



The region's six desired outcomes – endorsed by city and county elected officials and adopted by the Metro Council in December 2010

Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project

Background

In 2007, the Oregon Legislature established statewide goals to reduce carbon emissions – calling for a halt to rising emissions by 2010, a 10 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2020, and a 75 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050. The goals apply to all sectors, including energy production, buildings, solid waste and transportation.

In 2009, the Legislature passed House Bill 2001, directing the Portland metropolitan region to “develop two or more alternative land use and transportation scenarios” by January 2012 that are designed to reduce carbon emissions from cars, light duty trucks and SUVs. The law also mandates adoption of a preferred scenario after public review and consultation with local governments, and local government implementation through comprehensive plans and land use regulations that are consistent with the adopted regional scenario. The Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project responds to these mandates.

For years, the region has followed the 2040 Growth Concept to grow the kind of vibrant communities where transit, jobs and services are close to neighborhoods. The policies and initiatives that have protected farmland also reduced driving and the growth of carbon emissions. Together, these policies and actions provide the foundation for better integrating land use decisions with transportation investments to create prosperous and sustainable communities and to meet state climate goals.

State response

Oregon Sustainable Transportation Initiative

The Oregon Department of Transportation and the Department of Land Conservation and Development are leading the state response through the Oregon Sustainable Transportation Initiative. An integrated effort to reduce carbon emissions from transportation, the initiative will result in a statewide transportation strategy, toolkits and specific performance targets for the region to achieve.

Regional response

Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project

The Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project builds on state efforts and existing plans underway in the Portland metropolitan area. The project presents an opportunity to work together to learn what will be required to meet the state carbon goals and how well the strategies support the region's desired outcomes.

A goal of this effort is to further advance implementation of the 2040 Growth Concept, local plans and the public and private investments needed to create jobs, build great communities and meet state climate goals. Addressing the climate change challenge will take collaboration, partnerships and focused policy and investment decisions by elected leaders, stakeholders and the public to identify equitable and effective solutions through strategies that create livable, prosperous and healthy communities.

Metro's policy and technical advisory committees will guide the project, leading to Metro Council adoption of a “preferred” land use and transportation strategy in December 2014.

About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy, and sustainable transportation and living choices for people and businesses in the region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges and opportunities that affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

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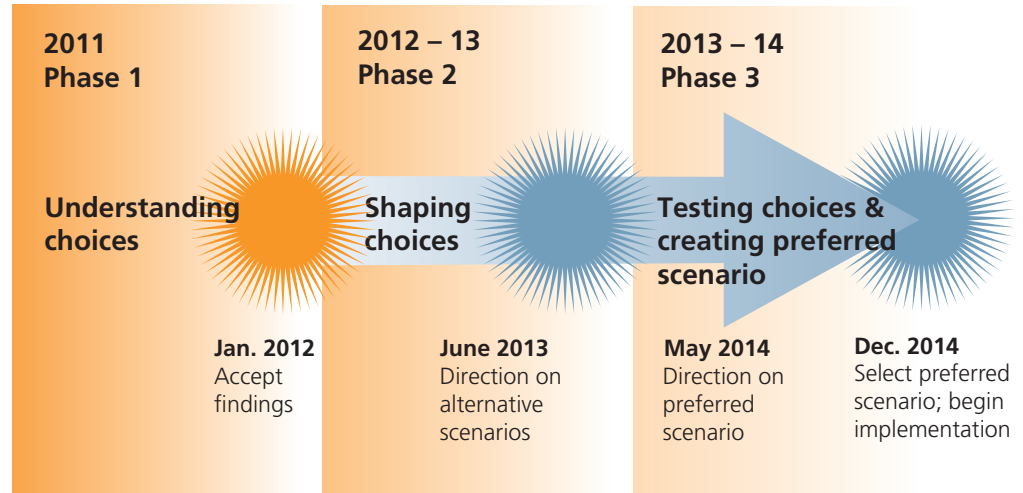
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Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project timeline



Phase 1

Understanding the choices

Working closely with cities and counties, Metro studied regionwide combinations of strategies, called scenarios, in 2011. The work focused on learning what combinations of land use and transportation strategies could potentially meet the region's emissions target. Strategies included transportation operational efficiencies that can ensure faster, more dependable business deliveries; more sidewalks and bicycle facilities; more mixed use and public transit-supportive development in centers and transit corridors; more public transit service; incentives to walk, bike and use public transit; and user-based fees.

Regional policy advisory committees reviewed findings and recommendations from the analysis in fall 2011 before accepting them for submittal to the Legislature in January 2012.

Phase 2

Shaping the direction

In 2012-13, the region developed alternative scenarios and evaluation criteria that applied the lessons learned from Phase 1. This phase provided an opportunity to incorporate strategies and new policies that reflect community aspirations identified through local and regional planning efforts already underway (e.g., SW Corridor Plan, East Metro Connections Plan,

Portland Plan, and other local land use and transportation plan updates). This work involved leaders from local governments as well as businesses, equity and environmental justice, and environmental leaders. In May-June 2013, Metro's policy committees and the Metro Council provided direction on three scenarios to be tested in summer 2013. Testing will help cities, counties and community partners decide which elements in the three options should go forward into one scenario for the region to adopt in 2014.

Phase 3

Building the strategy and implementation

The final project phase during 2013 and 2014 will lead to adoption of a "preferred" land use and transportation strategy. The analysis in this phase will be conducted using the region's most robust analytic tools and methods – Metropolitan GreenSTEP, the regional travel demand model, MetroScope and the regional emissions model, MOVES.

This phase will identify needed changes to regional policies and functional plans, and include updates to the Regional Transportation Plan and the region's growth management strategy. Implementation of approved changes to policies, investments and other actions would begin in 2014 at the regional and local levels.