

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The purpose of this project is to develop a policy framework to improve regional decision-making at the state and local level.

In April 2010, the Bullitt Foundation awarded the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) a grant to study how Oregon regions (outside of the Portland Metropolitan area) can more effectively and efficiently address policy issues at a regional level. There are numerous policy issues, including but not limited to, climate change, transportation, and land use, that may be addressed more effectively and efficiently through regional coordination than could be achieved by individual jurisdictions acting independently. As governance becomes more complicated, the OAPA Board recognizes that regional planning has an unrealized potential to improve

decision-making in Oregon. The project report and its recommendations were adopted by the OAPA Board in November 2010.

Given the resources available for this effort, there are a number of issues that could not be explored in much depth, or at all. Along with the specific recommendations on page 2 of this handout, the following points help make it clear what OAPA is recommending, and what it is not recommending.

What OAPA is recommending:

- Enabling the creation of efficient regional planning and decision-making processes that save time and money for both the state and local governments.
- Enabling local governments that share a defined geography and important

issues of concern to create a mechanism to avoid negative impacts on one another, and build regional trust to enable region's to make difficult decisions cooperatively.

- A way for the state to cede some regulatory oversight of local planning without losing control of important outcomes.
- A way for local governments to gain more control of their future.

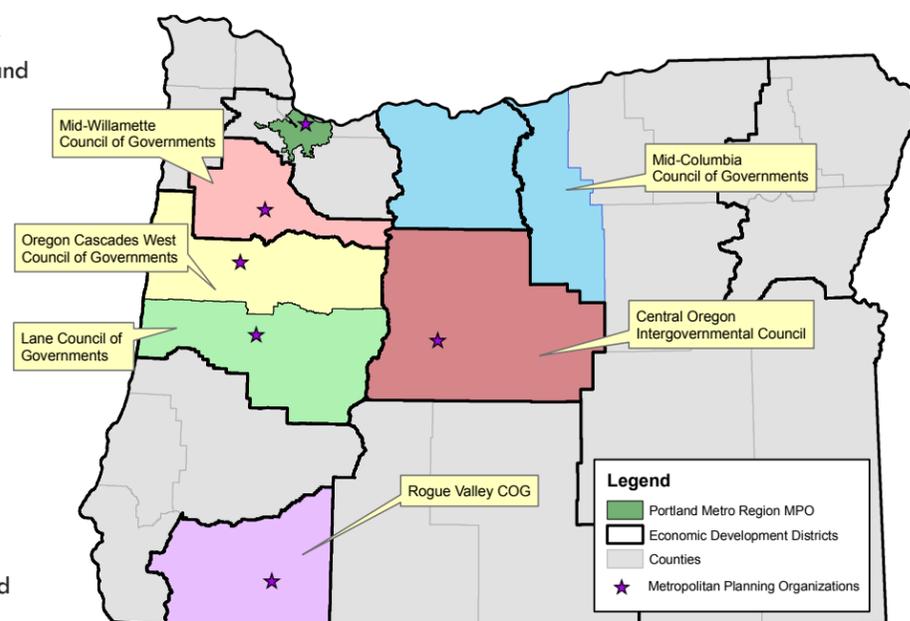
OAPA is not recommending:

- A change in state goals, or weakening their enforcement
- Regional LCDC's or mini-Metro's
- Forcing regional planning on unwilling local jurisdictions
- An additional layer of bureaucracy between state and local governments.

REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS AND EFFORTS IN OREGON

- **Regional and bi-state governmental entities** are Metro and the Columbia River Gorge Commission.
- **Inter-governmental coordination** are the six Councils of Governments that provide a variety of services for cities, counties, special districts, and tribes.
- **State-sponsored and supported regional planning efforts** are Regional Problem Solving (coordinated by the Department of Land Conservation and Development), Area Commissions on Transportation (coordinated by the Oregon Department of Transportation), watershed councils, and soil and water conservation districts.
- **Federally mandated organizations or plans for federal money** are Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Economic Development Districts (EDDs), and Consolidated Plans for Housing.
- **Ad-hoc regional efforts** are multiple public and private entities that are engaged in voluntary activities.

Oregon Councils of Government, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and Economic Development Districts, 2010



FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION AND INITIATIVES

- **OR HB 2001 (2009 Jobs and Transportation Act)** requires Metro to develop a pilot program to do scenario planning related to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2012 (and Eugene-Springfield MPO by 21013 -14). By 2013, DLCD will develop rules for scenario planning in regional and local plans.
- **OR SB 1059 (2010 Metropolitan Scenario Planning for GHG Reduction)** requires the state to prepare guidance for possible future planning by local governments to reduce GHG emissions,

the OTC to adopt a GHG reduction strategy, and LCDC to adopt GHG emissions targets for metropolitan areas outside of Portland Metro by 2011.

- **OR HB 2228 (2009 Transfer of Development Rights Pilot Program)** requires DLCD to develop a transfer of development rights pilot program that will require cooperation between urban and rural areas.
- **Federal Transportation Reauthorization Bill** reauthorizes federal transportation programs. Prospects are good for federal transportation reform that

supports regional planning and implementation in innovative and effective ways.

- **Proposed Federal Energy and Climate Change Bills** would require states and MPOs to implement GHG reduction strategies.
- **Federal Sustainable Communities Program** is a collaboration between HUD, USDOT, and the EPA to develop a new grant program for sustainable communities for regional integration of housing, economic development, and transportation.

REGIONAL PLANNING IN CALIFORNIA, GEORGIA, NORTH CAROLINA, & VERMONT

California: California features an empowered system of regional planning.

- In 2008, California adopted SB 375, which may be "the nation's most comprehensive effort to reduce sprawl." *NY Times* 8-28-08.
- SB 375 promises to integrate plans for global warming, sustainable communities, transportation, land use, and housing allocations.
- Regional transportation planning happens statewide in an integrated framework. Most agencies are responsible for more than just transportation planning, as they are parts of Councils of Government.
- California grants its regional agencies strong funding authority, by passing through 75% of all State Transportation Improvement Program funds (state and federal). The regions have the lead authority to allocate these funds, even on the state highway system.
- Regional Blueprint Plans (or Scenarios), used for a decade, are evolving to meet SB 375 regional GHG targets.

Georgia: While education and funding incentives encourage smart growth and regional planning, change on the ground has been slow.

- Georgia incentivizes local governments to adopt comprehensive plans, and more recently zoning ordinances, with the "carrot" of state funding.
- Since 1989, Regional Development Commissions (composed of local governments) review local plans, prepare regional plans, and provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions.

North Carolina: North Carolina utilizes regional councils as the state's primary regional planning and decision-making organizations.

- 17 regional councils (13 COGs and 4 planning and economic development commissions) are intermediaries between local and state and federal agency programs.
- Participation in regional councils is voluntary, resulting in gaps in service and weakening of planning project outcomes.

Vermont: Vermont has one of the nation's most comprehensive systems of regional planning with a 40-year track record (like Oregon). It uses a strong model of integrated regional and local planning and incentives, based on State Goals.

- Decentralizes the state's planning authority to 11 Regional Planning Commissions (since 1989), composed of local governments, which assist, review, and mediate local plans, on a five-year cycle.
- "Confirmed" local plans give municipalities big state funding and home rule incentives for effective community development. While comprehensive local plans are voluntary, 90% of municipalities have them.
- Vermont local governments interact more with their region than with state agencies. Local plans must be consistent with regional plans and State Goals.
- Regional transportation plans are an integrated part of all regional plans, which also include land use, energy, utilities and facilities, housing, natural areas, and development trends.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STATEWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

S1. A new regional framework

S1A. The State and regions should actively work to create a new regional planning framework that is cost-efficient and effective, removes barriers to regional planning and decision-making, and increases regional coordination and cooperation. Regional planning should fill a gap in decision-making, not create another layer of bureaucracy.

S2. Addressing regional issues

S2A. The state should allow regions to work together to conduct a regional buildable lands analysis as the factual base for UGB expansion analysis. OAPA recommends that the state amend state statute to encourage regions to address regional land use issues by conducting a regional buildable lands analysis. Once it is acknowledged, local jurisdictions could use the findings as a safe harbor for urban growth boundary expansions.

S2B. Regions should consider (and the state should better support) adopting regional plans. A regional plan should create a common regional vision, policies, and goals, and an implementation program that considers alternative long-term land use and transportation scenarios.

S2C. The State should consider adopting performance measures for Regional Plans. Oregon should create performance measures that hold regions accountable for regional plans and plan implementation.

S2D. The State should empower regions that have acknowledged regional plans with planning review and funding authority. OAPA recommends that LCDC acknowledge regional plans, and then

local plans would have to comply with the regional plan. With an acknowledged regional plan, locals could reduce reporting to the state.

S3. Coordination of regional planning and decision-making

S3A. The State should enable regions to create Regional Planning Commissions governed by local elected officials, as multi-county coordinating bodies (under ORS 195) to adopt regional plans and assume other delegated planning powers.

S3B. The State should support an increased role of COGs and encourage them to coordinate all regional planning activities within their service area, to adopt regional plans, and to assume other delegated planning powers.

S4. Supporting regional planning and decision-making

S4A. The State should look for opportunities to audit and streamline laws, rules, and processes. State agencies should re-examine the requirements and processes for long-range planning activities, permitting, and other activities that will save state and local government money and time, while maintaining high standards.

S4B. The State should fund improvements to state and regional data collection, management, and analysis. DAS and DLCD have proposals to upgrade spatial data and hardware to better manage data. OAPA believes that it is important to make sure that regions have good data to make the best decisions and support.

S4C. The state and regions should prioritize some resources and incentives to support regional planning. The state should consider dedicated funding for

regional activities. Even in tough fiscal times, the state should look at its existing programs and consider changes that support regional planning.

S4D. The State should authorize creation of Regional Improvement Programs that would coordinate state support and other resources to implement acknowledged regional plans. The State and regions should identify a funding package, called a Regional Improvement Program, that supports regional planning and decision-making.

S5B. The State and regions should track, provide input, and prepare for federal legislation and programs for regional planning. The State and regions should cooperatively identify and review potential changes to Oregon's regional planning programs that may be needed to align with new federal laws and initiatives.

REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. MPOs should consider expanding their boundaries. MPOs should consider expanding boundaries to cover complete counties within SMSA or Combined Statistical Areas, so they can address larger regional land use and transportation issues in a more integrated way.

R2. The Central Oregon region should determine if it wants to address regional planning and transportation issues, and if so, what body should coordinate this activity. Central Oregon is the only major metropolitan area without a regional body that addresses land use and transportation issues. It should consider forming a regional planning body through the Central Oregon intergovernmental Council to address regional land use, transportation, economic development, housing, and climate change issues.

REGIONAL PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS TIMELINE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

| Recommendations | Ph 1 | Ph 2 | State, regional, and local actions | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|------------------------------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2011-2013 | 2013-2015 | Legis. | State | State Agency | Local/Region |
| S1. A new regional framework | | | | | | |
| S1A. The State and regions should actively work to create a new regional planning framework that is cost-efficient and effective, removes barriers to regional planning and decision-making, and increases regional coordination and cooperation. | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| S2. Addressing regional issues | | | | | | |
| S2A. The State should allow regions to work together to conduct a regional buildable lands analysis (including a housing needs analysis and an economic opportunities analysis) as the factual base for urban growth boundary expansion analysis for all local governments within that region. | X | | X | X | | X |
| S2B. Regions should consider (and the State should support) adopting regional plans. | | X | X | X | | |
| S2C. The State should adopt performance measures for regional plans. | | X | X | X | | |
| S2D. The State should empower regions that have acknowledged regional plans with planning review and funding authority. | | X | X | X | X | X |
| S3. Coordination of regional planning and decision-making | | | | | | |
| S3A. The State should enable regions to create Regional Planning Commissions. | X | | X | X | | X |
| S3B. The State should support an increased regional planning role of Councils of Governments. | X | | | X | | X |
| S4. Supporting regional planning and decision-making | | | | | | |
| S4A. The State should look for opportunities to audit and streamline planning (and other) laws, rules, and processes. | X | | | X | X | |
| S4B. The State should fund improvements to state and regional data collection, management, and analysis. | X | | X | | | |
| S4C. The State and regions should prioritize some existing resources and consider adopting new incentive programs to support regional planning. | X | | X | X | X | X |
| S4D. The State should authorize regions to create Regional Improvement Programs that coordinate state and other resources to effectively implement acknowledged regional plans. | | X | X | X | | X |
| S4E. The State and regions should track, provide input to, and prepare for federal legislation and programs in energy, transportation, housing, and environment that can provide new resources for regional planning. | X | | | | X | X |
| Regional Recommendations | | | | | | |
| R1. MPOs should consider expanding their boundaries to provide more comprehensive transportation planning within their travelsheds. | X | | | X | | X |
| R2. The Central Oregon region (Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson Counties) should determine if it wants to address regional land use and transportation planning issues, and if so, what body should coordinate this activity. | X | | | | | X |