



SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

FEDERAL PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

Mission Statement – To encourage and promote the development of a balanced, safe, efficient, and affordable regional transportation system to meet the mobility and accessibility needs of people and goods, within and through this region, and minimize transportation related air pollution.

Role - RTC serves as the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for Clark County and conducts the federally required transportation planning process that is a condition for the receipt of federal transportation funds. RTC also serves as the Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat County Regional Transportation Planning Organization as required by the State Growth Management Act.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) – The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for Clark County is the region’s principal long-range transportation planning document. The MTP is the result of a comprehensive planning process among jurisdictions and establishes regional transportation policy, while recommending a balanced program of modal investments to meet future transportation system needs. The federally required plan must look 20 years to the future and be updated every 4 years.

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) – The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program is a four-year project list of all federally funded and regionally significant state and local transportation projects within Clark County. The MTIP prioritizes and programs funding for the set of projects to be implemented in each of the next four years. Projects in the MTIP must be identified in the MTP or be consistent with the MTP project categories of preservation, maintenance, safety, freight, bike/pedestrian, and transportation system management strategies. All federally funded and WSDOT transportation projects must be programmed in the MTIP in order to be eligible for the receipt of funds.

Congestion Management Process (CMP) - The Congestion Management Process, as defined in federal regulation, is intended to serve as a systematic process that provides for safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system. RTC’s CMP is collaboratively developed and implemented as an integral part of the metropolitan planning process. The CMP provides a wide range of transportation system data to help guide the investment of transportation funds toward improving congestion.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – The Unified Planning Work Program identifies the transportation planning activities in response to the region’s policies and issues, and in compliance with federal and state transportation planning requirements. The annual work program is developed in cooperation with local agencies, WSDOT, and C-TRAN. The UPWP is required in order for the region to be eligible to receive federal and state transportation planning funds.



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FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECT FUNDING

Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) – The federal STP program provides \$5.3 million per year in regionally allocated funds for RTC member agencies within Clark County. The project selection and programming decisions for these funds are made by the RTC Board, beginning in June of each year and ending with a Board decision in October. The program provides flexible funding for a wide range of projects from planning, to highways, to transit, to bike/pedestrian facilities. A project selection, evaluation, and programming process for these funds has been set by the RTC Board.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) – The federal CMAQ program provides \$3 million per year in regionally allocated funding for projects in the Vancouver Air Quality Maintenance Area that improve air quality. The project selection and programming decisions are made by the RTC Board and follow a similar process as used for the STP funds but with the air quality points doubled. CMAQ project eligibility is limited to projects that contribute to the maintenance of national ozone and carbon monoxide air quality standards. Project examples include transit, traffic operations, traffic flow, and transportation demand management.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – The federal TAP program provides \$.5 million per year in regionally allocated funds for projects in Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat counties. The project selection, evaluation, and programming decisions are made by the RTC Board. The program includes funding for projects that enhance the surface transportation system including: on and off-road facilities for pedestrians, and bikes, safe routes to schools, conversion of old railroad corridors to trails, overlook/viewing areas, historic preservation of transportation facilities, and other similar categories. The project selection, evaluation, and programming process has been set by the RTC Board and applies the evaluation criteria that is specific to TAP-eligible projects.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – The funds for the FTA program are not regionally allocated to RTC. There are four regionally allocated and several nationwide competitive FTA project funding sources available to C-TRAN that include funding for capital and operating assistance, special needs of elderly and handicapped, replacement/rehabilitation of buses and related facilities, modernization, and discretionary funds for high capacity transit projects. The C-TRAN Board makes the project selection decision, while the RTC Board approves the inclusion of the projects into the MTIP.

Other Federal MAP-21 Funding – There are several other federal transportation funding programs for which the RTC Board does not make a project selection decision but must approve the inclusion of the project into the MTIP. The project selection decision is largely with WSDOT and includes funds for maintaining Interstate highways, the National Highway System, and highway bridge replacement/rehabilitation.

Other State Transportation Funding -There are a number of State transportation funding programs for which the project selection decision is made at the state level. If the projects are regionally significant, the RTC Board approves the inclusion of these projects into the MTIP.