



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director 
DATE: September 25, 2018
SUBJECT: **Human Services Transportation Plan, 2018 Update**

AT A GLANCE - INFORMATION

This Memo provides background information on an update to the state and federally-required Human Services Transportation Plan due in 2018. It also anticipates Board action at a future meeting when the Board be asked to approve the updated HSTP and endorse a ranked list of projects that address human services transportation needs in Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties that are supported in the HSTP. These are projects that have been submitted by resource agencies for the next WSDOT Public Transportation Consolidated Grant program cycle. Project ranking will be carried out by the Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative (ATCI) before being brought to the RTC Board for endorsement.

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 will soon be available.

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 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. RTC's efforts to coordinate with stakeholders is described on pages 4 to 5 of this Memo.
- 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.

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 2018 population, estimate of population aged over 65 years in 2015, OFM’s intermediate level 2040 population forecast and forecast of population 65 and older in 2040. The forecast growth in population aged 65+ years over 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	2018 Population	2015 Population 65+> and %	2040 Population Forecast	2040 Population Forecast 65+> and %	Population 65+> % Inc. 2015 to 2040
Clark	479,500	65,524 <i>14.28</i>	643,552	142,656 <i>22.17%</i>	118%
Skamania	11,890	2,158 <i>18.88%</i>	13,704	4,103 <i>29.94%</i>	90%
Klickitat	21,980	4,792 <i>22.82%</i>	21,930	7,451 <i>33.98%</i>	55%

Source: Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM), OFM forecast, Intermediate Series (Nov. 2017)

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

RTC staff and planning partners have documented existing special needs transportation services and the transportation challenges faced by special needs populations for the 2018 HSTP update.

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 special stakeholder outreach meetings to learn about and understand special transportation needs and reflect the comments received in the 2018 Plan update. In addition, meetings of the Accessible Transportation Coalition have included agenda items on the HSTP update at each of the meetings held during the past year and a half during the development of the 2018 HSTP 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, will approve the Plan update and meet to consider project applications.

Listed below are the outreach meetings where RTC and Human Services Council staff have made presentations and sought input from stakeholders:

- Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board; March 7, 2018
- Clark County Aging and Disability Resource Network hosted by the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington; March 9, 2018
- ATCI Special Meeting focused solely on the HSTP update at the date and time usually reserved for the Clark County Commission on Aging's monthly meeting, recorded by CVTV at the Public Service Center; March 21, 2018
- ATCI Special Meeting focused solely on the HSTP update, at C-TRAN's Rose Besserman Room, Fisher's Landing Transit Center; March 22, 2018.
- C-TRAN's Citizens Advisory Committee; March 28, 2018
- Vancouver Neighborhood Traffic Safety Alliance; April 17, 2018
- Hegewald Center, Stevenson; May 30, 2018
- HSTP Open House, White Salmon; June 13, 2018
- HSTP Open House, Goldendale; June 19, 2018
- Southwest Washington Healthy Living Collaborative; July 2018
- Loaves and Fishes meetings at:
 - Battle Ground
 - Washougal
 - Luepke Center, Vancouver
 - Ridgefield

- La Center
- Amboy

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.

At each of the HSTP outreach meetings, questions were 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)?
 - Is there a lack of accessible transportation in the region? If yes, be specific/examples
 - Are there gaps in transportation?
3. Where are the places you generally need to get to?
 - Services (medical, shopping, etc.)
 - Geographical areas (neighborhoods)
 - Recreation
4. What transportation currently works for you?
 - what needs enhancement?
 - What methods of transportation do you use?

Further information on the Human Services Transportation Plan and access to an electronic comments form has been available on RTC's website throughout the development of the HSTP 2018 update at <http://www.rtc.wa.gov/programs/hstp/update/>

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 Transportation Policy Committee, the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee in addition to the outreach meetings described in the Stakeholder Outreach section (above).

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 school student 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 and volunteer driver services provided through Catholic Community Services.

Skamania County

The main special transportation service provider in Skamania County is Skamania County Senior Services. Other services include school student transportation, 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 special transportation service provider in Klickitat County is Mount Adams Transportation operated by Klickitat County Senior Services. Other services include school student 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

The transportation needs identified in discussions with stakeholders and surveys conducted by the Human Services Council included 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 such as Loaves and Fishes/Meals on Wheels.
- Providing transport to adult day care services.
- Ensuring the Cowlitz Tribe Transit Service can help to get clients to medical appointments as well as the Tribe's employment opportunities 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 of the homeless and 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 van 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).
- Purchase of vehicles to continue providing special needs transportation.

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 rank projects seeking funding through C-TRAN's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 funding or through the state's Consolidated Grant Program.

The state's grant process requires each RTPPO 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, 6 B's, 5 C's and unlimited D's. 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 6 projects	(25 percentile points)
C = third 5 projects	(12 percentile points)
D = remaining projects	(0 percentile points)

NEXT STEPS

The draft Human Services Transportation Plan update for the three-county region is soon scheduled for completion. The Plan will support project grant requests and will be brought to the RTC Board for approval. The Board will also be asked to endorse the project application rankings for those projects seeking WSDOT Consolidated Grant program funds in the next funding cycle.