



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director 
DATE: March 27, 2018
SUBJECT: **Human Services Transportation Plan, 2018 Update - Introduction**

AT A GLANCE - INFORMATION

This Memo provides background information on an update to the state and federally-required Human Services Transportation Plan due later in 2018. Board action to approve the updated Plan together with project rankings in preparation for transmittal to WSDOT is scheduled to be completed by year-end 2018. Project applications submitted by resource agencies for the next Public Transportation Consolidated Grant program cycle must be identified in the Human Services Transportation Plan as a pre-condition for 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, the young, people with disabilities, low income populations, and rural residents unable to provide their own transportation. The first Human Services Transportation Plan for this region, which includes Clark, Skamania and Klickitat counties, was adopted in 2007, an update followed in 2011 and the current Plan was adopted in 2014. A Plan update is required at least every four years and completion of a draft update is targeted for September 2018.

HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND FUNDING PROGRAMS

Development of a 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. \$62 million was available through the statewide Consolidated program in the 2017-2019 biennium.

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 is a designated recipient of a direct allocation of FTA 5310 funds to the region. The 5310 program currently helps to fund C-TRAN's Travel Trainer and Ambassador programs as well as sub-recipient programs for the Human Services Council's mobility management program and Catholic Community Services volunteer driver program. Typically, this region has received about \$2.6 million per biennium in the statewide competition for funds and about \$330,000 per year comes to C-TRAN from FTA's Section 5310 program.

HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN: OUTLINE

Washington State Department of Transportation 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 - WSDOT is placing heavy emphasis on reaching out to stakeholders during the Plan development process to determine transportation needs and gaps in service.
- Emergency management - how would those with special transportation needs be evacuated during an emergency?
- Data and information, including common origins/destinations and existing transportation services – to understand the demographic trends we are experiencing in the region and how these trends might affect special transportation needs.
- Identify unmet transportation needs and recommend strategies to meet these 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.
- Technology - consider how technology may be used to improve transportation. Technology may help in dispatching vehicles to providing timely information for transportation system users. Evolving technologies may include use of driverless vehicles to meet special transportation needs.

STATUS OF PLAN UPDATE

RTC staff is currently updating key demographic data, is documenting existing special needs transportation services, and is beginning to document the transportation challenges faced by special needs populations to include in the 2018 update.

RTC, C-TRAN and the Human Services Council partner to provide staff assistance to the Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative (ATCI) which formed in this region in 2011 at the recommendation of stakeholders who participated in a program led by Easter Seals to discuss special transportation needs. The ATCI has continued to hold meetings on a quarterly basis to bring together stakeholders who either have special transportation needs themselves or represent those with special transportation needs. The ATCI will review the Plan update once it is available, will approve the Plan update and meets to consider project applications.

Because stakeholder outreach and feedback have a heightened emphasis in the 2018 HSTP update, RTC, C-TRAN and Human Services Council staff have partnered to conduct four outreach meetings to date. Staff met with the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board on March 7, with the Clark County Aging and Disability Resource Network hosted by the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington on March 9, held a special meeting recorded by CVTV at the Public Service Center on March 21 at the date and time usually reserved for the Clark County Commission on Aging's monthly meeting and at an outreach event at C-TRAN's Fisher's Landing Transit Center held on the evening of March 22. It is noteworthy that the Commission on Aging's focus in 2018 is on meeting the transportation needs of the older members of our community. There is also an agenda item on this Human Services Transportation Plan 2018 update at the March 28th meeting of C-TRAN's Citizens Advisory Committee at C-TRAN's offices.

At each of the meetings, questions have been posed to help solicit comments and gather feedback. The questions are:

1. How does transportation or lack of transportation affect you?
2. What transportation services are needed in the region (Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties)?
 - o Is there a lack of accessible transportation in the region? If yes, be specific/examples
 - o Are there gaps in transportation?
3. Where are the places you generally need to get to?
 - o Services (medical, shopping, etc.)
 - o Geographical areas (neighborhoods)
 - o Recreation
4. What transportation currently works for you?
 - o what needs enhancement?
 - o What methods of transportation do you use?

Staff will be going out to meetings in Klickitat and Skamania counties and to meet with those in the smaller cities and rural areas of Clark County in the coming months as we try to reach out to as many and varied stakeholders as possible so that we can learn about and understand special transportation needs and reflect the comments we receive in the 2018 Plan update.

Further information on the Human Services Transportation Plan and access to an electronic comments form is available on RTC's website at <http://www.rtc.wa.gov/programs/hstp/update/>

NEXT STEPS

The draft Human Services Transportation Plan update for the three-county region is scheduled for completion in September. The Plan will support project grant requests. When the draft HSTP update is complete, the RTC Board will have opportunity to review the draft Plan before final approval by the Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative (ATCI) and adoption by the RTC Board.