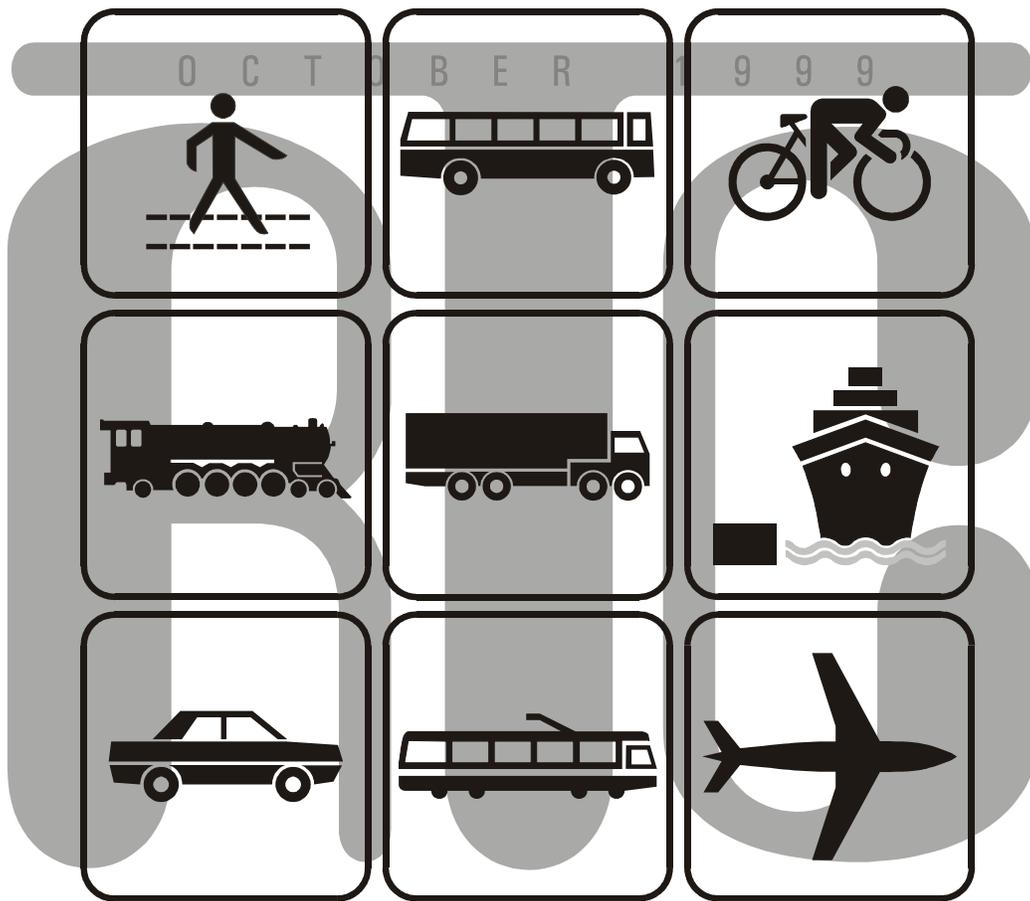


Metropolitan Transportation Plan for Clark County



Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council

CHAPTER 7

PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

RTC has an adopted public involvement program, outlining the public involvement efforts in the development of regional transportation plans and programs. Copies of the public involvement program are available at the Fort Vancouver Library and at RTC offices for public review. All RTC Board meetings and technical committee meetings are open to the public. Public involvement efforts build from those carried out at the local level in development of local plans and programming of transportation projects. In 1996, RTC staff was involved in extensive public involvement efforts through the Transportation Futures Committee. RTC is represented at numerous public meetings regarding regional transportation issues. These meetings include the transit Special Services Advisory Committee (SSAC), the Padden Task Force, the Community Design Team for the Orchards Community Plan; Fourth Plain Boulevard, representation at Clark County Transportation Improvement Program Involvement Team (TIPIT) Committee meetings, the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Transportation Sub-committee activities, InterAct and meetings of the Choices 2010 group. A Bi-state Transportation Issues open house was held on March 26, 1998 at the Vancouver Marketplace. The open house provided an opportunity to present the MTP and its recommendations for regional transportation development. RTC convened a HOV Citizens Stakeholders Committee in 1998 to assist in developing the "Clark County High Occupancy Vehicle Study". Through the coordinated efforts of RTC and WSDOT a public information booth on regional transportation issues is set up each year at the Clark County Fair. The Fair is attended by over 300,000 people and staff at the transportation booth solicit comments from the Fair attendees and the public can fill in survey forms about the region's transportation system. Staff manned the booth to answer questions from the public and to receive comments on the TIP and the MTP. In September, prior to the adoption of the 1999-2001 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program, a public meeting was held to give the public opportunity to comment on the program of regionally selected and prioritized projects to be presented for federal funding during the forthcoming three year period as well as opportunity to learn about MTP development.

A formal public meeting is held before *MTP* adoption and, at a minimum, an annual public meeting is held to allow the public to review the status of *Plan* development. Updates and amendments to the MTP are presented to the RTC Board for the Board's consideration and adoption. All meetings of the RTC Board are open to the public.

MTP IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of regional transportation goals, policies and actions established by the *MTP* are carried forward through the regional decision-making process which takes place in development of the regional **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**. It is in the TIP that transportation needs identified in the *MTP* can be programmed for receipt of federal funding.

MTP UPDATE PROCESS

Under the GMA, the *MTP* is to be reviewed for currency every two years. Updates are required at least every three years by federal agencies and the Plan is required to have at least a twenty-year horizon. Should changing policies, financial conditions or growth patterns warrant, *Plan* amendments can take place, subject to findings of air quality conformity and subject to a public involvement process.

The 1998 MTP amendment focused on changes to Chapter 4 (Financial Plan) and Chapter 5 (System Improvement and Strategy Plan). The language in the Chapter 4 Financial Plan was amended to make clear that the Plan is fiscally constrained. Only projects from a fiscally constrained Plan can be included in the air quality conformity analysis. In turn, only projects from air quality conforming plans can be advanced for programming of funds in the Transportation Improvement Program. The description of funding programs in Chapter 4 was also updated to reflect the new funding levels in the federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and recent funding history for state Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) programs. Chapter 5 was amended to include description and recommendations of the MTP Prioritization Process carried out during 1998. The 1998 amendments did not change the identified projects listed in Appendix A of the MTP. Therefore the air quality conformity analysis carried out on the December 1997 version of the MTP (documented in Appendix A of the Plan) remained valid.

A minor amendment in April, 1999 incorporated plans for a new interchange at I-5 and NE 219th Street into the MTP. This 1999 MTP update addresses the need to keep the MTP up-to-date with developments in the planning of transportation facilities and services. The focus of the MTP update is to extend the horizon year of the Plan to 2020, thereby meeting federal requirements to have a Plan with at least a twenty year horizon. Demographic data is updated to the 2020 horizon year, a revised regional travel forecasting model is prepared, transportation deficiencies considered, the list of transportation needs and projects revised, the financial plan reviewed and updated and an update to the air quality conformity analysis prepared.

The issue of cross-Columbia travel continues to be the subject of bi-state transportation efforts. The feasibility and utility of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) treatments in Clark County was studied during 1998 which culminated in the publication of "Clark County High Occupancy Vehicle Study" (December, 1998). The 1998 Study defined HOV policies and objectives, identified HOV need and benefits and identified the location of possible HOV corridors and/or facilities. A study of the operational feasibility of an I-5 HOV lane is now underway. A report on commuter rail as a cross-river travel option was published in May, 1999. A Bi-State Transportation Committee has recently convened and the I-5 Trade Corridor Study is underway. Results and recommendations from studies underway will be incorporated in a future MTP update or amendment.