



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director 
DATE: July 31, 2018
SUBJECT: **Regional Transportation Plan for Clark County – 2018 Update: Travel Forecast, System Performance, Public Outreach**

AT A GLANCE - Discussion

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Clark County is being updated in 2018 to comply with federal requirements and to ensure continued consistency between federal, state, regional and local plans. The focus of the RTP August Board presentation will be on the updated regional travel forecast and resulting transportation system performance data as well as public outreach and participation.

INTRODUCTION

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Clark County is the region’s long-range transportation plan to guide development of transportation systems and services over the next twenty years. Regular RTP update is needed to maintain consistency between state, regional, and local plans, is a condition for receipt of federal transportation funds to this region and a condition for programming of the federal funds in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Clark County jurisdictions and transportation agencies. TIP projects must come from an RTP that is compliant with federal laws. The existing Plan was adopted by the RTC Board in December 2014. The RTP update now underway will have a horizon year of 2040.

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a progress report on Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update activities. The agenda item will focus on key RTP elements including transportation system performance and public participation in developing the 2018 RTP update.

RTP UPDATE PROCESS

Attached with this Memo is a chart that summarizes steps in the RTP Development Process. To further recap some of the recent steps taken in developing the RTP update, an overview is provided in the table below:

Month	RTP
May RTC Board Meeting	RTP status report, development process chart, preliminary RTP 2040 project list
June RTC Board Meeting	Preliminary review of the RTP’s finance plan

After review of the RTP’s 2040 draft project list with local planning partners at meetings of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), RTC and Metro staff worked to code the RTP projects and work has been underway to complete the 2040 regional travel forecast modeling and analyze transportation system performance. RTC plans to share some of the initial regional travel forecast model results at the August RTC Board meeting.

TRAVEL FORECAST AND SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

RTC staff has completed the first round of 2040 regional travel forecasting to support the RTP update and will report on preliminary results at the August RTC Board meeting. The initial round of travel forecasting was developed using RTC’s Regional Travel Forecasting Model. The model uses land use inputs to estimate travel demand and then combines travel demand with highway and transit networks to estimate utilization of the transportation system, travel patterns and analysis of system performance.

In October, the Board reviewed the regional population and employment forecasts that serve as inputs to the regional travel forecast. The 7-county Metropolitan Statistical area is forecast to have over 3 million people and 1.5 million jobs by 2040. The 2040 forecasts for Clark County are 600,361 people and 241,499 jobs. The 2040 travel forecast is built upon a 2015 base-year travel model and the population and employment inputs for Clark County are found in a table below. These population and employment totals are spatially allocated to one of Clark County’s 665 Transportation Analysis Zones as households and jobs.

Table 1: 2015 and 2040 Population and Employment for Clark County

	2015	2040	% increase
Population	451,820	600,361	32.9%
Employment	144,004	241,499	67.7%

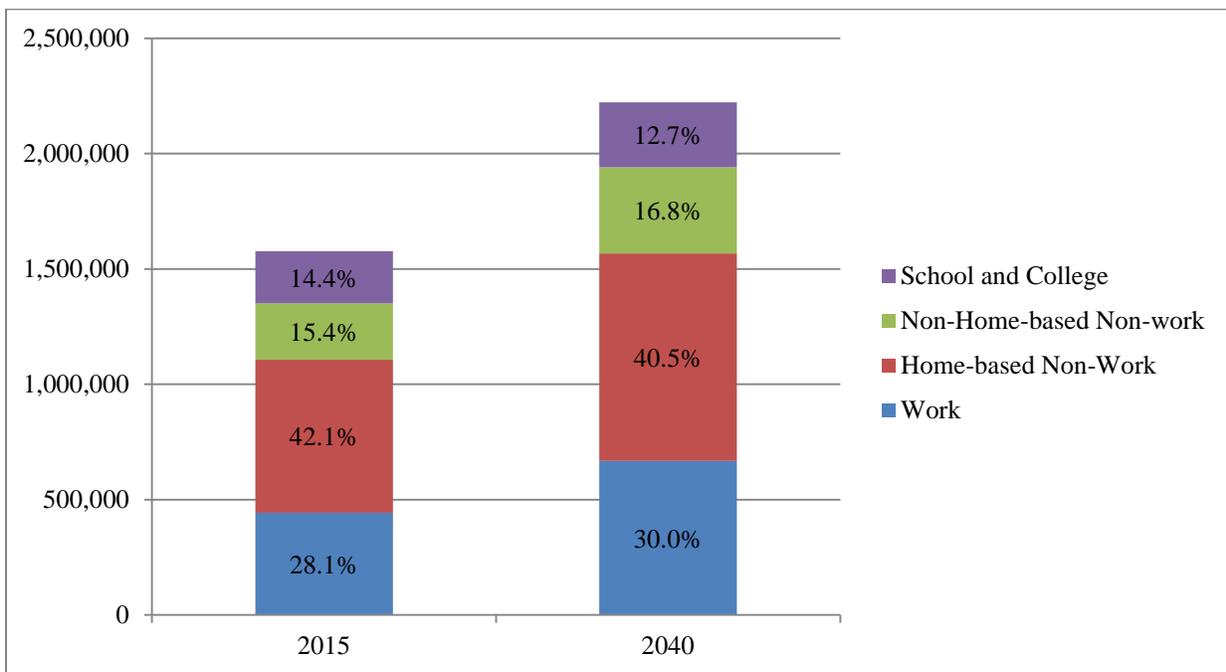
The regional travel forecast model has four major steps that represent travel choice behavior of households that vary significantly across a number of socioeconomic dimensions.

- 1) Trip Generation estimates the number of person trips that are generated by each household by trip purpose. This step addresses people’s needs and desires to travel for a specific purpose.
- 2) Trip Distribution/Destination Choice links the origin of each person trip with a destination. Work trips are linked to places of employment; shopping trips are linked to retail locations; and so on and so forth. This step addresses where the people will travel to satisfy their particular reason for travel.
- 3) Mode Choice addresses the selection of a mode of travel for each person trip to reach a particular destination. One can drive alone, ride as a passenger, take transit, walk, bike, or even combine modes.
- 4) Trips Assignment addresses the route taken for each auto and transit trip for defined time periods and is sensitive to congestion and capacity of each road and transit segment of

route between trip origins and destinations. The results of trips assignment provide a number of system performance measures.

Based on the regional travel forecast model, from 2015 to 2040 the number of daily person trips generated by Clark County residents on an average weekday will increase from just over 1.5 million to a little over 2.2 million, an increase of nearly 650,000 trips or about 41% (see Figure 1). There is not much change in the distribution of trip purposes, just some small changes as the population ages and birth rates continue to decline.

Figure 1: Clark County 2015 and 2040 Daily Person Trips by Trip Purpose



Source: RTC Regional Travel Forecast Model

While the number of trips generated by Clark County residents increases by 41%, trips crossing the Columbia River increase only 17%, around 30,000 person trips. This results in a decrease in the percentage of all daily Clark County non-school trips crossing the Columbia River in 2040 to about 10% (see Table 2). The percentage of Clark County work trips crossing the Columbia similarly decreases from 33% in 2015 to 25.3% in 2040 (see Table 3).

Table 2: Distribution of Average Weekday Person Trips (excluding school trips)

	2015	2040
Remain in Clark County/WA	87.5%	89.8%
Cross the Columbia River	12.5%	10.2%

Table 3: Distribution of Average Weekday Person Work Trips

	2015	2040
Remain in Clark County/WA	67.0%	74.7%
Cross the Columbia River	33.0%	25.3%

The mode split for all Clark County non-school trips changes slightly as transit’s mode share increases from 1.6% to 2.2% (see Table 4).

Table 4: Mode Split for Clark County Non-School Trips

Mode	2015	2040
Auto	90.0%	89.7%
Transit	1.6%	2.2%
Non-Motorized	8.4%	8.1%

At the RTC Board meeting, RTC staff will review these results from the regional travel forecast model and present system performance findings that will include things such as, vehicle miles traveled, lane miles of congestion, walk access to transit, household’s access to regional employment and comparisons to a “no-build” 2040 transportation system.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public is encouraged to participate in the RTP update process. RTP information and RTC Board materials on the RTP update have been made available on RTC’s website throughout the RTP’s current update process. The public is able to provide RTP comments via the RTC website, e-mail, phone or mail. Throughout the development of the RTP update in 2017 and 2018, RTC has received a steady flow of public comments through these means.

RTC staff has also been providing outreach to community groups with presentations on the RTP made to such groups as Vancouver’s Neighborhood Transportation Safety Alliance, Clark Communities Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the Columbia River Economic Development Council and Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative. At the May 2018 Board meeting, WSU-V student Andrew Harris provided an overview of research he had conducted on synthesizing public opinions on transportation issues and needs based on an examination of public opinion surveys from the past five years.

On Monday, September 10, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., RTC is co-hosting a transportation outreach event with the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) and other planning partners at the Downtown Vancouver Library. At this open house style event, the Washington

Transportation Plan and Regional Transportation Plan updates will be showcased as well as other transportation planning efforts in this region.

In upcoming months, RTC staff will be sending notices of the RTP's development and public outreach opportunities to Clark County and Vancouver neighborhood coordinators and will continue to keep small cities informed through their Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) representatives. RTC staff will be enquiring whether each of our jurisdictional planning partners would like RTC to make a presentation on the RTP update at Council workshops in October and November.

As the RTP update process moves into its final development phase, RTC proposes to field a public survey through use of the MetroQuest software tool. MetroQuest software is a widely recognized tool used in the planning sector to help maximize public participation, collect informed public input and assist in delivering actionable results thus assisting planning agencies in developing plans and programs. MetroQuest is a unique tool with an engaging and easy-to-use interface and offers the opportunity for planners to better meet public engagement objectives as part of the planning process.

Use of MetroQuest typically engages the public in completing an opinion survey within about 5 minutes providing thought-provoking and visual content to help educate the public and thereby quickly collect informed input. It is a fun, fast and easy way to gain public participation through interaction using desktop/laptop computer, tablet, mobile phone, and/or kiosk. The survey will be designed so that participants can learn about alternatives and tradeoffs and visualize options. Within the Portland-Vancouver region, the MetroQuest software has been successfully used by the City of Vancouver in its transportation financing initiative in 2014 and by Metro in engaging the public in development of Metro's Regional Transportation Plan update in early 2018.

NEXT STEPS

RTC staff will continue to work with local jurisdictions and partner agencies to complete the analysis of transportation system performance and to refine transportation solutions to be incorporated into the fiscally constrained RTP update. Over the next few weeks, work will focus on sections of the RTP relating to safety and security, active transportation, environmental mitigation and public outreach. RTC staff will report back to the RTC Board at future meetings.

Attachments: RTP Development Process Chart

The Regional Transportation Plan: RTP Development Process and Subsequent Implementation

RTP Update Developed: Years 2017-2018

2018 RTP Implementation: Years 2019 - 2023

