

Policy briefs call attention to important statewide policy considerations, relationships, and guidance for use by planners, engineers, implementers and community members.



Funding Prioritization

This policy brief helps people understand the relationships among different funding prioritization policies in statewide plans and make transportation investment and prioritization decisions.

The policy framework for funding prioritization

While statewide plans do not identify projects, they do establish a framework for investment decision-making. Investment needs do and will continue to outpace available resources, requiring strategic investment, prioritizing, and triaging needs.

The Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) [Strategy 1.1.4](#) sets the foundation for strategic investment in the state, which is echoed in other statewide mode and topic plans. When planning for transportation investments across the state, policy direction points to first preserving functionality and improving the efficiency of the existing system before adding new capacity ([e.g. Oregon Highway Plan Action 1G.1](#)).

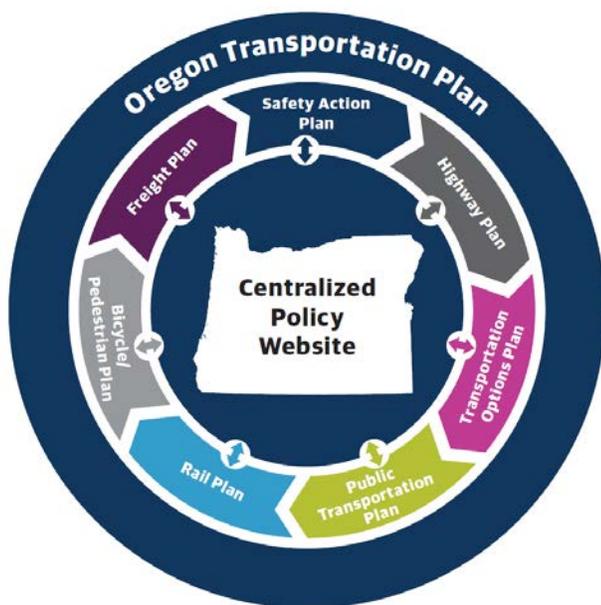


Figure 1
The Oregon Transportation Plan is the foundation for all modal plans in Oregon.

ODOT created an inventory of active transportation assets and needs to help leverage funding for active transportation projects.

Between plans, factors shaping prioritization are consistent with [OTP Strategy 1.1.4](#) but some incorporate other priorities such as closing network gaps for safe movement of vulnerable road users. For example, [Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan \(OPBB\) Strategy 8.2A](#) places adding capacity to fill critical gaps as one of the top priorities.

Applicable funding prioritization policies

Plan	Policy
Oregon Transportation Plan	<p>Strategy 1.1.4: In developing transportation plans to respond to transportation needs, use the most cost-effective modes and solutions over the long term, considering changing conditions and based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing the existing transportation system effectively. • Improving the efficiency and operational capacity of existing transportation infrastructure and facilities by making minor improvements to the existing system. • Adding capacity to the existing transportation system. • Adding new facilities to the transportation system.
Oregon Highway Plan	<p>Action 1G.1: Use the following priorities for developing corridor plans, transportation system plans, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and project plans to respond to highway needs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protect the existing system. The highest priority is to preserve the functionality of the existing highway system by means such as access management, local comprehensive plans, transportation demand management, improved traffic operations, and alternative modes of transportation. 2. Improve efficiency and capacity of existing highway facilities. The second priority is to make minor improvements to existing highway facilities such as widening highway shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes, providing better access for alternative modes (e.g., bike lanes, sidewalks, bus shelters), extending or connecting local streets, and making other off-system improvements. 3. Add capacity to the existing system. The third priority is to make major roadway improvements to existing highway facilities such as adding general purpose lanes and making alignment corrections to accommodate legal size vehicles. 4. Add new facilities to the system. The lowest priority is to add new transportation facilities such as a new highway or bypass.
Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	<p>Strategy 8.2A: Use the following priorities for identifying and investing in bicycle and pedestrian projects, recognizing that projects identified and funding allocated should be distributed among these categories in high need locations first.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protect the existing system – Protect the functionality of the existing bicycle and pedestrian system through safety, maintenance, and preservation, especially in transportation disadvantaged areas and surrounding schools, shopping, employment centers, and downtowns (i.e. high need locations). 2. Add critical connections and address safety issues – Make improvements to the existing system by providing bicycle and pedestrian connections in areas where no connections exist or where transportation options are limited, particularly in high need locations; and to address significant safety concerns. \ 3. Enhance the system – Enhance the system and people’s opportunity to use the system, such as through increased safety and security measures (e.g. separation, pedestrian bulb outs) and availability (e.g. bikeshare, bicycle parking). 4. Elaborate the system – Elaborate the system through network connectivity for recreation, and areas not deemed as critical connections; as well as more costly user comfort features (e.g. cycle tracks).

Why the policy framework matters

Policies and strategies related to funding prioritization guide decisions for multiple geographies, types of communities, modes of transportation, and types of investments. Though there will be variability dependent on context, this helps Oregon efficiently achieve multiple statewide goals in areas such as safety and security, mobility, accessibility and connectivity, community and economic vitality, land use, health, equity, environmental sustainability, and collaboration and coordination.



Maintaining a state of good repair is an important prioritization framework for Oregon's bridges and highways.

aspects of funding prioritization.

Programming

Programming is a federally-recognized term ODOT uses to signify committing funds to a project. Funding prioritization policies ensure that higher levels of funding are allocated to projects that reflect prioritization goals. While programming decisions integrate many factors – including where solutions are located and which funding program is paying for them – they should also reflect the investment priorities for the state. Programming opportunities come in the form of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and grants:

- [STIP Information](#)
- [Connect Oregon Grant Information](#)

Other helpful guidance and tools

ODOT has developed several tools and models to support decision-making. Policy or project prioritization is a key component of these tools.

Value and Cost Informed Planning

ODOT worked with stakeholders to develop a least cost planning methodology (called Mosaic – Value and Cost Informed Planning) that identifies direct and indirect costs of demand and supply options to identify the most cost-effective mix of options. For more on Mosaic, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Planning/Pages/Mosaic.aspx>

Regional Strategic Planning Model (RSPM)

RSPM measures the outcomes of different transportation and related land use policy choices. For information, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Planning/Pages/Strategic-Assessment.aspx#RSPM>

When to consider funding prioritization policies

Funding prioritization policies and strategies may apply to multiple types of decision contexts.

Planning

Transportation plans in Oregon include establishment of goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria; identification of problems, conditions, and needs; identification and evaluation of solutions; and prioritization of and implementation plans for solutions. Funding prioritization policies and strategies directly inform the identification, evaluation, and prioritization of solutions. For example, evaluation criteria could include