

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## The Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization

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Based on the results of the 2000 US Census, the Bend Urbanized Area exceeded 50,000 in population. Upon surpassing this milestone, federal regulations (23 CFR part 450) mandate that a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) be designated. The primary function of a MPO is to conduct a *continuing, cooperative* and *comprehensive* transportation planning process that will result in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes and will support metropolitan community development and social goals. The Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) was designated on December 18, 2002, by the Governor of Oregon. Local jurisdictions involved in the planning activities of the BMPO include the City of Bend and Deschutes County. In addition, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration participate in the MPO process.

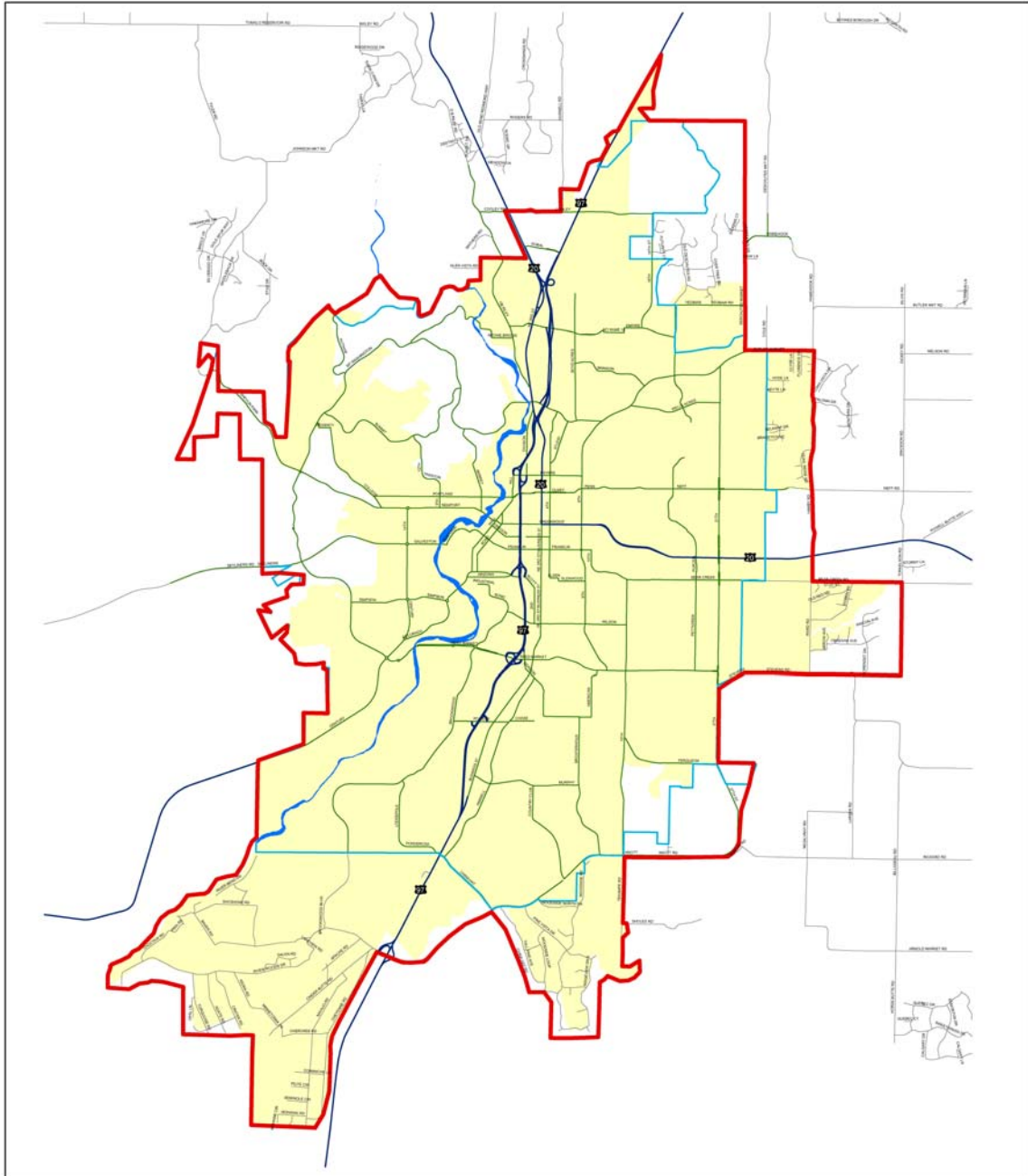
The BMPO organizational structure has been designed so that it operates as an entity separate from the participating jurisdictions so that no single entity dominates the organization's decision-making processes. A Policy Board has been established to oversee the process of the BMPO. The Policy Board is comprised of three members of the Bend City Council, one member of the Deschutes County Commission, and the ODOT Region 4 manager. As future major transportation providers form, such as a Transit District, they will be added to the Policy Board. The intergovernmental agreement specifies that no decisions shall be made by the BMPO Policy Board without representation from all parties. The agreement also states that all decisions shall be made by consensus. Consensus of the parties refers to consensus among the one ODOT representative, the one Deschutes County representative, and at least two of the three City of Bend representatives. The BMPO planning boundary is shown in Figure 1-1.

Federal and state transportation planning responsibilities for the BMPO can generally be summarized as follows:

- Develop and maintain a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) consistent with state and federal planning requirements.
- Review specific transportation and development proposals for consistency with the MTP.
- Coordinate transportation decisions among local jurisdictions, state agencies, and area transit operators.
- Develop an annual work program (known as the Unified Planning Work Program [UPWP]).
- Maintain the regional travel-demand model for the purposes of assessing, planning, and coordinating regional travel demand impacts. (NOTE: The BMPO currently contracts with ODOT's Transportation Planning Analysis Unit for modeling support services).

The BMPO entered into an intergovernmental/interagency agreement with the City of Bend establishing the City of Bend as the administrative and fiscal agent for BMPO. This agreement will be reviewed and renewed as appropriate.

Figure 1-1: Study Area Map



Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization Boundary

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li> MPO Boundary</li><li> Bend UGB</li><li> State Highways</li><li> Arterial/Collector Streets</li><li> County Roads</li><li> Urbanized Area</li><li> Deschutes River</li></ul>	 Not To Scale		<p><small>DISCLAIMER: Urbanized area information was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau. All other information on this map was derived from digital databases on Deschutes County's GIS. Care was taken in the creation of this map, but is provided "as is".</small></p> <p><small>Prepared by City of Bend GIS/Engineering Department 1-03-06 v.8.1 UFMPO 0916</small></p>
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## **The Importance of Transportation**

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Transportation is a key contributor to the Bend area'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 patterns and transportation system,
- 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**

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The region is anticipating significant population and employment growth. From the base year of 2003, the population of the Bend metropolitan area is expected to grow by 78 percent by 2030. Employment in the region is expected to grow by 68 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.
- 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 trips using alternative modes will not see significant changes.

## **Overview of the MTP**

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The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a multi-modal transportation plan designed to meet the anticipated 20-year transportation needs within the BMPO planning area boundary. The MTP serves as a guide for the management of existing transportation facilities and for the design and implementation of future transportation facilities through the year 2030. The plan is intended to provide the framework and foundation for the transportation future in the metropolitan area. Policies and project descriptions are provided to enable the governments and citizens of the metropolitan area to understand and track projects that will be needed within the next 20 to 25 years. As a plan, this document does not provide designs for individual projects. Such details are not within the scope of a metropolitan plan and will be completed on a project-by-project basis with the necessary community involvement and environmental analyses.

The MTP provides a coordinated framework for identifying and meeting the regions transportation needs for the next 20-25 years. It provides the best projection for future growth and development based on current trends and approved land uses, policies and ordinances. The MTP looks at the different types of transportation opportunities that are available and what would be beneficial and useful in the future. It looks at how all the pieces should fit together and what other opportunities are available for a coordinated and contiguous system. The plan focuses on intra-regional (within the region) travel, but also addresses inter-regional (through the region) travel. The roadway element of the plan is emphasized in recognition that automobiles and trucks are the predominant mode of transportation today; however, the roadway element also plans for connectivity to other modes of travel. The roadway system provides for bicycle travel through the addition of upgraded urban streets with sidewalks and bike lanes or other provisions for safe bike travel. Throughout the urban area, sidewalks are proposed for accessible and safe pedestrian travel. In many cases, there are transit needs within the improvements designated for roadway improvements. All of these factors are critical when describing the transportation system. Other elements of the plan cover important aspects of the overall system including transportation system management (TSM), transportation demand management (TDM), freight, safety, and security.

The plan identifies the basic assumptions through the year 2030, including forecasts of future population and employment, and the resulting demand on the metropolitan arterial and collector street system. The resulting travel demand was determined through a “best practices” travel demand model. The model is a sophisticated planning tool and will be continually refined and updated to ensure that it serves as an effective tool for future updates. The demographic assumptions used with the model are presented in the Land Use Chapter (to be completed at a later date). Other aspects of the model are described in the technical reports and memoranda summarized in the Appendices.

A significant requirement of the MTP is that it must be financially constrained. The MTP must identify projects and recommended policies that can be implemented within the current funding trends of the metropolitan area. Ultimately, a 2030 financially constrained transportation system improvement strategy was developed to meet the transportation needs of the metropolitan area. The transportation system improvement strategy was reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee, Citizen Advisory Committee, and Policy Board.

Reports and memoranda were prepared to document the details of the planning process, and to provide background information, data, and explanations of assumptions and technical work. Much of the final product of the MTP was directed and developed from research and decisions based on these reports and memoranda.

## **Regulatory Framework**

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Federal, state, regional, and local requirements comprise the regulatory framework that shapes the Bend area’s transportation planning process. The two most influential pieces of legislation are the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (successor to the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century [TEA-21]) and the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (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 be constrained to financial resources reasonably expected to be available. The entire plan provides the overall vision for the Bend region, taking into consideration the needs anticipated because of planned growth. To meet federal and state requirements, the plan includes the present financial capabilities of the region's implementing agencies. Thus, the funded project list contains only those projects within the present financial capabilities of the agencies. The illustrative list identifies projects that are beyond current financial capabilities.

In compliance with provisions in SAFETEA-LU and the TPR, the MTP contains transportation goals and policies. The MTP includes a description of the plan amendment process.

The ongoing nature of regional transportation planning allows the MTP to be a dynamic plan of action for the future transportation system, rather than a static snapshot in time. The range of policies and plan amendment and update processes ensure that the MTP 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.

The MTP 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. The federal metropolitan planning regulations require the transportation plan to be reviewed and updated at least every five years.

Completing and adopting the MTP provides the building blocks for a comprehensive guide for the future and allow us to make wise use of limited financial resources. Although this process is new, it is expected to provide a solid foundation for continuing our transportation system planning. We must use this foundation to strive for the implementation measures that will make a difference for the region as a whole.

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## **Using the MTP**

Based on this plan, the member jurisdictions and agencies should integrate the policies and recommendations into their own comprehensive planning documents, incorporate local needs with the pending regional strategies, and coordinate project completion with other affected agencies. The MTP provides support and validation of some of the local transportation needs. It is anticipated that each BMPO member jurisdiction will adopt this MTP and will then tailor its comprehensive plan updates to meet the goals and policies identified in the MTP.

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## **The MTP in the Future**

The BMPO Policy Board guides the development, updates, and amendments of the Plan and serves as the coordinating and problem-solving body during the MTP planning processes. The Policy Board is in a position to help as the agencies seek to implement essential MTP provisions and to seek ways to build the projects listed in it. Because of the strong implications for funding our transportation needs, we must ensure this document remains alive and is not just a reference or study. Taking current information and priorities into consideration, this document will be adjusted over time under the guidance of our community leaders.

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## **MTP Update Cycle**

At a minimum, the MTP must be reviewed, validated, and updated every five years. Plan updates give the BMPO the opportunity to evaluate past projections for growth and anticipated

use of the system. During the plan update process, a comparison of existing land use, recent development trends, and the use of the different modal components of the transportation system will be evaluated. This new data will be used to refine growth projections and determine their implications. This provides a basis on which to modify the plan. These minor changes are essential to protecting the accuracy of the plan. In addition, planning sometimes requires a change of direction, including updated goals, policies, or other fundamentals. Such changes require a more in-depth planning process, and, therefore, constitute a major plan update.

Amendments to the Plan can be made between the five-year updates. Each time a major amendment is made to the MTP, it must go through the rigors of a financial-constraint determination. It is anticipated that only large projects that would conceptually change the MTP would require a plan amendment.

The region also has the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) that dovetails with the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which is updated every two to three years. The STIP primarily sets the short-term funding direction for transportation projects using federal and state funds.

## **Summary**

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Change is inevitable. The question is not if growth will occur, or even when it will occur. The question is how best to manage the impact of growth as it happens. Can we progress from potential gridlock toward a systematic and affordable plan to keep people and goods moving efficiently from one place to another? The MTP represents many hours of community, staff, and elected officials' time. It provides a coordinated, comprehensive look into the future as the area continues to grow.

The Plan takes the ideas, potential growth factors, and the desires from the community and various entities, and provides a sense of structure. The MTP is guide for the Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization. Not just a road and highway plan, the MTP looks at all of the transportation opportunities -cars, buses, bicycles, pedestrian paths, air travel, rail, and various combinations of transportation methods. The MTP is not just a wish list, but instead, it is financially constrained, meaning that the projects proposed can be financed with existing and anticipated resources. Although not all of the needs can be funded, the MTP identifies concerns and projects beyond the immediate availability of known funding trends.

The MTP provides answers and potential solutions, yet places the burden of implementation back into the hands of the community and our elected officials. Individual project designs are left to the respective communities to develop over time according to their needs and opportunities. Policies are identified throughout the plan that address alternative transportation uses, agency coordination, system management, and other transportation related concerns.