



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director 
DATE: March 31, 2020
SUBJECT: **FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program – DRAFT Review**

AT A GLANCE

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Board with a DRAFT Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) in advance of final action at the May RTC Board meeting. The UPWP is prepared annually by RTC as a federal requirement of all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and as a condition of eligibility for federal and state transportation planning and project grant funds. The FY 2021 UPWP is consistent with RTC’s calendar year 2020 Work Plan and Budget.

BACKGROUND

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) documents the transportation planning activities to be carried out by RTC as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Clark County (within the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area) and the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) transportation planning activities in the three county region of Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties. The UPWP is prepared and transportation planning activities are performed in response to the requirements of all MPOs in federal regulations; United States Code (USC) Titles 23 and 49. RTC’s draft FY 2021 UPWP (attached) covers a one year period from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

The UPWP is consistent with RTC’s calendar year 2020 Work Plan and Budget adopted by the RTC Board in December 2019 (RTC Board Resolution 12-19-32). The FY 2021 UPWP extends the Work Plan’s timeframe by six months. In addition to describing upcoming transportation planning activities, the UPWP also details the funding sources to carry out the program and addresses the major transportation policy issues of the upcoming year. This month’s agenda item provides RTC Board members an opportunity to review the draft FY 2021 UPWP.

UPWP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The FY 2021 UPWP builds upon RTC’s CY 2020 Work Program, continues core work program elements and reflects planning emphasis areas. Guidance on development of the UPWP is provided to MPOs and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) in a Transportation Planning Guidance document prepared jointly by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

To meet federal requirements, the UPWP must include a discussion of the planning priorities facing the MPO (see UPWP pages xiii to xv). The UPWP is developed by the RTC in

cooperation with the state Department of Transportation and transit operators. Members of RTC’s Regional Transportation Advisory Committee also help to develop the draft UPWP.

FY 2021 UPWP FEDERAL AND STATE PLANNING EMPHASIS AREAS

The UPWP is expected to reflect federal, state and local transportation Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs) as outlined in the Transportation Planning Guidance document. State and federal emphasis areas to be reflected in regional FY 2021 UPWPs are addressed in the introductory section of the draft FY 2021 UPWP on pages x through xiii. The primary federal emphasis area for FY 2021 is continuation of the required performance based planning. The state emphasizes the need for MPO/RTPOs to collaborate with WSDOT on development of statewide transportation plans.

FY 2021 UPWP FORMAT & BUDGET

As in previous years, the draft UPWP has four major areas: (1) Regional Transportation Planning Program, (2) Data Management and Travel Forecasting Process, (3) Transportation Program Coordination and Management, and (4) Transportation Planning Activities of State and Local Agencies. Each section includes work elements that document the anticipated transportation planning activities to be carried out in FY 2021.

To meet federal requirements for Transportation Management Areas (TMAs), such as Clark County, the UPWP must include a discussion of the planning priorities in the metropolitan planning area and describe all metropolitan transportation and transportation-related air quality planning activities including corridor and subarea studies anticipated within the area, regardless of funding sources or agencies conducting the activities.

To carry out the metropolitan transportation planning program required of MPOs and state RTPOs, FHWA and FTA grant federal funds, and the state grants state planning funds. The table below presents WSDOT funding estimates for allocated federal PL and FTA funding and an estimate of state Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) funds RTC may receive to carry out the FY 2021 regional transportation planning program. The distribution of these estimated revenues to work elements is summarized on page 60 of RTC’s draft FY 2021 UPWP.

FY 2021 Estimated Annual MPO Funding:	
FHWA PL	\$626,041
FTA Section 5303	\$197,467
RTPO Planning	\$192,925

UPWP REVIEW

After a first draft UPWP was developed by RTC and planning partners in early 2020, the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) reviewed the early draft at its January 17 meeting prior to RTC’s review meeting with FHWA, FTA and WSDOT Headquarter staff held on February 20.

Bi-State UPWP Review

The Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area is served by two MPOs. In a bi-state region, the MPOs must cooperate and coordinate in development and adoption of the UPWP. RTC and Metro staff participate in the Federal and State UPWP review meetings held at both MPOs. To review the draft FY 2021 UPWPs for both MPOs federal and state agencies held a review meeting at Metro on the afternoon of February 19, 2020 and at RTC on the morning of February 20. RTC's draft UPWP is made available for review by Metro's Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) and Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT). JPACT and the Metro Council take action to adopt Metro's own UPWP and endorse RTC's. Likewise, Metro's draft UPWP is reviewed by RTC's Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), and the RTC Board is asked to endorse Metro's UPWP as part of the adoption process for RTC's UPWP. Metro's draft 2020-2021 UPWP is attached for review.

NEXT STEPS

Following the April 7 RTC Board meeting, the draft FY 2021 UPWP will be available on RTC's website for comment. RTAC will be asked to recommend action on the FY 2021 UPWP at its April 17 meeting. The FY 2021 UPWP will be scheduled for RTC Board approval at the May 5 Board meeting, including endorsement of Metro's 2020-2021 UPWP consistent with applicable requirements and schedules. This timeline would meet the federal and WSDOT-required timeline to have UPWPs submitted by June 22 with FHWA and FTA approval by June 30 thus allowing the UPWP to take effect on July 1, 2020.

Attachments: RTC's FY 2021 UPWP – DRAFT
Metro's FY 2020-2021 UPWP - DRAFT