Agenda Item VII.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors

FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director MHR

DATE: July 30, 2019

SUBJECT: **Integrated Transportation and Land Use Planning**

AT A GLANCE – INFORMATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide summary information on the Washington State Growth Management Act as it relates to the planning process for counties, cities and Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council in its role as designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the region. The Memo also provides information on integrated land use and transportation planning and a brief review of the 2011 Transportation and Land Use Scenario Planning Workshop hosted by RTC.

BACKGROUND - WASHINGTON STATE'S GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT

Washington State's Growth Management Act (GMA) was first adopted in 1990 though it has been amended and added to over time. The codified Act is primarily found in RCW 36.70A. The GMA was adopted to address the management of growth, protection of critical areas and natural resource lands, designation of urban growth areas, preparation of comprehensive plans and implementation of capital investments. The Statewide interest in growth management is expressed through 14 explicit GMA goals and requirements but the focus is on local control and decision-making as local jurisdictions determine how to meet the goals and requirements through the local planning process.

Given its population of over 50,000 and fast growth rate of more than 10% growth in the 10 years preceding May 16, 1995, Clark County is required to fully plan under the GMA. The County, cities and RTC, as Regional Transportation Planning Organization for the region, have duties and functions as summarized in Figure 1 (overleaf).

All communities, including those that are not subject to the full planning requirements of the GMA such as Skamania and Klickitat counties, have to adopt development regulations that protect critical areas and natural resource areas.

As part of the Growth Management planning process, Clark County adopted a Framework Plan in 1993. Its adoption came after extensive public outreach and participation to set the vision and reflect community values for Clark County's future. Under the GMA, the County is tasked with developing a set of county-wide planning policies in collaboration with cities, to guide comprehensive plan development and to ensure consistency between comprehensive plans of the County and cities. These planning policies are described in Clark County's 20 Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan.

Figure 1

Jurisdictions and Agencies: Duties and Functions under the GMA

Clark County	Cities	RTC Regional Transportation Planning Organization
• Framework Plan (Clark County, 1993) • County-wide Planning Policies • Comprehensive Plan, including transportation element (Clark County, first adopted 1994, most recent update June 2016) • Capital Facilities Plan	• Comprehensive Plan (including transportation element) • Capital Facilities Plan	• Regional Transportation Plan (consistent with countywide planning policies) • Review and certify transportation elements of local comprehensive plans • Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The GMA establishes the pre-eminence of the Comprehensive Plan as the centerpiece of local planning. Mandatory component elements of a Comprehensive plan are:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Capital Facilities Plan
- Utilities
- Rural Development (counties only)
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Ports (for cities with annual maritime port revenues exceeding $60 million, RCW 36.70A.085)

All elements listed above are significant, but it is the land use element that sets the direction for future growth in a community to attain the community's vision. It is the County and cities that

control land use and have the authority to maintain consistency with their comprehensive plans through zoning and platting.

Both Clark County and cities in the County have a transportation element as part of their comprehensive plans and have also developed a transportation Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) to support growth management planning objectives. Some jurisdictions opt to develop a Transportation Systems Plan which further informs and supports the GMA planning process.

As Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the region, RTC's duties under the GMA include: developing a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to be consistent with county-wide planning policies; must review and certify that the transportation elements of local comprehensive plans are complete and are consistent with the RTP; and must develop a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The duties of the RTPO primarily focus on consistency between plans.

INTEGREATD TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLANNING

The GMA provides the regional basis for integrated transportation and land use planning. Comprehensive plans analyze the transportation systems needs associated with the land use plan and develop transportation strategies in the transportation element along with a detailed Capital Facilities Plan for transportation projects and funding. The 1993 Community Framework Plan provides a 50-year vision for growth in Clark County and the County-wide Planning Policies support that vision. The region's current 20-year planning horizon has now reached the visioning horizon of the Community Framework Plan.

The region's comprehensive plans and Regional Transportation Plan provide a good understanding of how the region will accommodate growth over the next 20 years. They include: plans for new urban lands; the redevelopment of existing urban lands; and the provision of infrastructure to serve those lands with water, sewer, power, emergency services, schools, transportation, etc. The plans recognize opportunities as well as a number of constraints, including physical, legal, market, and fiscal constraints. These plans help us with the next few steps from where we are currently, but no longer have a vision of a long-term destination. A long-range vision is integral to identifying needs and beginning planning efforts for many facilities with long-term planning horizons - in this example multi-modal transportation infrastructure.

VISIONING AND SCENARIO PLANNING

Fifty years from now, what will our region look like and what kind of world will we be living in? That is a difficult question to answer. We would like to think that the future is wide open and completely up to us and the collective choices we make. However, while there are many possible futures they are influenced by constraints and the paths we choose to take within those constraints. Some constraints are self-imposed through policy and laws, some are based on the

economic realities of limited resources and competing values, while others come from past choices that opened new doors while closing others and many are yet to be seen given the uncertainty of future social, technological, geopolitical, and environmental changes that will manifest themselves over the next 50 years.

In the spring of 2011, RTC partnered with WSDOT to host a day-long Transportation and Land Use Scenario Planning Workshop sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration. The workshop introduced the community to the current state of integrated visioning and long-range scenario planning. What follows is a brief summary of material from that workshop.

Long-range visioning and scenario planning provide our community with processes and tools to develop a comprehensive vision for the future with strategies that provide both flexibility and resilience to adapt to a number of future uncertainties. The process relies on extensive community engagement to develop a vision that is owned by the community and answers four basic questions in the process.

1. Who are we?
2. Where are we now?
3. Where do we want to go and who do we want to be?
4. How do we get there given the uncertainties of the future?

"Who are we?" - is typically answered by a community values assessment, where the community seeks to identify and understand values they hold in common. The community's values set the basis from which the community vision is developed.

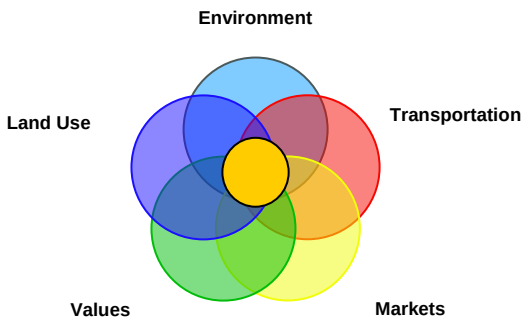
"Where are we now?" - is answered by the collection of data and information that presents a comprehensive picture of the community and function/state of its systems.

"Who do we want to be and where do we want to go?" - is answered by a visioning process where goals and outcomes are rooted in community values. Community values help to identify objectives and navigate compromise surrounding competing outcomes and objectives. The visioning process helps the community understand the long-term consequences and outcomes of the choices they make now. When values and outcomes lead the visioning discussion, it helps the community identify a menu of new ideas and strategies that can support a combination of community-valued outcomes.

"How do we get there given the uncertainties of the future?" - is answered through a scenario planning process that develops a comprehensive set of robust, flexible and resilient strategies that best navigate a wide-ranging set of possible future conditions. The goal of the community vision is not the forecast of a single future under a certain set of assumptions about that future, but a set of strategies that will preserve the best options to achieve the outcomes defined by our community's values across a range of possible futures.

The community vision is not necessarily comprised just of land use/transportation goals and outcomes, but can include the consideration of education, health, environment, equity, economic and other goals and outcomes as well. The community vision provides all planning efforts in the community a common set of goals, outcomes and strategies to focus upon. Each planning effort can identify not just what are the next steps from where we are at, but what are the next steps towards where we want to go. The community vision needs to be focused, centered and balanced.

Community Vision



LOOKING FORWARD

Options for the community's path forward are many, but not unlimited. Charting the path forward to accommodate expected growth (population, employment) can be both a practical and aspirational exercise. Long-term planning processes (ex. 50-year visioning) should include comprehensive input and feedback loops for community and agency stakeholders; allowing for the expression of values and testing of tradeoffs. Multi-modal transportation system and service providers should have a prominent role as part of the planning input and feedback loop processes, and should be joined by other service providers charged with building and managing the infrastructure needed to support the community's long-term growth vision. While the future is uncertain in some respects, charting a long-term path forward is a worthy endeavor.

Presentations and video from the workshop can be found on RTC's website – https://www.rtc.wa.gov/events/spw/.