



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director 
DATE: August 26, 2014
SUBJECT: Human Services Transportation Plan – Update

AT A GLANCE - INFORMATION

This Memo provides background information on update to the federally-required Human Services Transportation Plan. Board action to approve the Plans and ranking of projects in preparation for transmittal to WSDOT is scheduled to be completed by year-end 2014. Project applications submitted by resource agencies for the upcoming Public Transportation Consolidated Grant program cycle must be identified in the Human Services Transportation Plan as a pre-condition to grant eligibility.

INTRODUCTION

Federal transportation regulations require the development of a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP). The HSTP addresses the transportation needs of the elderly, people with disabilities, low income populations, and rural residents unable to provide their own transportation.

The first Human Services Transportation Plan for Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties was adopted by the RTC Board of Directors on January 2, 2007. In 2010, the Human Services Transportation Plan was updated to support grant requests submitted by this region for state and federal funding for human services transportation needs through the Washington State Department of Transportation's statewide competitive Consolidated Public Transportation Grant program. A Plan update is required at least every four years and completion of a draft update is targeted for later in September.

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.

WSDOT created a consolidated grant application process in 2003 to combine the applications for state and federal public transportation grants. Applicants for WSDOT's public transportation grant program are required to participate in the HSTP planning process with their local Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). Through the consolidated program, WSDOT distributes a variety of state and federal grants to support public transportation programs. These programs are Federal Transit Administration 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program) and 5311 (rural) funds as well as State Rural Mobility Competitive and State Paratransit/Special Needs Competitive program for non-profit agencies. Current grant recipients in the RTC region include the Human Services Council, Skamania Senior Services, Mt. Adams Transportation in Klickitat County and Mid-Columbia Economic Development District for the Gorge Translink Transportation Coordinator. C-TRAN also is the designated recipient of a direct allocation of FTA 5310 funds to the region. This program currently helps to fund C-TRAN's Connector and Travel Trainer programs.

HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN: OUTLINE

Washington State's Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) provides guidance on elements that must be covered in developing the Human Services Transportation Plan to meet state and federal requirements. The required HSTP elements are:

- Coordinate with stakeholders.
- Emergency management.
- Data and information, including common origins/destinations and existing transportation services.
- Identify unmet transportation needs, including technology.
- Develop strategies to meet public transportation needs, including prioritization of proposed community projects and continued coordination efforts after the HSTP update is completed. The program and project must meet Title VI requirements.

DATA

The tables below provide some of the relevant data relating to special needs transportation: population, population 65 years and older, population with disability, households with no vehicle and those below the poverty level. The first table has data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 decennial census and American Community Survey. The second table has updated Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) data with an estimate of 2013 population, OFM's intermediate level 2035 population forecast and forecast of population 65 and older. The growth in population aged 65 years and over forecast for the next twenty years may present challenges for keeping up with special needs transportation demands.

RTC: Three County Demographics, 2010						
County	2010 Population	Population Over 65 % of Pop.	Population with Disability %	Households with no Vehicle %	Persons Below Poverty Level %	2010 Persons per Square mile
Clark	425,363	49,128 <i>11.6%</i>	51,918 <i>12.2%</i>	7,708 <i>5.0%</i>	53,376 <i>12.6%</i>	693
Skamania	11,066	1,581 <i>14.3%</i>	1,613 <i>14.7%</i>	180 <i>4.1%</i>	1,357 <i>12.4%</i>	7
Klickitat	20,318	3,696 <i>18.1%</i>	3,744 <i>18.4%</i>	282 <i>3.0%</i>	3,865 <i>19.1%</i>	11

Source: 2010 US Census, 2010 American Community Survey, Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM)

County	2012 Personal Income Per Capita \$/Person	2013 Population	2013 Population 65+> and %	2035 Population Forecast	2035 Population Forecast 65+> and %	Population 65+> % Inc. 2010 to 2035
Clark	\$39,758	435,500	56,374 <i>12.9%</i>	562,207	116,716 <i>20.8%</i>	138%
Skamania	\$37,008	11,300	1,908 <i>16.9%</i>	12,816	3,685 <i>28.8%</i>	169%
Klickitat	\$43,329	20,700	4,291 <i>20.7%</i>	21,492	6,888 <i>32.0%</i>	86%

Source: Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM), OFM forecast, Intermediate Series (Oct. 2012)

THREE COUNTY CURRENT SERVICES AND NEEDS

For the three counties in RTC’S region, a description of current service providers and a listing of transportation needs identified through discussion with stakeholders follows. Needs were identified by stakeholders at regular meetings of the Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative (ATCI), through surveys conducted by the Human Services Council and at meetings of the Skamania County Transportation Policy Committee, the Klickitat County Transportation Policy Committee, the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, Clark County Commission on Aging, the Southwest Washington Healthy Living Collaborative, C-TRAN’s ADA Task Force, C-TRAN’s Citizens’ Advisory Committee, Skamania-Klickitat Community Network and at open houses held in Stevenson, Goldendale, and White Salmon.

Clark County

The main service provider in Clark County is C-TRAN fixed-route service and C-VAN paratransit service. However, transit service is not county wide. Other transportation services include pupil transportation, public/private providers, Amtrak service at the Vancouver station,

Greyhound/Bolt bus service available at stops in Portland and brokered special needs transportation trips through the Human Services Council.

Skamania County

The main service provider in Skamania County is Skamania County Senior Services. Other services include pupil transportation across five school districts, public/private providers, Amtrak service only available in the neighboring communities of Vancouver and Bingen, and Greyhound bus available on the Oregon side of the river in Portland and Hood River. The Human Services Council provides transportation brokerage services and Gorge TransLink coordinates transportation services in the bi-state region.

Klickitat County

The main service provider in Klickitat County is Mount Adams Transportation operated by Klickitat County Senior Services. Other services include pupil transportation, public/private providers, Amtrak service available with stops in Bingen and Wishram, Greyhound bus available on the Oregon side of the river in Hood River and The Dalles. The Human Services Council provides transportation brokerage services and Gorge TransLink coordinates transportation services in the bi-state region.

Transportation Needs Identified

Discussion with stakeholders and surveys conducted by the Human Services Council identified the following transportation needs:

- Meeting the growing demand for special transportation services.
- Providing mobility management services to coordinate comprehensive transportation information to the community and facilitating access to the most effective transportation services for those seeking transportation.
- Accommodating a wide range of individuals' transportation needs with the acknowledgement that current services do not meet the diverse range of special service transportation needs.
- Meeting the special transportation needs for residents of the rural areas where public transportation is not available.
- Meeting the special transportation needs resulting from the limited hours of transit service. We heard from the community that this creates problems for workers getting to and from their jobs and our Special Olympics athletes who may be able to use transit to get to their training but find service finished for the day when they get out of the practice.
- Maintaining curb to curb transportation for those not able to use fixed route service.
- Continuing travel training and travel ambassadors programs to support special needs clients who would prefer to learn how to use fixed route transit services rather than be dependent on paratransit service.

- Ensuring transportation to medical appointments. Life-sustaining medical treatments are a priority but there is growing demand for medical trips of all types including preventative appointments.
- Expanding Human Services Council’s Reserve-a-Ride program.
- Providing transportation services to support our seniors being able to “age in place”, to enable them to access vital services such as medical, shopping, and to make recreational trips to avoid social isolation.
- Providing transportation of seniors to nutrition programs.
- Providing transport to adult day care services.
- Ensuring the Cowlitz Tribe Transit Service can help to get clients to medical appointments in Clark County.
- Providing transportation to employment opportunities. Some employees need expanded transit service hours to accommodate their work schedule.
- Meeting the challenges of getting children to/from childcare on their parents’ way to and from work if parents are dependent on public transportation.
- Providing transportation for the youth in our community who are unable to drive themselves. There is large demand but little service.
- Dealing with changing transportation eligibility criteria for those trying to access medical appointments, e.g. travel to and from mental health appointments and preventative medical appointments is not covered under Medicaid.
- Coordinating with the Veterans Administration to help our Veterans gain access to transportation, particularly for access to medical appointments.
- Meeting the special transportation requirements to get homeless students to school which can provide a stable environment for them.
- Increasing the number of volunteer drivers in the community. There are growing needs for volunteers to help special needs clients get to appointments as well as grocery shops. There is also need for drivers who can drive the personal vehicles of those with disabilities unable to drive themselves.
- Establishing a community vanpool to help fill gaps in transportation services.
- Working with emergency service providers to ensure planning for emergency management situations such as evacuation of area residents in the event of an earthquake, fire etc. Those with special transportation needs are particularly vulnerable at times of emergency.
- Using emerging technology to help special needs populations use transportation services. This includes use of technology to dispatch transportation services most efficiently as well as way-finding technology for clients who may have hearing and/or sight disabilities.

- Meeting the challenges of funding for special needs transportation and the costs to clients, especially those with low incomes, seniors and those with disabilities.
- Access to a pharmacy that accepts Medicaid in Goldendale and outlying areas of Klickitat County.
- Access to neighboring counties (e.g. Skamania County to Hood River and Klickitat County, and Klickitat County to all of the neighboring counties).

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Following identification of transportation needs and potential strategies in the draft Human Services Transportation Plan, service providers define projects to meet these transportation needs. Transportation stakeholders and project sponsors in the three-county region will convene to discuss the highest priorities and to consider which of the priorities should be submitted for funding consideration for C-TRAN's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 funding and through the state's Consolidated Grant Program.

The state's grant process requires each RTPO region to rank projects as A, B, C, or D. The number of letter grades each region gets is determined by the population in each of the following categories: number of rural residents, people under 18, people over 65, people with disabilities, people living in poverty and the number of veterans. Based on these populations, the RTC region, which includes Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties, is able to submit 6 A's, 5 B's, 5 C's and unlimited D's¹. 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:

A = top 6 projects	(50 percentile points)
B = second 5 projects	(25 percentile points)
C = third 4 projects	(12 percentile points)
D = remaining projects	(0 percentile points)

NEXT STEPS

The draft Human Services Transportation Plan update for the three-county region will be completed in September. The Plan will support project grant requests. Stakeholders from the three-county region will meet to decide on project priorities to submit for WSDOT funding consideration. Prior to grant request submittal, the list of project priorities will be brought to the RTC Board for Board approval.

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¹ Per WSDOT Website, 2013-2015 Distribution of Ranking Allotments to RTPOs for Human Services Transportation Projects.