Proposed MTP Amendment,
Chapter 5: Redrafted Sections on Transit, High Capacity Transit and Safety

TRANSIT

The transit system and its development are part of the MTP. The transit transportation mode supports the land use goals established in local Comprehensive Plans developed under the Growth Management Act; plans that envision denser, transit-oriented developments in growth centers and in primary transportation corridors. Transit service expands transportation corridor capacity by providing more person throughput, helping the transportation system operate more effectively along transit corridors. Transit is also important in meeting the mobility needs of those unable to drive automobiles because of age, infirmity, disability, or low income. In addition, transit can provide a viable option for those who have automobiles but choose the convenience and cost savings of using transit for their commute and other local trips.

C-TRAN adopted a 20-Year Transit Development Plan, C-TRAN 2030, in June 2010. The Plan provides the framework on which to build public transportation for the future of Clark County. It is made available on C-TRAN's website at http://www.c-tran.com/20_Year_Plan_Update2.html. C-TRAN 2030 provides the framework on which to build public transportation to support the future transportation needs of Clark County. It sets in place a plan to preserve existing service levels with improvements that include two new bus routes in east Vancouver, increased frequencies on many existing bus routes, meeting the growing demand for paratransit service for people with disabilities (C-VAN), two new park and rides (one at I-205/18th Street vicinity and one at I-5/219th Street vicinity) with increased commuter service to downtown Vancouver and Portland, C-TRAN's first bus rapid transit line with service along Fourth Plain Boulevard from downtown Vancouver to the vicinity of Vancouver Mall, and operations and maintenance costs of light rail in downtown Vancouver as part of the Columbia River Crossing Project. The 20-Year TDP, C-TRAN 2030, includes transit routes, platform hours, and assumed capital and operating costs. The assumed improvements are now incorporated into the MTP's regional transportation system map and into the Regional Travel Forecasting Model.

Adoption of C-TRAN 2030 in June 2010 concluded a multi-year planning process and extensive public outreach that considered several alternatives before arriving at a preferred plan. C-TRAN riders, citizens, neighborhood associations and community organizations all helped to shape the Plan.

HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT (HCT)

Prior to adoption of C-TRAN 2030 (C-TRAN, June 2010), the RTC Board adopted the Clark County High Capacity Transit System Study in December 2008 following a two-year planning process. The HCT Plan provides a blueprint for C-TRAN and the Clark County region to move High Capacity Transit improvements forward in identified HCT corridors. The HCT System Study is based on the assumption that traffic volumes will increase as planned growth and economic development continues. The constrained ability to expand highway capacity in a number of key regional transportation corridors is expected to cause traffic congestion to worsen thus increasing the need to develop a transportation alternative. The Study is available on RTC's website at http://www.rtc.wa.gov/hct/. In addition, the HCT System Study's Executive

Summary is incorporated into C-TRAN 2030 as outlined in the Transit section above and is available as part of the C-TRAN Plan at http://www.c-tran.com/assets/20_Year_Plan/C-TRAN_20_Year_Plan-Adopted_June_8__2010.pdf.

The HCT System includes a set of the most promising HCT corridors now included in the MTP's Regional Transportation System map as a framework element. The HCT corridors are: I-205 between Gateway and Salmon Creek, I-5/Highway 99 between downtown Vancouver and Salmon Creek, Fourth Plain between downtown Vancouver and 162nd Avenue and Mill Plain between downtown Vancouver and East Vancouver. One of the study's underlying findings is that while design of a good HCT system is critical, it is not enough to ensure successful HCT project implementation. A well designed set of HCT facilities needs to be complemented by policies that address: 1) transit supportive land use strategies, 2) collaboration among public agencies, 3) commitment to the project at both political and staff levels, 4) continued public engagement and support, and 5) actions by public agencies to amend and implement HCT policies.

Listed below are overall HCT policies that apply across the HCT system:

Overall HCT Corridor Policies

- HCT needs to maximize ridership by serving both intra-county and bi-state transit trips
- HCT system needs to move transit vehicles through corridors faster than conventional bus
- Maximize access to the HCT system by locating stations within walking distance of major activity centers and park and rides
- Balance the trade-offs between ridership and cost

HCT Corridor Land Use Policies

- Transit supportive densities
- A mix of land use
- Transit-oriented pedestrian environment
- Parking management strategies
- Transit-oriented urban design

The HCT System Plan provides a long-term framework for C-TRAN and the Clark County region to move forward to implement transportation improvements in identified HCT Corridors. However, before any HCT project can move forward, final mode and alignment issues would be determined through the defined Federal Transit Administration's New Starts process which includes alternatives analysis as part of the process. The HCT project element now included in the fiscally-constrained MTP is the Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit, from downtown Vancouver to the Vancouver Mall vicinity. The next step in planning for BRT in the Fourth Plain Corridor is to carry out alternatives analysis. The MTP also includes the I-5 Columbia River Crossing Project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA, June 2008) to construct a replacement Interstate-5 Bridge and extend Light Rail Transit into Clark County with a terminus in the vicinity of Clark College (http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org/)

SAFETY

Accidents, their number, location, and type, are monitored by WSDOT and local jurisdictions and if there is deemed to be a safety deficiency then remedial measures are considered and corrective action taken. The MTP supports regional system safety projects identified through Safety Management System (SMS) planning and local plans and programs to correct safety deficiencies on the regional transportation system. ~~In November 2007, the RTC Board supported the construction of roundabouts on SR-14 through Washougal as a short-term solution to intersection safety and capacity issues rather than invest in upgrading the existing signalized intersections at 15th Street and 32nd Street. The long-term transportation solution will be to construct grade-separated interchanges.~~ The WSDOT "Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero" (SHSP; revised February 2007) was developed to identify Washington State's traffic safety needs and to guide investment decisions in order to achieve significant reductions in traffic fatalities and disabling injuries. WSDOT has identified both crossover accidents and run off the road accidents as two safety areas to focus on.

In March 2007, the Washington State Department of Licensing convened the At Risk Driver's Task Force to provide recommendations on how to reduce fatalities and serious injury collisions from drivers determined to be "at risk." The Task Force focused on three areas: 1) Young and aggressive drivers, 2) Elderly and medically impaired drivers, and 3) Drug impaired drivers. The Task Force published its final report in October 2007.

Measures to improve the safety and security of the transit system for transit passengers and employees will continue to be implemented by C-TRAN in keeping with guidance from the Federal Transit Administration.