



February 2012

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Climate Smart Communities

SCENARIOS PROJECT

Phase 1 Summary

Understanding Our Land Use and Transportation Choices

Making a great place



It is as much about jobs, livable neighborhoods and public health as it is about clean air.

Residents of the Portland metropolitan region value choice – where to live, how to get around, what kind of job to have. And we don't want to have to choose between things that are important to our way of life – things like clean air, good jobs, safe neighborhoods, vibrant downtowns, access to nature and cultural activities.

We are faced with many of the problems that others face around the nation and the world – an economic crisis, rising housing and transportation costs, lack of money for public structures, increasing congestion and air pollution. What sets us apart in this region is that we have followed a collective vision since 1995 – the 2040 Growth Concept – that has helped us to build communities with unique identities, save farms and forestland, develop public transit and biking and walking facilities, and work together to make the most of limited public and private dollars.

So when the state directed the region to come up with a plan and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to ensure clean air, we had a good start. It's not just about reducing carbon in the environment, but making sure that we all have choices of great communities in which to live, work and raise a family.

The Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project is a collaborative effort between Metro and its city, county and state partners to create the kind of communities that residents want. It is as much about jobs, livable neighborhoods and public health as it is about clean air. The goal is to select a combination of land use and transportation strategies and investments that will keep our communities vibrant and prosperous, while also helping our region meet state targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars and small trucks.

Working together

The scenarios project is characterized first and foremost by collaboration and implementation of local community visions. Policymakers who serve on the region's Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC), and the Metro Council approved principles to guide the project. A technical work group composed of planning staff from cities, counties and other agencies worked closely with Metro staff throughout the research, modeling, and analytical stages of Phase 1.

What sets us apart

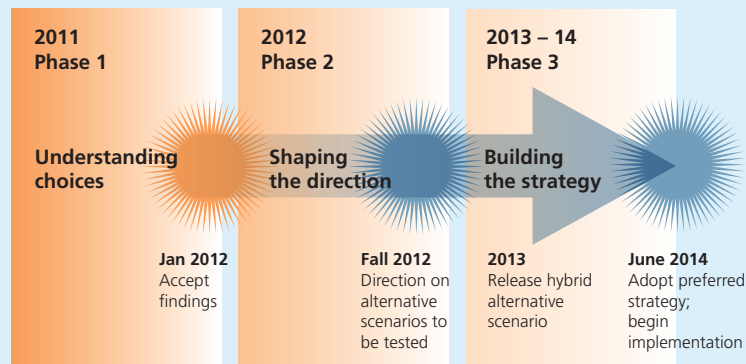
Residents in this region travel 20 percent fewer miles by car every day compared to other U.S. urban areas, annually saving:

2.9 million miles of driving

\$1.1 billion in transportation costs

100 million travel hours

Portland's Green Dividend, 2007



The scenarios project is organized into three phases.

Phase 1 research concluded with an understanding of the region's land use and transportation options for reducing carbon emissions while advancing community goals.

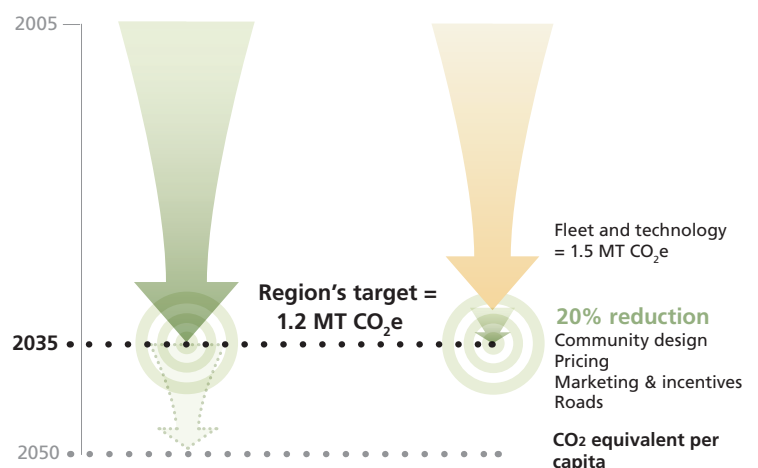
Phase 2 will engage local government, community and business leaders in identifying community visions and shaping scenarios to consider.

Phase 3 includes evaluation of three scenarios and public engagement. Implementation begins once the region adopts a preferred scenario.

Region's 2035 emissions reduction target

To assist the scenarios project, the Land Conservation and Development Commission established a 2005 baseline for the Portland metropolitan region: 4.05 metric tons annual, per capita roadway greenhouse gas emissions. (One metric ton CO₂ equals 112 gallons of gasoline.)

The 2035 target calls for no more than 1.2 metric tons annual per capita roadway emissions. State-provided assumptions on two policy areas, fleet (the type of cars in the region and their age) and technology (hybrid, electric and other carbon-reducing technologies), reduce the region's annual roadway greenhouse gas emissions to 1.5 metric tons per capita. Additional policy actions will be needed to reach the 2035 target.



Phase 1 snapshot

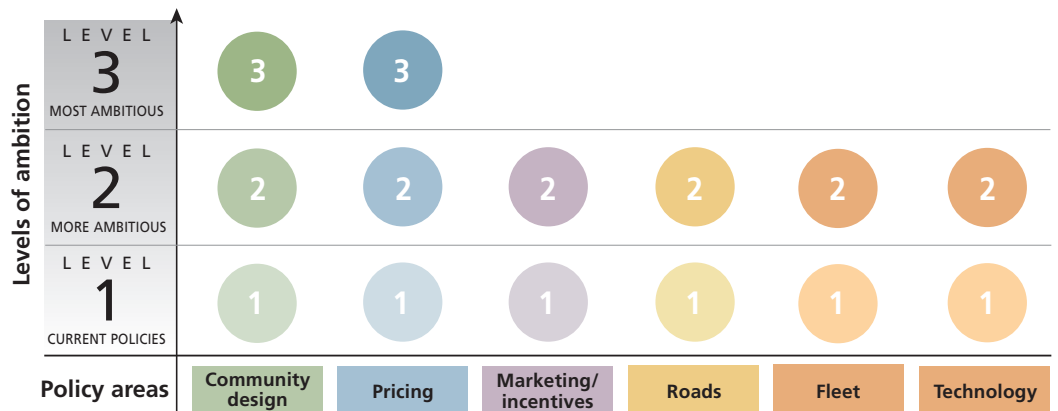
During Phase 1, Metro staff researched land use and transportation strategies that have been implemented in similar communities across the nation and around the world. This work resulted in a toolbox describing major strategy areas and potential results. The toolbox not only identifies successful strategies for providing practical choices to help people drive less, but also describes other community benefits as well.

Increased walking has a beneficial effect on public health and obesity rates. Properly designed shopping areas in combination with transportation choices can increase dollars spent at home while also taking cars off the road. Bike lane construction provides much needed jobs and an option for short outings, which are the majority of trips taken in the region.

Project staff also worked with ODOT and the technical work group to study six different policy areas: community design, pricing, marketing and incentives, roads, fleet, and technology. Each policy area included at least two levels of ambition, and in some cases three, resulting in 144 scenarios tested.

Phase 1: building blocks for regional scenarios

Testing combinations of plausible strategies



Family finance

One of the biggest household expenses for most families is transportation – second only to housing costs. According to AAA, if the average family drove even four fewer miles each day, they would save \$854 a year.



Complete results from Phase 1 are compiled in the findings report, available at www.oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios. JPACT, MPAC and the Metro Council accepted the Phase 1 Findings Report before it was submitted to the Oregon Legislature in January 2012.

Summary of Phase 1 results

1. Current local and regional plans and policies are ambitious and provide a strong foundation for meeting the region's greenhouse gas emissions reduction target.
2. The target is achievable but will take additional effort and new strategic actions.
3. Most of the strategies under consideration are already being implemented to varying degrees in the region to achieve the 2040 Growth Concept vision and other important economic, social and environmental goals.
4. A range of options can reduce greenhouse gas emissions; the best approach is a mix of strategies.
5. Community design and pricing play a key role in how much and how far people drive each day and provide significant GHG emissions reductions.
6. Fleet, technology and pricing strategies provide similar significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions but no single strategy is enough to meet the region's target.
7. Road management and marketing strategies improve system and vehicle efficiency and reduce vehicle travel to provide similar, but modest greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

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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Moving forward

Policy questions to be addressed

- What actions are currently underway to address the livability of local communities? How are those actions consistent with the actions identified by the climate scenarios project? What kinds of investment or support do communities need to fully realize their vision for the future?
- How do we ensure the region's approach is inclusive and equitable, reflecting the diverse needs and interests of all communities, particularly among households of modest income or people of color?
- How do we ensure the regional strategy provides greater economic opportunity for everyone, creating jobs and boosting economic development and competitiveness?
- Which strategies are most cost effective and efficient? Which strategies are easiest to implement both technically and politically? How do we overcome obstacles to the most effective actions that are difficult or expensive to implement?
- What are the benefits and impacts to the region's goals?

Phase 1 was about understanding choice at the regional level. Phase 2 shifts to understanding local community plans and exploring how and where different strategies could be applied to provide local and individual choice as the region meets carbon reduction targets.

Learn more Visit www.oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios.

Stay connected Sign up to receive periodic updates about the scenarios project at www.oregonmetro.gov/connect.

Communicate Share ideas or suggestions with your local elected officials and your Metro Councilor.

Opt In Voice your opinion by signing up for Metro's online opinion panel at www.optinpanel.org. Upcoming survey topics will include the scenarios project.