

Regional Transportation and Land Use Decision Making

APPENDIX 1:

Detailed Research Findings

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I APPENDIX OVERVIEW

This appendix summarizes the research findings from four metropolitan case studies: Central Puget Sound (Washington), Portland (Oregon), Denver (Colorado), and San Diego (California). All four cases were selected because of the institutional structures and mechanisms being used to coordinate land use and transportation on a regional level. This report presents the detailed findings, which are organized into the four objectives of the research project:

- **Section 2 Regional Governance:** regional arrangements, participation in decision making, relationships among organizations.
- **Section 3 Transportation and Land Use Coordination:** evaluation of coordination efforts, including the influence of plans and policies.
- **Section 4 Centers Policy:** evaluation of specific programs to create incentives for mixed use and/or transit-oriented centers.
- **Section 5 Transportation Improvement (TIP) Funding:** evaluation of efforts to use TIP funding as an incentive to improve land use decisions.

I.1 Methods

The project was led by a multidisciplinary team from the University of Oregon and Portland State University. The project also involved a team of graduate students working over two terms for the University of Oregon's Community Planning Workshop.

Case Selection

The research team conducted a review of published literature, research reports, state agency documents, and Web sites to identify potential cases for investigation. We used three criteria for selecting the case study regions:

- Land use and transportation is being addressed on a regional scale,
- Region encompasses multiple municipalities and jurisdictions, and
- Region is using grant programs and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding to promote regional growth centers.

Based on this review, we selected four cases and obtained commitments from regional organizations to participate in the study:

- **PSRC** Puget Sound Regional Council (Central Puget Sound, Washington)
- **Metro** Portland (Portland, Oregon)
- **DRCOG** Denver Regional Council of Governments (Denver, Colorado)
- **SANDAG** San Diego Association of Governments (San Diego, California)

Background Research

For each case study, the research team reviewed documents, research reports, and published research. The team conducted interviews with approximately ten key individuals in each region, addressing topics such as: approaches to regional

coordination and governance, incentive programs to coordinate transportation and land use, the role of regional plans, relevant policies, and cross-boundary issues.

The **stakeholder interviews** included a comparable cross-section of individuals in each region, including: (1) MPO staff, (2) MPO elected officials, (3) state agency officials, and (4) staff with transit agencies, regional agencies, or Federal agencies.

The team also conducted two group interviews with the Regional Project Evaluation Committee (RPEC) in Puget Sound and the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) in the Portland Metro region using a similar interview format.

On-Line Survey

For each case study we conducted an online survey of people involved in regional transportation and land use decision making, including local government staff and elected officials, state agency staff, and regional agency staff. The survey asked respondents to evaluate several issues in their region, including:

- Regional governance and coordination of decision making
- Effectiveness of specific policies and programs in supporting coordination
- Regional trends related to transportation and land use planning

Individuals were notified of the survey by e-mail and asked to complete it online. After the initial e-mail, two follow-up reminders were also sent. As shown in Table 1, the survey was sent to a total of 450 individuals in the four regions, and a total of 199 responded (response rate = 44%).

Table 1.1: Survey Respondent Information

	PSRC	DRCOG	Metro	SANDAG
Survey sample size	101	117	163	69
Survey responses	61	59	44	35
Survey response rate	60%	59%	44%	35%
Organizational Affiliation				
Federal Government	0%	2%	0%	0%
State Government	11%	9%	9%	3%
County Government	15%	22%	2%	6%
City Government	39%	49%	39%	71%
Tribal Government	0%	0%	0%	0%
Port	7%	0%	2%	0%
Transit District	10%	4%	5%	3%
Private Sector	7%	3%	11%	0%
MPO	2%	3%	9%	3%
Interest Group	3%	3%	5%	0%
Community Representative	2%	0%	16%	0%
Other	5%	5%	2%	14%

Research Forum

On September 8-9, 2010, the findings from this research were presented at a forum in Portland, Oregon. The invitation-only forum involved at least two participants

from each of the four case studies, invited researchers, and officials from state and Federal agencies. The schedule of the forum included:

- Federal transportation context
- Context and background on cases by MPO staff from each case study area.
- Presentation of findings by research team
- Legislative context by Congressmen Oberstar (MN) and DeFazio (OR)
- Research panels on findings and future research needs
- Facilitated breakout sessions covering: (1) funding, (2) governance, (3) coordination mechanisms, and (4) policy.

Information, notes and discussion from this forum were gathered by the research team and is summarized in the Appendix. The team used this information to refine the analysis and recommendations presented in this document.

Limitations and Caveats

Our methods have several limitations. Ideally, we could evaluate our cases using outcome data. However, the policies are relatively new, and many years of data are required to determine statistically valid trends. Our study provides an interim assessment of these policies using the opinions of regional stakeholders.

The interviews and surveys were designed to include a parallel set of participants for each case, but the committee composition and respondents varied. Also, respondents in different regions may have different expectations of performance. Finally, we rely on a relatively small set of respondents. For these reasons, we have been cautious in our cross-case comparisons and generalizations.

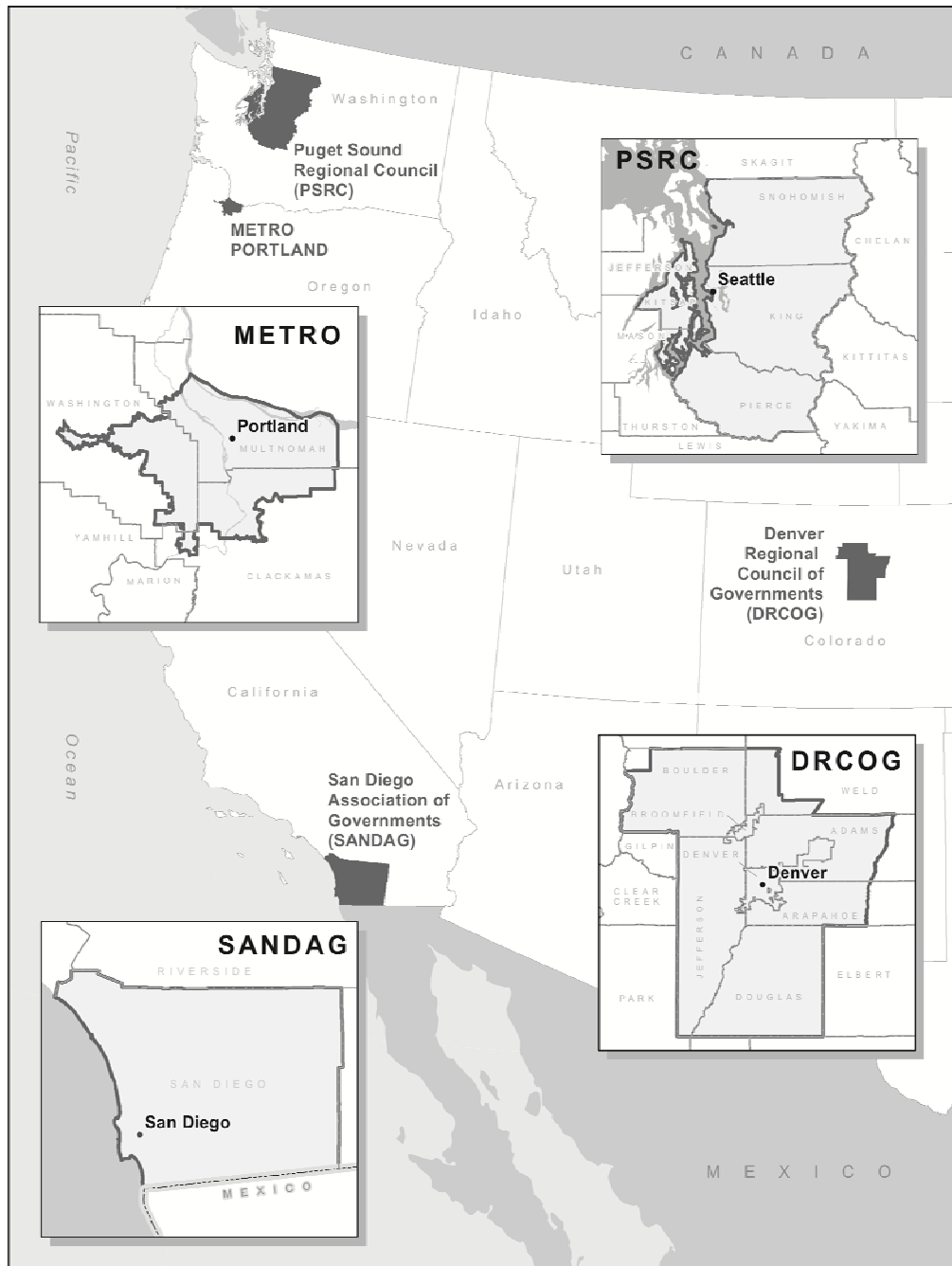
I.2 Overview of Case Study Areas

Transportation planning in all four case study regions is led by a federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). As shown in Table 1.2, all four regions include medium-sized cities with varying geographic sizes and number of local jurisdictions. Washington and Oregon have state growth management legislation, while California and Colorado do not.

Table 1.2: MPO Overview

Regional MPO	Metro Population	Area (sq miles)	Cities Counties	Agency Formation (Year)
Portland Metro (Metro)	1,400,000	463	25 Cities 3 Counties	1977
Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)	3,583,000	6,290	82 Cities 4 Counties	1959
San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)	3,200,000	4,526	18 Cities 1 County	1966
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)	2,851,000	5,288	47 Cities 9 Counties	1955

Figure 1.1: Case Study Regions



Source: InfoGraphics Lab, Department of Geography, University of Oregon

Portland Metro (Metro)

Portland Metro encompasses 3 counties (Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington) and 25 cities, including Portland, Beaverton, Tualatin, Oregon City, Milwaukie,

Gresham, and Fairview. Metro covers 463 square miles, but the greater metropolitan area extends to a larger area, including across the Washington-Oregon border to the north (see Map 1-2).¹ Metro was created in 1977 when the State Legislature approved the creation of the Metropolitan Service District (MSD). In 1978, as approved by voters, MSD was combined with Columbia Region Association of Governments (CRAG). In 1979, Metro began operation with legal authority over the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), solid waste planning, and the zoo.

In 1995, Metro adopted the 2040 Growth Concept. The 2040 Growth Concept is the region's growth management policy that defines development in the metropolitan region through the year 2040. The 2040 Growth Concept directs most development to existing urban centers and along existing major transportation corridors, and promotes a balanced transportation system with a variety of transportation options.

The Regional Framework Plan (RFP), adopted in 1996, unites all of Metro's adopted land use planning policies and requirements into one document. The RFP brings together the 2040 Growth Concept, the Regional Urban Growth Goals and Objectives (RUGGOs), the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan, and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Oregon state law requires that the RFP comply with Oregon's statewide planning goals. The RFP contains regional policies on key regional growth issues, including accommodation of projected growth and the coordination of transportation and land use planning. The RFP is the basis for coordination of the comprehensive plans and implementing regulations of the cities and counties in Metro.

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the transportation system plan for the Portland metropolitan region. The RTP serves as the Federal metropolitan transportation plan as well as the TSP required under the state's transportation planning rule. The first RTP was approved in 1982. The latest update to the RTP, the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, was adopted in June 2010.

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

The PSRC covers nearly 6,300 square miles and encompasses four counties (King, Snohomish, Pierce, and Kitsap) and 82 cities, including Seattle, Bellevue, Bremerton, Everett, and Tacoma. Puget Sound has many channels and waterways that make transportation systems challenging. Furthermore, populated areas tend to concentrate near the Sound, which creates land use challenges due to the sensitivity of natural areas.

The first regional planning organization was established in 1959 and designated as a Federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in 1973. The Puget Sound Regional Council was formed in 1992. Under Washington State law the PSRC is also the designated regional transportation organization (RTPO). The PSRC prepares the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which satisfies both Federal and state transportation requirements. Every one to two years the PSRC is required to

¹ Metro, Region, County, and City Areas. 2006. Document PDF available on Metro Web site: <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=24905> (accessed January 2010).

complete a federally approved Unified Planning Work Plan (UPWP). The Council also prepares the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Under the Washington Growth Management Act,² the PSRC prepared a long-range, integrated strategy called *Vision 2040*, which addresses regional environment, growth management, economic development, and transportation. It was adopted in 2008 as a comprehensive update to previous plans, and presents a numeric Regional Growth Strategy, which allocates expected population and employment growth throughout the region. A key component of *Vision 2040* is the designation of regional growth centers and manufacturing and industrial centers. The Council is responsible for ensuring that the transportation-related provisions in local comprehensive plans are consistent with the regional plan. *Transportation 2040*, an update to the regional transportation plan, was adopted in May 2010, and serves as the functional transportation plan for Vision 2040. It provides for a transportation system consistent with the regional vision.

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

SANDAG's boundaries coincide with San Diego County and encompass 18 cities, including San Diego, Carlsbad, Chula Vista, and Oceanside (see Map 1-3). The SANDAG region covers more than 4,000 square miles and the total population estimated for 2009 is close to 3.2 million, with over half of this population living in the City of San Diego.³ SANDAG is bounded by Mexico to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the west, mountains to the east, and a military base to the north.

Although SANDAG was not created until 1980, it was preceded by a comprehensive planning organization created in 1966. The CPO was designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization in 1970. In 1971 it was designated the state Regional Transportation Planning Agency, and one year later it was reestablished as a separate joint powers authority, independent of county government.⁴

As a result of several proposals and reviews, the California Senate passed legislation in 2002 that strengthened SANDAG's authority in the region. The agency took over the regional transit planning and capital project development functions of the region's Metropolitan Transit System and the North County Transit District.

As the Federal MPO, SANDAG is responsible for preparing a regional transportation plan and regional transportation improvement program (RTIP). Under state law, SANDAG creates regional short-range transit plans and is responsible for coordinating the regional housing needs assessment. The State Legislature also

² Chapter 36.70a RCW (Revised Code of Washington) accessible at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=36.70a>

³ SANDAG, "Demographics and Other Data: Fast Facts." http://www.sandag.org/resources/demographics_and_other_data/demographics/fastfacts/реги.htm (accessed January – February 2010).

⁴ SANDAG, "About SANDAG: History." <http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?fuseaction=about.history> (accessed January – February 2010).

requires SANDAG to develop a Regional Comprehensive Plan, which is a nonregulatory regional land use plan.

Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

Situated along the Front Range of Colorado, the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), DRCOG's planning area includes nine counties and 48 cities, including Denver, Boulder, Aurora, and Lakewood. The region in 2010 is home to some 2.7 million people, with over 460,000 living in the City of Denver.⁵

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) was formed in 1968, but was preceded by an intercounty regional planning commission formed in 1955. With DRCOG's support, Regional Transportation District (RTD) was formed in 1969, tasked with managing the region's transit system, and in 1971, DRCOG signed agreements with the RTD and state to manage transportation throughout the region.

As a Federal MPO, DRCOG is responsible for preparing a regional transportation plan and regional transportation improvement program (RTIP). DRCOG also prepared the regional land use strategy called Metro Vision. Metro Vision's goals and policies aim to *influence* the direction, shape, size and other characteristics of the region's built environment; however, participation in the plan is voluntary.

⁵ *With One Voice*, DRCOG, 2009, p.2,
<http://www.drcog.org/documents/2009%20With%20One%20Voice%20Brochure%204%20web.pdf>

2 REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

2.1 Overview

We use the term governance to refer to the processes of government management, leadership, and decision making in regions. At the regional level, governance is particularly complex, because of the multitude of jurisdictions and organizations. Metropolitan Planning Authorities (MPOs) and Councils of Government (COGs) serve as a forum for helping to govern across these regions. Our assessment involves a description of the formal leadership structures and how these structures operate. Through interviews and surveys we also explored some of the informal rules and norms that guide decision making.

2.2 Portland Metro (Metro)

In this section, we describe the governance structure in Portland Metro and review the results of our interviews and survey about regional governance.

Description of Metro Governance

Metro is unique among the case study MPOs because it is the only MPO governed by elected officials. The Metro president is regionally elected and presides over a six-member Metro council. The Council sets Metro's policy agenda and appoints all members of Metro's committees, commissions, and boards. The six Metro districts elect the six council members every four years in nonpartisan races.

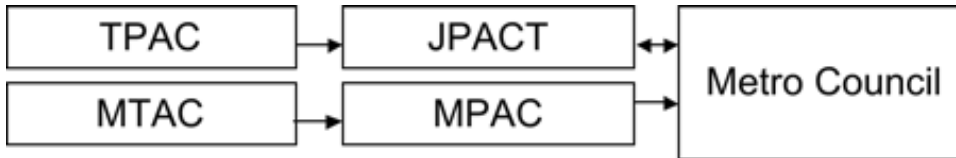
A number of committees play a key role in land use and transportation coordination in the region:

- Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) is a committee of local government representatives and citizens who advise the Metro Council on policy issues.
- Metro Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) is a 37-member committee of planners, citizens, and business representatives that provides detailed technical support to MPAC.
- Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) is a 17-member committee that provides a forum for elected officials and representatives of agencies involved in transportation to evaluate transportation needs in the region and make recommendations to the Metro Council.⁶
 - Bi-State Coordination Committee is a subcommittee of JPACT and Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC). The Committee reviews transportation and land-use issues of bistate significance and presents recommended actions to JPACT and RTC.

⁶ Metro, *2035 Regional Transportation Plan*. January, 2008. Document PDF available on Metro Web site: <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=137/level=3>. (accessed January- February 2010), introduction.

- Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) provides technical input to JPACT on transportation planning and funding priorities for the Portland metropolitan region.

Figure 2.1 Metro Regional Transportation Decision Making Process



Metro’s legal authority derives from ORS Chapter 238, Metropolitan Service Districts, and the Metro Charter that was approved by voters in 1992. Metro’s charter states that Metro’s primary responsibility is regional land-use planning. Metro’s regional land-use planning responsibilities must be carried out in a manner consistent with Oregon’s Statewide Land Use Planning Goals. These include:

- Goal 12, Transportation, and the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR). The TPR requires most cities and counties and the state’s six MPOs to adopt transportation system plans (TSPs) that consider all modes of transportation, energy conservation, and avoidance of reliance on any one mode of transportation. Metro’s RTP (Regional Transportation Plan) serves as the TSP required under Goal 12. TSPs must be consistent with the Oregon Transportation Plan adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission.⁷
- Goal 14, Urbanization, which requires establishment of urban growth boundaries (UGBs) to identify and separate urbanizable land from rural land. UGBs are intended to provide sufficient buildable lands to accommodate urban growth for a minimum twenty-year planning period. Metro is responsible for establishing and managing the regional UGB within the Portland metropolitan area.

Analysis of Metro Governance

As shown in Table 2.1, a majority (66%) of respondents in the Portland Metro region believed that all of the critical players were involved. A high percentage of respondents believed that both local government staff (59%) and elected officials (67%) were kept well informed. Respondents also agreed there was a high level of engagement among elected officials in the region (67%). Interviewees indicated that the Metro regional council was an important means for regional coordination, but some survey respondents noted tensions between the policies of Metro and Portland compared to smaller municipalities in the region.

⁷ Metro, *Regional Framework Plan*. December, 2005. Document PDF available on Metro Website: <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=432/level=3>. (accessed January-February 2010),, 1-9.

Table 2.1: Regional Decision Making in Metro

Survey Question: Focusing on regional transportation and land use decision making, please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
All of the critical players are involved in regional transportation decision-making	2%	21%	10%	52%	14%	0%	41
Local government staff are kept well informed on regional decision-making	2%	14%	17%	45%	14%	7%	41
Local elected officials are kept well informed on regional decision-making	2%	17%	12%	48%	19%	2%	41
There is a high level of engagement among elected officials in the region	2%	19%	12%	43%	24%	0%	41
There is consistency between Metro Council decision-making and technical committee decision-making/recommendations	7%	17%	19%	43%	10%	5%	41

Survey respondents were also asked to assess how effective various organizations were in coordinating transportation and land use decisions with Metro. As shown in Table 2.2, the highest percentage of “somewhat effective” and “very effective” responses were given to local governments within Metro (70%) and transit districts (76%). In contrast, 54% of respondents believed that neighboring counties and cities outside of Metro are “somewhat” or “very ineffective” at coordinating transportation and land use decision making with Metro. These views were echoed in interviews, reflecting the difficulty that Metro faces of having a small jurisdiction in a region whose commutershed extends far beyond its boundaries, including into Washington State. Some of these neighboring areas have also had less restrictive land use policies and faster growth rates, increasing the pressures on the regional transportation system.

Table 2.2: Coordinating with Metro

Survey Question: Please rate how effective the following organizations are at coordinating transportation and land use decision making with Metro:

	Very Ineffective	Somewhat Ineffective	Neither Effective nor Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Don't Know	Responses
ODOT	18%	21%	12%	50%	0%	0%	33
Local governments within Metro	8%	16%	3%	65%	5%	3%	36
Other MPOs	3%	17%	31%	17%	0%	33%	35
Neighboring counties and cities outside Metro	24%	32%	18%	11%	3%	13%	37
Special Districts	11%	24%	21%	13%	0%	32%	37
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	8%	29%	8%	21%	13%	21%	37
Transit Districts	0%	5%	13%	42%	34%	5%	37

2.3 Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

In this section, we describe the governance structure in central Puget Sound and review the results of our interviews and survey about regional governance.

Description of PSRC Governance

Puget Sound Regional Council was formed through an interlocal agreement entered into by its members in 1992, including the four counties, most of the 82 cities, and other agencies identified in Washington state law for regional transportation planning organizations. The Governor of the State of Washington designates the Puget Sound Regional Council, under Federal MPO statutes. The PSRC includes four counties; King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish. The PSRC serves as the regional MPO under Federal law and the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) under state law.⁸ PSRC has the authority to carry out MPO and RTPO (Regional Transportation Planning Organization) functions, as well as additional responsibilities spelled out under the agency's interlocal agreement.

Washington State requires RTPOs to complete a Unified Planning Work Plan (UPWP) every one to two years. In order to receive funding, the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) and the FTA must approve this plan. The PSRC is governed by the General Assembly, which is made up of the local elected officials of all member agencies in the PSRC jurisdiction. The General Assembly meets at least once a year to vote on major regional decisions, approve the budget, and elect new officers. The integrated environmental, growth management, economic development, and transportation long-range strategy is adopted by the General Assembly. The Executive Board carries out delegated powers and responsibilities between meetings of the General Assembly. It is comprised of 30 members who approximate the proportional representation principle of one-person, one-vote.

Advisory boards, including the Operations Committee, the Transportation Policy Board, the Economic Development Board, and the Growth Management Board, make recommendations to decision-makers on the Executive Board. These boards are also comprised of local elected officials in a manner that approximates proportional representation. In the case of the Transportation Policy Board and Growth Management Policy Board, there are also nonvoting members that represent other interests, including environmental groups, business and labor, and community groups. There are also more than a dozen advisory committees that consist of staff from member jurisdictions and agencies.

Because they are separate sovereign nations, tribes are not officially required to plan under state law. A total of eight federally recognized Native American tribes are located within the PSRC jurisdiction. Some have full membership in the Regional Council, and others have associate membership. These tribes play an important role in advising PSRC on key environmental, land use, and economic issues, and help coordinate planning efforts.

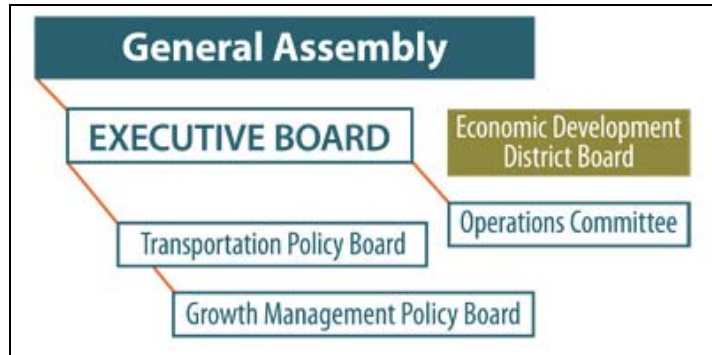
PSRC's Transportation Policy Board includes elected officials from local government, the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the state Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board, transit operators, ports, tribes, and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, as well as ex-officio members from business, labor groups, community groups and other organizations.⁹ The Council's Growth Management Policy board includes county and city elected officials, as well as ex-

⁸ Biennial Budget and Work Program (2010-2011), p.5

⁹ Biennial Budget and Work Program (2010-2011), 5.

officio representatives of homebuilders, public health agencies, community, and environmental interests.

Figure 2.2 PSRC Governance Structure



Source: <http://www.psrc.org/about/boards>

Joint meetings have been held between members of the Transportation Policy Board and Growth Management Board. An initial joint meeting was held in 1999 during the development of the area’s previous regional transportation plan to encourage consistency between regional growth management and transportation planning. Three joint meetings were held between 2006 and 2008 during the development of Vision 2040. A joint meeting was also held in 2010 as Transportation 2040 was being developed.

Analysis of PSRC Governance

In response to a survey question concerning involvement in regional decision making, 75% of respondents from the sample agreed or strongly agreed that all the critical players are involved (see Table 2.3). Seventy percent agreed or strongly agreed that local elected officials were kept well informed about regional decision making, while a lower percentage (58%) agreed or strongly agreed that there is a high level of engagement among elected officials.

Table 2.3: Regional Decision Making in PSRC

Survey Question: Focusing on regional transportation and land use decision making, please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
All of the critical players are involved in regional transportation decision-making	4%	16%	5%	56%	19%	0%	57
Local government staff are kept well informed on regional decision-making	0%	11%	4%	68%	18%	0%	57
Local elected officials are kept well informed on regional decision-making	2%	15%	9%	55%	15%	5%	55
There is a high level of engagement among elected officials in the region	0%	18%	21%	47%	11%	4%	57
There is consistency between Executive Board decision-making and technical committee decision-making/recommendations	5%	9%	11%	44%	28%	4%	57

A key to effective governance is how well various organizations coordinate with one another in decision making about land use and transportation. As required by the State Growth Management Act, Vision 2040 includes multicounty planning policies that set the overall policy direction of the region. For example, the first policy of Vision 2040 calls for the region to “coordinate planning efforts among jurisdictions, agencies and federally recognized Indian tribes . . . to facilitate a common vision” (MPP-G-1).

As shown in Table 2.4 below, 73% of the survey respondents in the sample felt that local governments were either somewhat or very effective in coordinating decision making with PSRC; for transit districts, the percentage was 69%; for Washington DOT, 56%; and for FHWA, 42%. Respondent opinions about organizations that were somewhat or very ineffective in coordinating with PSRC were highest for the Washington DOT (32%) and neighboring counties and cities outside PSRC jurisdiction (33%).

Table 2.4: Coordinating with PSRC

Survey Question: Please rate how effective the following organizations are at coordinating transportation and land use decision making with PSRC:

	Very Ineffective	Somewhat Ineffective	Neither Effective nor Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Don't Know	Responses
WashDOT	15%	17%	13%	41%	15%	0%	54
Local governments within the PSRC	6%	15%	7%	54%	19%	0%	54
Other MPOs	4%	13%	16%	16%	0%	51%	55
Neighboring counties and cities	9%	24%	26%	15%	0%	26%	54
Special Districts	11%	15%	26%	20%	0%	28%	54
FHWA	13%	13%	17%	31%	11%	15%	54
Transit Districts	5%	5%	9%	56%	13%	11%	55
Other (please specify) TIB	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%	2

In the interviews that we conducted, there were a variety of opinions expressed about regional governance, but several themes emerged. Many of the interviewees said there is strong leadership at both the board and staff levels for coordinating land use and transportation. In particular, they said that elected officials on the Transportation Policy Board play a strong role in crafting and presenting the updated transportation plan to other elected officials and the public.

The Regional Staff Committee is also an important forum for comprehensive coordination across issue areas, including growth management and transportation. The committee brings together planning directors, public works directors, economic development directors, and senior staff from state and Federal agencies (including FHWA, FTA, EPA).

A number of interviewees also noted the importance of the Regional Project Evaluation Committee (RPEC) as a vehicle for evaluating transportation projects. The RPEC brings together local transportation staff from across the cities, counties, and transit agencies in the PSRC region.

2.4 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

In this section, we describe the governance structure in San Diego and review the results of our interviews and survey about regional governance.

Description of SANDAG Governance

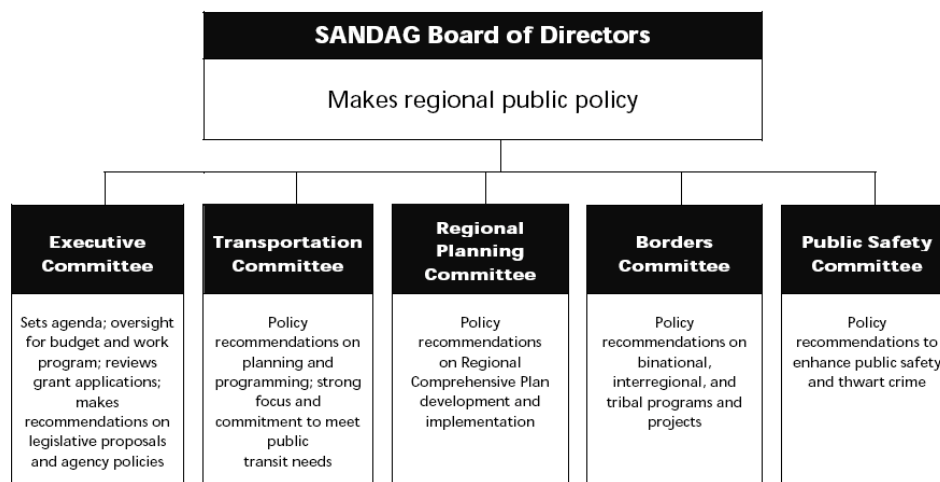
Several factors make the governance structure in the San Diego region less complex than other metropolitan regions. First, SANDAG boundaries coincide with San Diego County and encompass 18 other local governments in its region. Second, the region is bounded by the Mexican border to the south, mountains to the east, the ocean to the west, and Pendleton Marine Base to the north. Third, as a result of legislative changes, SANDAG oversees both transit planning and all transportation planning in the region. The two transit districts are operational entities, but SANDAG is responsible for network planning and system expansion. The California Transportation Agency (CALTRANS) is responsible for cross-regional corridor projects and operations, but SANDAG oversees most of the regional transportation planning. Fourth, SANDAG's Federal and state funds are supplemented by a half cent sales tax called TRANSNET, which provides over \$14 billion in funding over 40 years for transportation, transit, and open space.¹⁰

SANDAG is governed by a board of directors composed of elected officials from the region's 19 local governments. The Board uses a two part voting system. Each jurisdiction gets one vote (with the City of San Diego receiving 2 votes), which means that measures require 11 of 20 votes to pass. Any jurisdiction may also call for a weighted vote based on population, and successful measures require a majority of the weighted vote.

The Board is supported by an Executive committee and five standing committees (See Figure 2.3). The voting membership of standing committees is composed of representatives from: San Diego City, San Diego County, and four members from across the region. Board and committee members are paid for their time to attend meetings, and most meetings take place on Fridays at the SANDAG offices. For most committees, each jurisdiction is represented by one primary elected official and an alternate, and most have at least 3 of the 5 elected officials participating in some committee. As one local elected official noted, "every person on our council has some regional appointment."

¹⁰ Barbour, Elisa, and Michael B. Teitz. "Blueprint Planning in California: An Experiment in Regional Planning for Sustainable Development." In *Toward Sustainable Communities: Transition and Transformations in Environmental Policy*, edited by Daniel A. Mazmanian and Michael E. Kraft, 171-200. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009.

Figure 2.3: SANDAG Governance Structure



Source: SANDAG 2010. Program Budget FY 2011. San Diego, CA: San Diego Association of Governments.

Analysis of SANDAG Governance

In response to a survey question about involvement in decision making, 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that all of the critical players were involved in decision making (see Table 2.5). A high percentage of respondents also believed that staff and elected officials were kept well informed.

Seventy-two percent of respondents believed there was a high level of engagement among elected officials, with only 9% disagreeing. This view was echoed in interviews with staff and elected officials, who indicated that elected official attendance was often around 95%. Furthermore, several interviewees cited examples of the active role of elected officials. One elected official noted that he regularly e-mails his fellow councilors to update them on SANDAG meetings, because he “never wants them to learn about them in the press.” Other elected officials noted that they provided briefings at council meetings, and one mayor would go through each SANDAG agenda in detail with the City Manager and Director of Public Works.

Table 2.5: Regional Decision Making in SANDAG

Survey Question: Focusing on regional transportation and land use decision making, please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
All of the critical players are involved in regional transportation decision-making	3%	6%	12%	42%	33%	3%	30
Local government staff are kept well informed on regional decision-making	3%	0%	15%	48%	30%	3%	30
Local elected officials are kept well informed on regional decision-making	3%	3%	18%	45%	27%	3%	30
There is a high level of engagement among elected officials in the region	3%	6%	12%	48%	24%	6%	30
There is consistency between SANDAG Board of Directors decision-making and technical committee decision-making/recommendations	3%	6%	21%	48%	21%	0%	30

Local governments also highly involved with SANDAG because of the significant role that it plays in allocating Federal, state and local transportation dollars. SANDAG’s smart growth funding, technical assistance, transit investment and open space funding also have a significant effect on local governments.

On the regulatory side, SANDAG helps implement the California Regional Housing Needs assessment program. Under state law, each region must project housing needs by cost categories and demonstrate how they will be accommodated in the region. SANDAG negotiates with each jurisdiction in the region to accommodate a cross section of housing units, and the region’s Smart Growth Concept Map plays an important role in allocating the higher density housing to transit-oriented locations.

According to our survey respondents, many organizations in the region are effective in coordinating transportation and land use with SANDAG (see Table 2.6). Respondents indicated coordination as effective or very effective including: 80% for local governments, 74% for transit districts, and 63% for the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS). The highest percentage, for people rating coordination as ineffective, included CALTRANS (13%), neighboring cities and counties (16%), and special districts (13%).

Compared to other regions, SANDAG has clear authority for regional transportation and transit planning, while CALTRANS and the two transit districts are primarily responsible for operations and maintenance. SANDAG also benefits from being the sole large metropolitan area within CALTRANS Region 11. Furthermore, there has been a history of staff movement between CALTRANS and SANDAG, including SANDAG Executive Director Gary Gallegos.

According to interviewees, some of the more complex coordination arrangements relate to surrounding counties, Indian Tribes, and Mexico. Cross-county commuting is relatively small but increasing as people commute over 100 miles to access less expensive housing in Riverside or Imperial Counties. Development activities of Indian Tribes have raised travel issues in rural areas, leading SANDAG to create a Tribal Committee and liaison staff. The region also confronts over 40,000 daily

commuters across the Mexican border along with significant freight movement, leading to a cross-border committee and working groups.

Table 2.6: Coordinating with SANDAG

Survey Question: Please rate how effective the following organizations are at coordinating transportation and land use decision making with SANDAG:

	Very Ineffective	Somewhat Ineffective	Neither Effective nor Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Don't Know	Responses
Caltrans	0%	13%	17%	43%	20%	7%	29
Local governments within SANDAG	3%	3%	10%	48%	32%	3%	30
Other MPOs	0%	0%	29%	3%	3%	65%	30
Neighboring counties and cities outside SANDAG	3%	13%	26%	10%	0%	48%	30
Special Districts	13%	0%	23%	13%	0%	52%	30
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	3%	6%	13%	29%	0%	48%	30
Transit Districts	0%	3%	10%	47%	27%	13%	29

2.5 Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

In this section, we describe the governance structure in the Denver region and review the results of our interviews and survey about regional governance.

Description of DRCOG Governance

DRCOG's Board of Directors consists of representatives from the 57 participating local governments (nine counties and 48 cities). The Governor also appoints three non-voting representatives to the Board of Directors.

DRCOG utilizes both standing committees and ad hoc committees. The authority and criteria for membership for standing committees are defined by its Articles of Association, agreements, statute, or by Board authorization. Ad hoc committees are created to review specific issues within a specified timeframe.

As shown in Figure 2.4, two significant standing committees are the Regional Transportation Committee and the Metro Vision Issues Committee. These two bodies address many of the transportation planning issues in the Denver region. The Metro Vision Issues Committee oversees regional planning efforts, including the coordination of land use and transportation planning.

DRCOG has limited regulatory authority. DRCOG has authority over only transportation funding and has no real authority over land use other than its voluntary Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A) and the voluntary Mile High Compact group. As a result, land use planning occurs almost entirely at the local level in the Denver region.

In addition, there is virtually no state role in regional land use decision making. Colorado does not have any state-mandated municipal government planning requirements and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) does not get involved land use issues.

Figure 2.4. DRCOG Committee Structure



Source: Board Resource Manual Section 1, p. 55
 (<http://www.drcog.org/index.cfm?page=BoardHandbook>)

Analysis of DRCOG Governance

As shown in Table 2.7, 78% of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that key players are involved in the regional transportation and land use decision making. Only 15-16% of respondents disagreed that both staff and elected officials are kept informed on regional decision making. Nearly 75% of the respondents indicated that there was a high level of engagement among elected officials in the region. A small majority (57%) agreed that there is consistency between DRCOG board decisions and technical committee recommendations.

Table 2.7: Regional Decision Making in DRCOG

Survey Question: Focusing on regional transportation and land use decision making, please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
All of the critical players are involved in regional transportation decision-making	0%	11%	9%	59%	19%	2%	54
Local government staff are kept well informed on regional decision-making	0%	15%	9%	57%	17%	2%	54
Local elected officials are kept well informed on regional decision-making	0%	16%	18%	52%	10%	4%	50
There is a high level of engagement among elected officials in the region	0%	9%	14%	52%	22%	3%	58
There is consistency between DRCOG Board of Directors decision-making and technical committee decision-making/recommendations	0%	15%	22%	44%	13%	6%	54

According to our survey respondents, local governments and the Regional Transit District (RTD) were some of the most effective in coordinating with DRCOG (see Table 2.8). The responses for the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), neighboring counties, and special districts were more varied, with a narrow majority rating their efforts as ineffective or very ineffective.

The interview findings were generally consistent with the survey responses: internal coordination within the MPO (between participating local governments and the Regional Transit District) was rated as more effective than external coordination (with CDOT, neighboring jurisdictions and MPOs, and special districts).

Individuals interviewed in the DRCOG region generally agreed that land use-transportation coordination was occurring, but some questioned the effectiveness of the efforts. A number of interviewees commented on the importance of multimodal, mixed-use integrated development, such as RTD’s FasTracks, in facilitating coordination. FasTracks is a taxpayer-funded Regional Transit District program to rapidly increase the amount of transit services (light rail and bus rapid transit, or BRT) in the region. Other key issues driving coordination in the Denver metro region are the rapid pace of residential development in rural areas and water availability.

Table 2.8: Coordinating with DRCOG

Survey Question: Please rate how effective the following organizations are at coordinating transportation and land use decision making with DRCOG:

	Very Ineffective	Somewhat Ineffective	Neither Effective nor Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Don't Know	Responses
CDOT	13%	23%	13%	34%	11%	6%	53
Local governments within DRCOG	4%	8%	15%	53%	21%	0%	53
Other MPOs	8%	10%	15%	23%	2%	42%	52
Neighboring counties and cities outside DRCOG	19%	25%	15%	10%	4%	27%	52
Special Districts	23%	15%	21%	17%	6%	19%	53
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	9%	11%	21%	32%	8%	19%	53
RTD	2%	9%	9%	57%	21%	2%	53

Interviewees indicated that DRCOG’s strongest means for coordination lies within its staff and its ability to bring people together through the MPO. Efforts such as the Planner Idea Exchange (a forum for member government land use and transportation planners and other local government staff to share information and ideas, as well as learn about best practices) and Metro Quest (a interactive computer tool that allows policy makers, business leaders and the general public to visualize alternative land use scenarios) were cited as having a significant positive effect on coordination. Moreover, these coordination efforts have helped create a more unified DRCOG (Board and staff) that creates peer pressure for a regional approach and perceptions of interdependence among the participants.

One of the challenges facing DRCOG is coordination with the development of toll roads. The major toll road in the region is E-470, a circumferential freeway ringing the outer edge of the urbanized area. Several interviewees suggested that the toll road was creating capacity in areas where the MPO was not planning for it (or

modeling it in the regional transportation plan) and that the capacity was inducing new development.

Almost all of the interviewees believed that DRCOG has strong leadership, even if it is lacking in authority and funding. Because of the lack of authority, many believe that DRCOG must have strong leadership through its Board and its staff. The voluntary agreements such as the Mile High Compact and the Urban Growth Boundaries/Areas UGB/A were also cited as strong leadership tools due to the personal and political consequences of noncompliance.

Term limits were also cited as a barrier to regional coordination; this barrier was stated mostly in terms of education and communication. Locally elected officials build relationships working on shared problems, and these relationships are lost when term limits are reached.

3 TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE COORDINATION

3.1 Overview

A second goal of this project was to examine the mechanisms and strategies that regions use to coordinate transportation and land use. The need for coordination has long been a topic in the literature and policy documents, but coordination is complex to examine.

In this section we discuss some of the general coordination trends, and in later sections we review findings about specific mechanisms used in each region.

In our online survey, we asked officials in each region to assess how well transportation and land use is coordinated, and trends in coordination over the past five years. In the following sections we discuss the survey and case study findings by site.

3.2. Portland Metro (Metro)

In this section, we describe the regional approaches to land use and transportation coordination, and review the results from our survey about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of Metro Coordination Mechanisms

Metro has a number of plans and programs that work together to help foster coordination between land use and transportation, and includes the following:

The **Regional Framework Plan (RFP)** unites all of Metro's adopted land use planning policies and requirements into one document. The RFP contains regional policies on key regional growth issues, including accommodation of projected growth and the coordination of transportation and land use planning. The subjects addressed in the framework plan include but are not limited to: management and amendment of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB); urban design and settlement patterns; housing densities; transportation and mass transit; coordination with Clark County, Washington; and planning responsibilities mandated by state law.

The 2040 Growth Concept is the region's growth management policy that defines development in the metropolitan region through the year 2040. The 2040 Growth Concept directs most development to existing urban centers and along existing major transportation corridors, and promotes a balanced transportation system with a variety of transportation options.

The **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** is the transportation system plan for the Portland Metro region. The RTP serves as the Federal metropolitan transportation plan as well as the TSP required for compliance with Oregon's statewide planning Goal 12 and the transportation planning rule (TPR). A number of the state's TPR requirements (including Section 0060) are designed to assure that local governments consider the transportation impacts of changes to land use plans,

address how needed transportation improvements will be funded, and minimize traffic impacts of new development.

Analysis of Metro Coordination Mechanisms

A significant majority of respondents (73%) believed that transportation and land use decision making in the Portland Metro region was coordinated or very coordinated, with 22% listing it as uncoordinated or very uncoordinated (see Table 3.1). When asked about coordination over the last five years, 51% believed it was improving, 27% believed it was staying the same, and 12% believed it was getting worse.

Table 3.1: Coordination in Portland Metro

Question: Thinking about the METRO region, how coordinated is transportation and land use decision making?

	Response %
Very Uncoordinated	2%
Uncoordinated	20%
Neither Coordinated nor Uncoordinated	7%
Coordinated	51%
Very Coordinated	22%
Don't Know	0%
Responses	41

Table 3.2: Coordination Trends in Metro

Question: In the past 5 years, would you say that the coordination of transportation and land use decision making in the Metro region is:

	Response %
Getting Considerably Worse	5%
Getting Worse	7%
Staying the Same	27%
Improving	34%
Improving Considerably	17%
Don't Know	10%
Responses	41

In our survey we also asked respondents to assess the influence of a range of mechanisms for coordinating transportation and land use. In the Portland Metro region, the regional land use and transportation plans generated the highest percentage of “moderate influence” and “strong influence” responses. Other elements that generated a high percentage of moderate and strong influence percentages included the Urban Growth Management functional plan, the Metropolitan TIP, the Oregon Department of Transportation, and Metropolitan Transportation modeling.

Interviewees noted that one of the difficulties with coordination efforts is the regional travelshed issue. Travelsheds cross the boundaries of Metro, cover several of the region’s Area Commissions on Transportation, and cross several ODOT district boundaries. This compounds an already complex coordination setting, particularly since areas such as Clark County, Washington, and the towns of Newburg and Dundee are experiencing high rates of growth. While interviewees noted that a Bi-State Committee and the ACTs have helped facilitate some communication, some respondents commented that Metro needs to increase its effort to coordinate with the neighboring jurisdictions.

Table 3.3: Assessment of Metro Coordination Mechanisms

Rate the influence that each of the following has on coordinating transportation and land use decision making in Metro:

Question	No Influence	Some Influence	Moderate Influence	Strong Influence	Don't Know	Responses
Regional Framework	3%	31%	36%	25%	6%	36
Regional Transportation Plan	0%	19%	14%	67%	0%	36
2040 Growth Concept	0%	22%	33%	44%	0%	36
Future Vision	14%	37%	20%	14%	14%	35
Urban Growth Management Functional Plan	0%	31%	28%	39%	3%	36
Metro Transportation Improvement Program	3%	22%	22%	50%	3%	36
Transit Oriented Development Program	14%	33%	36%	14%	3%	36
Oregon Department of Transportation programs/policies	3%	22%	44%	28%	3%	36
Regional Travel Options Grants	9%	40%	29%	9%	14%	35
Metro Transportation Modeling	3%	17%	50%	25%	6%	36
Air Quality Conformity Requirements	14%	22%	47%	6%	11%	36
Other (please specify)	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	2

3.3 Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

In this section, we describe the regional approaches to land use and transportation coordination, and review the results from our survey about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of PSRC Coordination Mechanisms

Two regional decision making bodies—Transportation Policy Board and Growth Management Policy Board—play a critical role in coordinating land use and transportation. There have been joint meetings on occasion of members of the Transportation Policy Board and Growth Management Board to encourage consistency between the regional growth management and transportation plans.

Washington State’s Growth Management Act (GMA) is an important part of the framework for land use and transportation coordination. The GMA requires local governments with common borders or related regional issues to ensure that their plans are coordinated and consistent (RCW 36.70A.100). Regional coordination and consistency are implemented primarily through countywide planning policies. In the central Puget Sound region, there is also a requirement for multicounty planning policies which provide a common planning framework for regional, county-level, and local planning.

In addition, under the GMA, **concurrency** is one of 14 goals which local governments must consider in land use planning. The goal is intended to ensure public facilities are adequate to serve new development at the time of occupancy without decreasing service levels below locally established minimum standards. Local governments have the authority and responsibility to provide acceptable levels of service for their communities, but this discretion is constrained by the Growth Management Hearings Board¹¹ finding that local governments cannot avoid the concurrency requirement entirely by manipulating the standard to allow uncontrolled development. In addition, approximately half of the state’s highways are designated to be of statewide significance. In 1998, the Washington Legislature amended the GMA to specifically exempt these highways from the concurrency provision. Level of services standards for state facilities that are not of statewide significance are jointly set by WSDOT and regional transportation planning organizations such as PSRC, in cooperation with WSDOT.¹²

Under state law, PSRC is required to review the transportation provisions of local government comprehensive plans to ensure that they are consistent with Vision 2040’s multicounty planning policies, which also serve as the RTPO’s regional guidelines and principles for regional and local transportation planning. PSRC formally certifies the provisions in the local plans. The PSRC Executive Board has made a determination that only jurisdictions whose provisions have been certified are eligible to compete for regionally-managed transportation funding.

The new transportation improvement program (TIP) must be tied to multicounty planning policies in Vision 2040. The multicounty planning policies required by the Growth Management Act articulate the overall policy direction of the region and provide the foundation for transportation planning and investment decisions. Since 2003, PSRC’s TIP process has focused on funding centers and connecting corridors between centers. The revised multicounty policies adopted in 2008 cover a

¹¹ A Hearings Board is a three-member quasi-judicial panel that reviews cases regarding the adequacy of comprehensive plans adopted under the state’s Growth Management Act.

¹² Washington State Department of Transportation, “Concurrency, Land Use, and the State Transportation System, May 2007)

complete range of topics spanning environment, development patterns, sustainability and health, housing, economy, transportation, and public services. The policies state more explicitly that funding to designated centers is a priority. The overarching transportation goal in the multicounty policies is to develop a safe, cleaner, integrated, sustainable, and highly efficient transportation system that supports the regional growth strategy, promotes economic and environmental vitality, and contributes to better public health. An implementation action in Vision 2040 calls for revising the TIP process to address these updated policy goals and principles.¹³

Analysis of PSRC Coordination Mechanisms

A majority of respondents (56%) believed that transportation and land use decision making in the Puget Sound region was coordinated or very coordinated, with 24% responding that it was uncoordinated, and 19% indicating it was neither coordinated nor uncoordinated (see Table 3.4). When asked about coordination over the last five years, 54% believed it was improving, 29% believed it was staying the same, and 14% believed it was getting worse.

Table 3.4: Coordination in PSRC:

Thinking about the PSRC region, how coordinated is transportation and land use decision making?

	Response %
Very Uncoordinated	0%
Uncoordinated	24%
Neither Coordinated nor Uncoordinated	19%
Coordinated	46%
Very Coordinated	10%
Don't Know	2%
Responses	59

Table 3.5: Coordination Trends In PSRC

In the past 5 years, would you say that the coordination of transportation and land use decision making in the PSRC region is:

	Response %
Getting Considerably Worse	2%
Getting Worse	12%
Staying the Same	29%
Improving	45%
Improving Considerably	9%
Don't Know	3%
Responses	58

¹³ Our study took place just after Vision 2040 was adopted, but prior to the adoption of Transportation 2040. As a result, the last TIP process was conducted in a period of transition and was informed by previous multicounty planning policies, which were adopted in 1995.

Survey respondents were asked to rate the influence of various land use-transportation coordination mechanisms used in the PSRC area. The mechanisms that generated the highest percentages as having a moderate to strong influence included Vision 2040 (73%), Transportation 2040 (74%), and the Washington Growth Management Act (74%). The mechanisms generating the highest percentages as having 'no to some influence' included Transit Oriented Development funding (55%), SMART corridors (57%) and Rural Town Centers and Corridors Program (67%).

Interviewees pointed out the importance of having regional and local plans internally and externally consistent to achieve coordination. In particular, they noted that state highway plans and investments can sometimes work at cross purposes to regional land use and transportation coordination efforts.

Table 3.6: Assessment of PSRC Coordination Mechanisms

Rate the influence that each of the following has on coordinating transportation and land use decision making in PSRC:

Question	No Influence	Some Influence	Moderate Influence	Strong Influence	Don't Know	Responses
Vision 2040	2%	21%	27%	46%	4%	52
Destination 2030/Transportation 2040	7%	17%	33%	41%	2%	54
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	6%	30%	30%	33%	2%	54
Transit Oriented Development (TOD) funding	13%	42%	24%	9%	13%	55
WSDOT programs/policies	13%	24%	29%	33%	2%	55
Multi-County Planning Policies	4%	35%	35%	24%	4%	55
Washington State Growth Management Act	4%	20%	29%	45%	2%	55
State Implementation Plan for Air Quality	7%	37%	24%	24%	7%	54
Statewide Transportation Enhancement Funding	9%	38%	31%	9%	13%	55
SMART Corridors	13%	44%	27%	5%	11%	55
Rural Town Centers and Corridors Program	18%	49%	13%	7%	13%	55
Regional Economic Strategy	11%	34%	42%	9%	4%	53
Designated Regional Growth Centers	4%	22%	36%	36%	2%	55
Other (please specify)	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1

3.4 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

In this section, we describe the regional approaches to land use and transportation coordination, and review the results from our survey about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of SANDAG Coordination Mechanisms

Barbour and Teitz¹⁴ note that SANDAG was the first MPO in California to adopt a Regional Growth Management Strategy (1993). This was later replaced by the Regional Comprehensive Plan (2002), which identified a network of Smart Growth Centers. These factors allow SANDAG to bring together a range of policies and programs to coordinate transportation and land use planning.

The Regional Comprehensive Plan has no direct authority, but its designation of growth centers increases the potential for future transit investment and makes the centers eligible for grants. Also, the regional transportation plan and transportation improvement program (TIP) both integrate centers investment into funding criteria, which make a designated center in a local government region important.

Analysis of SANDAG Coordination Mechanisms

The overall assessment of coordination and trends in San Diego was positive. A high percentage of respondents listed land use and transportation as being coordinated or very coordinated (73%), and a sizable majority also believed it had been improving over the past five years (69%). These trends reflect the structural advantage of SANDAG in terms of its transportation planning authority, transit planning authority, and the significant funding overseen by the organization.

Table 3.7: Coordination in SANDAG

Thinking about the SANDAG region, how coordinated is transportation and land use decision making?

	Response %
Very Uncoordinated	0%
Ucoordinated	9%
Neither Coordinated nor Uncoordinated	18%
Coordinated	61%
Very Coordinated	12%
Don't Know	0%
Responses	33

¹⁴ "Blueprint Planning in California."

Table 3.8: Coordination Trends in SANDAG

In the past 5 years, would you say that the coordination of transportation and land use decision making in the SANDAG region is:

	Response %
Getting Considerably Worse	0%
Getting Worse	0%
Staying the Same	30%
Improving	48%
Improving Considerably	21%
Don't Know	0%
Responses	33

The interviews and survey revealed that no *single* mechanism strongly influences the coordination of land use and transportation decisions. Instead, several mechanisms mutually reinforce their coordination efforts. For local jurisdictions struggling to accommodate their share of affordable housing under state law, the growth centers provide an option for locating this higher density housing. City and SANDAG staff noted that one indicator of the growing importance of centers has been the increased debate about the criteria for choosing centers and the interest by local governments in having centers designated in their area.

Some of the coordination challenges include addressing interjurisdictional issues, including U.S.-Mexican border travel patterns. Several interviewees noted that this travel includes a significant number of residents who live in Mexico and commute daily across the border.

Table 3.9: Assessment of SANDAG Coordination Mechanisms

Rate the influence that each of the following has on coordinating transportation and land use decision making in SANDAG:

Question	No Influence	Some Influence	Moderate Influence	Strong Influence	Don't Know	Responses
Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP)	3%	13%	37%	33%	13%	30
2030 Regional Transportation Plan: Pathways for the Future	0%	20%	27%	40%	13%	30
2008 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)	3%	13%	33%	40%	10%	30
Sustainable Communities Strategy	13%	13%	30%	27%	17%	30
Caltrans programs/policies	3%	17%	33%	33%	13%	30
Smart Growth Concept Map	3%	7%	47%	33%	10%	30
TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program	3%	20%	37%	33%	7%	30
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	13%	13%	27%	13%	33%	30
Transportation Enhancement Activities Program	10%	27%	20%	10%	33%	30
Integrated Regional Infrastructure Strategy	3%	14%	24%	14%	45%	29
Other (please specify)	0%	0%	0%	80%	20%	5

3.5 Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

In this section, we describe the regional approaches to land use and transportation coordination, and review the results from our survey about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of DRCOG Coordination Mechanisms

DRCOG uses RTD's FasTracks program to facilitate transportation-land use coordination by helping to fund multimodal, mixed-use integrated development. In addition, DRCOG voluntary agreements such as the Mile High Compact and the UGB/A help to ensure that transportation decisions are in line with smart land use goals. Also, driving DRCOG coordination are the Urban Centers policy and the process of allocating transportation improvement program (TIP) points to meet land use goals as outlined in the Metro Vision 2035 Plan.

Analysis of DRCOG Coordination Mechanisms

The overall assessment of transportation and land use coordination in the region was mixed. While 52% of respondents believed that decision making is coordinated or very coordinated, 35% of respondents believe that decision-making is not coordinated (see Table 3.10). As shown in Table 3.11, 54% of respondents indicated that coordination is improving or improving considerably, while 38% indicated that it is staying the same. Seven percent of respondents thought coordination is getting worse.

Table 3.10: Coordination in DRCOG

Thinking about the DRCOG region, how coordinated is transportation and land use decision making?

	Response %
Very Uncoordinated	0%
Ucoordinated	35%
Neither Coordinated nor Uncoordinated	13%
Coordinated	47%
Very Coordinated	5%
Don't Know	0%
Responses	55

Table 3.11: Coordination Trends in DRCOG

In the past 5 years, would you say that the coordination of transportation and land use decision making in the DRCOG region is:

	Response %
Getting Considerably Worse	0%
Getting Worse	7%
Staying the Same	38%
Improving	45%
Improving Considerably	9%
Don't Know	0%
Responses	55

Survey respondents were asked to rate the influence of various land use-transportation coordination mechanisms used in the DRCOG area. The mechanisms that generated the highest percentage of moderate to strong influences included the Regional Transportation Plan (77%), the Transportation Improvement Program (77%), and the Metro Vision 2035 Plan (64%). The mechanisms that generated the highest percentage of no to some influence responses included CDOT policies (41%), TDM funding (51%), intelligent transportation systems funding (49%), Ridearrangers program (66%) and the traffic signal improvement program (57%).

Comments by respondents focused on the fact that land use and transportation coordination is left largely to the decisions of local leadership. Others addressed the automobile-centric role of CDOT in the region, the influence of FasTracks, and the DRCOG Board's sustainability goals, which are still in development and are scheduled for adoption in 2011.

An additional issue becoming increasingly important in the Denver region is the regional travelshed. In particular, rural and unincorporated areas are generating increased travel. In these areas there is also more political opposition to regional transportation and land use planning.

Table 3.12: Assessment of DRCOG Coordination Mechanisms

Rate the influence that each of the following has on coordinating transportation and land use decision making in DRCOG:

Question	No Influence	Some Influence	Moderate Influence	Strong Influence	Don't Know	Responses
Metro Vision 2035 Plan	0%	35%	37%	27%	2%	52
2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan (2035 MVRTP)	2%	21%	45%	32%	0%	53
2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	9%	13%	43%	34%	0%	53
Station Area Master Plan (STAMP) Funding Pool	6%	19%	32%	23%	21%	53
Colorado State Department of Transportation (CDOT) programs/policies	15%	26%	17%	40%	2%	53
Congestion Mitigation Program	17%	34%	23%	17%	9%	53
DRCOG Travel Demand Management (TDM) Funding Pool	13%	34%	21%	15%	17%	53
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Management and Operations Funding Pool	17%	32%	19%	9%	23%	53
RideArrangers Program	28%	38%	17%	4%	13%	53
Traffic Signal Systems Improvement Program	25%	32%	21%	11%	11%	53
Small Communities Technical Assistance Program	11%	26%	19%	4%	40%	53
Planner Idea Exchange	8%	19%	35%	12%	27%	52
Other	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	2

4 CENTERS POLICY

4.1 Overview

One of the goals of many transportation and land use coordination efforts is to encourage more growth around higher density, mixed-use development centers. The theory behind this goal is that development around higher density areas can reduce the demand for nonwork travel, as people are able to access commercial locations by walking or biking. Furthermore, higher density housing which is located adjacent to public transit (bus, train or light rail) increases the potential for transit ridership. This is particularly true for people living in affordable housing, because they are more dependent upon public transit.

The private development market faces a number of challenges in developing mixed use centers, including the higher cost of mixed use development, public perceptions about high density housing, the difficulty of assembling land in existing urban areas, and urban policies that support dispersed, low density development.¹⁵ For these reasons and others, many regions are promoting growth in centers by providing incentives to both local governments and developers.

4.2 Portland Metro (Metro)

In this section, we describe the Portland Metro centers policy and review survey results about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of Metro Centers Policy

The Metro Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) prioritizes transportation projects and awards more points to those projects that meet the goals of the 2040 Growth Concept functional plan. The 2040 Growth Concept identifies key growth centers and encourages high density development in priority land use areas such as town centers, regional centers, and corridors. The Urban Centers policy in the Growth Concept identifies guidelines for about 85 high-density, mixed-use, pedestrian- and transit-oriented activity nodes. These centers fall into one of three categories, including Mixed-Use Centers, Activity Centers, and Regional Centers. The Growth Concept's Rural Town Centers program examines the role of smaller, outlying communities in the region's rural areas.

The Oregon transportation and planning agencies oversee a joint program that provides Transportation Growth Management (TGM) grants which provide funding for planning purposes at the local level to promote development in transit-based centers. However, it is a statewide program with limited funds, with no direct connection between TGM grants and the 2040 Growth Concept.

¹⁵ Dunphy, Robert T. *Developing around Transit : Strategies and Solutions That Work*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute, 2004. See also: Schwanke, Dean, and Urban Land Institute. *Mixed-Use Development Handbook*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: ULI, 2003.

In 2009, Metro Council initiated a competitive grant process for planning and development within the urban growth boundary. The grants are funded by a construction excise tax, and in June 2009 the Council approved \$3.7 million for its first 17 projects.¹⁶

Analysis of Metro Centers Policy

Survey respondents provided mixed results regarding the effects of the 2040 Growth Concept. A majority (74%) of the respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that the 2040 Growth Concept has influenced local jurisdictions to focus more development within centers. A combined 37% “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that the funding for centers has been allocated to the most appropriate areas in the region. This echoes the equity issues that the interview participants discussed in noting that oftentimes both rural and urban areas feel underrepresented.

Survey respondents generally agreed that the most effective aspect of the 2040 Growth Concept is its focus on regional centers and corridors, providing the region with a framework for long-term growth and development as well as helping jurisdictions to prioritize their planning projects. When asked how the 2040 Growth Concept could be improved, several respondents suggested that Metro increase cooperation and efforts to work with local jurisdictions to understand what is important to them and their individual cities.

Survey results also reveal that 66% of the respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that transit investments support regional growth centers, but less than half (45%) believe that there is an increasing trend of development within the region’s growth centers. Also, 68% believe that bicycle and pedestrian investment supports regional growth centers.

Several survey respondents noted that there is limited funding to support growth centers, and a new community planning and development grant program began only in 2009. Therefore, while many jurisdictions would like to develop 2040 design concepts (such as centers and corridors), there simply is not enough money for everyone to do so.

¹⁶ Metro. 2010. Community planning and development grants. Accessed August 25, 2010: <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=33050>

Table 4.1: Assessment of Metro Centers Policy

Question: Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
The 2040 Growth Concept supports what local jurisdictions were doing already	3%	31%	36%	31%	0%	0%	35
The 2040 Growth Concept has influenced local jurisdictions to focus more development within centers	6%	3%	14%	56%	19%	3%	35
There are significant incentives for local jurisdictions to promote growth within centers	3%	22%	39%	25%	8%	3%	35
The 2040 Growth Concept funding has been allocated to the most appropriate areas in the region	8%	31%	39%	17%	0%	6%	35
The 2040 Growth Concept has significantly influenced private investment	11%	19%	42%	14%	3%	11%	35

4.3 Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

In this section, we describe the PSRC centers policy and review the results from our survey about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of PSRC Centers Policy

A key component of Vision 2040 is the designation of regional centers. The region designates regional growth centers and manufacturing and industrial centers. Designated regional growth centers have been identified for housing and employment growth, as well as prioritized for regional funding. Regional manufacturing and industrial centers are locations for increased employment. The region directs growth and development toward a limited number of designated regional growth centers. Originally PSRC had 21 regional centers, which was increased to 27 centers in 2008. Since 2003, PSRC has provided a regional framework for designating these regional centers, with eight designated regional manufacturing and industrial centers.

Vision 2040 also acknowledges the importance of other center-type places that are not designated regionally, but may be established locally. Those centers should also be prioritized to receive more localized sources of funding. Indeed, Vision 2040 calls for every municipality in the region to identify one or more locations for center-type development to occur.

Development standards and regulations established locally for residential and commercial development, especially in centers, are used to accommodate a broader range of project types consistent with the regional vision. These incentives also help to increase the percentage of new development and redevelopment built at higher performing energy and environmental standards.¹⁷

The centers are also supported in the Regional Transportation Plan (Transportation 2040). A major PSRC policy focus is providing transportation improvements to a

¹⁷ PSRC Multicounty Planning Policies Appendix C, p. 7.

center or centers and the corridors that serve them. Centers are defined as regional growth centers and regional manufacturing and industrial centers as identified in Vision 2040.¹⁸

Analysis of PSRC Centers Policy

As noted in Table 4.2, 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that PSRC’s centers policy was influencing local jurisdictions to focus more on development within centers. This view was supported by comments in the interviews. However, 40% of respondents disagreed that there were significant incentives for local jurisdictions to promote growth centers, while 40% agreed or strongly agreed. Twenty-six percent of respondents believed that the centers policy was significantly influencing private development, while 28% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Twenty-four percent of respondents indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that there has been an equitable distribution of centers, whereas 52% felt that it had been equitable. Concerns about the allocation of centers across the region were also raised in the interviews. Ongoing tension exists between those who would prefer to give priority to regional centers versus those who believe that funding should be focused on local centers; but, according to interviewees, these tensions appear to be lessening over time.

Table 4.2: Assessment of PSRC Centers Policy

Question: Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
The Designated Regional Growth Centers policy supports what local jurisdictions were already doing	0%	28%	22%	44%	2%	4%	50
The Designated Regional Growth Centers policy has influenced local jurisdictions to focus more development within centers	0%	6%	18%	52%	22%	2%	50
There are significant incentives for local jurisdictions to promote growth within centers	0%	40%	20%	28%	12%	0%	50
The geographic distribution of Designated Regional Growth Centers has been equitable	6%	18%	22%	34%	18%	2%	50
The Designated Regional Growth Centers policy has significantly influenced private investment	4%	24%	36%	24%	2%	10%	50

4.4 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

In this section, we describe the SANDAG centers policy and review the results from our survey about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of SANDAG Centers Policy

SANDAG’s growth center policy is called the Smart Growth Incentive Program. The program is based on the Regional Concept Plan, which identifies a range of smart growth centers, ranging in scale and intensity from metropolitan and urban centers to town and community centers. These areas are emerging or have the potential to become areas with compact, higher density, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented activities.¹⁹ The program was launched as a \$17 million pilot in 2005 using Federal

¹⁹ Barbour and Teitz. "Blueprint Planning in California," 171-200.

transportation funding. In 2009, SANDAG began a 40-year program funded through an allocation of two percent of the annual TransNet revenues (approximately \$4.8 million in FY 2009).²⁰

The program funds either planning or capital projects. Planning projects include activities that encourage alternative transportation, infill development, internal mobility, or sense of place. Capital project funding can be used for “public infrastructure projects and planning activities that will support compact, mixed use development focused around public transit, and will provide more housing and transportation choices.”²¹

Analysis of SANDAG Centers Policy

As shown in Table 4.3, 84% of respondents believe that SANDAG’s Smart Growth Centers policy was influencing local jurisdictions to focus more on development within centers. Fifty percent of respondents indicated that the policy supported what local jurisdictions were doing already.

Overall, three themes emerged from the interviews and survey regarding SANDAG’s centers policy. First, the policy was still in its infancy and too early to evaluate—particularly given the recent collapse of the real estate market.

Second, the policy needs more funding to have a significant impact. In fact, when asked how the Smart Growth Incentives program could be improved, 8 of the 15 open-ended answers noted a need for more funding because of the significant infrastructure investment required for these centers.

Third, the importance of the policy varies considerably by local jurisdiction. In centrally located cities with transit access, the policy is consistent with plans and trends already underway and the grants help accelerate many of these efforts. Of the thirty Smart Growth Incentive grants allocated in the first two rounds, 14 were allocated to the City of San Diego and 10 were allocated to the three central cities. Not surprisingly, officials in these jurisdictions were very positive about the program and its impacts. In coastal areas where the increasing cost of land drives private-market increase in density and mixed-use development, these grant programs are less important. Only two grants have been awarded to these types of communities. Suburban and rural areas show much less public acceptance of high density development, and because many of these areas have limited transit access, development is focused around “rural villages” and “community centers.”

One common theme across all of these jurisdictions was that centers were means by which local jurisdictions could meet state affordable housing requirements. As noted above, SANDAG is responsible for coordinating the California Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The state requires SANDAG to work with local jurisdictions to determine household growth in the region and project how local

²⁰ SANDAG. 2010. "Smart Growth Incentive Program: Guidelines and Call for Projects. FY 2009-FY 2010.

²¹ SANDAG. 2008. "Final 2008 Regional Transportation Improvement Program." San Diego, CA: San Diego Association of Governments, p. 3.

jurisdictions throughout the region will accommodate a sufficient quantity and range of housing in their general plans. One indication of *planning* improvements is demonstrated by the outcomes of this housing needs assessment process. The 2030 plan fell far short of accommodating the housing needs across the region. The 2050 plan projected higher growth rates, but was able to accommodate regional housing needs.

The centers policy also highlighted some tensions about the program. Some interviewees and survey respondents believed there were too many types of centers across the region. This array of centers means that almost every jurisdiction has a designated center, but this broad definition may also diffuse the impact of the policy. SANDAG staff indicated that some of the outlying jurisdictions are beginning to work on smart growth development, but they are not connected to transit so it is more difficult to obtain grant funding. Thus far, this distribution has not seemed to create discontent. When asked whether the program funding has been allocated to the “most appropriate areas in the region,” 70% of the respondents (n = 30) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, and similar views were expressed in the interviews. However, both local government and SANDAG staff expressed concern about support for the program if only a few jurisdictions are successful in obtaining funding.

Table 4.3: Assessment of SANDAG Centers Policy

Question: Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
The TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program supports what local jurisdictions were doing already	0%	26%	19%	48%	4%	4%	26
The TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program has influenced local jurisdictions to focus more development within centers	0%	7%	11%	67%	15%	0%	26
There are significant incentives for local jurisdictions to promote growth within centers	4%	26%	26%	33%	11%	0%	26
The TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program funding has been allocated to the most appropriate areas in the region	0%	15%	11%	52%	19%	4%	26
The TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program has significantly influenced private investment	4%	19%	33%	22%	4%	19%	26

4.5 Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

In this section, we describe the DRCOG centers policy and review the results from our survey about coordination activities and individual mechanisms.

Description of DRCOG Centers Policy

DRCOG has legal authority only over transportation funding and has no authority over land use other than its voluntary Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A) and the voluntary Mile High Compact group. The Metro Vision plan also lays out

voluntary strategies to increase infill and density through urban centers, freestanding communities, transit corridors, and rural town centers.

Metro Vision 2035 states that DRCOG does not “address development activity occurring on specific parcels of land; that is the responsibility of local jurisdictions.” Metro Vision’s goals and policies “aim to *influence* the direction, shape, size and other characteristics of the region’s built environment.”²² Rather than acting as a regulatory body concerning land use planning, DRCOG acts as a facilitator and uses its limited Federal funds that utilize regional transportation mechanisms and structures to promote its land use goals.

DRCOG’s Metro Vision 2035 outlines the formation of urban centers, rural town centers, and freestanding communities for the purpose of decreasing urban sprawl and increasing infill. The Vision also identifies various transportation corridors. Through its transportation programs and TIP funding DRCOG exercises influence on land use.²³

DRCOG also works collaboratively with local governments and the Regional Transit District (RTD) in developing Transit Oriented Developments (TODs). The development of TODs goes hand-in-hand with the implementation of FasTracks throughout the region, which is a taxpayer-funded RTD program to rapidly increase the amount of transit services (light rail and bus rapid transit, or BRT) in the region. In addition, DRCOG serves as a source of information for local governments on TODs.²⁴

Analysis of DRCOG Centers Policy

As shown in Table 4.4, 59% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Urban Centers Policy supports what jurisdictions are already doing, 22% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 14% disagreed. There was a similar distribution when respondents were asked whether the policy was influencing local jurisdictions to focus more development within centers. When asked whether incentives for local jurisdictions were significant, only 20% agreed, while 53% disagreed and 24% neither agreed nor disagreed. Many of the comments related to these questions highlighted the voluntary nature of the Metro Vision plan and the strong influence of local control.

The survey responses revealed mixed responses regarding the equitable distribution of funding for urban centers. The debate about equitability was also reflected in comments. While some respondents remarked that centers are available only in a few locations, others commented that there are too many Urban Centers, diluting their influence and success.

²² *Metro Vision 2035*, DRCOG, 2007, p. 11, <http://www.drcog.org/documents/MetroVision2035FinalPlanIntro-Ch%202.pdf>

²³ See Transportation Planning in the Denver Region, pp. 29-37

²⁴ See With One Voice, p. 6

Table 4.4: Assessment of DRCOG Centers Policy

Question: Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Responses
The currently adopted Metro Vision 2035 Plan Urban Centers policy supports what local jurisdictions were doing already	0%	14%	22%	55%	4%	4%	49
The currently adopted Metro Vision 2035 Plan Urban Centers policy has influenced local jurisdictions to focus more development within centers	2%	12%	24%	55%	6%	0%	49
There are significant incentives for local jurisdictions to promote growth within centers	12%	41%	24%	20%	0%	2%	49
The geographic distribution of Urban Centers has been equitable	4%	22%	39%	24%	0%	10%	49
The currently adopted Metro Vision 2035 Plan Urban Centers policy has significantly influenced private investment	8%	29%	39%	12%	0%	12%	49

5 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

5.1 Overview

In the United States, Metropolitan Planning Agencies are responsible for allocating Federal funding for maintenance and improvements through a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This allocation typically happens on a biannual basis, and state and metropolitan approaches to allocating this funding vary considerably. Funding is allocated across a region based on a number of criteria, such as safety and congestion relief. These criteria are determined by the MPO as part of its regional transportation plan, which must be approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

One emerging trend in some metropolitan areas is to include criteria related to smart growth or centers policies in the TIP process. A 2005 report by CH2MHill for the Atlanta Regional Commission identified five different MPOs that have used the criteria in this way.²⁵ One of the criteria for choosing our cases was that all four MPOs were incorporating smart growth criteria in their TIP process.

5.2 Portland Metro (Metro)

In this section, we describe the Portland Metro policy criteria and process, and review the results from our survey.

Description of Metro TIP Criteria and Process

The MTIP includes projects and programs that are administered by Metro, ODOT, TriMet, and SMART. Metro updates the MTIP every two years.²⁶ The MTIP is essential to the implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP includes more projects than can be afforded by the region in any single year; therefore, the MTIP development process is used to determine a priority schedule year by year for projects included in the RTP.²⁷ In an effort to facilitate the integration of transportation and land use planning, the primary policy objective of the MTIP and the allocation of funding is to “leverage economic development in priority 2040 land use areas through investment to support centers, industrial areas, and UGB expansion areas with completed concept plans.”

The MTIP uses a 100-point technical ranking system to prioritize transportation projects. The points are grouped as follows:

²⁵ CH2MHill. "Integration of Quality Growth Policies into Transportation Planning." 14 pp. CH2MHill, Portland, Oregon: Prepared for the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, 2005.

²⁶ Metro. "Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program." <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=3814/level=4>. (accessed January-February 2010).

²⁷ Metro, 2008-2011 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program. January, 2008. Document PDF available on Metro Web site: <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=3814/level=4>. (accessed January-February 2010), 1.

- 25 points: congestion relief; use of alternative travel modes
- 40 points: support of Metro’s Region 2040 Land Use Goals
- 20 points: safety hazard correction
- 15 points: cost effectiveness

Analysis of Metro TIP Criteria and Process

As shown in Figure 5.1, 79% of respondents believe that the TIP criteria have a significant or very significant influence on transportation decision making, while only 7% listed it as insignificant, and 11% believe it is neither significant nor insignificant. In contrast, 47% of respondents believe that the TIP criteria have a significant or very significant influence on land use decision making, while 25% believed it is insignificant, and 21% believe it is neither significant nor insignificant.

The interviews highlighted some of the reasons for the mixed views on the effect of the TIP criteria and process. First, only about \$33 million per year go to the MTIP, out of about \$800 million spent yearly in the whole region on transportation. So while the MTIP criteria have symbolic significance, expressing the view that “this is where we want the region to go,” their impact is still relatively minimal because the amount of funding attached to the MTIP is a small fraction of the regional transportation investment.

Second, interviewees noted that the MTIP process is still relatively new, so it is difficult to tell how effective the MTIP criteria have been so far in helping Metro meet its transportation and land use goals. The rating system has not been fully developed and a quantitative analysis has not yet been done to assess this issue.

Third, the Federal MTIP funding is more flexible than other state funds. Specifically, interviewees noted that the MTIP policies have strategic importance because of their flexibility to fund projects (such as bicycle and pedestrian) with these funds that are otherwise not possible through other funding sources.

Both the interviewees and survey respondents commented on the controversy over how the MTIP funds should be allocated throughout the region (i.e., based on specific outcomes or more widely distributed throughout the region). Respondents noted that Metro is moving toward a more outcomes-based method in order to prioritize certain growth patterns. As a result, some of the region’s more rural and suburban areas that are not designated 2040 growth centers believe they are not getting their fair share of the project funding.

Table 5.1: Evaluation of Metro TIP Criteria

Question: Please rate the significance of the 2010-13 MTIP evaluation criteria on the following:

	Very Insignificant	Insignificant	Neither Significant nor Insignificant	Significant	Very Significant	Don't Know	Responses
Effect on transportation decisions across the region	0%	7%	11%	61%	18%	4%	28
Effect on land use decisions across the region	0%	25%	21%	43%	4%	7%	28

5.3 Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

In this section, we describe the PSRC TIP policy criteria and process, and review the results from our survey.²⁸

Description of PSRC TIP Criteria and Process

Projects listed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are selected based on regional transportation, economic, and land use policy criteria.

As noted in the previous chapter, a major PSRC policy focus is providing transportation improvements to a center or centers and the corridors that serve them. Centers are defined as regional growth centers and regional manufacturing and industrial centers as identified in Vision 2040. Areas specified as employment clusters also qualify as center areas. Also, a minor portion of PSRC's TIP process is the Rural Town Centers and Corridors program, which was developed in 2004 to support projects that integrate rural highway corridor development with local rural town Main Street style development needs.

The PSRC-managed Federal funds come from three programs: Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestions Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) The TIP process differentiates between regional (PSRC) and county selection processes for projects. Although the counties are asked to use the same selection criteria as the PSRC for regional projects, county projects generally select more locally focused projects, helping to ensure that local needs are not overlooked. For both county and regional transportation funds, the approved policy of the region is to set aside at least 10% of the combined estimated STP and CMAQ funds available for programming for nonmotorized projects in the four counties.

The Regional Project Evaluation Committee (RPEC) is responsible for making recommendations to the Transportation Policy Board on criteria, specific projects for Federal transportation funding, and approaches to dealing with related transportation planning issues. Members of RPEC include public works directors, and representatives from transit agencies, the Governor's office, and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) district offices in the region.

All TIP projects controlled by PSRC's competitive selection process are approved using a 100-point system.²⁹ The point criteria vary slightly depending on whether the funds come from the STP, CMAQ, or the FTA. For projects to be selected by PSRC for FTA and STP funds, the following point system is used:

- 70 points: Projects that Support and Serve Centers (includes: 30 points for benefit to center; 20 points for system continuity; 20 points for long-term benefit for meeting projected travel demand)

²⁸ As noted above, the last TIP process was conducted shortly after the adoption of Vision 2040 and prior to the adoption of Transportation 2040. Vision 2040 calls for an update of the TIP process to included factors such as health impacts and greenhouse gas emissions.

²⁹ 2010-2013 Regional TIP: Appendix C.

- 20 points: Air Quality and Climate Change (projects that substantially reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollution)
- 10 points: Project Readiness/Financial Plan (projects for which all prerequisites for obligation will have been met by the time the funds are requested)

Analysis of PSRC TIP Criteria and Process

As shown in Table 5.2, a high percentage of respondents (81%) believe the TIP evaluation criteria have a significant or very significant effect on transportation decisions in the central Puget Sound region. As expected, survey respondents also felt that the effect was much more significant for transportation decisions than for land use decisions.

Most of those interviewed believe that the TIP criteria are working well to guide the distribution of funds. In addition, some interviewees noted that even though the funding allocated using these criteria represent only about 10% of the total TIP funds, the criteria relating to centers tend to leverage additional investment from local jurisdictions.

Table 5.2: Evaluation of PSRC TIP Criteria

Question: Please rate the significance of the 2010-13 MTIP evaluation criteria on the following:

	Very Insignificant	Insignificant	Neither Significant nor Insignificant	Significant	Very Significant	Don't Know	Responses
Effect on transportation decisions across the region	0%	2%	17%	48%	33%	0%	46
Effect on land use decisions across the region	4%	22%	36%	31%	2%	4%	45

5.4 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

In this section, we describe the SANDAG policy criteria and process, and review the results from our survey.

Description of SANDAG TIP Criteria and Process

SANDAG first incorporated smart growth criteria in its Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) in 1997.³⁰ The criteria have been updated several times, the last change coming in 2008 through an ad hoc working group. SANDAG's RTIP provides smart growth criteria for the four types of RTIP funding, which account for 5% to 20% of the competitive scoring criteria:

- Highway Corridors (serves smart growth centers = 5% of criteria)
- HOV Connector (serves regional corridors or transit routes = 20% of criteria)
- Freeway Connector (serves regional corridors or transit routes = 15% of criteria)

³⁰ CH2MHill. "Integration of Quality Growth Policies into Transportation Planning." 14 pp. CH2MHill, Portland, Oregon: Prepared for the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, 2005.

- Transit (serves smart growth centers = 15% of criteria)

In each of these categories, SANDAG has developed guidelines for how projects are scored. For example, highway corridor projects can receive up to 9 points if they serve: (1) existing or planned Metropolitan or Urban Centers (5 points), (2) existing or planned Special Use Centers (3 points), and (3) potential urban or Special Use Centers (1 point). A project receiving 7 or more points receives the full 5% allocation in the RTIP scoring process.

Analysis of SANDAG TIP Criteria and Process

As shown in Table 5.3, almost 80% of survey respondents rated the TIP evaluation criteria as having a significant effect on transportation decisions. While 31% indicated it is having a significant effect on land use decisions, an equal percentage rated its effect as insignificant. When asked an open-ended question about the specific influences of the TIP on local land use decision making, most respondents could not cite an example. One respondent commented: "I can't think of an example where the RTIP criterion has specifically affected a land use decision. The reverse is true. Appropriate land use decisions have affected RTIP decisions."

The reason for this assessment is explained in both the interviews and TIP data. Interviewees noted that the smart growth components were only a small proportion of the overall TIP criteria, and scoring on the smart growth criteria was not always a critical factor in obtaining funding.

An analysis of the criteria and funding decisions in SANDAG's 2008 RTIP supported this contention:

- None of the 10 freeway connector projects scored any points for serving regional and/or corridor transit routes (15% of criteria).
- Of the 13 transit projects that were funded (out of 43 proposed), ten scored at least 7 out of 15 points and the top five all scored between 8.5 and 15 points. Only five projects (out of 43) that scored 7 points or higher were not funded.
- Under the category of highway connectors, 19 projects were funded from 52 proposals. Of these 19, 11 scored zero or 1 for serving smart growth areas (out of 5), and only one funded project received all five points.³¹

As with the Smart Growth Incentives Program, the TIP funding allocation by itself provided limited incentives to coordinate transportation and land use. However, when combined with each other and with the need to accommodate affordable housing and the increasing cost of land, funding allocation helps reinforce policies of supporting growth in centers. As two survey respondents noted, the effects are subtle and somewhat distant:

"Local agencies are made aware of upcoming improvement projects and realize that land use decisions must work in conjunction with the transportation system."

³¹ SANDAG. 2008. "Final 2008 Regional Transportation Improvement Program." San Diego, CA: San Diego Association of Governments.

“It provides additional rationale for local jurisdictions to focus on smart growth development within their planning areas.”

Table 5.3: Evaluation of SANDAG TIP Criteria

Question: Please rate the significance of the 2010-13 MTIP evaluation criteria on the following:

	Very Insignificant	Insignificant	Neither Significant nor Insignificant	Significant	Very Significant	Don't Know	Responses
Effect on transportation decisions across the region	7%	7%	7%	50%	29%	0%	14
Effect on land use decisions across the region	8%	23%	31%	23%	8%	8%	13

5.5 Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

In this section, we describe the DRCOG policy criteria and process, and review the results from our survey.

Description of DRCOG TIP Criteria and Process

DRCOG’s TIP covers a six-year window of time, slightly longer than the federally mandated four years. The first four years of the TIP contain committed projects. The following two years are limited to carryover projects from the previous four years.

DRCOG directly selects projects funded by three Federal funding sources: STP-Metro, STP-Enhancement, and CMAQ. Starting in 2007, DRCOG also began sourcing TIP funds through Federal Transit Administration funding. Currently three separate processes are used for selecting transportation projects to receive Federal funds within the TIP area. DRCOG, CDOT, and RTD each select projects over which they have authority. DRCOG, as the region’s federally designated MPO, is charged with development and approval of the TIP. While the three authorities work to focus their efforts toward areas of overlap between the projects, DRCOG has the final authority in what gets funded.³²

The three agencies have undertaken four efforts to improve coordination in project selection: (1) utilizing “strategic corridors” as the unifying theme, (2) participating in each other’s meetings on project selection, (3) concurrence of DRCOG project selections with RTD and CDOT, and (4) holding interagency reviews on draft TIP project lists.³³

In addition to three separate criteria for project selection within the TIP, three separate criteria also are used for eligibility. RTD and CDOT have their own eligibility requirements, but DRCOG has the final approval. Additionally, the TIP

³² Policy on Transportation Improvement Program Preparation, DRCOG, 2006, pp. 1-6 <http://www.drcog.org/documents/20072012TIPPolicyAmendedFinal0106.pdf>

³³ Policy on Transportation Improvement Program Preparation, DRCOG, 2006, pp. 1-6 <http://www.drcog.org/documents/20072012TIPPolicyAmendedFinal0106.pdf>

must implement State Implementation Plan (SIP) Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) to meet air quality requirements as per Metro Vision RTP findings.³⁴

The DRCOG eligibility of specific projects is based upon the project type, consistent with the *2035 Metro Vision RTP*. Generally, DRCOG projects that involve highways require CDOT concurrence; projects that involve transit require RTD concurrence. The number of new funding requests that can be put forth by municipalities and counties depends on the population or employment (P/E) size of the locality.³⁵

The first phase of project selection entails selecting new projects by way of ranked lists on point scales, to a maximum of 75% of the total unprogrammed funds. Projects must score a minimum of 50 points on a 100-point scale to be selected, even given the funding targets.

The second phase of the selection process, which covers the remaining 25% of NYP funds, is more qualitative. Factors considered in this assessment include: financial equity of project awards, cost savings from merging projects, projects in strategic corridors, project readiness, and projects in very small communities.³⁶

Finally, DRCOG's TIP policy awards one point for any of the following eight factors:

- Preserves open space
- Demonstrates progress in developing an urban center or freestanding community town center
- Increases population density
- Establishes an urban reserve planning area
- Adopts senior-friendly development policies
- Establishes a stormwater utility or equivalent level of commitment
- Implements alternative mode plans
- Signs the Mile High Compact³⁷

Analysis of DRCOG TIP Criteria and Process

As shown in Table 5.4, 88% of survey respondents believe that the TIP evaluation criteria have a significant or very significant effect on transportation decisions. While 26% believe they have a significant or very significant effect on land use decisions, 36% believe their effect is very insignificant or insignificant.

Several themes emerged from the interviews and open-ended survey responses. First, a number of respondents indicated the need for more funding to be allocated through the TIP process. Second, respondents and interviewees commented that funding still favors highway projects and road capacity as opposed to transit or bike-ped projects. However, respondents also noted the flexibility of funding for multimodal and bike-ped projects, compared to other sources of funding.

As in the other regions, DRCOG's competitive TIP funding criteria have raised tensions about the distribution of funding across the region. Efforts to decrease the

³⁴ Ibid, pp. 6-7.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 11.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 19.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 85.

tendency towards “spreading of the political peanut butter” have increased criticism of the policy favoring urban centers.

Table 5.4: Evaluation of DRCOG TIP Criteria

Question: Please rate the significance of the 2010-13 MTIP evaluation criteria on the following:

	Very Insignificant	Insignificant	Neither Significant nor Insignificant	Significant	Very Significant	Don't Know	Responses
Effect on transportation decisions across the region	0%	5%	8%	63%	25%	0%	40
Effect on land use decisions across the region	5%	31%	38%	21%	5%	0%	39

6 REGIONAL OUTCOMES

The primary goal of this study is to assess the efforts by regional agencies to coordinate land use and transportation. As noted in the Methods section, the ultimate question of whether coordination is improving is difficult to answer because it is hard to measure. We do not attempt to correlate regional indicators with our assessment of governance and coordination efforts. However, we believe our findings must be placed in the context of transportation and land use performance trends.

Table 6.1 summarizes information from national-level sources that use consistent methodologies across metropolitan regions. This data is based on metropolitan area definitions, which does not always match MPO boundaries. We have also included alternative measures of transportation recently published by Cortright³⁸ (see inset box). These measures attempt to address some of the flaws of the Travel Time Index summarized in the *Urban Mobility Report*, including measurement problems with traffic speeds and volumes and its failure to consider trip length.

Excess Miles and Hours is calculated by taking the mean travel distances and time in metropolitan areas and subtracting the mean distance and time from the best performing metropolitan areas (defined as 90th percentile performers). “The 90th percentile represents the performance that is close to the best that is achieved in practice and that deviations from this level represent transportation ‘costs’ ... from a performance that falls below this level.”³⁹

Peak Period Travel Distance is calculated from *The Urban Mobility Report*,⁴⁰ which assumes that 50% of all travel occurs during peak periods. Peak travel distance (total vehicle miles traveled) is 50% of the sum of freeway and arterial miles.

In addition to compiling existing performance data for each region, our survey presented participants with a range of outcome assessment questions to provide additional perspectives on regional trends.

As shown in Table 6.2, a similar percentage of respondents agreed and disagreed that there was consistency between regional transportation decisions and local land use decisions. A similar split was found when they were asked about local land use decisions being consistent with regional transportation decisions.

In contrast, a strong majority in all regions believed that transit investment and bicycle and pedestrian investment supported regional growth centers. In contrast the views about roadway investment supporting growth centers was more mixed.

³⁸ Cortright, Joe. (2010). *Measuring Urban Transportation Performance: A Critique of Mobility Measures and a Synthesis*. CEOs for Cities.

³⁹ Ibid, p. 50.

⁴⁰ Schrank, D., & Lomax, T. (2009). *Urban Mobility Report*. College Station: Texas Transportation Institute.

In all four regions, a sizable majority of respondents agreed that the region was making more efficient use of land, was increasing transportation options, and was seeing more development within the region's growth centers.

Table 6.1: Trend Data for Metropolitan Areas

	Metro	PSRC	DRCOG	SANDAG
Population⁴¹				
2000 Population	1,583,138	2,712,205	1,984,887	2,674,436
2000 Urbanized Area (square miles)	474	954	499	782
2000 Density (population per square mile)	3,340	2,844	3,979	3,419
Air Quality⁴²				
Percent of Days Good Air Quality Index 1998	90.1%	91.5%	55.3%	59.5%
Percent of Days Good Air Quality Index 2008	70.7%	89.2%	54.8%	40.3%
Percent Change in Good Air Quality Days	-27.5%	-2.6%	-1.0%	-47.7%
Housing Composition	Metro	PSRC	DRCOG	SANDAG
Total housing units 2009	904,735	1,443,978	1,063,508	1,142,276
Percent single family housing 2009	67.30%	63.70%	67.60%	60.30%
Change in total housing units (2005-2009)	5.20%	5.81%	5.25%	2.54%
Percent change single family housing 2005-09	1.11%	0.63%	-0.18%	-2.54%
Percent change multi-family (2-9 units) 2005-09	0.54%	0.57%	-0.29%	1.15%
Percent change multi-family (10+ units) 2005-09	-1.09%	-0.66%	0.44%	1.69%
Percent change mobile home 2005-09	-0.55%	-0.58%	0.00%	-0.19%
Housing Affordability (GRAPI: Gross rent as % of household income)	Metro	PSRC	DRCOG	SANDAG
GRAPI Less than 20% (2009)	22.9%	23.7%	22.2%	17.6%
GRAPI 20%-29.9% (2009)	26.0%	27.9%	26.2%	23.6%
GRAPI 30% or more (2009)	51.1%	48.4%	51.6%	58.8%
Percent change in GRPI less than 20% (2005-09)	6.9%	-6.9%	-8.0%	7.4%
Percent change in GRPI 20%-29.9% (2005-09)	19.6%	13.1%	1.5%	-0.4%
Percent change in GRPI 30% or more (2005-09)	8.5%	18.2%	3.5%	11.8%
FHWA Transportation Measures⁴³	Metro⁴⁴	PSRC⁴⁵	DRCOG⁴⁶	SANDAG⁴⁷
Average Peak Period Miles Per Day	16.0	18.8	17.0	19.8
Average VMT per capita per day	20.1	22.5	24.0	23.7
Other Transportation Measures⁴⁸	Metro	PSRC	DRCOG	SANDAG
Excess Miles: Peak Period Travel (per peak period traveler)	8	689	260	945
Excess Hours: Peak Period Travel (per peak period traveler)	5	31	30	33
Change in Average Peak Period Travel Dist (2001-2007)	4	344	130	472
Change in Average Peak Period Travel Distance (1982-2001)	-14.6%	5.8%	-14.8%	2.2%
Change in Average Peak Period Travel Distance (2001-2007)	-4.6%	-0.8%	-0.6%	-4.1%

⁴¹ Source: US Census Bureau.

⁴² Source: US Environmental Protection Agency.

⁴³ Federal Highway Administration. (2009). Highway Statistics 2007: Urban Mobility Report. Washington: US Department of Transportation.

⁴⁴ Data for Portland OR-WA.

⁴⁵ Data for Seattle WA.

⁴⁶ Data for Denver-Aurora CO.

⁴⁷ Data for San Diego CA.

⁴⁸ Cortright, *Measuring Urban Transportation Performance*.

Table 6.1: Metropolitan Outcome Assessment Questions

Question: Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

	PSRC				DRCOG				Metro				SANDAG			
	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Regional transportation decisions are consistent with local land use decisions	38%	21%	39%	2%	27%	45%	27%	2%	33%	27%	39%	0%	47%	32%	21%	0%
Local land use decisions are consistent with regional transportation decisions	30%	32%	36%	2%	27%	25%	46%	2%	32%	29%	38%	0%	36%	29%	33%	4%
Transit investment supports regional growth centers	65%	21%	13%	2%	77%	10%	10%	2%	66%	12%	21%	0%	64%	7%	22%	7%
Roadway investment supports regional growth centers	31%	34%	36%	0%	39%	33%	26%	2%	39%	21%	39%	0%	44%	26%	19%	11%
Bicycle and pedestrian investment supports regional growth centers	50%	32%	15%	4%	65%	12%	20%	2%	68%	12%	18%	3%	50%	36%	11%	4%
The region is making more efficient use of land as a result of regional efforts	48%	28%	23%	2%	47%	27%	26%	0%	66%	21%	12%	0%	68%	14%	15%	4%
The region is increasing transportation options as a result of regional efforts	60%	23%	17%	0%	77%	6%	16%	0%	69%	18%	12%	0%	64%	11%	18%	7%
There is an increasing trend of development within the region's growth centers	59%	30%	8%	4%	57%	29%	10%	4%	45%	33%	21%	0%	68%	14%	7%	11%
Sample size	53				48-49				33-34				27-28			

RESEARCH STUDY DOCUMENTS

Main Report:

Margerum, Richard D., Susan Brody, Robert Parker, and Gail McEwen. 2011. Regional Transportation and Land Use Decision Making in Metropolitan Regions: Findings from Four Case Studies.

Appendix 1

Margerum, Richard D., Susan Brody, Robert Parker, and Gail McEwen. 2011. Regional Transportation and Land Use Decision Making. Appendix 1: Detailed Research Findings.

Appendix 2

Margerum, Richard D., Susan Brody, Robert Parker, and Gail McEwen. 2011. Regional Transportation and Land Use Decision Making. Appendix 2: Detailed Case Study Summaries.

Appendix 3

Margerum, Richard D., Susan Brody, Robert Parker, and Gail McEwen. 2011. Regional Transportation and Land Use Decision Making. Appendix 3: Forum Proceedings.