Public Participation Plan

Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council

Clark County
Skamania County
Klickitat County
City of Vancouver
City of Camas
City of Washougal
City of Battle Ground
City of Ridgefield
City of La Center
Town of Yacolt
City of Stevenson
City of North Bonneville
City of White Salmon
City of Bingen
City of Goldendale
C-TRAN
Washington DOT
Port of Vancouver
Port of Camas-Washougal
Port of Ridgefield
Port of Skamania County
Port of Klickitat
Metro
Oregon DOT
14th Legislative District
17th Legislative District
18th Legislative District
20th Legislative District
49th Legislative District

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I. Introduction

Public participation is a key element in the regional transportation decision-making process carried out by Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC). As mandated in the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and other supporting Federal regulations, and continued with the current Federal Transportation Act, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) must establish and periodically review and update public participation processes in a public participation plan. These processes should assure early and continued public awareness of, access to and opportunity to participate in the transportation decision-making process. This Public Participation Plan document describes Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council's (RTC's) public participation process with polices and guidance for public outreach and participation outlined. The Public Participation Plan establishes consistent procedures to ensure people have reasonable opportunities to be involved in the regional transportation planning process and provides examples of the types of tools and techniques RTC may use to communicate with the public, stakeholders and planning partners.

The participation of the public in regional transportation planning and programming has been part of RTC's work program since the Council was established in July of 1992. RTC's work includes development of regional transportation plans, such as the long-range regional transportation plans (RTPs) for Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties and Transportation Improvement Programs for the region.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 required that MPO's adopt a formal public involvement process relating to regional transportation planning and programming of transportation projects in the MPO region. The original Public Involvement Plan was adopted by the RTC Board of Directors in July, 1994 and was updated in October 2001. The federal transportation act, SAFETEA-LU (2005), emphasizes the need to have participation of citizens and interested parties in developing the Public Participation Plan and participation in the metropolitan transportation planning process. SAFETEA-LU also emphasizes the use of "visualization techniques" as part of the public participation process; this includes making transportation plans and programs available on the internet and use of maps and pictures where they can help the public understand the transportation plan and program. The adopted Public Participation Plan also meets Washington State's requirements regarding public involvement and outreach in conducting regional transportation planning by the Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

RTC as MPO/RTPO and TMA

Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Clark County, Washington and as Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for Clark, Klickitat and Skamania Counties in Washington State (see Figures 1 and 2 for maps of the region). Having a population of over 200,000, the Clark County region is a federally-designated Transportation Management Area (TMA). TMA status brings additional transportation planning requirements that the MPO must carry out.

Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Clark County, Washington, portion of the larger Portland (Oregon)/Vancouver urbanized area. RTC is also the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the three-county area of Clark, Skamania and Klickitat. Responsibility for these functions was assumed by RTC on July 1, 1992.

What is the Metropolitan Planning Organization?

A Metropolitan Planning Organization is an organization of elected officials in urbanized regions with a population of 50,000 or over. The MPO provides a forum for local decision-making on transportation issues of a regional nature.

As a condition for receipt of federal capital or operating assistance, MPOs must have a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process. The MPOs are to cooperate with the state in developing transportation plans and programs for urbanized areas. This transportation planning process is to result in plans and programs consistent with the urbanized area's comprehensive planned development. In addition, the plans are to provide for the development of transportation facilities (including pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities) and serve as an intermodal system for the state, metropolitan areas and the nation.

The MPOs planning functions are carried out in cooperation with the state and local agencies. An MPO can contract staff from other agencies to perform specific elements in the planning process. This cooperative transportation decision-making process provides a forum for the member jurisdictions to discuss regional transportation issues and plan transportation improvements for the region. Currently, eleven regional councils perform the MPO transportation planning functions in Washington, representing the urbanized areas of the state.

What is the Regional Transportation Planning Organization?

RTPOs serve the same basic transportation planning functions as MPOs, but were created by state legislation. An RTPO covers both urban and rural areas and receives state funding in support of its planning efforts. In 1990, the Washington

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State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act (ESHB 2929) authorizing the Regional Transportation Planning Program.

The primary functions of RTPOs are to develop regional plans and policies for transportation, growth management, environmental quality, and other topics determined by the RTPO; provide data and analysis to support local and regional decision making; build community consensus on regional issues through information and citizen involvement; build intergovernmental consensus on regional plans, policies and issues, and advocate local implementation; and provide planning and technical services on a contractual basis. [Bylaws]

RTC provides the region a valuable forum in which to consider the transportation issues, develop coordinated strategies, and recommend prudent investments in our system to solve the transportation challenges faced in this region.

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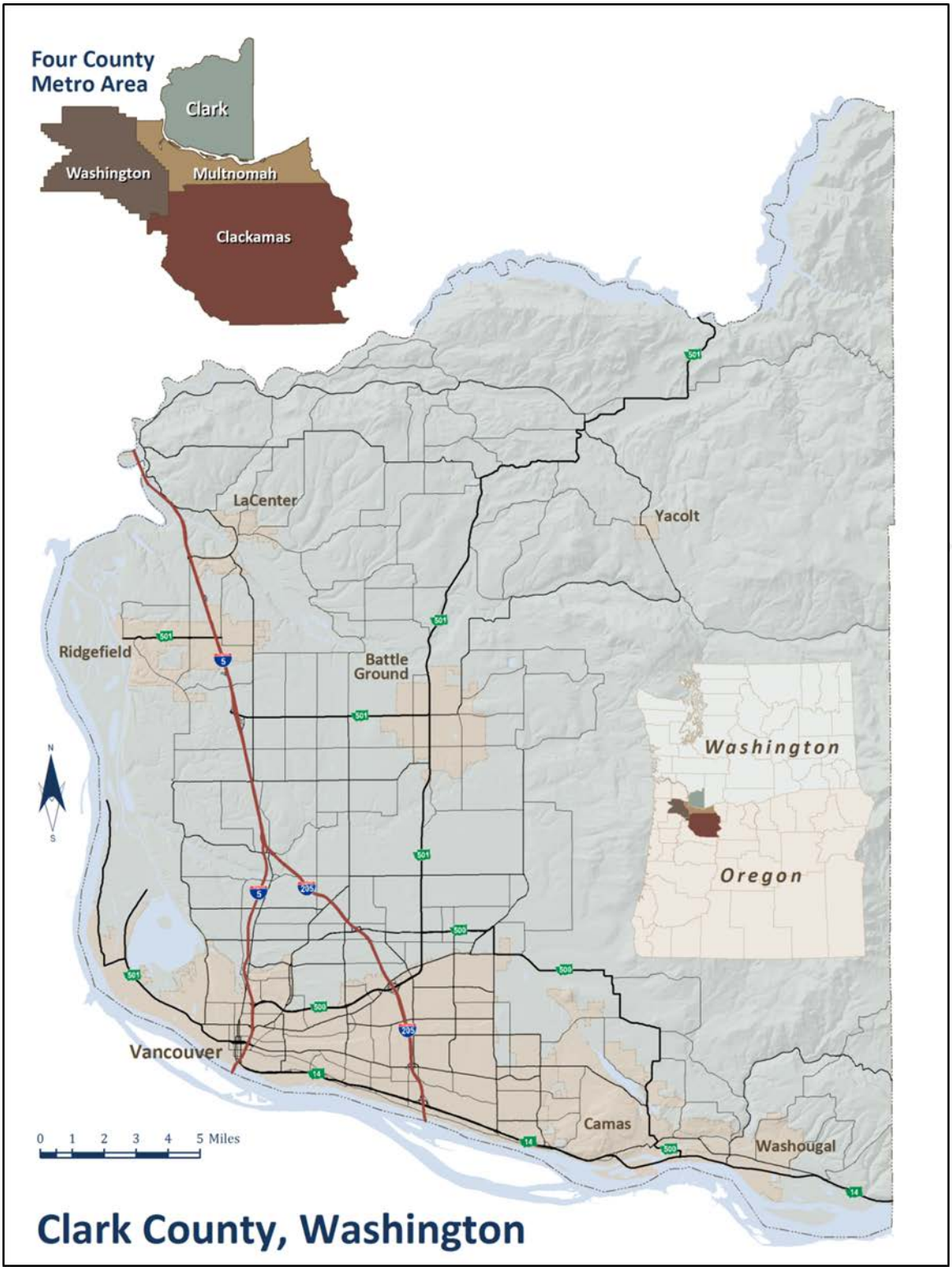

Figure 1: RTC, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Region. The MPO covers the whole of Clark County

Figure 2: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC): Extent of Regional Transportation Planning Organization (Clark, Skamania and Klickitat counties).

Importance of Public Input in the Transportation Planning Process

Public involvement is a key component of the transportation planning and programming process. A proactive public involvement process is one that provides complete information, timely public notice, and full public access to major transportation decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing transportation plans and programs.

We are also asked to reach out to people who are traditionally underserved by transportation projects, such as low-income and minority households. In addition to ensuring that community members are involved, we must show that transportation investments are not adversely impacting these populations and that improvements are equitably distributed.

Purpose of the Public Participation Plan - guiding principles and goals

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan is to ensure that all of RTC's regional transportation plans, programs, and studies include adequate public involvement prior to action by the RTC Board. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), enacted in 2005, required that organizations like RTC utilize "proactive" public involvement procedures that go beyond merely providing notice of decisions. These requirements continue today under the current federal Transportation Act requiring us to provide opportunities for "early and continuing involvement throughout the transportation planning process." The Public Participation Plan explains and describes how the public can be involved in the transportation planning process.

Guiding Principles

RTC's public involvement process aims to provide members of the public opportunities for early and continuing participation in transportation projects, programs, plans and decisions, and to provide public access to key decision making processes. Engaging the public early and often in the decision-making process is critical to the success of any transportation plan or program, and is required by a number of state and federal laws.

RTC's public involvement procedures are built on the following guiding principles:

- RTC is committed to providing timely public notice and timely, relevant information.
- Public access to the transportation planning program is not biased by race, ethnicity, gender, or economic level.
- No major public policy decision is reached or large project implemented without significantly affecting someone.
- Project and policy decisions should follow a decision-making process to make them acceptable.
- Effective public participation and education strategies must be tailored to fit the audience and issue.
- Collaboration provides for stronger solutions.
- People are much more willing to live with a decision that affects different interests unequally if the decision-making process is open, objective and considerate of all viewpoints.

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- Effective public notification and participation takes time and effort, and it can be expensive, yet is an essential component of sound decision-making.
- Early involvement of stakeholders improves information and direction for regional planning decisions.
- All relevant information necessary for an informed decision should be provided by project staff.
- Use of a variety of public outreach and public education techniques should be used to help involve a wider audience of interested parties and strengthen decisions for transportation policy and in regional plans.
- Public participation is a dynamic activity that is best when planning partners work together to provide information to the public.
- There is often more than one solution to a problem.
- The decision-making process is strengthened with the inclusion of potentially underserved populations, sometimes through alternate means of communication. Citizens of all ethnicity, gender and backgrounds need to be well-informed, have the opportunity to voice their concerns and have their concerns addressed.

Public Participation Goals

The primary goal of RTC's Public Participation Plan is to describe RTC's approach to public engagement. Other goals of the Public Participation Process are to:

- Maintain a proactive public participation process.
- Support early and continuous participation of the public in developing Regional Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs.
- Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties especially where they may be affected by particular transportation plans, programs and projects.
- Provide adequate public notice of public participation opportunities.

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- Provide adequate time for public review and comment at key decision points in development and approval of plans and programs.
- Provide reasonable public access to information about transportation issues and processes including issues relating to development of transportation plans and programs.
- Make information on the transportation planning process, including plan and program development and meeting information, available on the World Wide Web.
- Visualization techniques, such as maps and graphics, can be used to simplify and make transportation plans and programs easier to understand.
- Hold public meetings at convenient times and locations.
- Consider and document public suggestions and recommendations received during the planning and development processes.
- Identify and address the transportation needs of the traditionally underserved, including low income and minority populations, and identify the effects of transportation policies, plans and projects on these populations.

Meeting these goals ensures early and continuous public notification and participation in major actions and decisions by RTC and that there will be meaningful public input to inform the decision-making process.

Participation Plan Requirements

Federal and state requirements of the Public Participation Process are more fully addressed in Appendix A of this Plan though a summarized list of applicable federal, state and local requirements follows:

Policies and Regulations Guiding RTC's Public Involvement Process

RTC operates under a wide range of federal, state, and local requirements including:

Federal Requirements:

- Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), Public Law 112-141 as passed by Congress and signed by President Obama on July 6, 2012
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC 126 and 49 CFR 27.19

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- Federal Clean Air Act of 1970, 42 USC 85 and 40 CFR Parts 50-99
- Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, 42 USC 38 and 13 CFR 305
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 23 USC 140, 23 CFR 200, and 49 CFR 21
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency. Signed August 11, 2000 by President William J. Clinton
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low–Income Populations. Signed February 11, 1994 by President William J. Clinton.
- Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Signed July 14, 1982 by President Ronald Reagan.

Washington State Requirements:

- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), RCW 43.21C
- Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A
- Open Public Meetings Act, RCW 42.30
- Public Records Act, RCW 43.56
- Washington Clean Air Act, RCW 70.94

Other Requirements:

- RTC Interlocal Agreements, Bylaws and Memoranda of Agreement

Desired Outcomes of the Public Participation Plan

- Receive public input on RTC's activities and decisions.
- Share information with a broad cross-section of the public.
- Ensure notification and participation of all populations, including people of color, low-income and special needs groups.
- Increase overall awareness of regional planning activities.

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- Ensure planning decisions incorporate the concerns, needs, and visions of the region.

Development of the Public Participation Plan Update

This public participation plan is RTC's documented "process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process" in accordance with the 23 CFR 450.316(a)

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) is updated as needed through a process involving ongoing consultation and engagement with the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), the RTC Board, and interested parties such as transportation providers, public agencies, the freight transportation community, representatives of seniors, young people and those with disabilities, Native American Tribes in the region, bicycle and pedestrian committees and more.

The Public Participation Plan update process is ongoing as RTC gauges the most effective techniques for reaching out to the public over time and works to comply with federal and state laws governing public participation. This particular 2013/14 Plan update, culminating in the November 2013 draft PPP document, was followed by a 45-day public comment period. The RTC Board is the final decision making body of RTC and chooses to accept or adopt the PPP.

RTC's initial Public Involvement Plan was adopted in July 1994 and updated in October 2001. The August 2007 Plan update was adopted to comply with the federal transportation act in existence at that time, SAFETEA-LU, as well as state public outreach requirements for the Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

Federal law requires that the MPO periodically evaluate the Public Participation Process and update the Public Participation Plan to reflect current practices. RTC worked with planning partners, the Board, Committees, stakeholders, interested parties, the interagency consultation process and the public to develop the Public Participation Plan and updates.

The 2013/14 Public Participation Plan reflects RTC's existing practices for public involvement, consultation with interested parties, interagency consultation, agency governance and operations, all documented in one place for public reference. The 2013/14 Plan update was refined to include strategies that have proved effective in

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the planning process, complies with federal and state guidance and provides more specificity than previous Public Participation Plans.

This draft Public Participation Plan underwent a 45-day public comment period from November 11 to December 27, 2013. This 45-day public comment included:

- Notifying RTC's membership, interested parties, stakeholders, Tribes, community organizations representing Title VI and Environmental Justice groups, as well as federal resource agencies of the opportunity to comment on the plan.
- Online commenting and review at RTC's website, www.rtc.wa.gov
- News release to media outlets in the region, including news outlets that serve diverse and Limited English Proficient audiences.
- Legal notices placed in local print media.
- Agenda information items to the RTC Board and RTC committees.
- Opportunity to provide a public comment in person at RTC Board meeting.
- Availability for review at RTC and at libraries in the region.
- Documenting comments received.

If you have comments on this Plan, please contact RTC:

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II. RTC's ORGANIZATION

As background information on the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, the second section of the Public Participation Plan describes the organization of RTC and its decision-making structure. RTC exists as a forum for regional transportation decision-making.

RTC Membership

RTC is a membership organization formed by interlocal agreement. RTC members are listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: RTC Membership

RTC Membership: Jurisdiction/Agency
Clark County
Skamania County
Klickitat County
City of Vancouver
City of Camas
City of Battle Ground
City of Ridgefield
City of La Center
Town of Yacolt
City of Stevenson
City of North Bonneville
City of White Salmon
City of Bingen
City of Goldendale
C-TRAN
Washington State Department of Transportation
Port of Vancouver
Port of Camas/Washougal
Port of Ridgefield
Port of Skamania County
Port of Klickitat
Metro (Portland, OR)

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RTC Membership: Jurisdiction/Agency
Oregon Department of Transportation
Legislators from the following Washington State Districts:
14th District
17th District
18th District
20th District
49th District

Governing Structure: Committees

RTC's Agency Structure is illustrated in Figure 3 below and descriptions of the decision-making Committees follow.

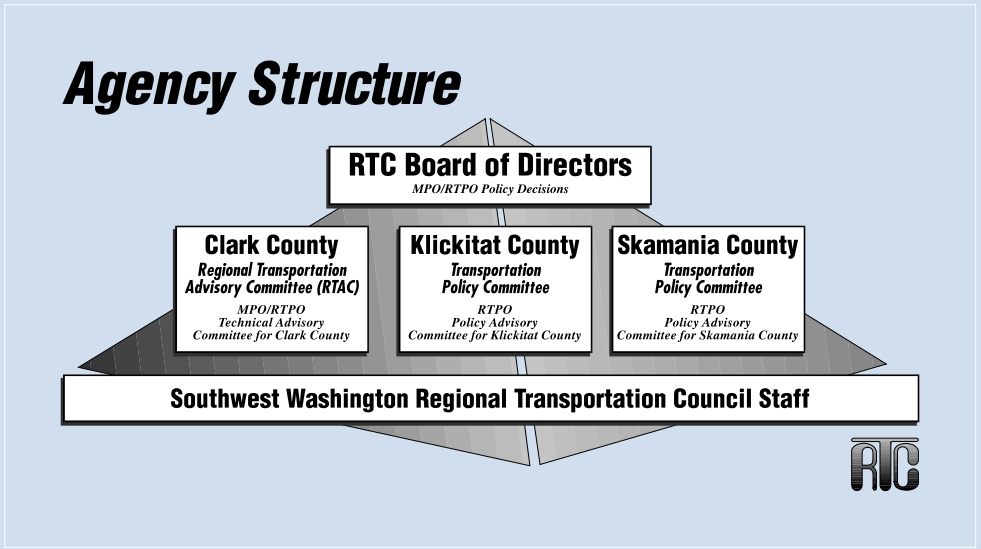

Figure 3: RTC's Agency Structure

RTC Board of Directors

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Board of Directors is the policy decision-making body for RTC, both as MPO and RTPO. The Board meets monthly to make policy and project decisions and provides direction to RTC staff. The Board makes recommendations on key transportation issues. As determined by state (RCW 47.80.060) and federal laws (23 USC 134(d)(2)) and by RTC's Bylaws, the RTC Board is comprised of fourteen voting members composed of elected officials representing the region's cities, counties and ports, and senior staff from state transportation agencies and the transit agency, and, because the region is a bi-state region, the Oregon Department of Transportation and Metro are represented. The method of appointment is at the discretion of the appointing jurisdiction. The

fifteen state legislative members of the 14th, 17th, 18th, 20th and 49th districts are ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board. Nine RTC Board members are required to meet quorum. Valid votes require at least eight voting members plus one member who can be either a voting or non-voting member. Table 2 provides a summary of RTC Board representation and voting rights.

Table 2: RTC Board of Directors: Representation and Voting Rights

RTC Board Representation	Voting Rights
Three Clark County Commissioners	Yes
Two representatives from the City of Vancouver	Yes
One elected official from the City of Camas or the City of Washougal representing Camas and Washougal	Yes
One elected official from the City of Battle Ground, the City of Ridgefield, the City of La Center, or the Town of Yacolt representing these four cities	Yes
One elected official from Skamania County, the City of Stevenson, the City of North Bonneville, or the Port of Skamania County	Yes
One elected official from Klickitat County, the City of White Salmon, the City of Bingen, the City of Goldendale, or the Port of Klickitat	Yes
The Executive Director/CEO of C-TRAN	Yes
The Southwest Regional Administrator of the Washington State Department of Transportation	Yes
One Port Commissioner from the Port of Vancouver, Port of Ridgefield, or the Port of Camas/Washougal representing these three ports	Yes
The Portland Region One Manager of the Oregon Department of Transportation	Yes
One Councillor from Metro of Portland	Yes
Ex-Officio Representation:	
14th Legislative District: State Senator and Two State Representatives	No
17th Legislative District: State Senator and Two State Representatives	No
18th Legislative District: State Senator and Two State Representatives	No
20th Legislative District: State Senator and Two State Representatives	No
49th Legislative District: State Senator and Two State Representatives	No

All meetings of the RTC Board and RTC's other committees are open to the public, with the exception of Board executive sessions. Agendas and minutes from all RTC Board meetings are posted at www.rtc.wa.gov or hardcopies can be obtained by calling (360) 397-6067. All Board meetings include a public comment agenda item.

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Clark County

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee

Within the Clark County MPO region, the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) meets monthly to coordinate the regional transportation planning program and advise the RTC Board on technical transportation issues. RTAC is composed of staff from local jurisdictions, WSDOT, C-TRAN as the region's transit agency, and bi-state representation from ODOT and Metro. RTAC representation is listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Regional Transportation Advisory Committee: Representation

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee: Representation
Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
Clark County Public Works
Clark County Planning
City of Vancouver, Public Works
City of Vancouver, Community Development
City of Battle Ground/Town of Yacolt
City of Camas
City of Washougal/Port of Camas - Washougal
City of Ridgefield/City of La Center/Port of Ridgefield
C-TRAN
Washington State Department of Transportation
Port of Vancouver
Oregon Department of Transportation
Metro
Human Services Transportation

Skamania and Klickitat County Committees

Consistent with the 1990 State Growth Management Act, Transportation Policy Committees for Skamania and Klickitat Counties provide policy and technical advice for the two rural counties to the RTC Board.

Skamania County Transportation Policy Committee

The Skamania County Transportation Policy Committee was established in 1990 to oversee and coordinate transportation planning activities in the Regional Transportation Planning Organization Skamania region. Skamania County Transportation Policy Committee representation is summarized in Table 4 below.

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Table 4: Skamania County Transportation Policy Committee: Representation

Skamania County Transportation Policy Committee: Representation	
Skamania County	
City of Stevenson	
City of North Bonneville	
Port of Skamania County	
WSDOT, SW Region	
Senior Services – transit provider	Non-Voting Member

Klickitat County Transportation Policy Committee

The Klickitat County Transportation Policy Committee was established in 1990 to oversee and coordinate transportation planning activities in the Regional Transportation Planning Organization Klickitat region. Klickitat County Transportation Policy Committee representation is summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Klickitat County Transportation Policy Committee: Representation

Klickitat County Transportation Policy Committee: Representation	
Klickitat County	
City of White Salmon	
City of Bingen	
City of Goldendale	
Port of Klickitat	
WSDOT, SW Region	
Mt. Adams Transportation – transit provider	Non-Voting Member

Bi-state coordination

Both RTC, the MPO for the Clark County, Washington portion of the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region, and Metro, MPO for the Oregon portion of the Portland-Vancouver region, recognize that bi state travel is significant within the region. To address bi-state regional transportation system needs, RTC representatives participate on Metro's Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) and Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) committees. Metro is represented on RTC's Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) and RTC Board of Directors. Currently, several locations on the I-5 and I-205 north corridors are at or near capacity during peak hours resulting in frequent traffic delays. The need to resolve increasing traffic congestion levels and to identify long-term solutions continues to be a priority issue. Also of bi-state significance is continued coordination on air quality issues.

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Bi-State Coordination Committee

The Bi-State Transportation Committee was established in 1999 to ensure that bi-state transportation issues are addressed. The Committee was reconstituted in 2004 to expand its scope to include both transportation and land use according to the Bi-State Coordination Charter. The Committee is now known as the Bi-State Coordination Committee. The Committee's discussions and recommendations continue to be advisory to the RTC, the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), and Metro on issues of bi-state transportation significance. On issues of bi-state land use and economic significance, the Committee advises the appropriate local and regional governments.

Other Committees and Transportation Stakeholders

RTC may form ad hoc Committees to help with specific transportation planning tasks such as corridor studies and to assist in development of such plans as the Human Services Transportation Plan. The formation of these ad hoc Committees and their meeting dates and times will be posted on to RTC's website and interested stakeholders will be notified.

RTC may also attend, participate in, and seek advice from other transportation planning committees and groups such as the Clark Communities Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, the C-TRAN Citizens Advisory Committee, the Vancouver Freight Alliance and local transportation project committees to provide ideas on ways to address regional challenges, to research and resolve technical issues, and to review and recommend major transportation projects for funding.

RTC's committee meetings are open to the public and include opportunities for citizen comment.
Information about meetings and agendas are available at rtc.wa.gov or from RTC at 360-397-6067 or info@rtc.wa.gov

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III. RTC's TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND PROGRAMS

The third section of the Public Participation Plan describes RTC's regional transportation planning programs and reports the public may be interested in.

Work Plan, Budget and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Each year, RTC drafts a calendar year Work Plan and Budget to maintain the regional transportation planning process led by the RTC Board. The draft Work Plan and Budget is usually reviewed at the November RTC Board meeting and is proposed for adoption at the December RTC Board meeting. The Work Plan outlines a course for RTC's regional transportation planning, policy setting, and project programming activities.

Related to the Work Plan and Budget, the Unified Planning Work Program is a federally-required document that describes coordinated metropolitan transportation planning activities anticipated for the region for the next one or two year period. For UPWP purposes, the fiscal year begins July 1. The UPWP is expected to reflect federal, state, and local transportation planning emphasis areas. RTC, as Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region, is granted Federal Highway Administration PL (planning) dollars and Federal Transit Administration planning funds to carry out the required metropolitan transportation planning process. The UPWP outlines how these federal dollars, as well as state and local funds, will be used by RTC and planning partners. UPWP requirements are specified in 23CFR450.308 and 23CRF420.111.

The UPWP must be developed by RTC in cooperation with the state Department of Transportation and transit operators and bi-state transportation planning partners. Members of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee help RTC to develop a draft UPWP. Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration representatives usually review the draft UPWP in February, the RTC Board reviews the draft in April or May and Board adoption is proposed for the following month. During the course of the fiscal year, the work program is kept current through UPWP amendments.

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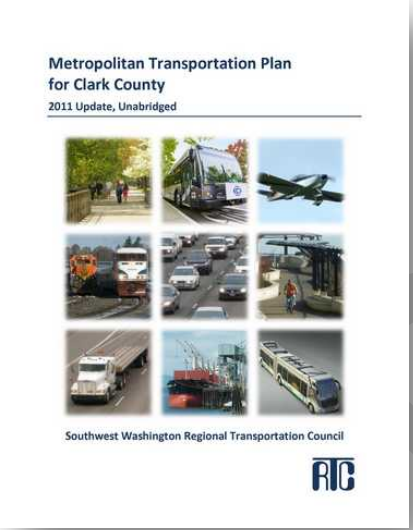
RTC and Transportation Project Funding

Within the Metropolitan Planning Organization region, or Clark County, RTC selects projects to receive certain types of funding from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. By federal law, these funds must be regionally selected and approved by RTC. The criteria used to select projects are based on regional transportation, economic and land use policies adopted by the region's elected leadership. RTC regularly reviews and updates the project selection criteria to fit with the transportation policy framework. All public agencies, jurisdictions and tribes are eligible to apply for funding. Projects selected to receive RTC funds undergo a public comment and review period prior to RTC Board approval as part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process (see below).

Regional Transportation Plans

RTC covers a three-county region each county having a long-range, twenty year, Regional Transportation Plan.



Regional Transportation Plan for Clark County

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), also known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, is the long-range, twenty-year, plan for the Clark County region's transportation system. The Plan is required by the federal government as a condition for receipt of federal transportation funding to the Clark County region. The RTP must be updated at least every four years, must include multiple modes of travel, be fiscally constrained and must be consistent with federal, state and local plans and policies. The Plan provides a vision for an efficient future transportation system and a guide for sound transportation investments to accommodate growing travel demand. For additional information see RTC's website at http://www.rtc.wa.gov/programs/mtp/

Regional Transportation Plans; Skamania and Klickitat Counties

In RTC's two rural counties, the Regional Transportation Plan for Klickitat County and the Regional Transportation Plan for Skamania County are the two principal transportation planning documents. The Regional Transportation Plans have a long-range, twenty-year, horizon. The Plans are developed through a coordinated and cooperative process between local jurisdictions, RTC and Washington State Department of Transportation in order to develop regional transportation solutions.

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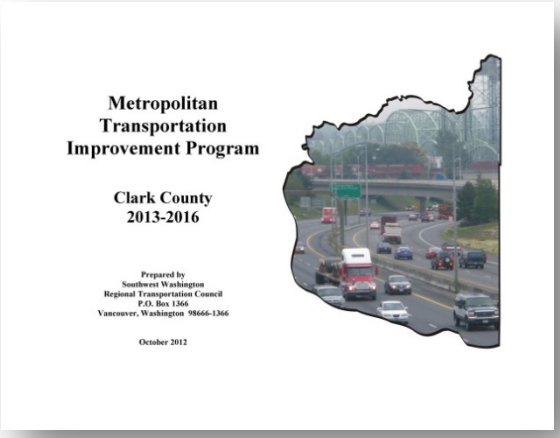
Transportation Improvement Program



The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a four-year program of regionally significant projects. Projects programmed in the TIP are drawn either directly from specific project recommendations made in the Regional Transportation Plan or are developed from a more general series of recommendations (e.g. preservation, maintenance, safety, etc.). The TIP represents an agency's intent to implement a specific project and the anticipated flow of funds for that project. Regionally selected transportation projects are incorporated into the TIP along with other regionally significant projects selected for funding at the state of federal level. The TIP is usually updated annually by RTC, undergoes a public review and comment period prior to RTC Board adoption.

The metropolitan TIP for Clark County is required under both federal and state legislation. Transportation projects programmed in the TIP must be consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan. Projects must also meet clean air standards and environmental justice requirements. The TIP is developed by RTC through a cooperative and coordinated process involving local jurisdictions, WSDOT, and C-TRAN. RTC selects and prioritizes projects programmed in the TIP.

RTC selects and prioritizes projects programmed in the TIP. The TIP development process has three steps: 1) project screening for eligibility, 2) project evaluation and ranking according to RTC Board adopted criteria, and 3) project selection and programming. Minor amendments to the TIP can be made on a monthly basis.

For more information see RTC's website at http://www.rtc.wa.gov/programs/tip/

RTP and TIP; Air Quality Conformity Determination

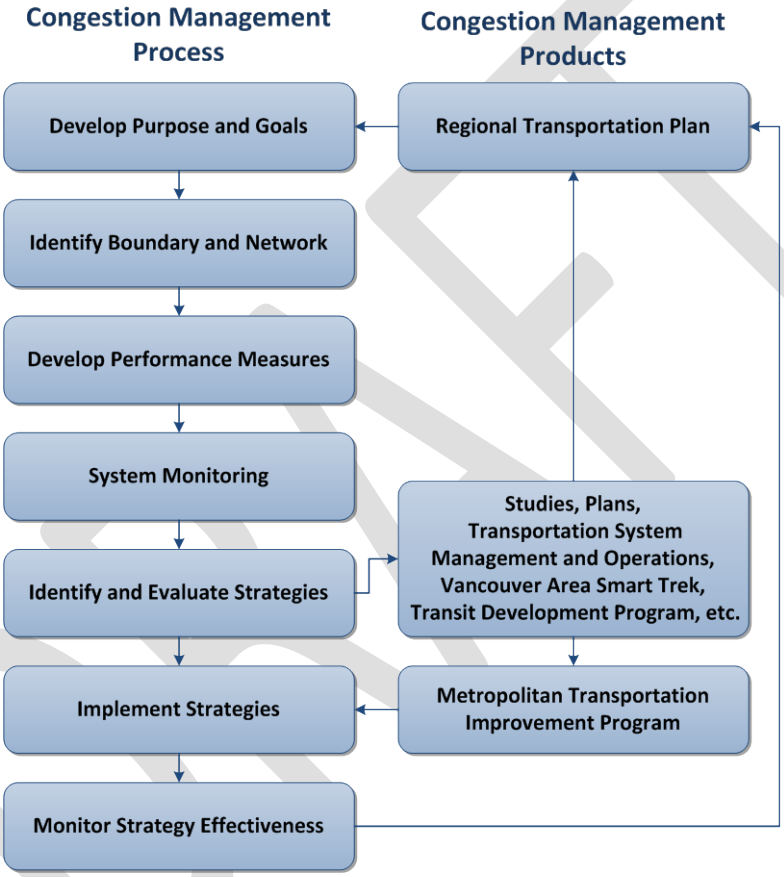
For both the RTP and TIP for Clark County, an air quality determination must be made to assure that new projects, programs and plans do not impede the region from meeting and maintaining air quality standards.

Congestion Management Process

RTC is required to have a Congestion Management Process (CMP) for the Clark County region to meet federal requirements in 23 CFR 450.320(c)[1]. A CMP is a systematic process for managing congestion. The CMP provides information on

[1] *http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&rgn=div5&view=text&node=23:1.0.1.5.11&idno=23*

multimodal transportation system performance and on alternative strategies to alleviate congestion and enhance the mobility of persons and goods. The Congestion Management Process focuses on transportation performance within corridors through monitoring of vehicular travel, auto occupancy, transit, travel demand management strategies, system management strategies, and traffic operations in an effort to identify solutions to address congestion. Both existing and future traffic conditions are addressed. The CMP informs both the RTP and TIP. RTC reports on the CMP annually.



More information is available on RTC's website: http://www.rtc.wa.gov/data/cmp/

Human Services Transportation Plan

Special Needs Transportation

Initially a requirement of the federal transportation act, SAFETEA-LU passed in 2005, regular update of a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) continues to be a federal requirement. The intent of the Human Services Transportation Plan is to identify transportation needs and solutions and thereby

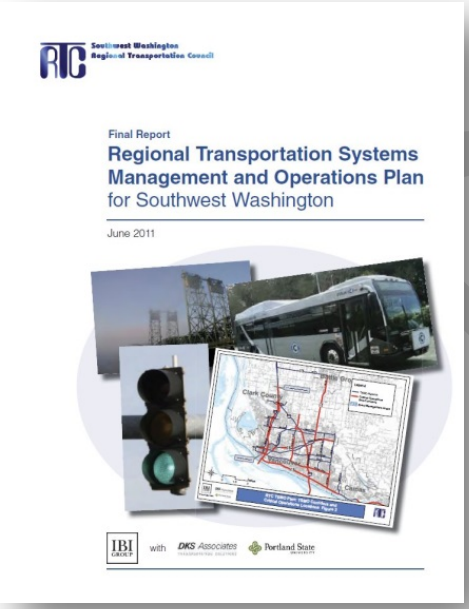
improve transportation services for people with disabilities, seniors, and individuals with lower incomes as well as those in rural locations who cannot provide transportation for themselves. An update to the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) is required by federal law at least every four years.

The Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) for Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties is used as the basis for selecting special needs transportation projects to compete for Washington State's Consolidated Public Transportation Grant Program. Development of the Human Services Transportation Plan brings together service providers, agencies that distribute funds, riders, and the community at-large to improve special needs transportation throughout the region.

Additional information is available on RTC's website at: http://www.rtc.wa.gov/reports/index.htm#HSTP.

Vancouver Area Smart Trek; Transportation Management and Operations

The Vancouver Area Smart Trek (VAST) program has been managed by RTC since 2001 and is one of RTC's ongoing programs. VAST program activities include regional collaboration on transportation system management and operations (TSMO) and on intelligent transportation systems (ITS).



The focus of RTC's Transportation Systems Management and Operations program is on low-cost, quickly implemented transportation operational projects that aim to optimize the existing transportation network. TSMO strategies aim to better utilize existing transportation facilities without expanding roadway capacity. The operational projects cover a wide range of transportation solutions such as traveler information, freeway management, arterial management, coordinated incident management, and transit signal priority. The availability of traveler information supports improved travel reliability, travel choices, and makes for informed commuters.

The Intelligent Transportation System element of the VAST program provides coordination and management for the deployment of ITS projects, infrastructure, and equipment to ensure integration and interoperability of operational projects. ITS technology is automating the collection of data. In addition, the region has initiated a transportation data archive system called PORTAL to enhance data availability, ease its retrieval, and assist with the analysis of transportation data to support performance monitoring.

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Transportation Data and Analysis (household travel survey, travel forecast modeling)

RTC develops, maintains and manages a regional transportation database and regional travel forecast model to support the regional transportation planning program.

Transportation Data

RTC provides coordinated transportation data collection, compilation and analysis within the region. The database is used to assess transportation system performance, evaluate level of service standards and to calibrate the regional travel forecasting model and to support transportation and engineering work of RTC"s transportation partners. Traffic count data is available on RTC's website. For more information see http://www.rtc.wa.gov/data/traffic/arterials.asp

Household Travel Survey

RTC conducts household travel surveys periodically to collect and document statistically valid demographic, travel and activity behavior characteristics of Clark County households. The Clark County Household Travel Survey collects information about where people go, how people get there, and what they do there. The data is used to inform transportation planning and policy analysis and forms the foundation for updating and calibrating the regional travel model.

Travel Forecast Modeling

RTC develops and maintains a regional travel forecast model. The forecast model improves our ability to identify future transportation needs and guides investment of public funds for transportation solutions to help maintain Clark County's quality of life.

Other

Other RTC transportation planning activities include assessment of the safety of the transportation system, planning for freight transportation and working with local planning partners on comprehensive land use planning and planning for pedestrian and bicycle transportation modes. RTC also works with planning partners on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs which focus on reducing travel demand, particularly at peak commute hours through techniques such as Commute Trip Reduction (CTR). TDM strategies can make more efficient use of the current roadway system and can reduce vehicle trips.

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Make a Public Comment on RTC's Transportation Plans and Programs: Contact RTC at:

If you have comments on RTC's Plans and Programs, contact RTC:

E-mail:
info@rtc.wa.gov

Telephone:
360-397-6067

Fax:
360-397-6132

Physical address:
RTC
Public Service Center
1300 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Vancouver, WA 98660

Postal address:
RTC
P.O. Box 1366
Vancouver, WA 98666

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IV. PARTICIPATION, INVOLVEMENT, CONSULTATION AND COMMENT PROCEDURES

Section IV of the Public Participation Plan describes key participation elements including access to the public participation process, consultation and public comment procedures.

Key Public Participation Elements

Procedures

RTC will utilize a broad range of public information and participation opportunities in planning for regional transportation needs and programming of regional transportation projects (see menu in Section V). RTC also recognizes the importance of public participation at the local level and will acknowledge and consider public input resulting from transportation planning and project programming at the local jurisdictional level as well as through public participation conducted by transportation agencies such as the public transit provider, C-TRAN, and Washington State Department of Transportation. RTC's public participation procedures are described below.

Public Meetings (forum for decision-making)

Public meetings are the forum for RTC's decision-making with the RTC Board of Directors being the body that adopts regional transportation plans and programs.

How to Access RTC Meetings and Related Information

Table 6 summarizes how RTC's materials and meeting notices can be accessed.

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Table 6: How to Access RTC's Materials and Notices

How to Access RTC's Materials and Notices

Materials	What is Available Online?	When is it Posted Online?
Meeting agendas and packets	• RTC Board • Advisory committees, see rtc.wa.gov	One week prior to the meeting
Meeting Information	• Board and advisory committee meeting dates and times	Calendar posted on rtc.wa.gov beginning each year. Meeting information pages updated monthly. Online calendar is posted and updated continuously throughout year, along with Board web pages
Web and audio stream	• RTC Board meetings	Listen or watch RTC Board meetings live on CVTV or in searchable archive, which becomes available within 24 hours of event
News Releases	• News articles/media pieces published or broadcast	All news releases are available on RTC's website at rtc.wa.gov. Timing of the news release varies depending on the news item or event being publicized.

No web access? RTC can help you

All RTC meeting schedules, meeting agendas and packets are available to anyone by calling (360) 397-6067. Printing and mailing fees may apply.

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Access for All

Consistent with Federal requirements associated with the transportation planning process, RTC is committed to nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities. RTC strives to ensure fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all of the region's residents, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability and income. Efforts will be made to seek out and consider the needs and interests of traditionally underserved populations. Special accommodations can be arranged in advance of any RTC meeting or event by notifying RTC at (360) 397-6067 or info@rtc.wa.gov.

Environmental Justice and Title VI

RTC maintains a Title VI Plan to ensure that no person in the region shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any

program or activity for which RTC receives federal financial assistance. RTC's Title VI Plan is updated approximately every four years. RTC also submits annual reports on its Title VI program to the Washington State Department of Transportation to ensure all federal regulations are being met.

RTC seeks out and considers the needs of people traditionally underserved by transportation systems (e.g., low-income and minority households). To identify these populations, RTC publishes an Environmental Justice (EJ) Demographic Profile using Census and American Community Survey data to identify the number and locations of minority, low-income, elderly and limited English proficient populations in the region. RTC updates this profile approximately every three years. RTC uses this data as the basis for providing an Environmental Justice analysis of the impacts of key decisions on traditionally underserved populations as part of the planning process. This report contains data that allows for the continuing development and updating of information to track the performance of the regional transportation system and implemented strategies.

Maps taken from the Demographic Profile are provided on the next two pages. Figures 4 and 5 show the location of Clark County minority populations in 2010 and Clark County low-income populations, 2006-2010.

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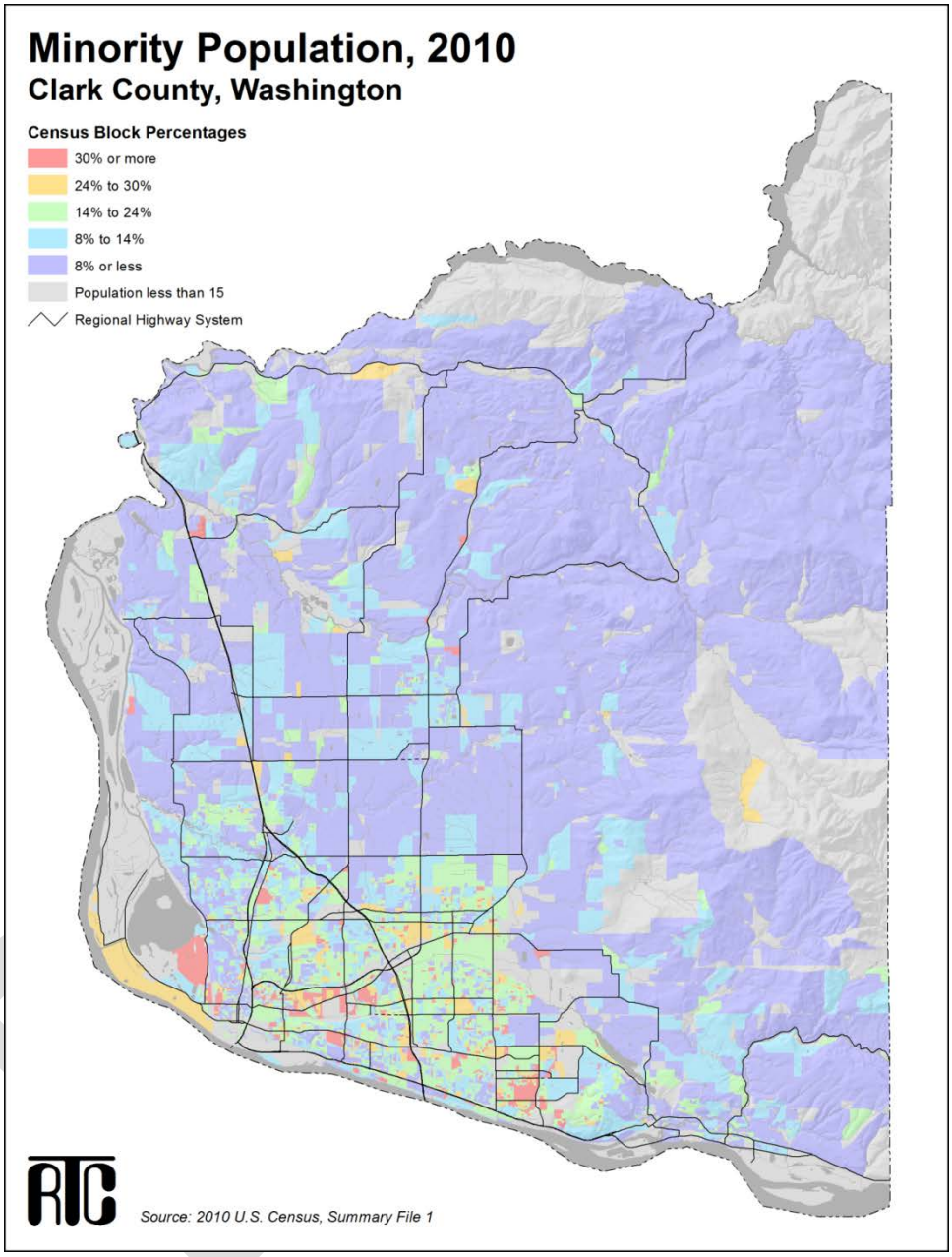
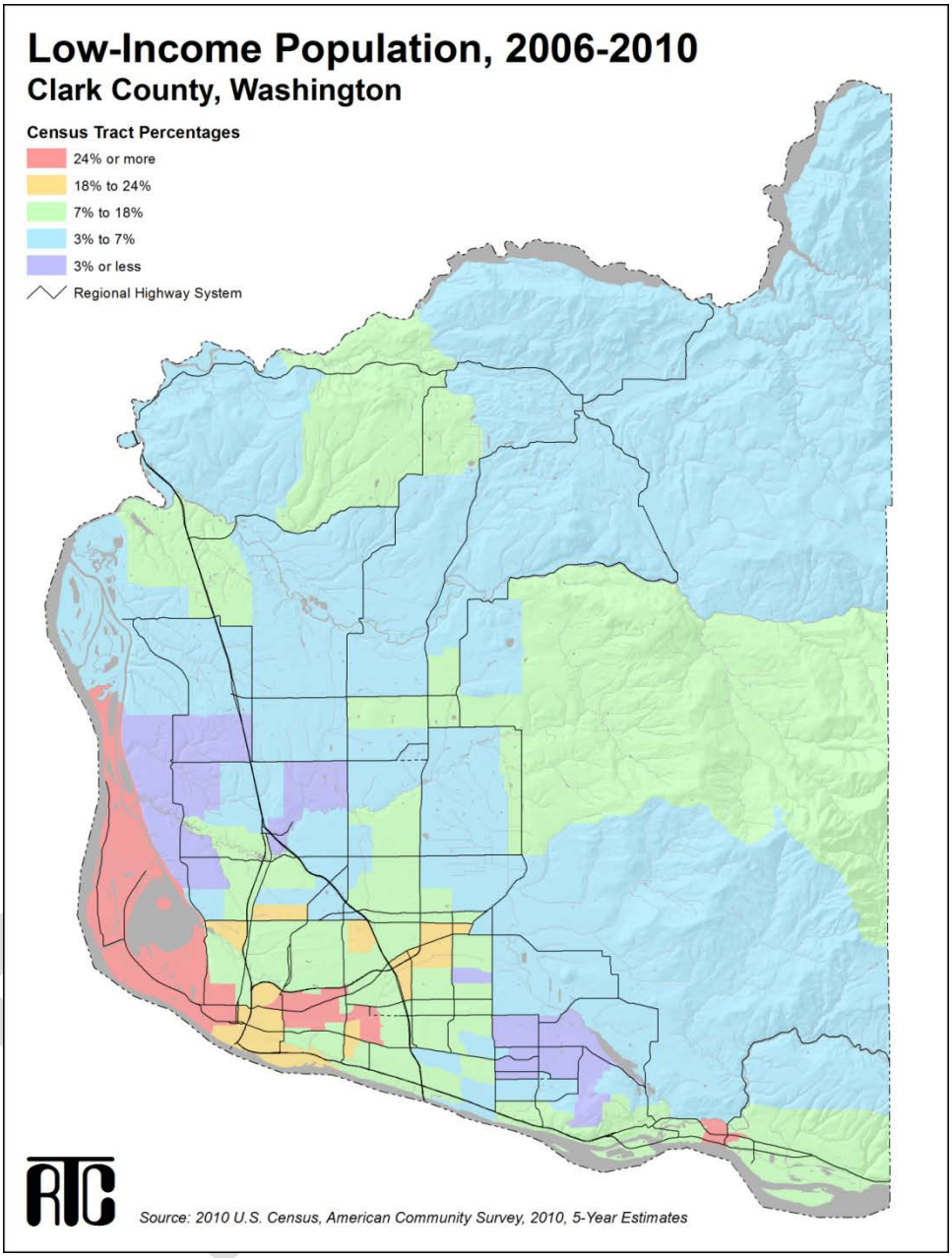
Figure 4: Minority Population 2010, Clark County, Washington



From, Environmental Justice Demographic Profile- Clark County (RTC, October 2012)

Figure 5, Low Income Population 2006-2010, Clark County, Washington



From, Environmental Justice Demographic Profile- Clark County (RTC, October 2012)

Limited English Proficiency and Alternative Formats

Those requiring alternative formats and language translation should contact RTC to request these services. For those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), translation of RTC's online information and reports is currently available through online translation services such as Google Translate, a free online language translation service that instantly translates text and web pages. RTC's new website to be launched in early 2014 will offer direct links to online translation services. In addition, RTC's reception staff has a poster at the reception area offering interpreter services. Visitors with limited English proficiency to the Public Service Center where RTC's office is located are able to point to the language assistance needed. The receptionist will identify the language needed and can seek translation help.

Consultation

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, known as MAP-21, continued the previous federal transportation act's (SAFETEA-LU's) commitment to public participation. Metropolitan transportation agencies like RTC are directed to consult with officials responsible for other planning activities affected by transportation in the area. The goal of the consultation is to ensure a coordinated and open exchange of information, ideas and concerns between RTC and stakeholders about the planning process, potential impacts and appropriate mitigation.

The most effective time to involve the public, local governments, Tribes, and agencies in the planning and programming process is as early as possible.

RTC considers the agency consultation process as a continuum starting with development of the regional transportation plan. The development of the regional transportation plan, with its long–range time frame, is the earliest opportunity for consultation and is a key decision point for the interagency consultation process. It is at the long-range planning stage when policy direction is formulated, funding priorities and major projects' planning level concepts are introduced, prioritized and considered for implementation. Because the RTP governs the selection and programming of projects in the TIP, the RTP is the key decision point for policy decisions regarding project and program priorities that address mobility, congestion, air quality, and other planning factors.

The Transportation Improvement Program is a short-term programming document detailing the funding for those projects and investments first identified as needed in an adopted Regional Transportation Plan.

RTC uses the following approaches to coordinate and consult with affected agencies in the development of the RTP and the TIP. Throughout the process, consultation is based on the agency's needs and interests. At a minimum, all agencies will be

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provided an opportunity to comment on the RTP and TIP updates. RTC uses Washington's State Environmental Policy Act as a guide to initiating public involvement and agency consultation and will issue a scoping notice at the beginning of the planning process in order to begin the interagency consultation process.

Tribal Government Consultation

The RTC region is home to tribal governments including the Yakama Nation and the Cowlitz. All tribes within the region are encouraged and welcomed to participate in RTC's transportation planning processes. RTC encourages full involvement of tribes in all of its activities, including the development of the Regional Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program and the Human Services Transportation Plan. RTC notifies tribes of opportunities to participate through a number of methods, including direct outreach to tribal leaders and staff at tribal offices, invitation letters, electronic communication, and agenda packets. RTC also has opportunity to work with the statewide Tribal Transportation Planning Organization (TTPO), which meets quarterly and is a good statewide planning forum to present and get feedback from tribes. RTC works to understand the diverse needs of each tribe in all of its work and adapts communication accordingly.

Other Consultation/Partnerships

Air Quality Conformity Determination

RTC works closely with the region's air quality consultation partner agencies: the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, the Washington State Departments of Transportation and Ecology, and Southwest Clean Air Agency.

RTC consults with the partner agencies to review the methodology and assumptions to be used prior to each major transportation planning activity, especially RTP development.

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Public Comment (how to offer comments)

If you have comments on RTC's Plans and Programs, contact RTC:

E-mail:
info@rtc.wa.gov

Telephone:
360-397-6067

Fax:
360-397-6132

Physical address:
RTC
Public Service Center
1300 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Vancouver, WA 98660

Postal address:
RTC
P.O. Box 1366
Vancouver, WA 98666

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Public Comment and Review Periods

Public comment is always encouraged on any topic. When the agency is seeking public comment on a particular action, RTC may offer a specific public comment and review period and use the variety of notification methods discussed in this plan to let the public know how to comment. Federal and SEPA requirements are also taken into consideration when determining the length and number of public comment and review periods. The Transportation Improvement Program and Regional Transportation Plan public comment periods will be a minimum of 30 days. The Public Participation Plan public comment period will be a minimum of 45 days.

How Public Comments Are Addressed

RTC welcomes and responds to public comments. Public comments are reviewed and analyzed by staff, and are used as input for potential revisions to operations, plans, and programs.

Public Input

When significant written and oral comments on drafts of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are received from the public, a summary, analysis and report on the comments will be made a part of the final Plan and TIP. Within the

MPO region whenever air quality conformity analysis is required, significant comments resulting from the interagency consultation process required under the United States Environmental Protection Agency's air quality conformity regulations will also be included in the final Plan and TIP.

If the final transportation Plan or TIP differs significantly from the one made available for public comment and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised Plan or TIP will be made available.

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V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION METHODS and TECHNIQUES

The methods and public participation techniques used by RTC will be tailored to best suit each particular planning effort as it gets underway. At the outset of each planning process, such as Regional Transportation Plan development, corridor studies and regional transportation studies, RTC will review the menu of participation methods and techniques and use the best mix of public participation methods. The following section documents a menu of public outreach methods, tools and techniques that RTC may use to gain public participation and involvement in development of RTC's plans, programs and activities.

Menu of Public Participation Tools, Methods and Techniques

The following is a range of public participation techniques and strategies that RTC may use to support and enhance public participation. These techniques and strategies are what the public can typically expect RTC to use in the regional transportation planning and decision-making process though their use will be customized for each individual plan or program

RTC's Website — rtc.wa.gov

Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has maintained a web site since 1996. The web site has information about RTC and its activities; regional programs, planning studies, data resources, final reports, and upcoming meetings. The website includes a meeting calendar and electronic copies of agendas, public comment periods, comments received, data products, publications, and other relevant information. The web site also provides an opportunity for the public to provide input and formal comments on an ongoing basis through e-mail links. The website offers links to archives of CVTV broadcasts of RTC Board meetings. RTC's web site address is: http://www.rtc.wa.gov

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Public notification (agendas etc.)

The public is notified of RTC meetings and events primarily through RTC's website and e-mail communication. RTC Board packets of informational materials is also made available on RTC's website.

Meetings held at Convenient Times, Locations and Accessibility

RTC commits to hold meetings at convenient times, and at locations that are accessible to persons with disabilities and, wherever possible, to people who rely on public transit.

RTC Board meetings are typically held at 4 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month in the Public Service Center at 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver WA. The public can confirm the meeting dates, times and location on RTC's online calendar.

View Meetings Online

RTC Board meetings are recorded by CVTV. Meetings are broadcast live on the day of the meeting and are archived for future playback with links provided from the RTC website.

Public Meetings/Open Houses

Public meetings and open houses provide a setting for the public to access information on RTC's planning activities. Information is made available either through presentations by technical staff (public meeting) or through display exhibits (open house).

Workshops, and Forums

Information workshops may be held on topics associated with the regional transportation planning process. Such workshops are designed to educate participants on specific topics such as regional transportation modeling, intelligent transportation systems, etc. Information workshops are conducted on an as-needed basis.

Citizen Advisory Committees

Citizen Advisory Committees are advisory committees to RTC that may be established to provide broad regional community input during certain planning processes such as corridor studies. Citizen Advisory Committees are usually comprised of individuals representing a cross-section of the region's populations including those with environmental, business, civic organization, neighborhood and other interests.

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E-Mail Distribution Lists and Databases

RTC maintains and continuously updates its mailing lists and databases so RTC can initiate contact with interested parties, targeting those traditionally underserved and/or gaps in existing databases. RTC's mailing lists include tribes, community groups, Title VI relevant populations, businesses, resource agencies, membership, and local governments.

To join RTC's mailing list, contact reception at 360-397-6067 or online at info@rtc.wa.gov

Stakeholder Outreach

A stakeholder is defined as any person or group that is affected by a transportation plan, program, or project, including those who may not be aware they are affected. Stakeholders include the general public; environmental, health, neighborhood, citizen, and civic organizations; traditionally underserved populations such as people with disabilities, low-income, and racial and ethnic minorities, and affected public agencies. Stakeholders are identified and are included in public outreach activities.

Social Media

CVTV broadcasts of the monthly RTC Board meetings are provided on YouTube to reach a broader audience.

Media Releases

Key media shall be provided with periodic updates of RTC activities and projects. Media releases shall be disseminated to announce public review and comment periods for RTC's plans, programs, and other activities. RTC maintains a list of media outlets such as newspapers, television, and radio stations in the region.

Presentations and Speakers Bureau

Speakers' Bureaus shall consist of RTC staff and citizen volunteers who can speak to

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civic groups, professional organizations, neighborhood associations, and other groups about the regional transportation planning process and activities.

RTC can provide presentations on metropolitan transportation planning activities. One of the most effective outreach tools is to present at meetings where people routinely gather, such as community groups, chambers of commerce, councils, or classes. When RTC is engaged in a major planning activity, such as development of the Regional Transportation Plan, staff actively seeks out interested groups to present to. To schedule a speaker e-mail info@rtc.wa.gov or call 360-397-6067.

Local Libraries

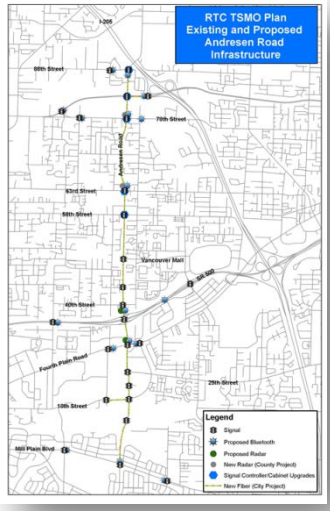
RTC distributes copies of publications to libraries in the region. Draft and final publications are sent to libraries in the Fort Vancouver Library system and to Camas Public Library. Libraries also offer computer access to RTC's website with online information and publications.

Visualization Techniques

Wherever possible, RTC will use visualization techniques, maps and graphics, to help explain transportation plans and programs.

Newsletters

Project newsletters to keep the public apprised of specific projects are published on an as needed basis. Newsletters may include information about a project written in language understood by the general public. Newsletters are distributed to identified stakeholders and interested parties.



Other Technologies

RTC is committed to researching and reviewing new technologies and creative techniques that could be used, as appropriate, to increase transparency, access, and understanding of regional planning efforts. For example, RTC added webstreaming and broadcast of monthly RTC Board meetings on CVTV in 2013. RTC may establish a larger social media presence in the future.

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Surveys

Surveys are used on an as-needed basis as a tool to gather information on peoples' perceptions, preferences, and practices. Surveys can range from being informal and inexpensive to scientific and more costly. The information being sought and the use of that information in the regional transportation planning process will vary.

Planning Partners: Coordinated Public Outreach Activities/Events

RTC staff will coordinate with member jurisdictions and agencies to help outreach to a larger number of people. Combining resources to publicize activities and events will help RTC to reach a broader audience and will help to promote best practices both for public outreach and for transportation planning and project implementation. Examples of this coordination include combined presentations with other local, regional and state transportation jurisdictions and agencies at

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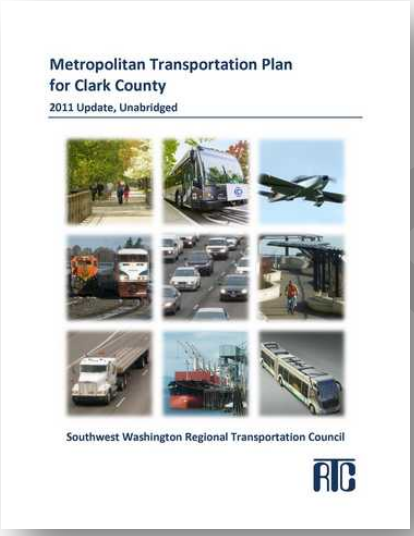
VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN RTC's METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN and TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: A GUIDE TO PROCEDURES

There are two core duties performed by RTC as part of the federal metropolitan transportation planning process that are specially called out in federal law as needing early and continuing opportunities for public participation. These two core duties are development of a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Clark County and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Clark County.



Because the Regional Transportation Plan, also known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, includes a comprehensive, long-term vision for the future transportation system, the RTP's development process provides the earliest and the best opportunity for interested persons and public agencies to influence RTC's transportation policies and investment priorities. It is at this earlier RTP stage where investment priorities and major planning–level project design concepts are established, and broad, regional impacts of transportation on the environment are addressed.

Regional Transportation Plan for Clark County

As described in Section III of the Public Participation Plan the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), also known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, is the long-range, twenty-year, plan for the Clark County region's transportation system to guide the area's transportation development in the next twenty years. The RTP is the comprehensive blueprint for transportation investment (transit, highway, local roads, bicycle, and pedestrian projects), and establishes the financial foundation for how the region invests in its surface transportation system. Crucial decisions about whether or not to support or fund a transportation program or project in the region first occur in the development of the long-range transportation plan

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Federal requirements pertaining to the Regional Transportation Plan addressed in CFR 450.322 also include provisions addressing public outreach [450.322(f)(7) and 450.322 (g)] as follows:

- A discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities. The discussion shall be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and Tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies.

- Consult, as appropriate, with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the MTP. The consultation shall involve, as appropriate (1) comparison of MTPs with State conservation plans or maps, if available, or (2) comparison of MTPs with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

The RTP is required to be updated at least every four years to reflect new planning priorities and changing projections of growth and travel demand. Changes to the RTP may be required and can be made through Plan amendments.

MTP updates include extensive public consultation and participation involving area residents, public agency officials, and stakeholder groups over many months. As appropriate, RTC requests that local agencies involve the public in their Comprehensive Planning and Capital Facilities Planning processes for nominating projects for inclusion in the RTP. Local agencies document public comments that helped inform their recommendations.

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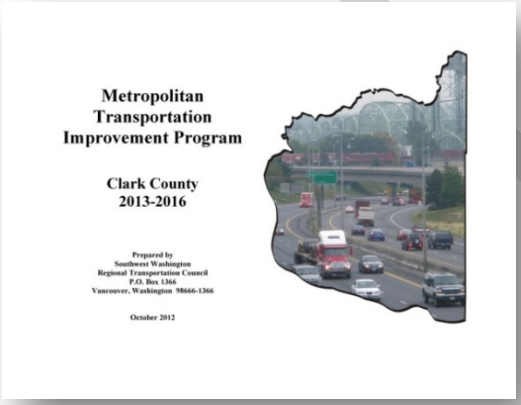

Transportation Improvement Program

As described in Section III of the Public Participation Plan the Transportation Improvement Program for Clark County (TIP) is a four-year priority list of transportation projects within Clark County. The TIP translates recommendations from the long-range RTP into a short–term program of improvements. The TIP defines project budgets, schedules and phasing for those programs and projects that are already part of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Federal requirements pertaining to the Transportation Improvement Program are addressed in CFR 450.324(b):

- All interested parties shall have a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP as required by 450.316(a). In addition, in nonattainment TMAs, an opportunity for at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process; the circumstances of the public meeting should be addressed through the participation plan described in 450.316(a).

The TIP is required to be updated every two years but it can be done more often if needed. RTC routinely adopts a TIP annually.

Occasionally changes need to be made to the TIP following its adoption. These changes will be handled as Updates, Administrative Modifications, and Amendments. Updates do not substantially change a project and can be handled administratively by RTC Staff. Administrative Modifications are minor changes that require approval from the RTC Transportation Director. Amendments are substantial changes to projects that require action from the RTC Board of Directors. TIP administrative modifications and amendments are available for public review, input and comment.

RTC Document Review and Advertising Schedule for Clark County MPO Region

Table 7 (overleaf) outlines the Document Review and Advertising Schedule for RTC's core documents; the Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program for Clark County. These documents that RTC develops are required by the Federal government or the state to go through a public involvement process and there is an established timeline involved in reviewing, adopting and updating them.

Table 7: RTC Document Review and Advertising Schedule for Clark County MPO Region

Document	Process
Regional Transportation Plan for Clark County *(also known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan)*	Reviewed annually and updated at a minimum every four years • RTC Board and Regional Transportation Advisory Committee review • Interagency Coordination, Consultation and Collaboration review • Draft RTP document posted on RTC's website • News release published notifying public of comment and review period before RTP adoption; includes public meeting notice • Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption • Legal notice published including notice of public meeting • Notice of public comment period sent to extensive e-mail distribution list • Public meeting hosted during 30-day comment period to solicit input • Draft document posted for review and comment on RTC web site • Provide draft to Federal, State and member agencies for review and comment • Document approved or accepted by RTC Board • Distribute final adopted copies to member, Federal and State agencies • Post adopted document on the RTC website
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Clark County	Updated at a minimum every two years but routinely RTC updates annually. • Reviewed by RTC Board and Regional Transportation Advisory Committee • Minimum 30-day comment period prior to adoption of new TIP • Draft TIP posted on RTC's website • News release published notifying public of comment and review period before TIP adoption; includes public meeting notice • Notice of public comment period sent to extensive email distribution list • Public meeting hosted during 30-day comment period to solicit input on new TIP • Provide new TIP to Federal, State and member agencies for review • Document approved or accepted by RTC Board • Distribute final adopted copies to partner, Federal and State agencies • Post adopted document on the RTC website
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments	• Reviewed by Regional Transportation Advisory Committee • Notice of proposed TIP amendment sent to RTC Board email distribution list • Notice of amendment posted for review and comment on RTC web site as part of RTC Board meeting agenda • Amendment approved or accepted by RTC Board • Amendments posted on RTC website
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Evaluation Criteria	• Updated at a minimum every two years • Reviewed by Regional Transportation Advisory Committee and RTC Board (usually in May/June of each year) • Approved by RTC Board • Updated criteria posted on the RTC website and sent to member agencies
Annual Listing of Federal Obligations	• Regional Transportation Advisory Committee and RTC Board review no later than March 30 each year • Posted on RTC website no later than March 30 each year

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VII. EVALUATION AND UPDATE OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

Section VII of the Public Participation Plan documents how the PPP will be periodically evaluated to ensure the Plan is meeting its purpose and goals and describes the process to update the Plan.

Public Participation evaluation of effectiveness - matrix

RTC's Public Participation Plan is not a static document, but an ongoing strategy that is periodically reviewed for effectiveness and updated based on experiences and the changing circumstances of RTC, the region, evolving technology and changing public preferences regarding outreach techniques. In accordance with 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x) of the Code of Federal Regulations, this Public Participation Plan will periodically be reviewed for effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in it to ensure a full and open participation process. After Public Participation Plan evaluation, RTC may choose to update the Plan. The PPP may also be subject to minor corrections.

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As part of every public involvement period and public outreach effort for studies, plans, documents and other activities, RTC uses a variety of methods to reach the public, solicit comment and evaluate how effective each method was. The following matrix (Table 8) shows the type of evaluation the public can reasonably expect RTC to conduct on an annual basis in evaluating the effectiveness of the Public Participation Process:

Table 8: RTC's Public Participation Plan, Evaluation Matrix

Involvement Tool	What, How and When Monitored	Evaluation
Website	• Number of site visits tracked • Website analytics • Search terms • Comments from users • Website updated at least monthly and usually with greater frequency	Used to better organize website information, improve the website's interactivity, post information that people are searching for and determine what is prompting people to visit rtc.wa.gov (such as committee meeting agendas, news releases, etc.)
Board / Committee & Public Meetings	• Attendance • Comments made at and after meetings • Results of discussion used to improve future meetings.	This information shows the effectiveness of meeting notice techniques, the level of interest in topics discussed at meetings and provides essential direction to plans and programs.
Television Broadcast and Webstreaming of RTC Board Meetings	• Number of people accessing the webstream • Comments made by viewers/listeners.	This information is used to demonstrate the value of the broadcast and streaming service.
News and Media Releases	• Number of news articles/media pieces published • Number of people accessing the news release on website • Web usage on day after media coverage • News coverage monitored by staff	This information is used to improve news releases to enhance media relations and communications and to determine the level of interest in agency activities. The connection between sending news releases and web traffic on rtc.wa.gov can also be tracked.
Public Comment Periods	• Number of comments received • Substance of comments received • Summary of comments provided at the end of the comment period	This information is essential to developing quality plans and programs. It is also indicative of whether the overall public participation plan and tools were effective.
Social media	• Number of comments or replies • Number of visitors to sites • RTC uses YouTube to allow for access to the broadcast of RTC Board meetings. • RTC will evaluate whether further use of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, should be implemented. Number of 'likes' or 'followers'	Information would demonstrate the value of using social media sites and would help to determine what information the public responds to.

Updating the Public Participation Plan - amendment to procedures, adoption

RTC strives to enhance public participation in the agency's work while putting limited funds to best use. As such, if update of the Public Participation Plan is warranted, RTC will take steps to update the Public Participation Plan.

A dated copy of this Plan will always be available directly from RTC or on RTC's website. Any major updates will include a process that includes review by RTC's Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), a 45-day public comment period with wide release and notification of the public about the proposed changes, and approval by the RTC Board. RTC will extend the public comment period by an additional 45-days in instances where major revisions are proposed in response to comments received.

RTC welcomes public feedback on this Plan, the public outreach and participation techniques described within it and on any aspect of the agency's public involvement program.

Adoption Process and Update Procedures

The public involvement process and procedures were originally adopted by the RTC Board of Directors on July 5th, 1994. An updated version of the public involvement process was adopted at the October 2, 2001 RTC Board meeting and the 2007 Public Participation Plan update was adopted at the August 7, 2007 RTC Board meeting following a public comment period of more than 45 days.

The Public Participation Plan will be reviewed periodically and if updates are necessary, the public will be consulted on its update, the draft update will be made available for public comment for a period of at least 45 days and the RTC Board of Directors will be responsible for Plan adoption. Legal notices will be provided in local newspapers informing the public of the comment period and the draft Public Participation Plan will be made available at local libraries and on RTC's website.

Amendment to Adopted Procedures

Proposed amendments to adopted public participation procedures will be placed on the RTC Board's agenda for the Board's consideration prior to the required public comment period. There will be a minimum forty-five (45) day public comment period before any amendment to the public participation plan is adopted by the RTC Board.

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Comments on RTC's Public Participation Plan Should be Communicated to RTC:

E-mail:
info@rtc.wa.gov

Telephone:
360-397-6067

Fax:
360-397-6132

Physical address:
RTC
Public Service Center
1300 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Vancouver, WA 98660

Postal address:
RTC
P.O. Box 1366
Vancouver, WA 98666

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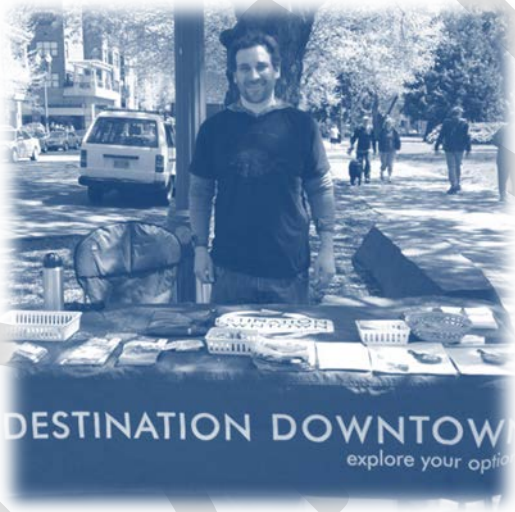

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: REQUIREMENTS FOR RTC'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

RTC operates under the jurisdiction of several federal laws, the basics of which are highlighted below.

Federal Requirements for RTC's Public Participation Process

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)

MAP-21 was signed into law on July 6, 2012. The Act reauthorized the Federal-aid highway program through fiscal year 2014, while consolidating the number of Federal programs to focus resources on key national goals and reduce duplicative programs. The Act also emphasizes expedited project delivery.

MAP-21 continues the previous transportation act's commitment to public participation, directing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to have a public participation plan that provides "citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan."

MAP-21 directs MPO public participation plans to "be developed in consultation with all interested parties," and "provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan." It further directs MPOs "to the maximum extent practicable" to "hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times," to "employ visualization techniques to describe plans," and to ''make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information."

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Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that transportation planning and programming be nondiscriminatory on the basis of race, color, national origin or disability. The federal statute was further clarified and supplemented by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and a series of federal statutes enacted in the 1990s relating to the concept of environmental justice. The fundamental principles of environmental justice include:

- Avoiding, minimizing or mitigating disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations.
- Ensuring full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- Preventing the denial, reduction or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income communities.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The ADA requires that all federally funded activities be nondiscriminatory on the basis of physical or mental disabilities. The fundamental principles of complying with ADA include:

- Ensuring full access to information related to agency activities including an accessible website, accessible offices and meeting spaces, and availability of alternative formats including a TTY Relay access.

Executive Orders

An Executive Order is an order given by the President to federal agencies. As a recipient of federal revenues, RTC assists federal transportation agencies in complying with these orders.

1. Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low–Income Populations: In February 1994, President William Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice for Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which mandates that federal agencies make achieving environmental justice part of their missions.

2. Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency: Executive Order 13166 states that people who speak limited English should have meaningful access to federally conducted and federally funded programs and activities. It requires that all federal agencies identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency and develop and implement a system to provide those services so all persons can have meaningful access to services.

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3. Executive Order 12372: Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs: Executive Order 12372 calls for intergovernmental review of projects to ensure that federally funded or assisted projects do not inadvertently interfere with state and local plans and priorities. The Executive Order does not replace public participation, comment, or review requirements of other federal laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), but gives the states an additional mechanism to ensure federal agency responsiveness to state and local concerns.

Federal Clean Air Act

Under federal regulations, RTC is required to demonstrate that the long-range metropolitan transportation plan and the Transportation Improvement Program conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for Air Quality. Required under the federal Clean Air Act the SIP provides a blueprint of how maintenance and nonattainment areas, such as the Clark County region, will meet or maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Positive conformity determinations that the Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program do not contribute to violations of ozone or carbon emission standards allow the region to proceed with implementation of transportation projects in a timely manner.

Washington State Laws

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), RCW 43.21C

RTC can use SEPA to guide its environmental review for key decision-making.

State Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A and RCW 47.80.030

Clark County develops county-wide planning policies under the GMA pursuant to GMA procedures [RCW 36.70A.210 (2)(e)] with appropriate public notification and participation.

Washington State Open Public Meetings Act, RCW 42.30

All RTC committee and Board meetings are open to the public, and public comment periods are provided during each regular meeting. Board chairs may limit comment periods as needed. Monthly meetings of the RTC Board are broadcast on CVTV and archived.

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Public Records Act, RCW 43.56

RTC conducts its business in an open and transparent manner, but people may want to request specific information under the State Public Records Act. Anyone may request to view RTC records for any reason (although Washington state places some limits on how certain records may be used, including but not limited to prohibiting using lists of individuals for commercial purposes [RCW 42.56.070 (9)] and prohibiting using lists of persons to promote election of persons or for promotion or opposition of ballot measures [RCW42.17.130]).

Washington Clean Air Act, RCW 70.94

The Washington State Legislature adopted the Clean Air Act in 1967. Under state regulations, RTC is required to demonstrate that the long-range Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for Air Quality.

Other Requirements

RTC has its own bylaws and interlocal agreements amongst membership and may take on additional responsibilities through grant opportunities or by the request of its membership.

Bylaws and Interlocal Agreement

RTC is a membership organization formed by interlocal agreement. As such, RTC members established bylaws for governing the agency. The bylaws outline expectations for the governing structure, duties of officers, meetings of the RTC Board and operating procedures. These documents determine the allocation of voting seats on the Board. RTC bylaws are available on RTC's website at www.rtc.wa.gov.

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Appendix B

Media Outlets

RTC may select to send news releases, notices and other materials to newspapers, websites, radio and television channels selected, as appropriate, from the following list:

- The Columbian, daily newspaper
- The Oregonian, newspaper
- The Camas Post Record, weekly newspaper
- The Battle Ground Reflector, weekly newspaper
- The Daily Insider, weekday online news for Clark County area
- The Vancouver Business Journal
- The Portland Business Journal
- The Skanner newspaper
- The El Hispanic News newspaper
- White Salmon Enterprise, weekly newspaper
- The Goldendale Sentinel, weekly newspaper
- Skamania County Pioneer, newspaper
- City of Vancouver Office of Neighborhoods Weekly Update, an electronic newsletter for neighborhoods:

Note: RTC's region, including Clark, Skamania and Klickitat counties, relies on broadcast news and radio stations based in Portland, Oregon. Clark County does have a cable television station that broadcasts Clark County-centric meetings and informational items:

- Clark-Vancouver Television, CVTV, community cable TV channel

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