

Chapter 9

Plan Maintenance Updates

Introduction

This Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) has provided the vision, goals, policies, and long-range strategies to help shape the future of the region's transportation system. The RTP has laid out a list of fiscally-constrained improvements planned in the short-term to help with plan implementation. A list of fiscally-unconstrained improvements as well as regional unfunded needs consistent with the plan have also been proposed to keep the region focused on the longer-term.

More specifically, the plan to this point has covered the following topics.

1. The plan boundaries, federal and state planning requirements, the public involvement process, and the relationship to other plans have been discussed.
2. Demographics and regional trends in the five-county RTPO region and the Longview-Kelso-Rainier Metropolitan Planning Area were reviewed.
3. The goals, policies, and long-range strategies that guide this RTP were presented.
4. The existing conditions of the regional transportation system were discussed.
5. Results from a Transportation User Survey were presented to provide an understanding of concerns, issues, and priorities of the public.
6. A list of transportation improvements to help implement this RTP was presented along with a financial plan and fiscal constraint determination.
7. A discussion of the Regional Transportation Improvement Program, performance measures, and ongoing public and stakeholder outreach as activities that implement the plan.
8. A brief description of what the future transportation system may look like, a high-level analysis of the existing/future regional transportation system, environmental constraints, and a discussion of future challenges, possible successes, and opportunities was provided.

For this RTP to be useful it cannot be a static document that is adopted and placed on a bookshelf. The plan needs to keep up with changes that may impact the regional transportation system. These changes could be due to new or revised laws, funding sources, or technology for starters. In order for the plan to keep up with possible changes in the future, a process for plan maintenance and a schedule for the next plan update needs to be established. This chapter provides details on both topics, plan maintenance and update.

Plan Maintenance

There are two types of plan maintenance after the plan is adopted. The first is a biennial (every two years) review and the second is a formal amendment to the plan.

Biennial Review

This RTP is the long-range regional transportation plan for the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization and as such must comply with Washington State statutes (laws). Washington State laws are in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), and specifically RCW Section 47.80.030(2) provides language about a biennial review. RCW 47.80.030(2) says the following:

“The [regional transportation planning] organization shall review the regional transportation plan biennially for currency and forward the adopted plan along with documentation of the biennial review to the state department of transportation.”

After plan adoption, the first biennial review will start in January 2020 and be completed by December 2020. The biennial review format will be determined as 2020 approaches, but at a minimum will involve meetings with technical advisory committees, policy boards, regional stakeholders, and possibly the general public to gather feedback on the adopted plan’s strengths, weaknesses, deficiencies, needs, and whether a plan update should begin sooner than planned. Completion of the biennial review will be documented in a report and submitted to WSDOT.

A second biennial review will be due in December 2022. Since the next plan update should be in process in 2022, the second biennial review maybe a simple letter to WSDOT stating that a plan update is underway and provide a timeline for the update.

Plan Amendments

The second type of plan maintenance is a formal amendment. A formal amendment will only occur if needed. An amendment may be requested by a local agency (cities, counties, transit agencies, ports, tribes), WSDOT, ODOT, the CWCOG (MPO) Board, or the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) Board. An amendment will follow the process outlined below.

1. A request is submitted to CWCOG staff explaining the proposed amendment and reasons it should be considered.
2. CWCOG staff reviews the request and makes a recommendation to the CWCOG (MPO) and RTPO Boards

whether or not to initiate work on the amendment. Since this is a combined Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan, both boards need to approve before work to amend the plan begins. If the request was submitted by either the CWCOG (MPO) or the RTPO Board (step one), then only one board approval is needed for this step.

3. A public review draft of the amended RTP will be made available for public comment according to the CWCOG Public Participation Plan.
4. The CWCOG (MPO) and RTPO Boards make a decision on the amended RTP.
5. If the amended RTP is adopted it will be posted to the CWCOG website and submitted for approval to WSDOT and ODOT. WSDOT may forward the amended plan to FHWA and FTA for approval if the changes affect the Longview-Kelso-Rainier MPA.

Plan Update Schedule

This RTP is the long-range metropolitan transportation plan for the Longview-Kelso-Rainier Metropolitan Planning Organization and must comply with federal regulations. Federal regulations are in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Title 23 of the CFR includes a section on how frequently the RTP must be updated. Title 23 CFR 450.324(c) says the following:

The MPO shall review and update the transportation plan at least every 4 years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and at least every 5 years in attainment areas to confirm the transportation plan's validity and consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends and to extend the forecast period to at least a 20-year planning horizon. In addition, the MPO may revise the transportation plan at any time using the procedures in this section without a requirement to extend the horizon year. The MPO shall approve the transportation plan (and any revisions) and submit it for information purposes to the Governor. Copies of any updated or revised transportation plans must be provided to the FHWA and the FTA.

The Longview-Kelso-Rainier MPA is an attainment area for the purposes of air quality conformity and thus an update of the adopted RTP will not need to be completed until December 2023. To ensure adequate time to develop an updated RTP before December 2023, the update process will begin around Summer/Fall 2021.

Chapter Appendices