

Annual Report

2020



Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council



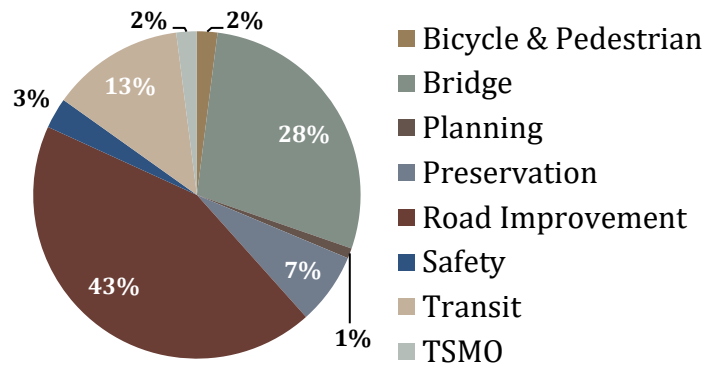
Director's Reflection

2020 will end as a year to remember. Despite upheavals to traffic and personal lives associated with the global COVID-19 pandemic, the [RTC Board of Directors](#) continued to chart a path forward with its grant program and several regional planning initiatives. The Board of Directors awarded the agency's annual competitive grant program of over \$12 million to 15 priority regional projects, and approved a 4-year program for over

\$422 million dollars of multi-modal transportation network investments. RTC continuously plans and advocates for funding of regional transportation network investments and finds strength in our collaboration with all 25 member agencies. Highlights of RTC's work in 2020 are reflected in the following report.

2020 Grants and Investment Program

RTC administers the largest transportation system grant program in Clark County. Over the past 10 years, RTC has awarded over \$120 million in grants. In 2020, RTC approved just over \$12 million in regional grants to 15 projects. These RTC grant funds will help plan and build the region's priority transportation systems. The complete listing of RTC grants awarded in 2020 is provided on page 3.



4-Year Regional Investment Program

The RTC Board of Directors adopted the 2021-2024 [Transportation Improvement Program](#) in October 2020. The 4-year program anticipates \$422 million in

multi-modal transportation system investments for 69 regionally significant projects.

Regional Projects Moving Forward

Numerous projects were advanced from planning to final construction. RTC member agencies celebrated many ribbon cuttings for projects that improve safety, expand

multi-modal networks, and reduce congestion at key locations. Showcase projects completed in 2020 include:



I-5 Advanced Traffic Management System



SR-14 Roundabouts in Washougal



I-5 Bridge Trunnion Project



Stevenson Waterfront Trail



NE 119th Street

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Highway Improvement Program (HIP) Projects

Agency	Project	Phase(s)	Source	Award
Vancouver	SE First Street, 164 th Ave. to 177 th Ave.	CN	HIP	\$395,551
				\$395,551

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)-Urban Projects

Agency	Project	Phase(s)	Source	Award
RTC	Regional Studies	PL	STBG	\$100,000
RTC	2023 UPWP & CMP Support	PL	STBG	\$500,000
RTC	VAST / TSMO Coordination	PL	STBG	\$385,000
Vancouver	NE 137 th Avenue, 49 th St. to Fourth Plain Blvd.	CN	STBG	\$1,000,000
Clark County	NE 152 nd Avenue, Padden Pkwy to 99 th St.	PE	STBG	\$500,000
Clark County	NE 99 th Street, 94 th Ave. to 117 th Ave.	CN	STBG	\$2,000,000
Camas	NW 38 th Ave., Parker St. to Grass Valley Park	CN	STBG	\$1,436,400
Clark County	NE 179 th Street at 29 th Ave. and 50 th Ave.	PE/CN	STBG	\$1,700,000
				\$7,621,400

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)-Rural Projects

Agency	Project	Phase(s)	Source	Award
La Center	4 th Street Widening/ Brezee Creek Culvert	CN	STBG-R	\$1,045,000
Clark County	NE 182 nd Avenue / NE Risto Rd.	PE/CN	STBG-R	\$450,000
				\$1,495,000

Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) Projects

Agency	Project	Phase(s)	Source	Award
C-TRAN	Mill Plain Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	PE/CN	CMAQ	\$800,000
WSDOT	I-205 Southbound Ramp Meters	CN	CMAQ	\$695,100
Clark County	Orchards Sifton Adaptive Signals	PE/CN	CMAQ	\$1,000,000
WSDOT	I-5 Northbound Fourth Plain Ramp Meters	PE	CMAQ	\$74,500
				\$2,574,600

Strategic Regional Planning

Planning the strategy of future regional transportation investments is a group effort and RTC often leads partner agencies in strategic planning studies. Notable studies in process through 2020 included: a comprehensive assessment of the region’s investments in smart transportation infrastructure; an investigation

of low-cost investments to improve traffic flow and safety along the region’s major highway routes; and, planning for development of the region’s “active transportation” networks. Summaries of each initiative are described below.

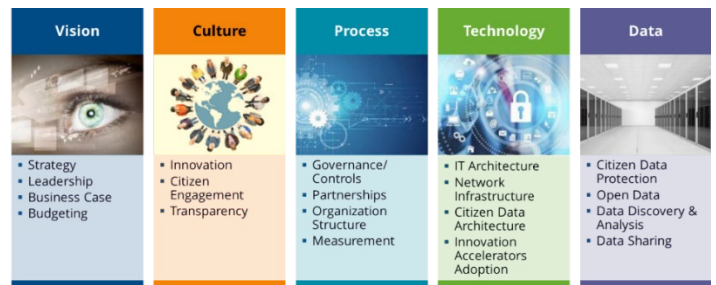
Smart Communities Assessment

The Smart Communities Assessment study was a multi-agency project among [VAST program](#) partners. The study gathered information on each agency’s readiness to adopt and implement “smart” infrastructure for operating the region’s transportation networks.

The study was organized into three distinct phases of assessment: 1) leadership engagement interviews; 2) workshops for agency leaders and staff; and, 3) a benchmarking survey. The survey measured agency conditions against key *Maturity Metrics* for digital transformation, which included an assessment of an agency’s: Vision, Culture, Process, Technology, and Data.

These metrics are used internationally in a *maturity model*, which was ultimately used to gauge and benchmark each agency and the region against its national peers.

The study found that RTC’s regional partners benchmark *in the middle of the pack* when compared to national peers. Key study findings suggest the region’s smart community investments, staff capacity and agency culture, and buy-in can be improved. Additional smart technology deployment should be a focus of VAST program partners in the years ahead.



Smart Community Maturity Metrics

Urban Freeway Corridor Operations Study

I-5 CORRIDOR DASHBOARD

I-5 is the major spine running north and south connecting the region. It carries the highest number of vehicles and provides one of two routes over the Columbia River. This route is especially critical as it is the main route for freight and commuters who rely on the corridor to fulfill daily business needs.



The Urban Freeway Corridor Operations (UFCO) Study, identified short-term operational and system management projects, which if built, will optimize the flow of traffic and maximize available network capacity. Study recommendations focus on lower cost investments and technology solutions.

The study reviewed the freeway routes in Clark County, consisting of: I-5 from the Columbia River to 179th; I-205 from the Columbia River to I-5; SR-14 from I-5 to 192nd; and SR-500 from I-5 to Fourth Plain, including north from SR-500 on SR-503 up to Padden Parkway.

UFCO study strategies and project lists were developed and summarized for each corridor.

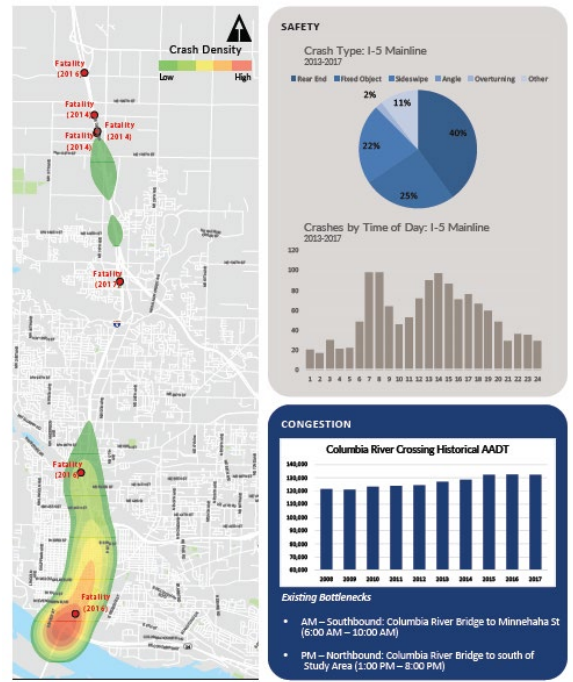
Recommended projects include a mix of strategies, and may be: 1) spot strategies, such as new auxiliary lane additions or restriping are intended to address bottlenecks; and, 2) system strategies, such as speed and electronic signs, which have a

Urban Freeway Corridor Operations Study, continued

broader application and address overall corridor operations. Other strategies, like ramp metering, are applied at spot locations and benefits are derived when applied to a complete corridor.

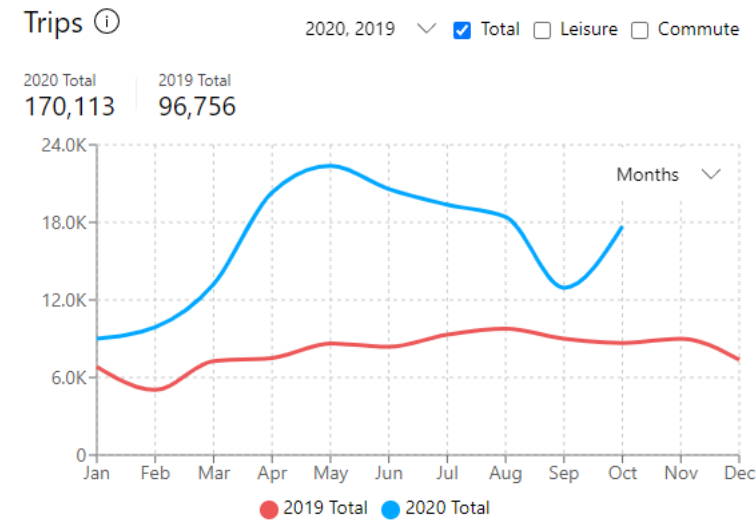
Implementation of study recommendations will occur in phases. Tier one strategies are generally lower cost, ready to implement and respond to existing problem areas, and in some cases are already funded. Tier two and three strategies, may have higher costs or respond to network issues just starting to emerge, and which require more planning and future funding.

The final study report is available for download at: rtc.wa.gov/reports/misc/rtcUFCOStudy.pdf



Regional Active Transportation Plan for Clark County

RTC partners are developing a Regional Active Transportation Plan for Clark County which, upon adoption, will become an integral part of the [Regional Transportation Plan](#). Regional partners are evaluating existing and future active transportation networks to promote comfortable transportation system for non-motorized travel (i.e., bike, pedestrian, hiking trails, ADA enhancements).



Run, Walk, Hike Activity Profile:
Comparison of July 2019 and 2020
Source: Strava/Metro

To date, work with planning partners has included documenting existing conditions of the active transportation system, inventorying and mapping available data. This summer, RTC was granted access to a big data inventory ([Strava Metro](#)), which provides insights into activity and usage patterns along all key regional corridors. The data reveal a notable increase in active transportation activity within Clark County (2019-2020). Anecdotal feedback from community stakeholders also finds that the COVID-19 pandemic has induced active transportation and recreation activities, further emphasizing the community value of safe and sound active transportation networks.

The Plan will set in motion policies, design concepts, network mapping, project identification, and funding strategies to build-out and enhance the regional networks. The Plan will incorporate best practices regarding equity and inclusion, with particular attention to the needs of low income and underserved areas and populations. This process is scheduled to be completed in 2021.

Member Agencies

