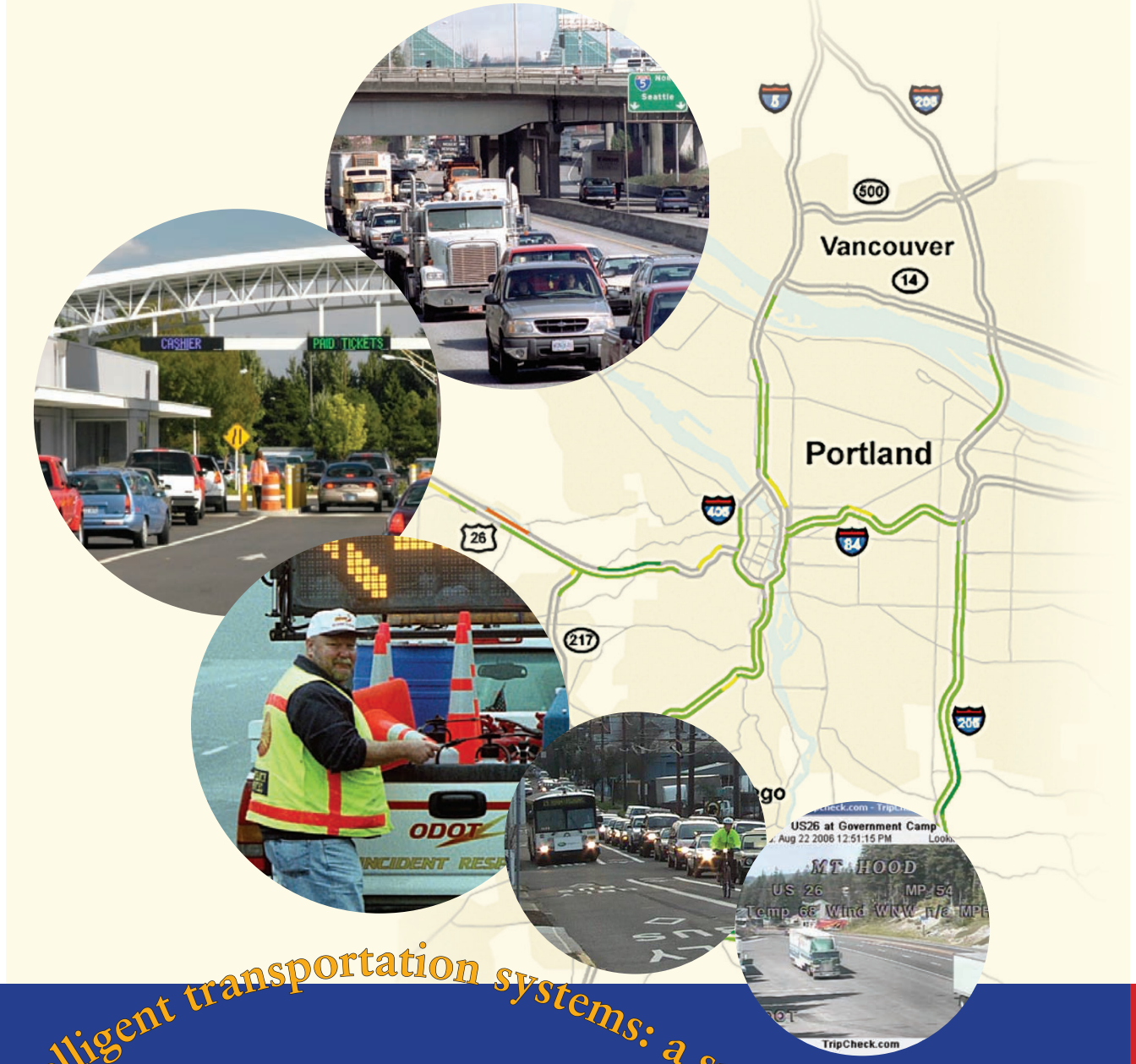

Intelligent transportation systems: a smarter way to go

Metropolitan Mobility *The Smart Way*

The State of Intelligent Transportation Systems in the Portland Region

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unclog traffic and spend less? New study shows *smart* solutions

As a community leader and resident of the Portland metropolitan region, you know two things for certain: The region's transportation infrastructure is getting more congested every day, and there are fewer dollars to fund high-cost solutions like roads.

Those problems underscore why you and every leader, transportation professional and activist concerned about the impact of the regional transportation system on our quality of life and economy should read *Metropolitan Mobility the Smart Way: The State of Intelligent Transportation Systems in the Portland Region*.

Prepared by staff at Metro and the City of Portland with contributions by transportation planners and traffic managers in the public and private sectors, as well as Portland State University's Center for Transportation Studies, this brief but enlightening report shows that we have the power to control congestion before it becomes gridlock. But we must understand the issue and act together before it's too late.

The good news? As the report shows, **some of the best ways to manage congestion are also some of the most cost-effective.**

The Problem: More people, cars and trucks, fewer dollars

"Transportation planning is being defined more than ever by the scarcity of funding … In this context, the risks associated with bad decision-making are tangible and the stakes are high." So concludes *Metropolitan Mobility the Smart Way*. As the report indicates, the Portland region is at greater risk than many other cities because of its high reliance on transportation-intensive export industries. A December 2005 study released by Metro found that by 2025, congestion could cost Portland 6,500 jobs as well as $844 million per year in wasted fuel and delay. How then can we as community leaders find and fund creative, lower-cost solutions to our transportation congestion problems?

A Cost-Effective Solution: Intelligent Transportation Systems

We're lucky in a way: Portland's penchant for regional cooperation and its openness to new ideas have placed it at the forefront of implementing smart ways to manage traffic. In *Metropolitan Mobility*, you'll read brief case studies that show how traffic managers in the Portland

Intelligent transportation systems:

metropolitan region already have been using cost-effective advanced technologies to increase mobility and safety. These technologies, known as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), include examples such as:

- A transit signal priority project between TriMet and Portland allows buses on high-frequency routes to stay on time with the use of technology that links on-board computers with traffic signals.
- Real-time traveler information and road weather information systems from ODOT and TriMet allow drivers and riders to get to their destinations more quickly and safely.
- Project Green Light, ODOT's weigh-in-motion initiative, has saved trucking companies an estimated 524,000 hours and $39 million in operating costs during its first seven years of operation.
- The ITS Laboratory at Portland State University offers data archiving and research services that enable operating agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of their investments in technology.
- ODOT has installed ramp meters at more than 100 locations, resulting in fewer accidents, less congestion and savings of time and fuel.
- Traffic signal coordination projects in Portland and Gresham have saved time, gas and pollution, and achieved benefit-cost ratios of 30:1.
- ODOT's advanced incident response program keeps traffic moving around breakdowns and fender-benders and helps avoid secondary crashes.
- Truck detection devices on Columbia Boulevard in Portland dramatically reduced red-light running.

"We need a new approach and we need it now."

—Norman Mineta, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation

The Opportunity: Regional collaboration will amplify benefits

Metropolitan Mobility will not only help you learn more about intelligent transportation systems. It will also provide you with information to guide decision-making for future investments. What's more, the report will help you identify opportunities for regional collaboration in such areas as corridor and freight management, traveler information, and electronic payment systems.

And there's more good news. Says the report: "With ITS plans in place at most transportation agencies around the region, the need is not for new project ideas but for opportunities to link technology, system management strategies, and regional transportation plans."

With better understanding of ITS tools and better regional coordination of both capital enhancements and system management strategies, *Metropolitan Mobility* concludes that we can make major inroads into managing transportation congestion. Furthermore, the benefits of these technologies can be multiplied by working together as a region. And that's something we've already shown we know how to do well here.

To obtain copies of *Metropolitan Mobility the Smart Way* for you, your staff or other thought leaders, go to **www.metro-region.org**

a smarter way to go

ITS OREGON

Metropolitan Mobility the Smart Way was developed by the members of TransPort, the ITS subcommittee of Metro's Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee.

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For more information about ITS in the Portland metropolitan region and throughout Oregon, please visit **www.itsoregon.org**. Additional information about metropolitan transportation issues in Portland can be found at **www.metro-region.org**.

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