

Memo



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Date: July 3, 2019

To: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and interested parties

From: Kim Ellis, Metro Project Manager and Lidwien Rahman, ODOT Project Manager

Subject: Regional Mobility Policy Update

PURPOSE

Introduce the Regional Mobility Policy and the process to update the policy over the course of the next two years. Propose next steps for development of a project work plan and stakeholder engagement plan for consideration by JPACT and the Metro Council in the fall 2019.

ACTION REQUESTED

Staff seeks JPACT feedback on the draft project objectives, the scope of the policy and measures to be considered, and stakeholders to be engaged throughout the project. See **Attachment 1**.

BACKGROUND

The greater Portland region is growing quickly, with more than one-half million more people expected to be living in the urban growth boundary by 2040. It's fundamental to our future to have a variety of safe, affordable, and reliable options for people to get where they need to go – whether they are driving, riding a bus or train, biking, walking or moving goods.

In December 2018, JPACT and the Metro Council adopted a significant update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) following three years of engagement that included over 19,000 touch points with community members, community and business leaders, and regional partners. Through the extensive engagement that shaped the plan, Metro heard clear desires from partners and community members for safe, smart, reliable and affordable transportation options for everyone and every type of trip.

The 2018 RTP failed to meet state requirements for demonstrating consistency with the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) Highway Mobility Policy (Policy 1F) under the current mobility targets for the region. As a result, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) agreed to work with Metro to update the mobility policy for the Portland metropolitan area in both the 2018 RTP and OHP Policy 1F. Built around key values of equity, climate, safety, and congestion relief, the 2018 RTP recognizes that a growing and changing region needs an updated mobility policy for measuring performance of the transportation system and identifying the transportation needs of people and goods.

Attachments 2 and 3 contain the 2018 RTP mobility policy (which has been in place since 2000) and direction provided in Chapter 8 of the 2018 RTP to guide this process.

What is the Regional Mobility Policy?

The region's mobility policy reflects vehicle-based thresholds adopted in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Oregon Highway Plan (OHP). These thresholds, referred to as the volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c ratio), are often expressed as a level-of-service (LOS) category, using letters A through F, with A being the best and F being the worst, similar to academic grading.

As the primary way of measuring congestion on roads and at intersections, the current policy measures the number of motor vehicles relative to the motor vehicle capacity of a given roadway during peak weekday travel times.

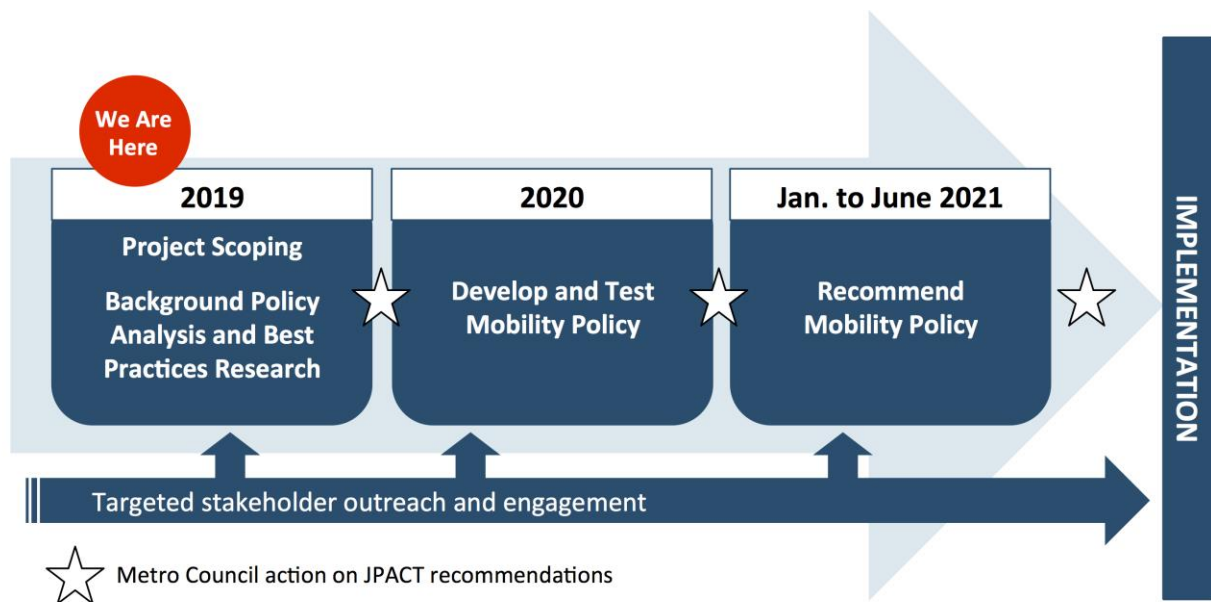
LOS was originally developed and used to guide the sizing and location of the Interstate System in the 1960s. Over time, the policy has been applied to all roads for these purposes:

- Planning for the future
- Regulating development
- Mitigating the impacts of development
- Managing and designing roads

Project overview and timeline

The Regional Mobility Policy Update project is a joint effort of Metro and ODOT. Since early 2019, Metro and ODOT staff have worked closely together to begin scoping the project. Identified in the 2018 RTP, this project will update the 20-year old “interim” mobility policy to better align with the comprehensive set of goals and desired outcomes identified in the plan for use in the 2023 RTP update. This work will be coordinated with planned updates to the Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) and the OHP, and will result in amendments to the mobility policy contained in the 2018 RTP and the OHP for the Portland metropolitan region.

Figure 1. Draft Project Timeline



In 2021, staff will seek consideration of the updated RTP mobility policy and proposed OHP amendments by JPACT, the Metro Council and the Oregon Transportation Commission, prior to initiating the 2023 RTP update. The updated policy will guide the development of regional and local transportation system plans and the evaluation of plan amendments (zoning changes) subject to the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) -0060 during development review.

Status of project scoping and next steps

Metro and ODOT have initiated the Regional Mobility Policy Update scoping process. The project team includes staff from Metro’s Planning and Development Department, Metro’s Research Center, ODOT Headquarters and ODOT Region 1.

Work to date led to creation of a Metro/ODOT Scoping Agreement contained in **Attachment 1** that identifies the project purpose, draft objectives and a proposed approach for updating the policy. At this meeting, staff will present an overview of the current mobility policy and uses, feedback provided to date and the timeline and proposed next steps for development of a project work plan and stakeholder engagement plan.

Planned scoping engagement activities

- Metro Council and JPACT briefings
- Coordinating Committees’ briefings
- TPAC/MTAC workshops
- Stakeholder interviews
- Community leaders discussion group
- Project website

The scoping phase is expected to continue throughout Fall 2019. Metro and ODOT staff have started engaging jurisdictional staff from the cities and counties through county-level coordinating committees as well as other interested stakeholders. In addition to meeting with jurisdictional staff from the City of Portland and county coordinating committees and other stakeholder groups, the

project team is also in the process of developing a project website and hiring a consultant to conduct a series of stakeholder interviews¹ throughout the summer.

The early staff-level discussions along with feedback gathered through the stakeholder interviews, a community leaders discussion group, Metro Council briefings and local elected and public official briefings through JPACT and county coordinating committees will be used to develop a refined problem statement and project objectives to be addressed through this project as well as a scope of work and stakeholder engagement plan. Staff will bring a draft work plan and engagement plan for consideration by TPAC, JPACT and the Metro Council (by Resolution) in the Fall 2019.

/attachments

Attachment 1. Metro/ODOT Mobility Policy Update Scoping Agreement (4/18/19)

Attachment 2. Table 2.4 Interim Regional Mobility Policy (from 2018 RTP, Chapter 2)

Attachment 3. Section 8.2.3.1 Regional Mobility Policy Update (from 2018 RTP, Chapter 8)

¹ Stakeholder interviews will include the Metro Council President, a Portland-area member of the Oregon Transportation Commission, city and county staff and elected officials, transit and other transportation providers, freight, business, port and economic development interests, community-based organizations representing underserved and historically marginalized communities, health and equity interests, youth, older adults, people living with disabilities, active transportation, environmental justice, environmental advocacy and land use issues, and transportation consultants with experience developing transportation system plans and conducting transportation impact analyses for plan amendments.

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Metro/ODOT Mobility Policy Update Scoping Agreement

April 18, 2019

Project Purpose

Update the mobility policy framework for the Portland metropolitan area in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) Policy 1F, including development of alternative mobility measures and targets. The updated policy will guide the development of regional and local transportation system plans and the evaluation of plan amendments subject to the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) - 0060 during development review.

Project Objectives

Develop an alternative mobility policy and associated measures, targets, and methods for the Portland area that define mobility expectations for multiple modes users, and time periods, and that:

- Clearly and transparently communicate mobility expectations and provide clear targets for local, regional and state decision-making
- Address all modes of transportation
- Address both people and goods movement
- Distinguish between throughway¹ and arterial performance
- Are financially realistic
- Reflect and are consistent with adopted state, regional and community policy objectives.²
- Support implementation of the Statewide Transportation Strategy for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Smart Strategy and related policies.
- Address growing motor vehicle congestion in the region and its impacts on transit, freight and other modes of travel.
- Are coordinated with and supportive of other state and regional initiatives, including Value Pricing, Rose Quarter, and Jurisdictional Transfer.
- Are innovative and advance the state of the art beyond the current motor vehicle v/c-based measures and targets.
- Consider system and facility performance for all modes in the alternative mobility policy, as well as financial, environmental and community impacts of the policy, including impacts of the policy on traditionally underserved communities.
- Are applicable and useful at the system plan, mobility corridor, and plan amendment (development review) scale.

¹ The RTP Throughways generally correspond to Expressways designated in the Oregon Highway Plan.

² Including the Oregon Transportation Plan, state modal and topic plans including OHP Policy 1G (Major Improvements), Oregon Transportation Planning Rule, Metro 2040 Growth Concept, Metro Regional Transportation Plan, Metro Regional Transportation Functional Plan, and the Metro Congestion Management Process.

Approach

- **Phase 1 | Project Scoping | May to Oct. 2019** Metro and ODOT work together with assistance from a consultant to engage local, regional and state partners and stakeholders to develop a refined problem statement, glossary of terms, work plan and public engagement plan. Engagement activities in this phase will include stakeholder interviews³, TPAC workshop(s), a Community Leader's Forum, Metro Council briefings and local elected official briefings through JPACT and City of Portland and County Coordinating Committees.
- **Phase 2 | Project Implementation | Oct. 2019 to June 2021** Metro and ODOT work together with assistance from a consultant to engage local, regional and state partners and stakeholders to develop the alternative mobility policy, measures, targets, and methods for consideration by JPACT, Metro Council, and the Oregon Transportation Commission.
- Work will be performed by Metro and ODOT (Region 1 and TDD) staff with targeted consultant support.
- ODOT and Metro roles and responsibilities and decision-making protocols will be set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).
- The project will rely on existing regional technical and policy advisory committees and decision-making processes that is supplemented with briefings to the Metro Council, OTC and targeted outreach to coordinating committees, business and freight associations, transportation, environmental justice and environmental advocacy groups and historically marginalized communities. The role of the Region 1 ACT needs to be clarified.
- The project will follow the process set forth in OHP Policy 1F3 and associated Operational Notice PB-02. That means the project will set forth a Portland area-specific process(es) and documentation requirements and identify measures and targets for identifying needs and for demonstrating the adequacy of regional and local actions and projects in transportation system plans, and of mitigation measures for plan amendments during development review.
- Proposed measures and targets will generally be taken from existing measures and past research efforts, including the RTP, Climate Smart Strategy, ODOT Key Performance Measures, Federal performance measures and targets, Washington County TGM project on performance measures, and the ODOT Region 1 Highway Performance Project and Traffic Performance Report. A targeted review of best practices from California, Washington, Florida and other states and MPOs will be conducted.
- Measures to explore may include motor vehicle, freight and transit travel time and reliability, active transportation network completeness, street connectivity, transit coverage and frequency, mode share, accessibility, trip length, vehicle miles traveled, and mobility corridor person and goods movement capacity and throughput.
- Measures, targets, and methods may vary in how they apply system-wide, to multimodal mobility corridors, to throughways, to arterials, and to plan amendments, but will not result in 24 mobility corridor-specific measures or targets.
- The project will apply the proposed measures and targets to selected mobility corridors at the mobility corridor and development review scale through case studies. The case studies will involve a technical assessment to determine the feasibility and adequacy of the proposed measures and targets. Following the case studies, the project will define an updated alternative mobility policy for the Portland region, including measures and targets for use in the 2023 RTP update.

³ Stakeholder interviews will include the Metro Council President, a Portland-area member of the Oregon Transportation Commission, city and county staff and elected officials, transit and other transportation providers, freight, business, port and economic development interests, community-based organizations representing historically marginalized communities, health and equity interests, youth, older adults, people living with disabilities, active transportation, environmental justice, environmental advocacy and land use issues, and transportation consultants with experience developing transportation system plans and conducting transportation impact analyses for plan amendments.

Excerpted from the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan

Table 2.4 Interim regional mobility policy

Deficiency thresholds for peak hour operating conditions expressed as volume to capacity ratio targets as adopted in the RTP and Oregon Highway Plan.

Locations	Target	Target	
	Mid-day One-Hour Peak ^{A, B}	PM 2-Hour Peak ^{A, B}	
		1 st hour	2 nd hour
Central City Regional Centers Town Centers Main Streets Station Communities	.99	1.1	.99
Corridors Industrial Areas Intermodal Facilities Employment Areas Neighborhoods	.90	.99	.99
I-84 (from I-5 to I-205)	.99	1.1	.99
I-5 North (from Marquam Bridge to Interstate Bridge)	.99	1.1	.99
OR 99E (from Lincoln Street to OR 224 interchange)	.99	1.1	.99
US 26 (from I-405 to Sylvan interchange)	.99	1.1	.99
I-405 ^C (from I-5 South to I-5 North)	.99	1.1	.99
Other principal arterial routes ^D I-205 ^C I-84 (east of I-205) I-5 (Marquam Bridge to Wilsonville) ^C OR 217 US 26 (west of Sylvan) US 30 OR 8 (Murray Boulevard to Brookwood Avenue) ^{C, D} OR 47 OR 99W OR 212 ^E OR 224 OR 213 ^F	.90	.99	.99

Table Notes:

- A. Unless the Oregon Transportation Commission has adopted an alternative mobility target for the impacted state-owned facility within the urban growth boundary, the mobility targets in this table (and Table 7 of the Oregon Highway Plan) are considered standards for state-owned facilities for purposes of determining compliance with OAR 660-012-0060.
- B. The volume-to-capacity ratios in this table (and Table 7 of the Oregon Highway Plan) are for the highest two consecutive hours of weekday traffic volumes. The 2nd hour is defined as the single 60-minute period, either before or after the peak 60-minute period, whichever is highest. See Oregon Highway Plan Action 1.F.1 for additional technical details for state-owned facilities. The mid-day peak hour is the highest 60-minute period between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Excerpted from the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan

- C. A corridor refinement plan, which will likely include a tailored mobility policy, is required by the Regional Transportation Plan for this corridor.
- D. Two facilities are not designated as principal arterial throughway routes in the RTP, including OR 8 between Murray Boulevard and Brookwood Avenue and portions of 99W, and are proposed to be removed from Table 7 of the Oregon Highway Plan in the next scheduled update.
- E. OR 212 is designated as a throughway route in the RTP and is proposed to be amended into Table 7 of the Oregon Highway Plan in the next scheduled update.
- F. In October 2018, the OTC approved an alternative mobility target that applies to the intersection of OR 213 and Beaver Creek Road such that during the first, second and third hours, a maximum v/c ratio of 1.00 shall be maintained. Calculation of the maximum v/c ratio will be based on an average annual weekday peak hour.

Appendix L describes how this information is used in the region's congestion management process and RTP updates to identify needs and inform consideration and prioritization of multimodal strategies and investments to address congestion in the region. See **Chapter 3** for more information about this policy.

8.2.3.1 Regional Mobility Policy Update

Lead agency	Partners	Proposed timing
Metro and ODOT	ODOT, cities, counties, TriMet, SMART, FHWA, SW RTC	2019-21

As part of adopting the 2000 RTP, the first transportation plan to fully implement the Region 2040 Growth Concept, Metro developed a new approach to managing mobility. The new policy came from an extensive conversation with regional elected officials and policy makers over a two-year period, including an alternatives analysis to help officials better understand the tradeoffs with making mobility investments.

Originally adopted by JPACT and the Metro Council in 2000 and amended into the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) in 2002, the interim regional mobility policy reflects a level of motor vehicle performance in the region that JPACT, the Metro Council and the OTC deemed acceptable at the time of its adoption. Policymakers recognized the policy as an incremental step toward a more comprehensive set of measures that consider system performance for all modes, as well as financial, social equity, environmental and community impacts. This RTP continues that evolution and has defined a broader set of performance measures that can provide a more comprehensive assessment of transportation system performance as reflected in the performance measures identified for each RTP goal and the regional performance targets, including the interim regional mobility policy, contained in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

The interim regional mobility policy reflects volume-to-capacity targets adopted in the RTP for facilities designated on the Regional Motor Vehicle Network as well as volume-to-capacity targets adopted in the Oregon Highway Plan for state-owned facilities in the urban growth boundary. In effect, the policy is used to evaluate current and future performance of the motor vehicle network, using the ratio of traffic volume (or forecasted demand) to planned capacity of a given roadway, referred to as the volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c ratio) or level-of-service (LOS).

Traditionally, motor vehicle LOS has been used in transportation system planning, project development and design as well as in operational analyses and traffic analysis conducted during the development review process. As a system plan, the RTP uses the interim regional policy to diagnose the extent of motor vehicle congestion on throughways and arterials during different times of the day and to determine adequacy in meeting the region's needs. LOS is also used to determine consistency of the RTP with the OHP for state-owned facilities.

The interim mobility policy broke from the historic practice of "one size fits all" congestion standards for roads and freeways to a more tailored approach that coordinates our region's land use goals with the role of our major streets, focuses auto and freight mobility expectations on the freeway system and emphasizes the role of transportation choices in moving people throughout the region. The policy allows for more congestion during the peak period in locations that have good travel options available, such as high capacity transit, while aiming to protect the off-peak period for freight mobility. This new emphasis on a tailored mobility policy and multimodal solutions was also incorporated into the Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) in 2006, the policy document that frames and organizes all of the state's modal plans for transportation.

The policy also recognizes that past practice of "building our way out" of peak-hour highway congestion is not only fiscally and technically unattainable, but also has unintended impacts that are inconsistent with the adopted 2040 Growth Concept vision, including encouraging development on rural lands outside the urban growth boundary and undermining the broader public and private investments being made in centers and transit corridors. The policy prioritizes investment in a multimodal transportation system in order to make sure that our transportation investments also help us meet our economic development, public health, climate change and fiscal responsibility goals.

In the 2010 RTP, Metro expanded on the concept with the development of a series of regional mobility corridors that provide the geography for monitoring and reporting on mobility. Twenty-four mobility corridors, encompassing the entirety of the region's transportation system, were developed, with each corridor framed by Region 2040 land use outcomes, and bundling throughways, transit, arterial streets and bikeways in each mobility corridor as complementary parts of an integrated system. Metro publishes a periodic Regional Mobility Atlas to provide ongoing tracking performance of these corridors as a foundation for planning and project development work in the region.



Regional Mobility Policy Update

There has been increasing discussion of the role of motor vehicle LOS as a performance metric. The region and local communities across the region have adopted goals such as improving safety for all roadway users (e.g., pedestrians, bicyclists, freight and transit users) and encouraging infill development to implement the 2040 Growth Concept, which often conflict with meeting LOS thresholds.

The region has committed to updating the interim regional mobility policy to better align with the comprehensive set of goals and desired outcomes identified in the RTP. This section describes a proposed work plan for considering measures aimed at system efficiency, including people-moving capacity, person throughput and system completeness.

In 2013, ODOT published the Corridor Bottleneck Operations Study (CBOS), another tool for understanding and responding to congestion bottlenecks on throughways within the regional mobility corridors. This tool has since been used to prioritize system management and operational investments on the region's throughways system with an eye toward fine-tuning a mature throughway system with strategic capacity improvements. The few major throughway projects envisioned in the RTP are focused on bottlenecks that are part of this shift toward maintaining, managing and operating a mature system.

Despite these efforts to keep pace with traffic growth in the region, congestion has continued to grow since the 2000 RTP mobility policy was adopted. During this time, the region has experienced significant population and employment growth, straining all parts of our transportation system. During the same period, state investments in the region's freeway system continued to decline from historic levels due to slowing state and federal transportation funding.

Congestion and its impacts on mobility and the region's economic prosperity and quality of life are a top public concern. The update identified current traffic congestion on many of the region's throughways and arterials, and predicts that many of these facilities are unlikely to meet the adopted interim mobility policy targets in the future, including I-5, I-205, I-84, OR 217 and US 26.

ODOT's 2016 Traffic Performance Report¹ shows what many of us have experienced: traffic congestion in the greater Portland region today can occur at any time of the day or week, and is no longer only a weekday peak hour problem. In 2013, about 11 percent of all travel in the greater Portland region occurred during congested periods. This increased to nearly 14 percent in 2015. This increase in congestion is a reflection of the both the region's continued growth, including our substantial economic rebound from the Great Recession that began in 2008.

More recently, the U.S. Department of Transportation issued new regulations (through MAP-21 and the FAST Act) for states and MPOs that will require greater monitoring of mobility on our throughway system and other facilities designated on the National Highway System and setting targets for system performance. While these new requirements differ somewhat from the current mobility policy for the region, the approach is similar.

ODOT and Metro propose to work in partnership on a refinement plan to update the regional mobility policy adopted in the RTP and the OHP Policy IF3 (Highway Mobility Policy) upon completion of the 2018 RTP. The process must comply with the provision of OHP Policy 1F3 and associated Operational Notice PB-02, and must include findings to demonstrate compliance. That means the project will set forth a Portland area-specific process(es) and documentation requirements and identify measures and targets for identifying needs and for demonstrating the adequacy of regional and local actions and projects in transportation system plans, and of mitigation measures for plan amendments during development review.

¹ The 2016 Traffic Performance Report establishes a baseline for long-term monitoring that will help Metro and ODOT better understand the performance of the region's freeway system and supports the region's Congestion Management Process.

Proposed measures and targets will generally be taken from existing measures and past research efforts, including the RTP, Climate Smart Strategy, ODOT Key Performance Measures, Federal performance measures and targets, Washington County TGM project on performance measures and standards, and the ODOT Region 1 Highway Performance Project and Traffic Performance Report. A targeted review of best practices from California, Washington, Florida, and other states and MPOs will be conducted. Measures to explore may include motor vehicle, freight and transit travel time and reliability, active transportation network completeness, street connectivity, transit coverage and frequency, mode share, accessibility, trip length, vehicle miles traveled, and mobility corridor person and goods movement capacity and throughput.

Metro and ODOT will engage TPAC, JPACT and other interested stakeholders in development of the scope of work (and desired outcomes) beginning in early 2019, after adoption of the 2018 RTP. The agreed upon scope of work and budget will also be reflected in the 2019-20 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). This work is expected to take two years and result in amendments to the RTP and regional functional plans and OHP Policy 1F3 for consideration by JPACT, the Metro Council and the Oregon Transportation Commission prior to the 2023 RTP update.

Expected outcomes of the update include:

- A mobility policy framework will be developed for the regional throughways, which generally correspond with expressways designated in the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP). This policy will be incorporated into the RTP, Regional Transportation Functional Plan (RTFP) and OHP Policy 1F3 for the purpose of evaluating the performance of throughways.
- A mobility policy framework will be developed for arterial streets. This policy will be incorporated into the RTP and RTFP for the purpose of evaluating the performance of county and city-owned arterials, and in OHP Policy 1F3 for the purpose of evaluating the performance of state-owned arterials.

Together, these new policy frameworks will guide transportation system planning as part of future RTP and local TSP updates and monitoring activities in support of the region's ongoing Congestion Management Process (CMP). The policy frameworks will also be applied to the evaluation of transportation impacts of plan amendments during development review, and will provide guidance for operational decisions.

The City of Oregon City has locally adopted the Highway 213 Corridor Alternative Mobility Targets plan, which includes alternative mobility targets at the intersection of Highway 213 and Beavercreek Road. The Highway 213 Corridor Alternative Mobility Targets were approved by the OTC as an amendment to the OHP in October 2018. It will be imperative that any planning work done regionally related to the regional mobility policy update, shall either create a condition where the Oregon City amendment to the Metro area mobility targets in the OHP is no longer necessary, or shall explicitly state that the Oregon City amendment to the OHP shall remain in effect even when an updated regional policy is adopted.