

March 5, 2014

CENTRAL LANE SCENARIO PLANNING

Scenario planning process

Overview

In 2009, the Oregon Legislature passed the Jobs and Transportation Act. This legislation directs the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to undertake scenario planning and for the local governments in central Lane County to cooperatively select a preferred land use and transportation scenario. The state set a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction target of 20% for the MPO; while this target must be considered in the scenario planning process, the final selected scenario is not required to meet this target.

A project management team (PMT) consisting of representatives of all the partner governments is providing oversight for the process. LCOG and consultant staff are providing technical support for the project.

What is scenario planning?

Over the next twenty years, our communities are likely to welcome more than 64,000 new residents. Plans like those currently being developed in the region – Envision Eugene, Springfield 2030, and Coburg Crossroads – establish a local vision for how our communities will accommodate new residents and jobs.

Scenario planning is a process for considering a range of plausible futures and allows us to examine how different choices would affect our region. Scenario planning also lets us compare these various futures based on a wide range of community goals, from how much each of us will drive, walk, bike, and take transit, to how clean our air will be, to how much our households will spend on housing and transportation.

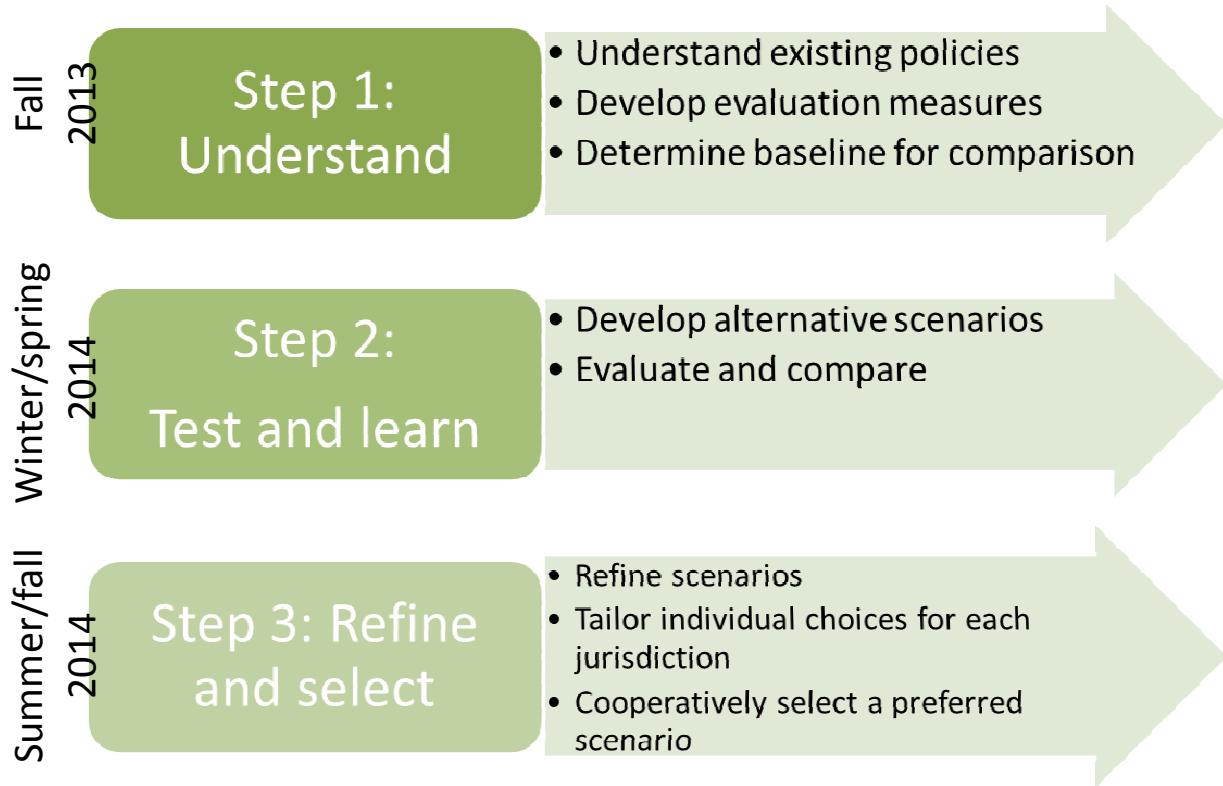
Participants

The cities of Coburg, Eugene, Springfield, Lane County, the Lane Council of Governments, and the Lane Transit District are all participating in the process.



Schedule

Phase 1 of the process will be complete in February 2014. Phase 2, which includes scenario development, evaluation, and selection, will be complete by spring 2015.



Scenario planning outcomes

At the end of the process, the local government partners will cooperatively select a preferred transportation and land use scenario. The preferred scenario will likely contain a range of policies and strategies that reduce GHG emissions and also produce a range of “co-benefits” – benefits like improved public health and greater economic prosperity – that would result from the preferred scenario policies. *The local government partners are not required to implement the preferred scenario.*

Work accomplished to date (phase 1)

- **Reference scenario – a baseline for comparison:** the project team developed and tested a “reference scenario” which provides a baseline against which alternative scenarios can be compared. The reference scenario approximates the future if current plans and policies are carried out.

- **Evaluation criteria:** the project team developed a set of criteria that will be used to evaluate alternative scenarios. Evaluation criteria categories include Economy and Prosperity, Air Quality, Feasibility, and others.
- **Scenario development methodology:** the team prepared a method, described below, for developing and evaluating scenarios that will be used in the next phase of work.
- **Equity framework:** an important project goal is to ensure that communities of concern – people who are elderly, disabled, low-income or are members of a minority community – are engaged in the development, evaluation and refinement of scenarios. An Equity Technical Advisory Committee spent two sessions defining how equity considerations can be incorporated into the scenario planning process.
- **Model testing:** staff at LCOG used the state’s Metropolitan GreenSTEP, a strategic analysis model, to quickly test the effects of transportation and land use scenarios on greenhouse gas emissions. Beyond greenhouse gas emissions, the GreenSTEP model produces more than 70 indicators that can be used to evaluate other benefits and impacts associated with scenarios including vehicle miles traveled by bike, household fuel costs, and local gas tax revenues.

This work sets the stage for developing, evaluating, and selecting a preferred scenario in phase 2 of the project.

Scenario development, evaluation and selection (phase 2)

The scenario planning process will include three more major steps: develop and evaluate scenarios, refine a single scenario and select a preferred scenario. The final step of the scenario planning process will be for the local governments in the Eugene-Springfield area to cooperatively select a preferred scenario. *While the local governments are required to cooperatively select a preferred scenario, they are not required to implement it.*

At each step, the Project Management Team (PMT) will make decisions about how to move forward. The PMT will consult with elected officials and the public in making interim decisions to direct the scenario planning process. The Eugene City Council, Springfield City Council, Coburg City Council, and Lane County Board of Commissioners will be ultimately responsible for selecting the preferred scenario.

The public will be invited to participate at each step of the process. The project team will host four public workshops at key milestones, regularly update a project website (www.clscenarioplanning.org), and create factsheets to inform and engage the community in the development and evaluation of scenarios.

Develop and evaluate scenarios

To develop scenarios, the team will first agree on distinct scenario themes. Next, the team will populate those themes with specific policies that are likely to meet the greenhouse gas reduction target as well as meeting health, equity and economic development goals. The PMT will choose a single scenario to advance to the next step using information from GreenSTEP and other evaluation tools.

Refine single scenario

PMT will define realistic implementing actions, refine policies where necessary, and adjust the scenario as needed. Using additional evaluation, the PMT will move toward recommendation of a preferred scenario.

Select a preferred scenario

Once the PMT identifies a recommended preferred scenario the technical team will complete a final evaluation of that scenario to support documentation of the expected impacts and benefits associated with the preferred scenario. This scenario will be presented to the Springfield City Council, Eugene City Council, Coburg City Council and the Lane County Board of Commissioners to meet the legislative mandate to cooperatively select a preferred scenario. The local governments are only required to select a preferred scenario; they are not required to implement it.