



Oregon's Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities Program

In 2007, Oregon legislators adopted a law setting a state policy and goal to reduce Oregon's climate pollution by 75% by 2050.

That's what the science requires, if America hopes to avoid catastrophic impacts to our environment, communities, and economy.

Seventeen years later, we're far off track in our efforts to meet those goals – and we're already experiencing real-world impacts of climate disruption, with increasing wildfires, in size, severity, and timing, and record heat waves that have cost Oregonians their homes, and their lives.

We're particularly off-track in reducing pollution from transportation, responsible for about 38% of Oregon's climate pollution. On our current path, Oregon will only reduce transportation pollution by about 20% by 2050. That means we're polluting far more than we hoped, meaning more extreme weather events, more wildfires, more ocean acidification, and more record heat waves.

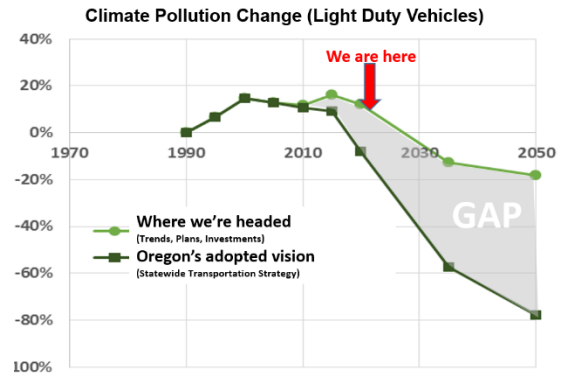
Meanwhile, Oregon is reexamining our troubling history and practice of land use, zoning, and transportation investment decisions that have resulted in current patterns of inequity and discrimination. Our decisions have concentrated wealth and health in privileged populations, at the expense of others.

Oregon's Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) program aims to take some steps towards redressing these harms, and getting us closer to meeting Oregon's climate law.

Program Overview and Desired Outcomes

The Land Conservation and Development Commission launched the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities program in September 2020. The commission directed the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), Oregon's land use planning agency, to draft changes in Oregon's planning system rules for communities in Oregon's eight most populated areas. The program is a partnership between DLCD, the Oregon Department of Transportation, and local governments.

The program requires those communities to update their local land use and transportation plans to do more to ensure Oregonians have more safe, comfortable ways to get around, and don't have to drive long distances just to meet their daily needs. The rules also aim to improve equity, and help community transportation, housing, and



Oregon is dramatically off-track. If current trends continue, Oregon will release more than four times more transportation pollution than our goal by 2050.



Thousands of Oregonians have lost their homes in recent wildfires. Missing our climate goals will mean more extreme and more frequent weather events such as heat bombs, droughts, and wildfires.



The program applies in Oregon's eight metropolitan areas shown above.

planning serve all Oregonians, particularly those traditionally underserved and discriminated against.

What does that mean on the ground? It means having some areas where regulations don't get in the way of creating more walkable neighborhoods. The program requires 15 communities to designate climate-friendly areas, and to allow people to build taller buildings providing more housing. The rules don't *require* taller buildings, but make sure those buildings are *allowed*. In climate-friendly areas, a minimum density standard will help to support infrastructure investments and convenient transit service.

Other program provisions call for new buildings to support the growing electric vehicle transformation, reduce one-size-fits-all parking mandates, and update local planning requirements to address critical gaps in our walking, biking, and transit networks. Communities must identify a set of transportation projects to meet our climate goals.

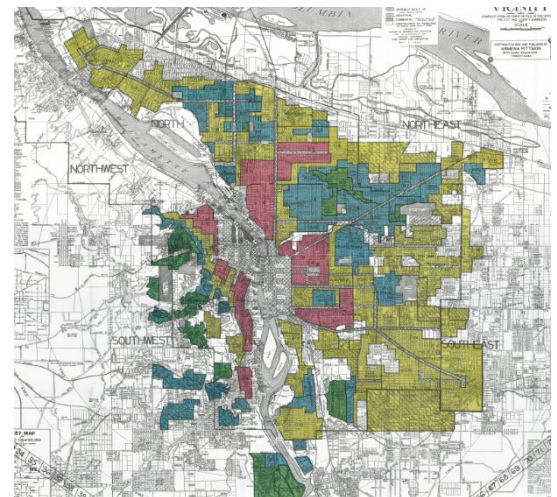
The program is mainly about letting climate-friendly development happen where people want to build it and the market calls for it. There's a lot of demand for housing where people can walk to where they want to go. Oregonians have a diverse set of housing desires and deserve more affordable and climate-friendly choices. Traditional housing types such as townhomes, duplexes, and granny flats could better meet the changing shape of American households, as nearly a third of homes hold just one person. But again, people can choose what best meets their needs, including single-family homes.

Equitable Engagement and Decision-Making

A central outcome of this program is an increased emphasis on equity. The program has worked to integrate equity, starting with the rulemaking charge and title. DLCD convened a rulemaking advisory committee reflecting the diversity of Oregon's communities

The rulemaking advisory committee spent significant time at many of its meetings discussing equity, and developed an [Equitable Outcomes Statement](#) to guide the rulemaking drafting and implementation. The department conducted a racial equity analysis of the rules and an analysis on how the program could be improved to serve people with disabilities. The department [published a table](#) listing how each item in the Equitable Outcomes Statement was or was not brought forth into the draft rules, and what next steps might be.

The rules define traditionally underserved populations to include Black and African American people, Indigenous people, People of Color, people with limited English proficiency, people with disabilities, low-income Oregonians, youth and seniors, and more. They require mapping of traditionally underserved populations, local consideration of a set of anti-displacement actions should decisions potentially lead to displacement risk, centering the voices of underserved populations in decision-making, and regular reporting on efforts to engage traditionally underserved populations.



1938 Redlining map of Portland. Redlining allowed white people to build wealth through homeownership.

Climate-Friendly Areas

A climate-friendly area is an area where residents, workers, and visitors can meet most of their daily needs without having to drive. They are urban mixed-use areas that contain, or are planned to contain, a good mix and supply of housing, jobs, businesses, and services. These areas are served, or planned to be served, by high quality pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure to provide frequent, comfortable, and convenient connections to key destinations within the city and region.

Why are climate-friendly areas important? To meet our climate and equity goals, we need to develop urban areas where residents are less dependent on driving. Before the automobile became common in America, cities grew more efficiently, with a variety of uses in city centers and other areas that allowed for working, living, and shopping within a walkable or transit accessible area. Over the last century, the automobile and planning practices have served to push activities apart, creating greater inequities within cities and widespread dependence upon climate-polluting vehicles to meet daily needs. Climate-friendly areas will help to reverse these negative trends, with some actions taking place in the short term, and others that will occur with development and redevelopment over time.

The program requires 14 cities, and one county, to adopt regulations allowing walkable mixed-use development in suitable areas within urban growth boundaries. The program directs communities in the Portland Metro area to work to implement the region's 2040 Growth Concept. The program requires areas to be large enough to accommodate a portion of the community's housing, jobs, and services. Local governments will determine where to locate these areas, but many of these areas will likely be established in existing downtowns that may currently allow for mixed uses and higher densities.

Associated requirements will ensure high quality pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure within these areas to provide residents convenient transportation options. The program required local governments to first identify potential climate-friendly areas, then later to adopt development standards for the areas best-suited for this purpose. Most will be zoned by the end of 2024. The program provides some minimum requirements for climate-friendly areas, with a set of clear and objective standards that may be adopted, or a process for local governments to craft their own standards. Cities of more than 10,000 will monitor housing production within these areas over time and develop strategies to facilitate desired development.



Oregon already has some climate-friendly areas, pleasant places to meet one's needs without needing to drive.

Reforming Costly Parking Mandates

Planning practices of the past have imposed a one-size-fits-all requirement everywhere, creating incentives to own more cars and drive more.

Excessive off-street parking has a significant negative impact on housing costs, business costs, the feasibility of housing development and business redevelopment, walkability, air and water pollution, climate pollution, and general community character.



Parking uses a huge amount of high-value land. Off-street parking in downtown Corvallis in red.

Parking mandates force people who don't own or use cars to pay indirectly for other people's parking, and people to build parking they won't use. Parking demand varies significantly from

development to development, and about one-seventh of Oregon renter households own zero vehicles. Carless households tend to be the poorest households.

The program encourages the diversity of parking needs to be met by the diversity of development. The program reduces costly parking mandates for desired types of development, such as smaller housing types, small businesses, childcare facilities, multi-family housing, and historic buildings. It also removes parking mandates within one-half mile of frequent transit and three-quarters of a mile of rail stops, where parking demand is lower per unit.

The program offers communities options to improve parking management. Those who adopt best practice parking policies get more flexibility. Since the program has been implemented, most Oregonians can decide how much off-street parking they need and want to provide.

Getting Ready for Oregon's Electric Vehicle Future

Making our vehicles cleaner is a key part in meeting Oregon's climate goals. Oregon has a vision where 90% of new vehicles will be electric by 2035. To meet that goal, we need to ensure people can charge their vehicles. The most convenient place to do so is at home, but many Oregonians live in older multi-family homes that would be very expensive to retrofit.

Thus, the rules require *new* housing and mixed-use development with at least five units to include electrical conduit (pipes) to 40% of spots, ready for adding wiring and charging stations to support electric vehicles as the market expands.



Building a complete network of EV charging stations at commercial and multi-family housing locations could cut up to 11.9% of climate pollution

Planning for a Future of Transportation Options

DLCD and other state agency partners including the Oregon Department of Transportation are providing a range of new and amplified services to help meet greenhouse gas reduction goals, including millions of dollars in grants, technical assistance, tools, and publications, to help local governments adopt plans that meet or exceed the state's climate pollution reduction goals.

Local governments in Oregon have been required to make coordinated land use and transportation plans for decades. The program requires local governments in metropolitan areas to:

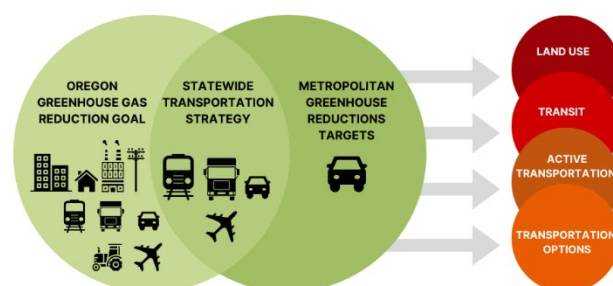
- Plan for greater development in transit corridors and downtowns, where services are located and less driving is necessary;
- Prioritize system performance measures that achieve community livability goals;
- Prioritize investments for reaching destinations without dependency on driving, including in walking, bicycling, and transit;
- Plan for needed infrastructure for electric vehicle charging; and
- Regularly monitor and report progress.



Transportation options are critical for everyone, but particularly the roughly one-in-three Oregonians who cannot drive.

Regional Planning to Meet Our Climate Goals

DLCD's regional greenhouse gas reduction program allows areas to work together to consider state, regional, and local needs and issues. The flexible regional planning process allows communities to study economic development, fiscal impacts, resource use, pollution impacts, and the effects of different choices on the state, region, community, or households. The results are intended to help local government community members, elected and appointed leaders better understand issues and quantify the effect of potential policies as they review and update the area's long-range plans and make investment decisions.



The program expands requirements for regional plans to meet the state's climate pollution reduction targets from the Portland metropolitan area to the next largest metropolitan areas in the state (Eugene-Springfield and Salem-Keizer) initially. All cities in the metropolitan areas are required to update their local plans towards meeting the state's climate pollution reduction targets and amend their local plans towards meeting the target.

Community Engagement

DLCD has heard from many Oregonians since launching the program. We've heard from a 40-person advisory committee including representatives from all of Oregon's impacted eight urban areas, several people who are home builders, realtors, representatives of the trucking industry, affordable housing advocates, land use advocates, community-based and other community-serving organizations.

We heard from two separate series of community conversations in 2021. Staff hosted a series of nine technical work group meetings on specific topics, a series of practitioner meetings with local government staff in each region, and dozens of additional meetings with legislators, local elected officials, planning staff, and interest groups.



Some members of the rulemaking advisory committee

We've heard from hundreds of Oregonians who have attended one or more of the scores of meetings, community conversations, work groups, or practitioner meetings, and from hundreds of people who've submitted comments ([summary here](#)). The program is better for it, having continued to evolve and improve.

Since the commission adopted the rules, we've been working hard with our local partners to aid in implementation. In response, the commission updated the rules in 2023 to make them easier to implement.

But the engagement won't end there – the program requires local governments to engage their communities as they make key decisions on how the program applies locally. If you're interested in these issues, we encourage you to stay engaged.

Program Implementation: Resources and Timelines

Local governments are responsible for implementing the program in their community. Many of the program's requirements take effect when a community next conducts a major update of its Transportation System Plan, a community's core document describing its transportation needs and future plans. Most plans should be updated by December 2029.

The program has launched regional scenario planning projects in Salem-Keizer and Eugene-Springfield, laying the groundwork for those communities to update their transportation plans by the end of 2027.

The land use components of the program have specific deadlines. Communities were required to [study potential climate-friendly areas](#) by December 2023, and adopt zoning for those areas by December 2024. Parking reform is happening in two phases - the first happened at the end of 2022, and the second at dates that vary by community. Communities have asked for flexibility around these dates, and the department has approved over 30 extensions.

To date, DLCD has provided over \$3.5 million in assistance for local governments to do this work. Our program partner, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), is providing another \$18 million in implementation assistance. The agencies published a [funding guide](#) identifying other potential state and federal sources of funding.

Learn More

Information on how to get implementation updates via email and many additional materials can be found at www.oregon.gov/lcd/CL/Pages/CFEC.aspx and www.oregon.gov/odot/planning/pages/climate-transportation-planning.aspx

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