



## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

**DATE:** September 14, 2010  
**TO:** MPO CAC  
**FROM:** Petra Schuetz, Lane Council of Governments  
**SUBJECT:** Regional Transportation Options Plan Overview

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### I. ACTION REQUESTED:

This is an informational item for discussion purposes. No action is requested.

### II. BRIEFING STATEMENT

The region's transportation planning partners have embarked on an unprecedented long-range transportation planning coordination effort. It includes, but is not limited to, creating or updating the following plans (through 2013):

- Coburg Transportation System Plan (local)
- Eugene Transportation System Plan (local)
- Springfield Transportation System Plan (local)
- Lane Transit District Long Range Transit Plan (regional)
- Regional Transportation System Plan (state)
- Regional Transportation Plan (federal)

Transportation demand management (TDM) has a growing role in creating a more efficient and balanced transportation system. TDM is the application of strategies and policies to reduce travel demand (specifically that of single-occupancy vehicles), or to redistribute this demand in space or in time. Some examples of demand management include rideshare, biking and walking, telework, and marketing/education of travel choices. In Oregon, TDM is commonly called Transportation Options (TO). The Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) through point2point Solutions is responsible for the region's TO programs. The partners have acquired partial funding to take advantage of the current transportation planning efforts to develop a Regional Transportation Options Plan (RTOP).

TO is important because urban areas can not build their way out of congestion. There are not enough resources or land to do so. In addition, a well established sustainability movement aims to affect travel demand for investment in safer, more livable cities with a better range of transportation choices. The need to manage travel demand has become increasingly urgent for a number of converging reasons including:

- Peak oil
- Efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Vehicle travel's link to poor air quality, road accidents, and reduced physical activity
- Emerging Federal and State regulations to create more balanced and efficient transportation systems

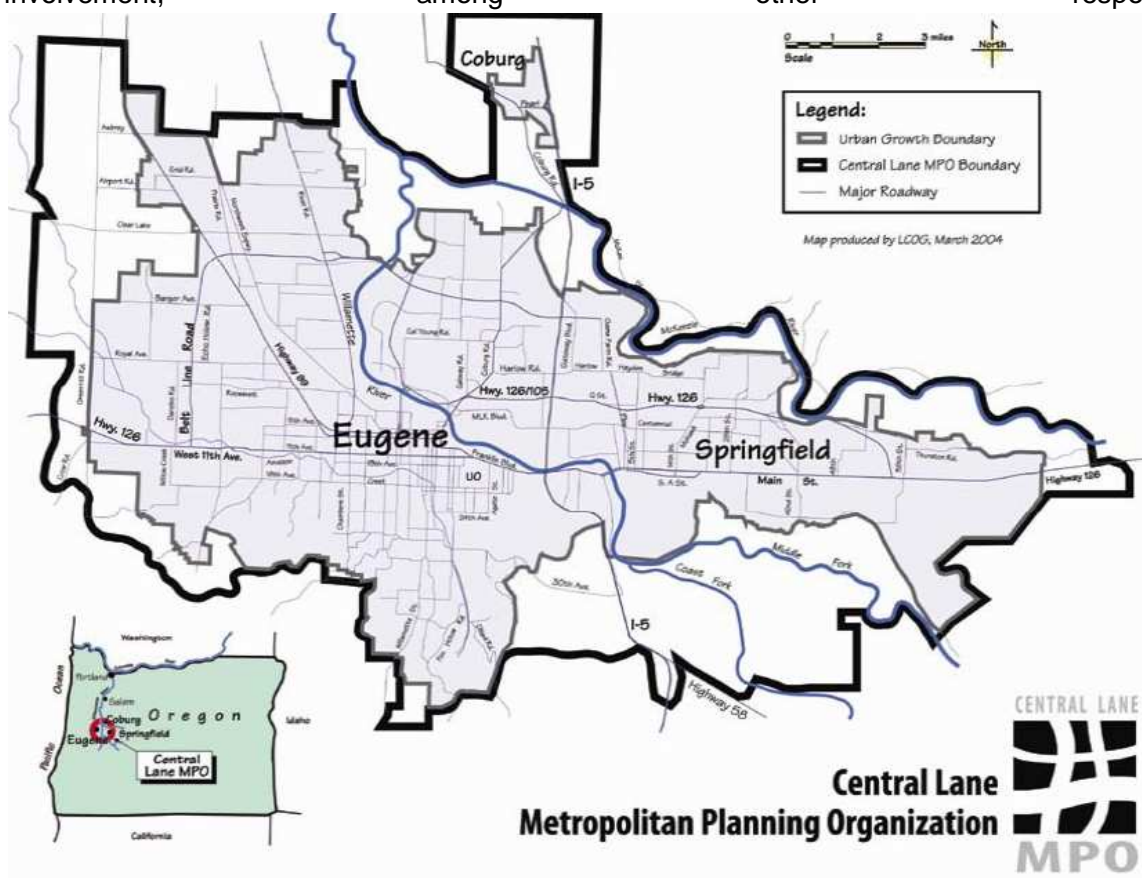
The RTOP project aims to deliver two products. One, the RTOP will update the TDM portion of the federal Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Second, the RTOP will provide a best practices document designed to assist both regional and local governments in strategically expanding the reach of their TDM programs.

The purpose of this memo is to provide a project overview. Throughout the summer, project staff met with area planning commissions and related organizations to introduce the project and note feedback prior to beginning the formal planning process.

### III. BACKGROUND

#### *The MPO and point2point Solutions*

Since the late 1960s, the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) has participated in the planning and coordination of regional transportation. Communities over 50,000 population require federal regional coordination of transportation under a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) structure. As the designated MPO for the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area, LCOG is responsible for preparation of the RTP, the federal long-range regional transportation plan. The MPO is also responsible for providing technical modeling of the transportation system to local governments; facilitating the interaction of federal, state, and local agencies dealing with transportation issues; managing the analysis and process for maintaining conformity with federal air quality standards; preparation of financial analysis and project programming; and providing opportunities for public involvement, among other responsibilities.



Partners in the MPO are: the cities of Eugene, Springfield, and Coburg, Lane County, the Lane Transit District and the Oregon Department of Transportation. As part of being the designated MPO for the region, LCOG coordinates and staffs the MPO. Point2point Solutions (formerly Commuter Solutions, housed at LTD) coordinates and staffs the regional TO program within the MPO. The presentation accompanying this memo will provide more information about the existing TO programs in the region.

*Transportation Options*

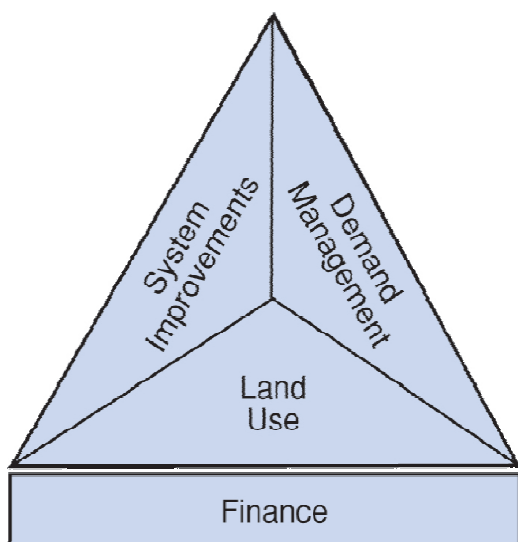
TO programs have long played a significant role in the region’s transportation system planning and implementation. In 1996, the MPO helped establish a regional TDM program called Commuter Solutions. Commuter Solutions developed as the region’s primary source for information about non-single occupancy travel options over the last 15 years. In 2003, the regional TDM Refinement Plan bolstered policy-level support for TDM planning. In 2004, the Refinement Plan evolved into a chapter of the RTP.

Over the years, Commuter Solutions – which became point2point Solutions (p2p) in 2009 – has grown in sophistication. At the same time, local TO efforts are evolving. Operational growth and burgeoning political support make revisiting the regional TO vision and implementation an important priority.

**Regional Transportation Options Plan**

*Timeliness and Need*

Development of the RTOP will assist agencies in the region in identifying and assessing the most appropriate transportation strategies to reduce the occurrence of, and reliance on, single-occupancy automobile travel. Central objectives include; identifying TO best practices, conducting cost/benefit analysis on TO strategies, developing potential performance measures for these strategies, and reviewing regional TO policies.



**RTP Balanced & Integrated  
Transportation Planning Framework**

In addition to the long-range regional planning efforts, other efforts directly related to TO are occurring in the area, including; the City of Eugene’s bicycle and pedestrian program, Smart Ways and Safe Routes to School, and Lane Coalition for Healthy Active Youth (LCHAY) programs. These examples provide valuable and sometimes overlapping services related to TO. At the federal and state level, requirements to address green house gas reduction, land use integration, and least-cost planning all relate to the evolving role of TO. A goal of the RTOP project is to leverage these relationships. By developing this project now, long range TO planning will be able to integrate the many current transportation planning efforts in the region.

In addition to the timeliness of the RTOP project, there has been no major long-range TO planning effort – at the regional level – since the late 1990s. Coupled with the evolving federal and state requirements, there is a need to integrate a number of planning efforts and

redefine the role of TO in the region. While there are not yet specific requirements to directly address climate change, recent revisions to federal transportation planning legislation have further incorporated energy and environmental considerations. These revisions offer greater opportunities for MPOs and state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) to integrate climate change considerations within their planning processes. More discussion regarding how these variables could affect the RTOP will be discussed at the meeting.

Early in 2010, a draft RTOP work plan was developed in coordination with staff from all the MPO transportation planning partners. In April, the Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC) provided \$20,000 to kick-start the RTOP project. Staff intends to return to MPC in October to complete funding for the project.

#### *The Work Plan*

The RTOP work plan continues to be refined, pending the result of the TGM grant application, but will include the following general tasks:

- **Background** – includes refinement of the work plan, formation of a project management team, a technical advisory committee, and a website, and development of stakeholder lists
- **Existing Conditions** – includes review of TDM best practices, regional TDM-related program development since 2002, development of a gap analysis, and identifying the TO role in emerging related trends/requirements such as: climate change/green house gas; universal access and mobility; congestion management process; and statewide performance measurement
- **Opportunities** – includes a cost/benefit analysis and stakeholder ‘brainstorm’ to identify improvements to existing and/or new TO-related strategies
- **Policy Framework** – includes review of existing Regional Transportation Plan policies related to TO and development of revised policies
- **Performance Measurement and Evaluation** - identify performance measures and evaluation methods that are part of regional TO strategies, programs, or projects
- **Preferred Alternatives** - By applying the performance measurements and cost/benefit analysis to the opportunities, preferred alternatives are identified and created as a matrix to illustrate relationships
- **Draft Regional Transportation Options Plan** – draft RTP element and best practices document
- **Plan Adoption and Production** – adoption by the Metropolitan Policy Committee and incorporation into the next update of the RTP

#### *Public Involvement*

The public involvement efforts for the RTOP are crucial to the project's success. Staff is coordinating the public involvement closely with the public involvement processes for the other regional planning efforts described above, in particular the RTSP process. The RTSP public involvement strategies continue to be developed and aim to accomplish the following:

- Facilitating efficient identification, notification, and engagement of a range of stakeholders and stakeholder groups;
- Maximizing the value of public participation by developing tools to share input among jurisdictions, and that allow information to be sorted according to specific travel modes (rail, transit, bike/ped, auto), geography, or other factors;
- Identifying specific geographic areas (corridors, neighborhoods, communities);
- Understanding issues (greenhouse gas emissions, economic development, safety);

- Involving agencies (MPO, Cities, County, ODOT, LTD, point2point Solutions); and
- Coordinating key messages and maintaining a common language in communications to the public and decision-makers.

### **Timing**

The RTOP is targeted for completion within the next year and a half. See Attachment C: Transportation Planning/Public Involvement Flowchart.

### **Planning Commission Input and Direction**

The immediate next step for the project is to provide this overview to stakeholders. When the funding for the entire project is secured, the project management team will refine the work plan and work through the contracting process.

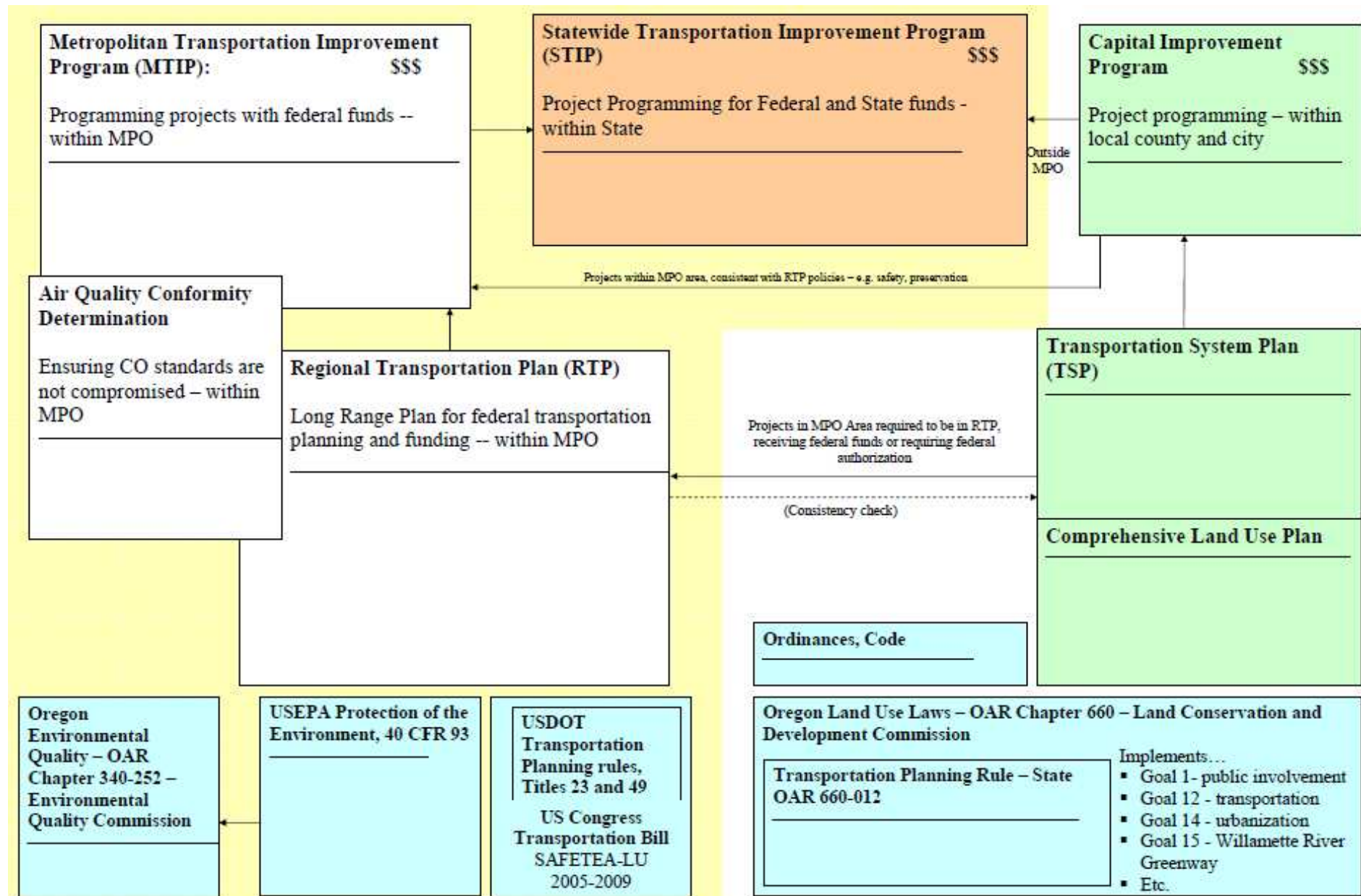
At this time, the RTOP project management team would appreciate feedback regarding the following:

- The proposed approach/work plan for the project
- Identifying additional stakeholders (outside of the traditional transportation-related roles)

## **IV. ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Transportation Planning Document Flowchart
- B. Regional Transportation Plan Transportation Demand Management Policies
- C. Transportation Planning/Public Involvement Programs

**ATTACHMENT A**



**ATTACHMENT B**  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT POLICIES

*Transportation demand management (TDM) policies direct the development and implementation of actions that encourage the use of modes other than single-occupant vehicles to meet daily travel needs. The TDM policies support changes in travel behavior to reduce traffic congestion and the need for additional road capacity and parking and to support desired patterns of development.*

**TDM Policy #1: TDM Program Development**

**Expand existing TDM programs and develop new TDM programs. Establish TDM bench marks and if the benchmarks are not achieved, mandatory programs may be established.**

**Policy Definition/Intent:** This policy supports expansion and development of a broad spectrum of local and regional TDM programs at varying levels of implementation. TDM programs will focus on reducing trips for nonwork purposes, as well as for work commutes. Voluntary participation in TDM programs will be encouraged through marketing and incentives to target audiences, including the general public, developers, employers, employees, school administrators, and students. An adequate funding program must be developed to support implementation of TDM programs. This policy also supports the exploration of opportunities to establish a market-based, user-oriented approach to TDM through the use of transportation pricing measures.

**TDM Policy #2: Parking Management**

**Increase the use of motor vehicle parking management strategies in selected areas throughout the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area.**

**Policy Definition/Intent:** Parking management strategies address both the supply and demand for vehicle parking. They contribute to balancing travel demand within the region among the various modes of transportation available. To promote parking equity in the region, consideration should be given to applying parking management strategies at a region-wide level, in addition to downtown centers.

**TDM Policy #3: Congestion Management**

**Implement TDM strategies to manage demand at congested locations.**

**Policy Definition/Intent:** Encouraging the use of alternative modes will become more important as the region grows and traffic congestion levels increase. A variety of strategies can be employed to help maintain mobility in congested locations as the area develops. TDM strategies implemented to manage demand at congested locations will be coordinated with other types of congestion management strategies, such as access management. This policy supports selective application of mandatory TDM strategies to manage demand at congested locations. For example, local jurisdictions could be allowed to require employers to designate an employee transportation coordinator and to implement programs that encourage employees to use alternative modes.

