. This is critical, as thoughtful and timely responses will increase trust and credibility. The project will catalogue all comments and responses, and share with the project team in a timely manner for consideration.

CONCLUSION

This document is an overview of the major public involvement goals and tasks. Coordinating with related projects and input from the interviews and focus groups will help refine and provide detail to this broad plan. Details such as topics for the email updates, organizations to connect with through speaking engagements, and recruitment efforts for the public meetings will be developed through the course of the project.

Public outreach is a powerful and dynamic force to create long lasting outcomes that are supported by the community. When done with inclusion, respect, and agility, it builds trust and strengthens the relationship between relationships between the community and public agencies.

Key Stakeholder Categories
Pedestrians
Bicyclists
Businesses
Car drivers: residents/commuters
Freight
Low-income/Housing industry
Youth, Students
Communities of color
Property owners
Bus riders
Accessibility and elderly
Environment/Sustainability/land use
Agencies (local, state, federal)
Elected officials
Fire & EMS

Appendix

Project Tasks, Products, and Timeline

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT	
Public and Stakeholder Involvement Strategy - Tech Memo #1	
INTRODUCTION, RTP OVERVIEW, AND PLAN FRAMEWORK	
Existing Document and Regulation Review - Tech Memo #2	
Plan Goals and Policies - Tech Memo #3	
Advisory Committee Meeting Series #1 and Project Kick-Off	June 2015
SYSTEM GAPS AND DEFICIENCIES	
Existing Transportation Conditions - Tech Memo #4	
Existing Transit Conditions - Tech Memo #5	
ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS	
Analysis of Environmental Considerations - Tech Memo #6	
FUTURE TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS AND NEEDS ANALYSIS	
Future Traffic Forecasting - Tech Memo #7	
Future Transportation Conditions and Needs - Tech Memo #8	
Future Transit Conditions and Needs - Tech Memo #9	
Advisory Committee Meeting Series #2	October 2015
Community Meeting Series #1: Project goals, methods, existing conditions, and future transportation needs	November 2015
IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS AND TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS	
Transportation Solution package Identification - Tech Memo #10	
RTP Funding Assumptions - Tech Memo #11	
Transit Funding Assumptions - Tech Memo #12	
Advisory Committee Meeting Series #3	Jan 2016
RTP Framework Community Event	March 2016
Policy Board Public Hearing	March 2016
TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS	
Develop and Evaluate Transportation System Solutions - Tech Memo #13	
Develop and Evaluate Transit Solutions - Tech Memo #14	
Advisory Committee Meeting Series #4	June 2016
Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation Briefing #1	
Community Meeting Series #2: Transportation solutions: methods, options, and next steps	July 2016
Transportation System Recommendations - Tech Memo #15	
Transit System Recommendations - Tech Memo #16	
Regional Performance Metrics - Tech Memo #17	
Final Plan Goals, Policies, and Objectives	
Advisory Committee Meeting Series #5	October 2016
DRAFT RTP	
Advisory Committee Meeting Series #6	March 2017
Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation Briefing #2	March 2017
RTP ADOPTION	
Local Agency Briefings	March 2017
Adoption Draft RTP	May 2017
MPO Policy Board Public Hearing	July 2017

Advisory Committee Membership (Albany Area Metropolitan Policy Board)

Amy Ramsdell	Area Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation Area 4
Darrin Lane	City Councilor, City of Millersburg
Dave Beyerl	City Councilor, City of Jefferson
Floyd Collins	City Councilor, City of Albany
Annabelle Jaramillo	Benton County Commissioner
Roger Nyquist	Linn County Commissioner
Gary Powell	City Councilor, City of Tangent

RTP Technical Advisory Committee Membership

Valerie Grigg Devis	Senior Region Planner, Oregon Department of Transportation Region 2
Chris Bailey	Operations Manager, City of Albany
Josh Wheeler	Public Works Director, Benton County
Chuck Knoll	County Engineer, Linn County
Darrin Lane	City Councilor, City of Millersburg LINN COUNTY ROAD MASTER
Lissa Davis	Assistant City Planner, City of Jefferson
Georgia Edwards	City Administrator, City of Tangent
Ned Conroy	Community Planner, Federal Transit Administration, Region 10
Nick Fortey	Senior Community Planner, Federal Highway Administration
Mary Camarata	Project Manager, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Ed Moore	S. Willamette Valley and S. Oregon Regional Representative, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
Bill Holstrom	Transportation Planner, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
Laurie Starha	Engineering/Survey Program Manager, Benton County
Jim Stouder	Road Maintenance Manager
Lee K. Lazaro	Special Transportation Coordinator, Benton County
Ron Irish	Transportation Systems Analyst, City of Albany
Mark Volmert	Special Transportation Coordinator, Linn County
Barry Hoffman	Transit Programs Supervisor, City of Albany

Transit Advisory Group:

Chris Bailey	Operations Manager, City of Albany
Jon Goldman	Transportation Superintendent, City of Albany
Ted Frazier	Paratransit Services Supervisor, City of Albany

Ken Bronson Manager, Sweet Home Senior Center
Jean Palmateer Regional Transit Coordinator, ODOT Public Transit Division
Steve Dickey Director of Transportation Development, Salem-Keizer Area Public Transit
Edna Campau City of Jefferson Resident

Project Management Team

Theresa Conley AAMPO Coordinator, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments
Ron Irish Transportation Systems Analyst, City of Albany
Chuck Knoll County Engineer, Linn County
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Aaron Berger DKS Associates
Jennifer Danziger David Evans & Associates
Tom Shook Associate, Nelson Nygaard
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Julie Fischer Cogito Partners
Nick Popenuk EcoNW