



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Dean Lookingbill, Transportation Director  
**DATE:** May 29, 2013  
**SUBJECT:** **2010 U.S. Census Urbanized Area and Federal Aid Urban Area Boundary**

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### ***AT A GLANCE***

*The purpose of this memorandum is to ask for the RTC Board's endorsement of the adjusted Federal Aid Urban Area Boundary for the Vancouver/Clark County region as proposed by the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) and to allow for submittal of the draft adjusted UAB map for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval.*

### **BACKGROUND**

**What is the Urban Area Boundary; what must it include?** Each decade, the need to review and adjust the federal transportation Urban Area Boundary (UAB) for the region follows after modifications to the U.S. Census-defined Urbanized Area Boundary (UZA) are made. The U.S. Census Bureau defines the UZA based on population densities at the decennial census in areas of greater than 50,000 population. At a minimum, the UAB must include the 2010 U.S. Census-defined UZA as well as land within the city limits of municipalities included within the UZA which in Clark County include Vancouver, Battle Ground, Camas and Washougal with each of these jurisdictions having a population of greater than 5,000 at the time of the 2010 Census.

**How is the UAB relevant to transportation?** Urban Area Boundaries (UABs) are relevant in establishing the federal functional classification of streets because the UAB delineates the boundary between rural and urban functional classifications. The UAB also has implications for capital transportation project funding such as distribution of federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds and eligibility for the State's County Road Administration Board (CRAB) funds for rural road preservation and maintenance, Rural Arterial Program (RAP), County Arterial Preservation Program (CAPP) and Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) programs.

**What should be considered in proposing adjustments to the UAB?** In proposing UAB adjustments, consideration should be given to the function of roads, traffic generators, expanding areas of urbanization expected to be a part of the 2020 Census UZA. The boundary should be smoothed to ensure peripheral roads do not snake in and out of the boundary between urban and rural classifications.

**Who makes the decisions on UAB adjustment?** In urbanized areas, Urban Area Boundaries are established or revised by WSDOT in cooperation with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and must be approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

**Resulting map of the adjusted Urban Area Boundary.** RTC worked with staff of local affected jurisdictions to work on completing a draft Adjusted Urban Area Boundary and reviewed the proposed map with Regional Transportation Advisory Committee members. The

resulting map, “Proposed 2010 Federal Urban Area Boundary” for the Clark County region, is attached. The map shows the extent of the 2010 Census Urbanized Area (UZA) in tan; this area must be included as part of the UAB. The map also shows, in green, areas proposed to be added to complete the 2010 UAB. These added areas ensure the Urban Growth Areas, as well as the city limits of Vancouver, Battle Ground, Camas and Washougal, are encompassed within the proposed adjusted 2010 UAB. The U.S. Census-defined UZA includes a long, narrow segment along the Washougal River Road and though local partners acknowledge this will not be urban in character; this narrow strip of land has to be included within the UAB to comply with federal directive. However, because the Lower Washougal River Road is a peripheral road of the UAB it can remain classified as rural.

### **POLICY IMPLICATION**

The federal Urban Area Boundary should not be confused with the Urban Growth Area boundaries (UGAs) required by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) primarily for land use purposes. However, the relationships between the state and federally-required boundaries are considered when adjusting the federal Urban Area Boundary for transportation. The federal Urban Area Boundary must be established to meet the requirements of Title 23, Section 103 USC in those places designated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census as urbanized. Washington State’s Boundary Review Team is scheduled to finalize the draft adjusted UAB proposals by June 14. After the updated UAB is approved by the Federal Highway Administration, the federal functional classification system of arterial streets will be updated later in 2013 and needs to be finalized by FHWA before the end of 2013.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATION**

UABs are relevant in establishing the federal functional classification system of streets and establish eligibility for transportation project funding. All roads, streets and highways are classified as rural or urban using the Transportation Urban Area Boundary (UAB). The functional classification determines what federal and state funding programs are available for that facility. Roads classified as collector or above in urban areas and major collector and above in rural areas are eligible for federal funding. Rural minor collectors are not eligible for federal funding.

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

The RTC Board is asked to endorse the adjusted Federal Aid Urban Area Boundary (UAB) for the Vancouver/Clark County region and allow for submittal of the draft adjusted UAB map to the WSDOT/FHWA Boundary Review Team and to seek Federal Highway Administration approval.

**Attachment:** Proposed 2010 Federal Urban Area Boundary Map, Clark County Washington Region

# Proposed 2010 Federal Urban Area Boundary

## Proposed 2010 Federal UAB

-  2010 Census Urbanized Area
-  RTC Recommended Additions

Last updated: 9 May 2013

