



MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Matt Ransom, Executive Director   
**DATE:** October 28, 2014  
**SUBJECT:** **Proposed 2015 RTC Work Program: Emphasis Areas and Core Program**

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***AT A GLANCE - DISCUSSION***

*The proposed areas of emphasis for RTC's 2015 Work Plan are for the Board's review and comment. The Board's comments will be incorporated into the final 2015 Work Program and Budget, which will be proposed for adoption at the December 2, 2014 meeting.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The proposed 2015 Work Program sets out the path for RTC's regional transportation planning, policy setting, and project programming activities for this next year that is responsive to the ever changing transportation issues facing our region. The Work Program reflects and is consistent with the adopted Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Year 2015 (BR 05-14-09). The YR 2015 Work Program is presented in two components: Emphasis Areas and Core Work Program. Each component is described in both summary and detailed outline in the attached documents and briefly summarized below.

The RTC Work Program identifies several Emphasis Areas, where the organization will allocate efforts and resources to advance specific study and policy development in key topic areas that are currently relevant and of regional interest. The intent of the Emphasis Area designation is to provide focus on a specific topic, due to either a current mandate, due to external influences, and/or in response to contemporary and relevant regional issues discussion.

The Work Program also provides a description of the Core component, which focuses on the continuing and comprehensive regional planning and collaborative decision making process and general MPO administration (consistent with the UPWP). The Core work program produces the bulk of the agency product and services to members. The Core work program is informed by accurate data, research, analysis, and special program management, each of which is used to identify needs and strategies that address the RTC region's pressing current and future regional transportation demands.

**YR 2015 EMPHASIS AREAS**

In YR 2015, the RTC will focus on several major initiatives as an outgrowth to the Regional Plan adoption, current mandates, and ongoing discussion of new transportation funding programs. In addition, the work program will seek to continue growth of existing and building of new partnerships which advance long-term regional transportation planning as well as focus particular attention to multi-modal freight planning/data collection. These emphasis areas will provide an

opportunity for focused attention to current regional dialogue related to needed investments across the three-county RTC region.

Emphasis Areas for YR 2015 include: Regional Project Funding; 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Implementation; Regional Freight Planning and Data Collection; Map-21 Implementation; and Partnership Building.

### **YR 2015 CORE WORK PROGRAM**

The Core Work Program includes a full complement of activities to ensure ongoing delivery and federal/state compliance of the regional transportation planning program. Also, individual planning initiatives designed to further implementation of current studies and to refine current plans are also designated as Core work of the agency. The RTC's core work program is oriented within five lines of business and service delivery areas, including: 1) Grant Funding and Administration; Regional Planning; 3) Technical Services; 4) Regional Partnership and Collaboration; and, 5) MPO Program Administration.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Following the November Board discussion, staff will finalize the YR 2015 RTC Work Program and accompanying YR 2015 RTC Budget and present both at the December RTC Board meeting for adoption.

Attachment

# RTC YR 2015 Work Program (*DRAFT*)

## Emphasis Areas

### 1. Regional Project Funding

- a. 10-Year Transportation Project Priorities Report Update
- b. Monitoring and Information Sharing for Federal and State Funding Discussions
- c. Affiliate Agency and Interest Group Information and Research
- d. Grant Program Policy and Scoring Review

### 2. 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Implementation

- a. Grant Program Policy and Scoring Review
  - i. Economic Development Policy Review
  - ii. Complete Streets Policy Review
- b. MAP-21 Performance Target Setting and Regional Policy Development
- c. Comprehensive Plan (GMA) Coordination and Certification

### 3. Regional Freight / Commerce Planning and Data Collection

- a. Regional Freight Data Collection
- b. Regional Freight Project Identification, Mapping, Review
- c. Legislative Monitoring
- d. Interest Group Outreach and Engagement

### 4. MAP-21 Implementation

- a. Monitoring and Comments to Federal Rule Making Process
- b. Develop Performance Targets and Monitoring Systems
- c. Multi-jurisdictional Collaboration for Target Setting and Performance Monitoring

### 5. Partnership Building

- a. Affiliate Agency and Interest Group Outreach
- b. Bi-State Committee(s) Support & Outreach
- c. New Partnership Building

# RTC YR 2015 Work Program (*DRAFT*)

## Emphasis Areas

The RTC 3-county region and member agencies are faced with many significant challenges in the years ahead. The wrap-up of recent state investment programs and the continued recovery of local government balance sheets runs head-on with the continued need to invest in regional transportation infrastructure and to maintain the current assets to an adequate condition. Faced with diminished project investment capacity across the entire region, the regional planning strategy will need to focus on smart investments in the interim while new investment capital is allocated for the Regional Plan list of identified project needs.

Forecasting into the future, all trends indicate a continued strong growth in population and an increasing diversification of our region in terms of age demographics, incomes, and transportation mode choice. These trends will drive a need for continued evolution in policy and strategy in order to provide for a modern and diverse regional transportation network which underlies and supports a planned for vibrant regional economy.

### Year 2015 Emphasis Areas

In addition to delivering a regional transportation program in compliance with federal and state regulations, the RTC has the opportunity to shape regional policy and investment decisions in an array of focus areas. The following are topics that will be emphasized in the YR 2015 Work Program.

**Regional Project Funding:** Advocacy and support of member agency funding of the regional transportation system is a priority of the RTC. Member and peer/affiliate agency and interest group advocacy efforts will be supported by RTC and supplemented by RTC generated data and analysis. The regional 10-Year Transportation Project Priorities Report will be analyzed to reflect new cost/benefit analysis and project cost data. This report, among other tools and research of the RTC, will be made available to all members and shared with the region's federal and state legislative delegate and key state leaders in pursuit of additional regional investment dollars. RTC staff will emphasize monitoring of both state and federal grant program policies with emphasis towards maintenance of existing and expansion of investment capital. RTC will also manage a full regional grant funding program, including the 2-year cycle for the Transportation Alternatives Program funding allocation. It is expected that the regional federal grant program will be at least \$10.5 Million.

**2035 Regional Transportation Plan Implementation:** On the heels of planned adoption of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the RTC will shift focus towards refining RTP implementation systems. Specific efforts will be focused on updating the regional federal grant fund project selection criteria and related policies. This review will enable focus on the key policy considerations identified in the RTP, including economic development and regional funding as well as consideration of complete streets policies. Each of these policy priorities would set the framework for the types and nature of

investments funded with the regional grant program. In addition to review of the regional grant program, RTC will initiate focus on the MAP-21 defined performance policies and target setting process and will begin consideration of targets and measures for inclusion in the RTP in YR 2016. Lastly, RTC staff will consult with local governments in Clark County regarding the ongoing development of the 2016 Growth Management Plan update. RTC will provide traffic forecasts, growth modeling, and GMA compliance certification reviews in compliance with state law.

**Regional Freight / Commerce Planning and Data Collection:** The RTC Board adopted the Clark County Freight Mobility Study (December 2010) and since that time, the regional focus on freight related infrastructure investments and access to Port related industrial lands has intensified. Also emerging are regional discussions to freight rail transportation, at grade crossings into industrial and economic development targeted lands, and there is early talk of potential expansion of freight programs in a future Federal transportation act (MAP-21). The RTC will deploy an extensive data collection program within the three-county region and explore partnerships with existing agencies and interest groups to focus attention on needed multi-modal freight investments and critical economic corridors within the region.

**MAP-21 Implementation:** Since adoption of MAP-21, most of the policy development has taken place at the federal program level. However, in YR 2015 several new policies will filter down and be discussed at the regional level. This coming year, and extending into early 2016, will be a time when RTC will be required to engage regional partners in the establishment of performance measures, targets, data collection, and reporting systems for key policy goals of MAP-21. The policy goals will relate to: Safety, Pavement and Bridge Performance, Asset Management, System Performance (congestion), Transit Performance, and MPO Administration. Specific policy review and target setting will occur steadily over the next 2-year cycle in order to bring RTC Plans and systems in compliance with MAP-21.

**Partnership Building:** Given the diversity of regional transportation needs and limited investment capital, building partnerships and linkages among like or affiliated agencies and groups will be critical for effective regional planning and investment decision-making. RTC staff will continue to commit considerable effort to building information sharing, research, and targeted project partnerships and alliances in order to facilitate maximum return on investment of the regional, state, and locally funded transportation investments. Several partnership opportunities are on the horizon related to topic specific interest groups (freight, bicycle/pedestrian, transit), and RTC will continue to nurture and build upon existing partnerships with Oregon's Metro through the exiting Bi-State Coordination Committee structure, as well as partnerships with affiliate agencies within the Columbia River Gorge region. As opportunities arise in the near term for joint study or research efforts, the RTC will explore those for mutual benefit.

# **RTC YR 2015 Work Program (DRAFT)**

## **Lines of Business & Major Work Activities**

### **1. Grant and Project Funding**

- a. Regional Federal Funding Grant Programs
- b. State Grant Programs
- c. MTIP Administration
- d. Grant Program Policy and Scoring Review

### **2. Regional Planning**

- a. 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Implementation
- b. MAP-21 Performance Target Setting and Regional Policy Development
- c. Congestion Management Process
- d. Vancouver Area Smart Trek – Program Administration
- e. Clark County Freight Mobility Study Implementation
- f. Clark County High Capacity Transit System Study Implementation
- g. Skamania County RTPO Services
- h. Klickitat County RTPO Services
- i. Safety Management System
- j. Human Services Transportation Plan
- k. Regional Commute Trip Reduction Plan Implementation
- l. Comprehensive Plan (GMA) Coordination and Certification

### **3. Technical Services**

- a. Regional Travel Demand Modeling
- b. Air Quality Evaluations
- c. Regional Traffic Count and Data Collection / Repositories
- d. Population/Employment and Demographic Analysis
- e. Specialty Traffic Modeling
- f. GIS Mapping
- g. Grant Writing
- h. Fee-for-Service Data Production and Analysis

### **4. Regional Partnerships and Collaboration**

- a. Member Agency Fee-for-Service Project Management
- b. Member Agency Research and Planning Studies Technical Support
- c. Legislative Project Information & Consultation
- d. Public / Private Partnership Outreach and Studies
- e. Bi-State Coordination Committee(s)

## **5. MPO Program Administration**

- a. Unified Planning Work Program
- b. Finance and Administrative Services
- c. Public Participation Program
- d. Title VI Compliance Program
- e. Professional Development and Training

# RTC YR 2015 (DRAFT)

## Core Work Program

### Lines of Business & Major Work Activities

The Core work of the RTC is to administer the federal and state mandated regional transportation planning and decision making programs. For compliance purposes, the Work Program is documented also in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and adopted by the Board on an annual basis each spring.

The Core Work Program is organized around five key lines of business and each are described in summary detail with corresponding major sub-work elements outlined below.

#### **1. Grant Funding & Administration**

RTC is responsible for managing the annual regional federal-aid transportation grant program for Clark County. The regional federal-aid grant program is the region's largest recurring transportation project investment capital, contributing on average \$10 Million in seed project funding each year across three grant programs as follows: STP-U and STP-R (annual); CMAQ (annual); and TAP (bi-annual). In addition to managing the annual program of grants, the RTC is responsible for managing the administration and compliance of the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Clark, Skamania and Klickitat counties. Proper oversight and compliance ensures timely delivery of member agency's grant funded projects. RTC's goal is to work with member agencies to achieve maximum leverage of regional and state grant funds and provide technical assistance upon request to include grant writing and review services.

YR 2015 Work Program activities include:

- a. Regional Federal Funding Grant Programs
  - i. YR 2015 call for applications: STP-U; STP-R; CMAQ, TAP
- b. State Grant Programs
  - i. *Provide technical support and consultation to member agency applicants*
- c. TIP Administration
  - i. YR 2016-2019 TIP Development
  - ii. Annual Self Certification of MPO Planning Process
  - iii. Monthly Project Amendments
- d. Grant Program Policy and Scoring Review
  - i. Multi-jurisdiction review of current grant program policies and competitive grant evaluation system.

## 2. Regional Planning

RTC provides regional planning study project management, policy development, and research in compliance with the mandates of federal and state statute and in support of regional and member agency initiatives. Urban transportation planning is a complex undertaking and requires skill and dedication of multi-discipline staff to develop long-range transportation investment strategies and policies that address the myriad of needs that exist within the RTC's three-county region. Under federal statute, the RTC is responsible for administering the metropolitan transportation planning program and tasked with development of core plans and performance reports including: Regional Transportation Plan; Congestion Management Process; Safety Management Systems; Regional ITS Architecture; and Human Services Transportation Plan. New federal mandates in MAP-21 require the RTC to develop targets, performance measures and a monitoring system for key investment areas. Under state statute, the RTC is also responsible for development of: Regional Transportation Plans; 6-year Transportation Improvement Programs; and certifying local comprehensive plan transportation elements and countywide planning policies of the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A). In addition to mandated regional planning activities, the RTC is often tasked with leading regional studies and research efforts which inform regional investment strategies and policies.

### YR 2015 Work Program activities include:

- a. 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Implementation
  - i. Grant Program Scoring and Policy Review (*duplicate above*)
  - ii. Complete Streets Policy Review
  - iii. Economic Development Policy Review
  - iv. 10-Year Transportation Priorities Report Update
- b. MAP-21 Performance Target Setting and Regional Policy Development
  - i. Develop measures, targets, and related policies for required emphasis areas including: Safety, Pavement and Bridge Performance, Asset Management, System Performance (congestion), Transit Performance, MPO Administration
- c. Congestion Management Process
  - i. YR 2015 Annual Report
  - ii. Incorporate MAP-21 Performance Targets
- d. Vancouver Area Smart Trek – Program Administration
  - i. TSMO Plan Update
  - ii. TSMO Project Funding and Implementation
  - iii. Traffic Operations Coordination and Management
  - iv. Transportation Fiber Asset Management and Sharing
  - v. Portal Data Archive Expansion
- e. Clark County Freight Mobility Study Implementation
  - i. Data Collection emphasis
  - ii. Classification counts for 2015 FGTS update
  - iii. Monitor Investment and Project Needs Assessment
  - iv. Support research and advocacy efforts

- f. Clark County High Capacity Transit System Study Implementation
  - i. Bus on Shoulders (BOS) Feasibility Study
    - 1. I-205 BOS Feasibility Study Scope of Work and Outreach with Partner Agencies
    - 2. Feasibility Study Finding and Recommendations (*schedule contingent*)
  - ii. C-TRAN 2030 Plan Update – Consultation
    - 1. Provide technical services and staff consultation to C-TRAN 2030 Plan update (*anticipated*)
  - iii. HCT Plan Review
    - 1. Assessment of current Study implementation conditions; monitoring for Study review.
- g. Skamania County RTPO Services
  - i. Bi-Monthly Meetings
  - ii. Technical, modeling and research services
- h. Klickitat County RTPO Services
  - i. Bi-Monthly Meetings
  - ii. Technical, modeling and research services
- i. Safety Management System
  - i. Annual Condition Update
  - ii. (*Next Full Review Cycle in YR 2017*)
- j. Human Services Transportation Plan
  - i. (*Next Full Plan Review Cycle in YR 2018*)
  - ii. (*Next Consolidated Grant Prioritization Process in YR 2016*)
- k. Regional Commute Trip Reduction Plan Implementation
  - i. Periodic Review and Regional Plan Update
  - ii. Local Agency Consultation and Plan Update Certification(s)
- l. Comprehensive Plan (GMA) Coordination & Certification
  - i. RTPO Certification of Consistency between RTP and countywide planning policies and local comprehensive plan transportation elements

### 3. Technical Services

The RTC is the regionally designated agency responsible for managing the regional travel demand model, regional traffic data collection, and air quality project and plan evaluations. Each of these technical services supports compliance with the federal and state planning requirements. Supplementing the core technical services are an array of data and research services provided to regional agencies and for RTC planning studies, and include: demographic analysis and forecasting, GIS mapping and data analysis, grant writing and technical support services to member agencies. In addition to member support, the RTC provides on a cost-reimbursement basis data and technical services to private firms seeking original RTC datasets and or custom modification of RTC data sets for private development and planning purposes.

YR 2015 Work Program activities include:

- a. Regional Travel Demand Modeling
  - i. Model Maintenance
  - ii. Fee for Services for Private Vendors
  - iii. Member Agency Technical Support
  - iv. Update / Consolidation of Model Logic with Metro Portland
- b. Air Quality Evaluations
  - i. Recurring updates for TIP
  - ii. Fee for Service for Member Agency Projects
- c. Regional Traffic Count and Data Collection / Repositories
  - i. Annual NHS Arterial traffic counting program
  - ii. Classification counts for 2015 FGTS update
- d. Population/Employment and Demographic Analysis
- e. Specialty Traffic Modeling
  - i. Dynamic Traffic Assignment Model
    - 1. Applicability Review for Operational Analysis
    - 2. Determine Agency Use
- f. GIS Mapping
- g. Grant Writing
- h. Fee-for-Service data production and analysis (member agency or private firm)

#### **4. Regional Partnerships and Collaboration**

A key component of the regional planning process is collaboration and networking/advocacy among members to the RTC and for the RTC to collaborate with peer public agencies, economic development associations, and private non-profits (Chambers of Commerce, civic associations, etc.) who are studying and advocating for transportation infrastructure planning and investment within the RTC region. Within RTC's 3-county region, dozens of agencies and interest groups are collaborative partners to RTC's mission. In order to effect comprehensive regional transportation planning and investment solutions, RTC staff spend considerable time coordinating and nurturing these partnerships in order to maximize the outcomes of the regional federal and state funding allocations and to set out effective plans for investment. As opportunities arise, RTC collaborates and will initiate or participate in new studies and research efforts and pursues partnerships to affect this type of work. Furthering the collaboration efforts, the RTC is a resource of information and research for members pursuing project lobbying efforts and also to members/staff of the Federal and State legislative delegation. In addition to partnership building and maintenance, RTC provides project management and study support to member and peer agencies on either a no-cost or a fee-for-service model (dependent upon project scope and RTC involvement).

YR 2015 Work Program activities include:

- a. Member Agency Fee-for-Service Project Management
  - i. *Projects TBD*

- b. Member Agency Research and Planning Studies Technical Support
  - i. Multiple Technical and Policy Committee Assignments
- c. Legislative Project Information & Consultation
  - i. Support for Member Agency Legislative Outreach
  - ii. Support for Clark County Transportation Alliance Outreach
  - iii. 10-Year Transportation Priorities Report Update (*duplicate above*)
- d. Public / Private Partnership Outreach and Studies
  - i. Topic Specific partnerships with peer and affiliated agencies and interest groups
- e. Bi-State Coordination Committee
  - i. *Meeting frequency - TBD*

## 5. MPO Program Administration

As the administrator of the metropolitan and regional transportation planning programs under Federal and State statute, the RTC is responsible for compliance with the myriad of regulations and procedures to ensure financial oversight, general administration, and public access to the program. On an annual basis, the RTC spends considerable time and effort in compliance processes, including running the day-to-day operations of the agency. RTC's track record in compliance certification processes and federal/state financial audits has been exemplary, and currently all compliance requirements are fully met. In addition to regulatory and general administration, the RTC provides opportunities for staff professional development and training. Given the complexity of urban/rural transportation planning and changing landscape of regulations and technologies, it is imperative to continue to develop the skills of staff to provide the most program delivery and effective consultation services when requested.

YR 2015 Workplan activities include:

- a. Unified Planning Work Program
  - i. FY 2016 Update
  - ii. FY 2015 Annual Report
  - iii. Triennial Update of MOU between RTC and Metro (Oregon)
- b. Finance and Administrative Services
  - i. Monthly Administration and Accounting Services
  - ii. Monthly Board and Committee Meetings
  - iii. Annual Audit
  - iv. Annual Budget
- c. Public Participation Program
  - i. Annual Evaluation Report
- d. Title VI Compliance Program
  - i. Annual Evaluation Report
- e. Professional Development and Training
  - i. *TBD*