




**STAFF REPORT/RESOLUTION**

**TO:** Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Matt Ransom, Executive Director   
**DATE:** October 28, 2014  
**SUBJECT:** **2014 Human Services Transportation Plan for Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties and Consolidated Grant Project Ranking, Resolution 11-14-20**

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**AT A GLANCE - ACTION**

*The action requested is adoption of Resolution 11-14-20 to approve the 2014 update to RTC's Human Services Transportation Plan for Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties and ranking of special needs transportation projects from RTC's three-county Regional Transportation Planning Organization region. RTC's Human Services Transportation Plan is prepared every four years as a federal requirement and is required in Washington State as a condition for funding eligibility under the statewide competitive Consolidated Public Transportation Grant Program. The RTC Board had opportunity to review HSTP information and special transportation needs and provide input to staff at the September 2 meeting.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Resolution is to provide information on the Human Services Transportation Plan update and to seek RTC Board action to approve the Plan update and the list of ranked special needs transportation projects from RTC's three-county Regional Transportation Planning Organization region. The Board's action will allow the ranked projects to be submitted to WSDOT for funding consideration through the 2015-2017 statewide competitive Consolidated Public Transportation Grant program. The Human Services Transportation Plan update is attached with this Resolution for review and a brief overview of the ranked projects is included within the Resolution.

In 2014, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council has been working with stakeholders and citizens to update the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) for Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat Counties. Federal and State transportation regulations require the development of a coordinated HSTP with an update at least every four years. The RTC Board adopted the region's first Human Services Transportation Plan for Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties in January 2007, with the most recent update in December 2010.

The purpose of the required plan is to provide a framework for the coordination of transportation services for aging adults, persons with disabilities, and individuals with economic disadvantages within the region. A coordinated plan for human services transportation can enhance transportation access, minimize duplication of services, and encourage the most cost-effective transportation possible. The Plan ensures that communities coordinate resources to provide transportation services through multiple funding programs. 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.

At the September 2014 meeting, staff provided the Board with background information on the Human Services Transportation Plan including a summary of current services, unmet needs, challenges and potential strategies to address the needs. Since then, staff has continued to meet with stakeholders to complete the draft Plan and to evaluate and provide a draft ranking of the proposed transportation projects resulting from the Plan.

### **HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND FUNDING PROGRAMS**

Development of an HSTP is a condition for receiving funding through WSDOT's statewide competitive Consolidated Public Transportation Grant program. The goals of the WSDOT Public Transportation Consolidated Grant Program are to address deficiencies in paratransit/special needs or rural public transportation, to provide a community benefit, to provide funding to special needs or rural public transportation where there is a demonstrated need and measureable benefit, to make community connections supporting a sustainable network of transportation services within and between communities, to establish opportunities for collaboration and financial partnerships and to coordinate services with other transportation providers and organizations in the area.

In addition to the availability of the statewide Consolidated funding program to help fund special transportation needs, C-TRAN receives a direct allocation of FTA Section 5310 funding for the enhanced mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. This allocation currently amounts to about \$145,000 per year in federal funds. These federal funds require a 50% local match if used for operating services and a 20% local match when used for capital projects. These FTA 5310 funds provide for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services and must be supported by the Human Services Transportation Plan. These funds currently help to fund C-TRAN's Travel Trainer and Travel Ambassador programs.

### **HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN: PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

RTC followed the process required by Washington State's Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) in developing the Human Services Transportation Plan to meet state and federal requirements. For each of the three counties in RTC's region, the required Plan elements of stakeholder and public outreach, data, emergency management, a description of current transportation services, a listing of unmet special transportation service needs including technology, and potential strategies to meet these needs are all addressed in the HSTP update. RTC staff reviewed these Plan elements at the September 2, 2014 RTC Board meeting. They are fully addressed in the attached Human Services Transportation Plan.

## CONSOLIDATE GRANT PROJECT EVALUATION AND RANKING

One of the purposes of the HSTP is to support applications moving forward to seek statewide Consolidated Public Transportation Grant Program funding for projects to help fulfill transportation service needs identified in the HSTP. Local agencies and non-profits in Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties developed project grant proposals to meet identified transportation needs in the HSTP and on October 23<sup>rd</sup> members of the Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative (ATCI) met to conduct a preliminary ranking of project proposals to be submitted for statewide funding consideration. The October 23<sup>rd</sup> ATCI meeting participants included representatives of Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, The Human Services Council, Mt. Adams Transportation, Skamania County Senior Services, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Catholic Community Services, C-TRAN, Columbia United Providers, Washington State Department of Transportation, the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington, Clark County Community Services and Clark County Public Health.

Project applications must be supported by the needs identified in the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) update. An overview of the project evaluation and ranking process follows. Projects are evaluated using criteria that reflect the WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program goals, with the highest priority given to maintaining existing service. The evaluation criteria are listed below:

- ***Address Deficiencies*** – Encourage communities to identify and address deficiencies in paratransit/special needs or rural public transportation.
- ***Provide a Community Benefit*** – Assist local areas in determining community benefits and support for paratransit/special needs or rural public transportation.
- ***Preservation or Enhancement*** – Provide funding to preserve or enhance paratransit/special needs or rural public transportation where there is a demonstrated need and measurable benefit.
- ***Community Connections*** – Support a sustainable network of transportation services within and between communities.
- ***Financial Partnerships*** – Establish opportunities for local jurisdictions, regional organizations, private sector agencies, state and federal governments, and tribal governments in Washington to work collaboratively. Ensure stakeholders have a voice in project development. Encourage appropriate cost sharing on projects.
- ***Support Coordination*** – Local organizations are required to coordinate services with other transportation providers in their area, as well as other organizations potentially able to use or purchase the services.

## PROJECT RANKING

The state's grant process requires each RTPO region to rank projects as A, B, C, or D priorities. The number of letter grades each region gets is determined by the population in each of the following categories: rural, people with disabilities, youth aged under 18, elderly aged over 65,

people living in poverty and veterans. Based on these populations, the RTC region, which includes Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties, is allocated 5 As, 5 Bs, 4 Cs and unlimited D project rankings. The region's ranking counts for one third of the total possible points awarded as part of the state's competitive process. For example, the maximum points awarded to a project by the state will be 100 points and projects ranked by the region in the A, B, C, and D categories will receive additional percentile points as follows:

<b>A</b> = top 5 projects	(50 percentile points)
<b>B</b> = second 5 projects	(25 percentile points)
<b>C</b> = third 5 projects	(12 percentile points)
<b>D</b> = remaining projects	(0 percentile points)

In total, thirteen projects were evaluated by RTC and stakeholders from the three-county region, including three projects from the Human Services Council based in Clark County, three from Mt Adams Transportation based in Klickitat County, five from Skamania County Senior Services, one from Mid-Columbia Economic Development District and one from Catholic Community Services. The proposed projects cover service operations, vehicles to provide the transportation services, brokered transportation options, volunteer drivers, technology to aid dispatch and mobility management. At the October 23 ATCI meeting, stakeholders determined that all projects support transportation needs identified in the draft Human Services Transportation Plan update and recommended ranking of the thirteen projects. Please note that projects are not prioritized within each category of letter ranking.

**Priority A** (5 projects)

**A. Continue to provide Klickitat County with existing dial-a-ride and route deviated service**

Mt. Adams Transportation is seeking funding to continue to operate essential dial-a-ride and route deviated services for the citizens of Klickitat County. Priority is given to seniors and persons with disabilities for life-sustaining service. The dial-a-ride service is provided Monday-Friday between 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with extension made for some critical services. Route deviated service is provided between White Salmon and Hood River in part to support an employment center for the developmentally disabled in Odell, Oregon. There is no other public transportation service in Klickitat County. Additionally, volunteer drivers play an important role in providing transportation services in this region. *Grant request of \$929,775.*

**A. Maintain Dial A Ride Program for Skamania County**

Skamania County Senior Services is seeking funding to continue to operate existing dial-a-ride service Monday-Friday between 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. After hours service can be pre-arranged for necessary services, such as hospital discharges. Senior Services attempts to serve as many people as possible with limited funds prioritizing trips for seniors needing to get to medical appointments. In addition to the demand response services, trips to

senior meal programs, shopping trips, and recreational trips are provided. *Grant request of \$317,000.*

**A. Human Services Council's Reserve-A-Ride Program**

The Human Services Council is seeking funding to continue to meet the demand for special needs transportation within Clark County to meet the unmet needs of some of the most vulnerable citizens. The Reserve-A-Ride Program prioritizes providing transportation to Clark County residents who are not eligible for other medical transportation programs so that they can get to life sustaining medical appointments such as dialysis, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments. While life sustaining medical trips remains the top priority of the program, the HSC would also like to offer transportation options for elderly, disabled, and low-income residents of Clark County to destinations such as grocery stores, nutrition sites, and other locations that assist people in remaining independent in their homes. *Grant request of \$350,000.*

**A. Human Services Council's Employment Transportation Program**

The Human Services Council is seeking funding to continue to provide employment transportation services to assist low-income individuals who reside in Clark County. The program brokers transportation to help eligible people get to employment sites, job interviews, training services, education, childcare and other employment-related activities. *Grant request of \$484,000.*

**A. Maintain the existing route deviated service between Skamania County and Fisher's Landing Transit Center**

Skamania County Senior Services is seeking funding to continue providing deviated service between Skamania and Clark Counties begun in 2003. The service has been very successful because there are only limited medical and nutritional resources available in Skamania County. This service provides trips along SR-14, between Carson and Vancouver. The round-trip service stops in Carson, Stevenson, North Bonneville, Skamania, the west end of Skamania County and Fisher's Landing Transit Center in Vancouver. Connections are available from Fisher's Landing Transit Center to all parts of the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area. *Grant request of \$222,800.*

**Priority B** (5 projects)

**B. Gorge TransLink Alliance Mobility Management**

The Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) Mobility Manager will continue to seek ways to provide communities with better access to healthcare, employment, training, shopping, social services and other needs crucial to quality of life. The Gorge TransLink Alliance is a coalition of partners in the Mid-Columbia region including Klickitat and Skamania Counties in Washington State and Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman Counties in Oregon. The Mobility Manager would further support identification and implementation of strategies enabling coordination of services between multiple transportation providers, such as shared training opportunities, planning

assistance, regional and individualized marketing campaigns to transportation-deficient populations, support to county providers seeking to implement scheduling/dispatch software, promote commute options programs to employers in the region, administer ridesharing networks, and pursue resource needs to benefit Gorge TransLink providers and the regional public transportation system. *Grant request of \$50,000.*

**B. Information Technology Architecture Project for Skamania County**

The project would maximize efficiencies by use of ITS technology for computer assisted scheduling and dispatch, automatic vehicle location, a mobile data terminal for drivers, onboard access to maps for drivers, online ride requests, electronic fare system and back-up cameras for each vehicle. *Grant request of \$78,624.*

**B. Replace two Skamania County Vehicles for Dial A Ride**

Skamania County Senior Services is requesting funding to replace two ADA minivan vehicles used for dial-a-ride service. The existing vehicles needing to be replaced have high mileage with decreasing reliability and increasing maintenance costs. *Grant request of \$80,000.*

**B. Replace two Aging ADA Minibuses**

Mt. Adams Transportation is requesting funding to replace two aging ADA minibuses to provide safe, reliable and efficient transportation services. Minibuses are needed to transport clients with bariatric medical conditions and larger assistive devices who need to get to specialist medical appointments not available in Klickitat County. *Grant request of \$112,000.*

**B. Clark County Volunteer Transportation**

Catholic Community Services is requesting funding to expand their current volunteer transportation service due to growing community demand. Funding would allow for increased staff hours to provide a Volunteer Driver Intake Specialist. Volunteer driver programs meet a community need by matching willing, qualified drivers with individuals requiring service requests which cannot be met by more traditional fixed route and demand-response providers. CCS works closely with non-profit agencies and medical institutions to match clients to drivers. *Grant request of \$117,461.*

**Priority C** (up to 4 projects)

**C. Maintain Computer Dispatching Software Subscription/Server Hosting**

Klickitat County Senior Services/Mt. Adams transportation is requesting funding to maintain its existing dispatch software subscription and server hosting to allow for continued efficiencies of dispatching. *Grant request of \$11,520.*

**C. Human Services Council's Mobility Management Project**

The Human Services Council is requesting funding to support a Mobility Management position to continue the work began by an AmeriCorps Vista worker on identifying

veterans and special needs transportation barriers, outreach and information sharing about transportation resources, development of solutions, research, analysis and development of a One-Call/One-Click Transportation Resource Center, and identifying formal and information transportation resources to meet the transportation needs of at-risk populations in Clark County. The Mobility Manager would focus on identifying community transportation options and work with local transit, human service transportation providers, and community partners to coordinate transportation solutions. *Grant request of \$162,000.*

**C. Trout Lake Transportation Volunteer Coordination**

The Trout Lake community is requesting funding for a Volunteer Coordinator to coordinate volunteer drivers to help seniors and the disabled get to social and personal services appointments to prevent social isolation. *Grant request of \$8,000.*

Once projects are submitted to the state, they will be evaluated using a forced pairs process where every project is compared to every other project. The regional ranking will be an important determinant in this competitive funding process.

**POLICY IMPLICATION**

Publication of a Human Services Transportation Plan for the region was first required by the federal transportation act, SAFETEA-LU and continues to be a requirement of today's federal transportation act, MAP-21. The HSTP provides a framework for identifying projects that can help meet the special transportation needs of those who cannot drive themselves including the aged, people with disabilities, rural residents, youth, veterans and low income workers. The 2014 HSTP update was developed with extensive stakeholder and public outreach efforts, through meetings of the Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative (ATCI) in the region since 2011 and with overview by the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) in Clark County and the Skamania and Klickitat Transportation Policy Committees. The draft HSTP update has been available on RTC's website for a 30-day public comment period since September 30. RTC Board action to adopt the HSTP update and project ranking will allow projects to be forwarded to WSDOT for statewide competitive funding consideration.

**BUDGET IMPLICATION**

Adoption of the HSTP and ranking of projects to be submitted for WSDOT Consolidated Public Transportation funding has no impact on RTC's 2015 budget. The HSTP update supports the project grant application requests from local human service transportation providers.

**ACTION REQUESTED**

Adoption of Resolution 11-14-20, "2014 Human Services Transportation Plan for Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties and Consolidated Grant Project Ranking".

ADOPTED this 4th day of November 2014,  
by the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

ATTEST:



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Jack Burkman  
Chair of the Board



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Matt Ransom  
Executive Director

Attachment