



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director
DATE: February 25, 2014
SUBJECT: **Regional Transportation Plan – Vision and Goals**

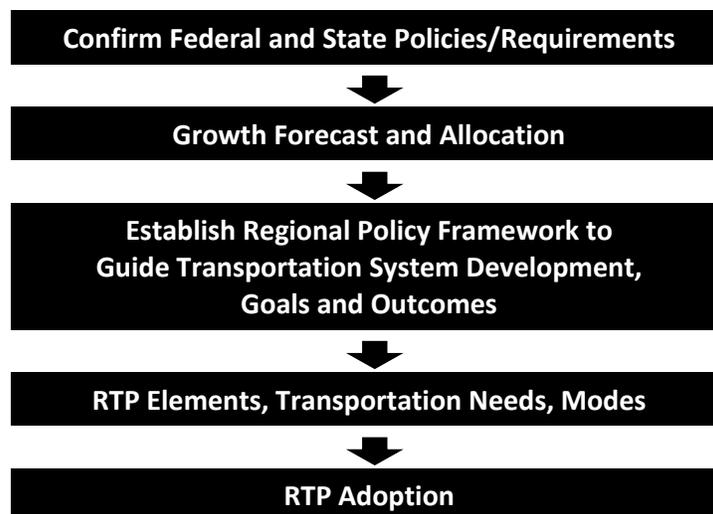
AT A GLANCE

The RTC Board will have opportunity to discuss transportation policies as the framework for the long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Clark County. Policy setting is the first foundational step in the 2014 RTP update process. The Board presentation will include significant transportation trends. Forthcoming public participation and consultation efforts for the RTP update will also be previewed.

BACKGROUND

The long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a part of the required federal and state transportation planning process. At the January meeting, the Board initiated the 2014 RTP update by considering a list of issues and expected outcomes as part of scoping the RTP update. The graphic below shows the steps in the 2014 RTP update process. The current long range transportation plan with a horizon year of 2035 was adopted in December 2011. The 2014 RTP update is driven by federal requirements that a Plan update must be adopted at least every four years and comply with federal laws. The current Federal Transportation Act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), was enacted in 2012 and brings new requirements for transportation system performance measurement, target setting and performance-related transportation system investments.

Steps in the 2014 RTP Update Process



RTP FRAMEWORK; VISION, PURPOSE AND GOALS

The starting point of a Plan update should be articulation of key policies and goals that provide the foundation for the Plan, guide the Plan, and shape its priorities. At the March meeting, the RTC Board will review the existing RTP vision statement, stated purpose and goals and will have the opportunity to suggest possible revisions. Transportation policies provide the framework for development of Clark County's regional transportation system. RTP policies need to be reflective of federal, state and local policies to ensure the plans are not at odds.

Attachment 1 provides the existing RTP Vision, the RTP Framework description explaining that the transportation system supports the land uses defined in local Comprehensive Plans and a summary of existing Federal, State and Regional Transportation Policies (see rightmost column of Attachment 1 table). The Board should focus on these existing regional transportation policies included in the existing Metropolitan Transportation Plan (adopted December 2012).

The basic transportation policy framework at all four levels of governance, federal, state, regional and local, focuses on these key policy issues:

- Economy
- Safety and Security
- Accessibility and Mobility
- Management and Operations
- Efficiencies
- Environment
- Preservation
- Vision and Values
- Finance
- Preservation

The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) discussed these policies at the February 21 RTAC meeting. RTAC members were asked to discuss the priority policy issues for their jurisdictions and agencies. RTAC members said that financing the transportation system is a growing challenge and a priority policy issue that needs to be addressed. All agreed the core transportation functions relate to preservation, safety, mobility and accessibility. Transportation system development and preservation were recognized as important strategies in supporting economic development and in raising the region's quality of life by building healthy, livable communities. RTAC members agreed that all existing policies still have value and need to be retained in the upcoming RTP update. However, RTAC members pointed out that an additional challenge in implementing transportation policies is that policy goals can sometimes be in conflict with each other. The Board's input on priority transportation policies and potential policy changes is sought at the March Board meeting.

The Regional Transportation Plan and Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan are integrally linked to meet the requirements of Washington State's Growth Management Act so Attachment 2 is provided for your information. Attachment 2 provides the countywide transportation planning policies included in the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan. These local County-wide policies were first developed as part of the Community Framework Plan and first Comprehensive Growth Management Plan back in 1994.

At the March Board meeting staff will highlight significant transportation trends that may inform the Board's discussion of transportation policies. To encourage discussion of these policy issues the Board may want to consider the following questions:

- What are our community's values to be applied to regional transportation system development?
- How can transportation policies guide investments to best support economic vitality?
- How do we provide safety?
(Education, engineering, and enforcement all have a part).
- How do we afford to maintain and preserve the existing system?
- How can we provide transportation options?
- What is an efficient transportation system that works for people, freight and goods?
Reliability, safety, and affordability are significant factors.
- How do we meet transportation revenue needs into the future?
The highway trust fund and gas taxes are not keeping pace with need.
- How do we improve land use and transportation integration through the regional transportation planning process?

Recommended RTP transportation projects and strategies should be balanced and result in a transportation system that can adequately and efficiently serve Clark County residents and businesses within the constraints of forecast revenue availability. The policy goals may be revisited during the 2014 RTP update process as we gather updated information on our transportation system and as we begin to consider the updated financial plan element.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Opportunities will be provided throughout the development of the 2014 RTP for public participation and input. The goal is to provide education and outreach on the RTP that will involve interested citizens and businesses across Clark County and afford them the opportunity to be a part of the 2014 RTP decision-making process.

The RTP update will be showcased on RTC's re-designed and updated website with enhanced feedback mechanisms available for members of the public to make comments on plans for

regional transportation system development. RTC’s website will be the prime forum for sharing steps in the 2014 RTP update process and providing easy access to relevant and current information on the RTP.

Throughout the RTP development process, the public outreach and participation program will include an array of activities that may include: meetings with neighborhood and business groups, media releases and content, web-based information and tools, and opportunities for comment ranging from electronic public comment forms available on RTC’s website to formal Citizen Communications time at monthly RTC Board meetings.

Key public outreach opportunities are anticipated to coincide with stages of Plan development as follows:

- May Regional Transportation Plan process, vision, framework, and key RTP policies
- July-August Review of RTP modal elements (road, public transit, rail, sidewalk, bicycles, marine, air), and issues (e.g. safety, economic development, travel system management and demand management, system maintenance, preservation and operations, environmental mitigation), and initial financing assumptions
- September Review of draft RTP components (goals, transportation system performance, recommendations for transportation projects and strategies, and finance plan)
- October-November Draft plan recommendations

NEXT STEPS

At the April RTC Board meeting, staff will provide information on Clark County’s demographic profile and growth forecast.

Attachments

ATTACHMENT 1: FEDERAL, STATE, and EXISTING REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

RTP VISION

In 2035, the Clark County region is a vibrant community with centers of commerce, business and industrial activity and safe neighborhoods that promotes livability and helps to achieve broad community goals for its residents. The region is served by an integrated transportation system that balances modal needs while providing mobility and access to support the region's growing prosperity and protecting the environment. The transportation system is funded with sustainable levels of revenue.

GOALS:

There needs to be consistency between federal, state, regional and local transportation plans so they are not at odds. The consistency requirement also applies to goals and policies. In determining policy goals for the RTP update, a review of key themes and issues in federal, state, regional and local laws, codes and plans was carried out. The basic transportation policy framework at all four levels of governance (federal, state, region and local) focuses on these key policy themes: Economy, Safety and Security, Accessibility and Mobility, Environment, Efficiencies, Management and Operations, Preservation, Finance, Vision and Values. These key policy themes are reflected in the Goals established for this region's RTP.

| Policy Themes | Federal Planning Factors and RTP Policies | State Policy Goals | Regional Transportation Policies Regional Transportation Plan (December 2011) |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Economy | Support economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency | Economic Vitality: to promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy | Support economic development and community vitality |
| Safety | Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users | Safety: To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system | Ensure safety and security of the transportation system |
| Security | Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users | | |
| Accessibility and Mobility | Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight | Mobility: To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington state | Provide reliable mobility for personal travel and freight <u>and goods</u> movement as well as access to locations throughout the region and integrity of neighborhoods accomplished through |

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|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | development of an efficient, balanced, multi-modal regional transportation system. |
| Management and Operations | Promote efficient system management and operation | Stewardship: To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system | Maximize efficient management and operation of the transportation system through transportation demand management and transportation system management strategies. |
| Efficiencies | Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight | | |
| Environment | Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns | Environment: To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment | Protect environmental quality and natural resources and promote energy efficiency. |
| Vision Values | | | Ensure the RTP reflects community values to help build and sustain a healthy, livable, and prosperous community |
| Finance | Fiscal constraint required in RTPs – the cost estimate for the list of identified RTP projects should not exceed the forecast revenues. | | Provide for the development of a financially viable and sustainable transportation system |
| Preservation | Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system | Preservation: To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services | Maintain and preserve the regional transportation system to ensure system investments are protected |

RTP FRAMEWORK

Development of the transportation system is one component required to support the land uses defined in local Comprehensive Growth Management Plans. The RTP is a collective effort to address the development of a regional transportation system that will help to achieve the land use vision presented in the local comprehensive plans, to facilitate planned economic growth and help sustain the region's quality of life.

ATTACHMENT 2

COUNTY-WIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING POLICIES

Excerpts from Clark County's adopted *Community Framework Plan* and the County-wide Planning Policies relating to transportation from the transportation element of the *Comprehensive Growth Management Plan for Clark County* (September 2004) are re-printed below. These constitute the Principles and Guidelines with which the transportation elements of local comprehensive plans required under the Growth Management Act are reviewed for certification purposes.

From the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan for Clark County (adopted 1994, updated August 2004).

COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Community Framework Plan and the comprehensive plans of the county and its cities envision a shift in emphasis from a transportation system based on private, single-occupant vehicles to one based on alternative, higher-occupancy travel modes such as ridesharing, public transit, and non-polluting alternatives such as walking, bicycling and telecommuting. This shift occurred due to changes in funding constraints at the federal and state level as well as consideration of the thirteen GMA planning goals contained in 36.70A.020 RCW.

Regional policies are applicable county-wide. Urban policies only apply to areas within adopted urban growth areas (UGA's) and are supplemental to any city policies. Rural policies apply to all areas outside adopted UGAs.

5.0 COUNTY-WIDE PLANNING POLICIES

5.0.1 Clark County, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), state, bi-state, municipalities, and C-TRAN shall work together to establish a truly regional transportation system which:

- reduces reliance on single occupancy vehicle transportation through development of a balanced transportation system which emphasizes transit, high capacity transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and transportation demand management;
- encourages energy efficiency;
- recognizes financial constraints; and
- minimizes environmental impacts of the transportation systems development, operation and maintenance.

5.0.2 Regional and bi-state transportation facilities shall be planned for within the context of county-wide and bi-state air, land and water resources.

- 5.0.3 The State, MPO/RTPO, County and the municipalities shall adequately assess the impacts of regional transportation facilities to maximize the benefits to the region and local communities.
- 5.0.4 The State, MPO/RTPO, County and the municipalities shall strive, through transportation system management strategies, to optimize the use of and maintain existing roads to minimize the construction costs and impact associated with roadway facility expansion.
- 5.0.5 The County, local municipalities and MPO/RTPO shall, to the greatest extent possible, establish consistent roadway standards, level of service standards and methodologies, and functional classification schemes to ensure consistency throughout the region.
- 5.0.6 The County, local municipalities, C-TRAN and MPO/RTPO shall work together with the business community to develop a transportation demand management strategy to meet the goals of state and federal legislation relating to transportation.
- 5.0.7 The State, MPO/RTPO, County, local municipalities and C-TRAN shall work cooperatively to consider the development of transportation corridors for high capacity transit and adjacent land uses that support such facilities.
- 5.0.8 The State, County, MPO/RTPO and local municipalities shall work together to establish a regional transportation system which is planned, balanced and compatible with planned land use densities; these agencies and local municipalities will work together to ensure coordinated transportation and land use planning to achieve adequate mobility and movement of goods and people.
- 5.0.9 State or regional facilities that generate substantial travel demand should be sited along or near major transportation and/or public transit corridors.