

TRAVELER INFORMATION & TRAVEL OPTION SERVICES



How does the RTO Program Support Access to Travel Options Information?

Metro's Regional Travel Options (RTO) partners play a valuable role in providing localized information for Portland region residents, employees, and visitors. The RTO program:

Informs the Way to Work. Commuter-focused, web-based traveler information services provide trip planning tools and increase travel options awareness among a variety of employers, such as in Washington County, on Swan Island, and in the Lloyd District.

Promotes Sharing. In 2011, RTO partnered with ODOT to offer a more robust carpool matching service for the entire state, for commute or recreation trips. More recently, Westside Transportation Alliance piloted a bikeshare program and an app to promote rideshare.

Helps Residents Find Their Way. RTO supports improved mapping for active transportation, and raises awareness of travel choices. From maps to apps, the RTO program helps people reach recreation, transit, and shopping destinations on foot, transit, or by bike.

WHAT IS THE RTO PROGRAM?

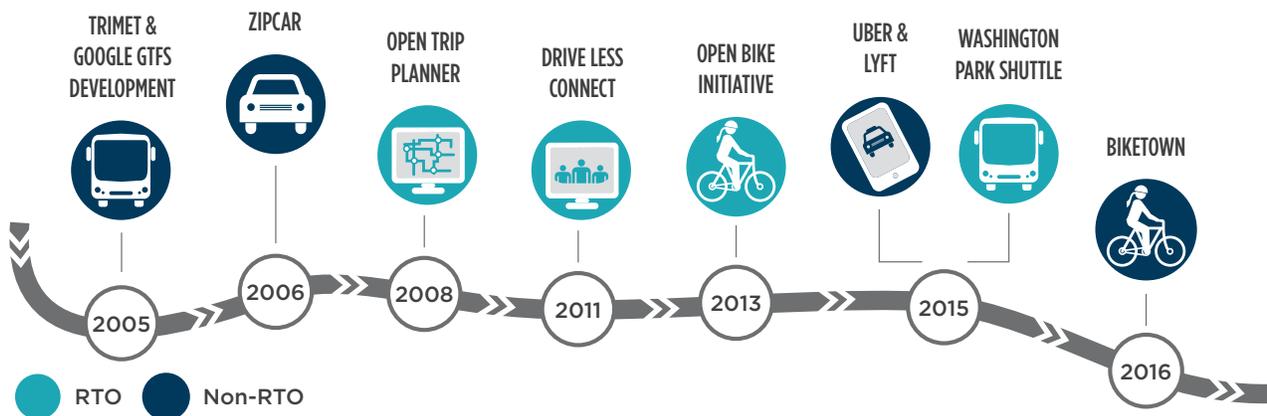
Metro's Regional Travel Options (RTO) Program supports organizations that develop and distribute travel options information and tools to encourage regional residents to walk, bicycle, take transit, or share rides.

RTO supports Metro's regional goals, including expanding transportation choices, improving air quality, and minimizing contributions to climate change. Its biennial competitive grant program distributes funds to government, non-profit, and community organizations throughout the region.

How are Travel Options Changing in the Portland Metropolitan Region?

New mobility options are emerging. People in the Portland metro area have new ways to get around whether they drive, bike, or take transit. Over the past five years, a wide range of new travel options and information tools have become available. Some of these services have been piloted by the RTO program and its partners, while others have been introduced by private companies or public agencies.

Timeline of Recent Traveler Information and Travel Options Developments in the Portland Region



Bikeshare arrived in the region in 2013, when the Westside Transportation Alliance used RTO funding in a partnership with the Open Bike Initiative to operate its first pilot bikeshare system with Intel employees. They have since piloted systems with other major employers. Portland, with seed funds from Metro, introduced its BIKETOWN bikeshare system in July 2016. On July 19th, 2017, Metro sponsored free BIKETOWN day passes to celebrate the one year anniversary of its launch.

- Over 300 users completed over 1,100 trips during Intel’s pilot bikeshare program.
- More than 300,000 trips were made during BIKETOWN’s first year.¹

Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft operate throughout the region as of 2015, providing on-demand mobility.

- In 2016, 8.5% of visitors to Washington Park said they arrived by “Carshare or other,” up from 2% the year before. This shift, combined with feedback from employees of Washington Park, suggests the increased use of TNCs.
- An estimated 7 million TNC rides will be provided within Portland in 2017.²

Carshare services provide their members with flexible access to motor vehicles.

- ZipCar provides hourly car rentals at over 200 locations throughout the Portland region.
- Car2Go and ReachNow provide over 800 vehicles (combined) for use in their point-to-point car sharing systems within Portland.³
- GetAround and Turo enable peer-to-peer carsharing, allowing hundreds of neighbors to rent each other’s vehicles.⁴

Shuttles operating in the region include the Columbia Gorge Express (2016) – operated by ODOT – and the Washington Park Shuttle (2015) – operated by Explore Washington Park and promoted through an RTO grant. RTO supported building ridership on Clackamas Community College’s shuttle.

- Usage of the Washington Park shuttle went from 9% of visitors to 21% between 2014 and 2015.
- The Columbia Gorge Express provided over 30,000 trips to Multnomah Falls in the 2016 operating season.⁵

The Portland region is an innovator in traveler information. TriMet and Google partnered in the development of the General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) in 2005, which is now used worldwide to enable transit trip planning. TriMet also partnered with OpenPlans in 2008 (supported by an RTO grant) to develop the OpenTripPlanner, enabling multimodal trip planning in the Portland region. Numerous web and smartphone applications building on these efforts enable Portland residents, over two-thirds of whom use smartphones, to explore travel options, plan routes, get real-time information on conditions and delays, and navigate with ease and convenience.⁶

Travel Options Information Projects

Go Swan Island – Interactive Commuter Kiosks

Go Swan Island installed travel options information kiosks at Vigor Shipyards, Portland Community College (PCC), and Daimler’s truck manufacturing plant. Each kiosk and the web page it displays was customized for its location.

- 90 users at three locations during first six months
- Vigor has seen an increase in transit pass enrollment
- Daimler is using the kiosks to launch their WeRide program to incentivize carpooling



Kiosk at the PCC Swan Island Trade Center. Source: Go Swan Island.

City of Portland – New Resident SmartTrips

Supported by an RTO grant, Portland’s ongoing citywide SmartTrips program uses an individualized marketing approach, offering customized travel information and resources to encourage new residents to utilize travel options. Portland added over 18,000 new residents between 2013 and 2015.⁷ Research has indicated that people are more likely to change their travel habits when moving to a new home.^{8,9}



SmartTrips Informational Materials. Source: Portland Bureau of Transportation.

- SmartTrips engaged with 73,500 new mover households between 2014-2015, almost 8,000 of whom actively participated
- The rate of driving for commute trips dropped from 50% to 36% among active program participants
- The rate of driving for non-commute trips dropped from 57% to 37% among active program participants
- Bicycling saw the greatest increase, from 9% to 23% of non-commute trips among active participants

Explore Washington Park – Visitor Shuttle

Explore Washington Park is a Transportation Management Association (TMA) formed in 2013 through an RTO grant and Portland Parks & Recreation funds to oversee parking management and encourage the use of travel options for visitors to SW Portland’s Washington Park. Washington Park is home to some of Portland’s most popular destinations, including the Oregon Zoo, the International Rose Test Garden, and the Portland Japanese Garden. The TMA started and promoted a free shuttle service during the peak summer season to circulate visitors among these destinations. Real-time information on the shuttle’s location and anticipated arrival is available online. The shuttle is integrated into TriMet’s GTFS feed for transit routing via Google Maps and other apps. Real-time parking information is also provided so that park visitors can make informed decisions about how they travel to Washington Park.

Explore Washington Park Visitor Shuttle

- Driving trips for visitors to Washington Park decreased by from 81% to 67% between 2014 and 2016
- Visitor surveys showed that use of the circulator shuttle increased steadily, from 9% to 23% between 2014 and 2016
- The shuttle carried more than 120,000 riders during peak season operations in 2016



Explore Washington Park Visitor Shuttle. Source: Explore Washington Park.



TriMet Open Trip Planner Bicycle Route Data Maintenance

With the assistance of RTO funds, TriMet maintains bicycle and pedestrian network data (e.g., streets, sidewalks, paths) in Open Street Maps so that TriMet OpenTripPlanner and other trip planners relying on the same data have up-to-date information on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.



Metro Bike There! Map

The Bike There! Map shows bike routes in the region, symbolized by suitability and accompanied by safety tips and bike laws. In 2015, the release of the 9th edition of the map was accompanied by outreach at community events and online outreach, including a photo contest on Instagram.

- 5,000 waterproof copies of the 9th edition were sold at local bike shops and bookstores for \$6
- Thousands of people were reached through events
- The 8th edition had annual average sales of 1,494 copies in 2013 and 2014
- According to the 2014 Metro RTO Travel and Awareness Survey, 18% of Metro residents are aware of the map



Metro Getting Around

The Metro Getting Around webpage includes resources and tools for transportation options including biking, walking, taking public transit, and carpooling. The site links to the Bike There! Map, transit agency websites, carshare websites, and other local resources for all travel modes. It includes information on bicycle gear, safety, and walking routes.

- Average of more than 3,400 page views per month (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2016)
- About 70% of user views are new visitors



Drive Less Connect

Drive Less Connect is a rideshare and multimodal trip logging tool that was launched by the State of Oregon in 2011. The tool allows participants to connect with carpools in their workplace and community and track their daily trips, including mode and destination.

- 13,303 registered users (2,226 active) as of June 30, 2015
- 5,205 ridematch requests sent as of June 30, 2015
- Almost 5 million drive-alone trips eliminated in the Portland Metro region between June 2013 and July 2015

Westside Transportation Alliance – Commove App

WTA implemented a pilot project to study strategies that encourage travel options usage in suburban environments. The project centered on the custom-developed Commove app, which helps Washington County commuters plan their route to work and match with a carpool or find another transportation option. WTA conducted the pilot in 2015 with two employers. Pilot participants enjoyed the competitive nature of the app, which gave them ‘achievements’ for logging trips using travel options. The application did have challenges in affecting the use of new travel options, as the pilot study group was small, and many participants already utilized travel options.

What’s next?

Travel options and information provided in the Portland region changed rapidly during the evaluation period. How people access travel information will continue to change as new technologies come on line.

- **New options are likely to expand and innovate.** This evaluation period saw the emergence of ride-hailing, carshare, bikeshare, and new shuttle services in the Portland region. These new options will likely expand service to more users and change the way people make daily travel decisions. OpenTripPlanner continues to expand with information from world-wide developers and TriMet’s current work to incorporate shared use mobility options into trip planning.
- **Travel information flow is no longer one-way.** Travelers no longer simply read and react to travel information – smartphones and the internet enable real time feedback from travelers. Expanded data input opportunities, such as trip-tracking apps for cyclists (e.g., Ride Report) and improved transit ridership information with the HOP Fastpass (the region’s new transit fare system) can be leveraged to improve regional travel options.
- **RTO is conducting an expanded Travel and Awareness survey.** The survey will track awareness of Metro’s RTO programs and understand how regional residents feel about and use the travel options and information available to them. RTO will incorporate new modes and technology into the survey to assess residents’ awareness and use of these options.

2013-2016 Regional Travel Options Evaluation

Metro works with an independent contractor every two years to conduct an evaluation of its RTO program including both Metro administered programs and competitive grant projects. This report is one of four reports developed for the 2013-2016 RTO Evaluation.

For more information, visit oregonmetro.gov/travel-options-research or contact RTO@oregonmetro.gov

ENDNOTES

1. Portland Bureau of Transportation. (2017, July 17). News Release: News Release: BIKETOWN celebrates first birthday with a week of prizes, Free Ride Day on Wednesday, July 19. Retrieved July 31, 2017, from <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORPORTLAND/bulletins/1aac54>.
2. Portland Bureau of Transportation. (2017, April 28). APRIL 2017 GREYBALL AUDIT REPORT. Retrieved July 17, 2017, from <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/saltzman/article/637492>.
3. Oregonian/OregonLive, E. N. (2017, April 12). Car-sharing in Portland: Driver's guide to options in a growing market. Retrieved August 25, 2017, from http://www.oregonlive.com/commuting/index.ssf/2016/09/car-sharing_in_portland_driver.html.
4. Dill, Jennifer, et al. (2017, May 25). Peer-to-Peer Carsharing: Short-Term Effects on Travel Behavior in Portland, OR. TREC. Retrieved from http://trec.pdx.edu/research/project/1144/Peer-To-Peer_Carsharing:_Short-term_effects_on_travel_behavior_in_Portland,_OR.
5. Looking ahead: listening, learning and improving. (2016, October 24). Retrieved July 17, 2017, from <http://columbiagorgeexpress.com/blog/looking-ahead-listening-learning-and-improving>.
6. City of Portland Office for Community Technology (2014, September). Portland Broadband Adoption. Retrieved August 11, 2017, from <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/revenue/article/504164>.
7. US Census Bureau. (2015, 2013). American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table B01003 [Data File]. Available from <https://factfinder.census.gov>.
8. Thomas, G. O., Poortinga, W., & Sautkina, E. (2016, April 27). Habit Discontinuity, Self-Activation, and the Diminishing Influence of Context Change: Evidence from the UK Understanding Society Survey. Retrieved July 17, 2017, from <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0153490>.
9. Tools of Change. (n.d.). Portland's Smart Trips Welcome Program. Retrieved July 17, 2017, from <http://www.toolsofchange.com/en/case-studies/detail/658>.