



Date: July 19, 2007  
To: TPAC Members and Alternates  
From: Pam Peck, RTO Manager  
Caleb Winter, RTO Staff  
**Re: Recommended Regional Travel Options Evaluation Framework**

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### **Background**

The Regional Travel Options (RTO) Subcommittee of TPAC formed a working group to make recommendations and set priorities for evaluating the program. The RTO Subcommittee approved recommendations in June 2007.

### **Recommendations**

Key recommendations are to:

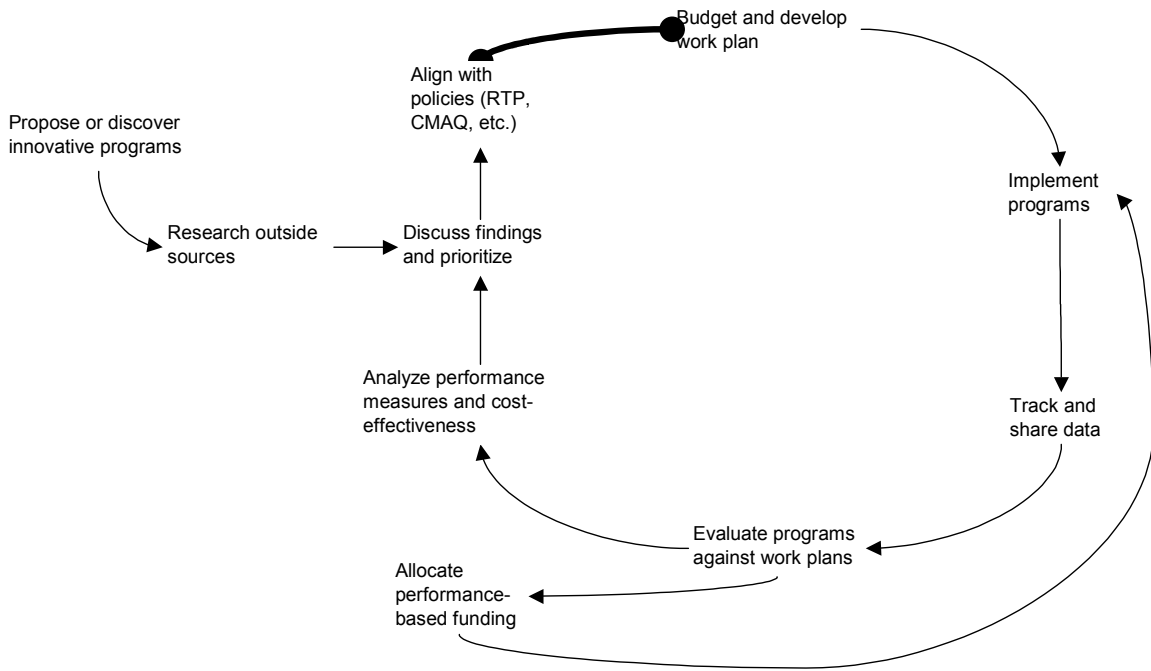
1. Expand RTO evaluations to include awareness and satisfaction measures; a recommendation made by Dr. Jennifer Dill in the 04/05 RTO Evaluation Report. Dr. Dill described awareness and satisfaction as missing levels of analysis needed to evaluate RTO projects.
2. Conduct region-wide phone surveys to track overall trends in mode share and the extent that changes can be attributed to RTO programs, while addressing several shortcomings of current data sources. Shortcomings to be resolved by the survey are:
  - Overlap among programs such as employer outreach and carpool matching make it difficult to attribute mode shifts by each element of the RTO program.
  - Non-commute trips are not adequately captured by current sources of RTO data. Non-commute trips were identified in the RTO Strategic Plan as having an impact on peak congestion and air quality.
  - Lack of a region-wide survey that can be used to evaluate the RTO program.

Dr. Dill and her Graduate Research Assistant identified five other U.S. regions and one Canadian region that have recently conducted region-wide phone surveys for the primary purpose to measure transportation demand management (TDM) programs. They reviewed reports from these regions and recommended areas of study including travel choices, awareness and satisfaction of RTO and other TDM programs, attitudes towards travel options and demographics related to travel behavior.

3. Acknowledge that responsibility for tracking and analyzing data begins with each funding recipient. The working group drafted a matrix to help define responsibility and tools to

evaluate outputs, awareness, satisfaction and outcomes applicable to current RTO projects. Metro RTO staff provides technical support.

4. Set the timeline for evaluation to every two years to best support the decision-making cycle (diagram below), beginning with data collection and analysis after July 1<sup>st</sup>. The region-wide phone survey will be conducted in September and reporting of all findings will be scheduled for October. Quarterly reports, shared databases and ad-hoc reporting will be used to address evaluation needs in-between two-year evaluations.



5. Budget resources for evaluation will fluctuate between years when the two-year evaluation and region-wide phone survey will be done (approximately \$200,000) and off years (approximately \$120,000). These amounts do not exceed 10% of the RTO budget, which is a generally accepted amount for program evaluation. Every year, Metro RTO staff will continue technical support to partners and carry out evaluation steps for Metro RTO projects (e.g., CarpoolMatchNW, Metro VanPool, DriveLess/SaveMore outreach).

**Conclusion**

RTO Subcommittee’s approval of the an Evaluation Framework helps:

- Set expectations for measurement;
- Define responsibilities for evaluation;
- Set the timeline and budgets for evaluation; and,
- Inform the RTO Strategic Planning process (beginning fall 2007).

The RTO Evaluation Working Group can be called upon to coordinate and carry out the Evaluation Framework as needed. Metro RTO staff will continue to update information related to the Evaluation Framework and also provide technical assistance to partners.