

# Chapter 2: The Planning Process

## Introduction

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The 2007-2030 MTP builds upon a series of technical analyses documented in technical reports from this planning process and other planning processes. The process was guided by systematic input and reviewed by member agency staff, various advisory committees, and the public. The steps of the planning process are summarized below.

## Process

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### Determine Transportation System Plan Requirements

The MTP is designed to meet the requirements of the federal legislation and regulations encompassed in SAFETEA-LU and the Statewide Planning Goal 12 and its implementing division, the Transportation Planning Rule (OAR Chapter 660, Division 12). In addition, the regional plan must be consistent with the Oregon Transportation Plan.

### Determine Transportation System Needs

Using population and employment forecasts for the year 2030, the travel-forecasting model was used to estimate transportation needs of the Bend metropolitan planning region for a 20+ year horizon. The Forecast Land Use and Future Travel Demand chapter summarizes the growth and development assumptions used for the year 2030.

A new “best practices” travel demand model was developed for the MTP. The Transportation Planning and Analysis Unit (TPAU) at ODOT developed the travel demand model with the assistance of BMPO and member agency staff. The model is sophisticated and requires significant data definition and input to produce accurate results.

A travel demand model is a tool that can accurately replicate existing transportation conditions and evaluate a variety of future year scenarios. To replicate base year conditions, the essential transportation inputs include the existing roadway and public transportation networks, recent traffic counts, and current population and employment information. Once this data has been entered and adjusted, the model simulates base year traffic movements within a small percentage of error of those observed.

The next step in the modeling process involves projections for future population distribution, employment locations, and any changes in travel behavior. Using these inputs, the model is able to derive future capacity limitations relative to the current roadway system. Once these deficiencies are identified, potential improvements are evaluated by rerunning the model with the “improved” transportation system. A range of different street networks, expansions of the public transportation network, and different land use scenarios can be tested this way. Although this is greatly over simplified, it

demonstrates the usefulness of the model as a tool. Future year traffic projections are based on numerous assumptions about population, employment, automobile operating costs, and other factors that will change over time. As such, future year forecasts are only as good as the assumptions that are made. Every effort has been made to ensure that the assumptions used in the development of the BMPO travel demand model are as reasonable and accurate as possible.

Transportation improvement projects needed within the planning horizon were identified during the needs assessment. This list of improvement projects was then assessed using the evaluation criteria. Once completed, this list became the financially unconstrained project list and vision beyond the present financial limitations of the MTP.

### **Develop Funding Plan and Project Lists**

A financial analysis was conducted to support development of the MTP. The analysis included a review of past transportation expenditures for Deschutes County, the City of Bend, and ODOT. The financial analysis estimated the level of transportation-related funding that jurisdictions could reasonably expect to be available over the planning horizon. A summary of the financial analysis is discussed in the Financial Chapter.

The financial limitations described by the financial analysis were merged with the project lists from the various systems (streets, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, transportation demand management, and transportation system management). Taking the financial limitations into consideration, funded and illustrative (unfunded) project lists were prepared. The funded list includes only those projects that are within the present financial limitations of the implementing agencies. The funded list consists of a combination of the following five components to help meet the area's transportation needs for the next 20-25 years:

- (1) roadway improvements;
- (2) transportation system management (TSM);
- (3) transportation demand management (TDM);
- (4) transit service; and
- (5) bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The funded project list meets the definition of a financially constrained transportation plan and forms the basis for the MTP.

The projects in the illustrative list may not be relied upon as planned improvements until a funding source has been identified. Projects included in this currently unfunded category are identified in the Appendices.

## **The Committee Process**

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### **Policy Board**

The BMPO Policy Board is composed of elected officials from each of the affected jurisdictions including City of Bend, Deschutes County, and ODOT. The BMPO Policy

Board makes the final approval decision regarding the MTP.

### **Technical Advisory Committee**

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is responsible for gathering, reviewing, and validating technical information and data that were used in the update of MTP. The TAC includes staff members from the City of Bend, Deschutes County, ODOT, the Bend-La Pine School District, Commute Options for Central Oregon, Central Oregon Community College, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

### **Citizen Advisory Committee**

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) makes recommendations to the Policy Board from the public's perspective on proposed long-range transportation plans and priorities for state and federal funding and other transportation issues.

### **Freight Advisory Committee**

The Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) makes recommendations to the Policy Board from the freight industry's perspective on proposed long-range transportation plans and priorities for state and federal funding and other transportation issues.

### **Traffic Safety Advisory Committee**

The City of Bend Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) makes recommendations, as needed, to the Policy Board regarding specific safety issues.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee**

The Deschutes County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) makes recommendations, as needed, to the Policy Board regarding bicycle and pedestrian issues.

## **Public Involvement**

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The draft public participation plan outlines a process for involving the public in the transportation planning process. The plan also allows for the BMPO to meet the requirements of SAFETEA-LU, which calls for a "proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans."

Through the public involvement program and detailed technical analysis, transportation needs were identified and consensus was developed on system improvement strategies. Local agency staff and the Policy Board guided the planning effort for the 2007-2030 MTP. The Technical Advisory Committee and Citizen Advisory Committee had equally important participation.

The CAC served as the community forum to gather information from their constituent

base and to help develop public consensus on the plan and the planning process. They also helped the BMPO define local issues and potential solutions to transportation problems. Recommendations from CAC meetings were provided to the Policy Board. BMPO staff made presentations at various meetings to discuss the plan and receive input from community members. The public participation program also included public notices of all CAC and Policy Board meetings during plan development. The public involvement process, in addition to being a federal and state planning requirement, is a priority of BMPO and the local agencies involved in development of the MTP. With future updates of the MTP, the BMPO will strive for a more robust public participation process.