



Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Serving Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, & Whitman Counties

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PALOUSE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

FY 2008 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

I. INTRODUCTION

The Boards of Commissioners of Asotin, Columbia, and Garfield Counties on January 16, 1991, established by resolution the Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO). At the same time they took action designating the Palouse Economic Development Council (PEDC) as its lead planning agency. This was done under the provisions of the 1990 Growth Management Act. In July of 2003 Whitman County became a member of the PRTPO through an Interlocal Agreement signed by all four counties.

The jurisdiction of the PRTPO includes the geographic area within the boundaries of Asotin County, Washington; Columbia County, Washington; Garfield County, Washington; and Whitman County, Washington. In 2003, a Metropolitan Planning Organization was created which included the cities of Asotin and Clarkston and parts of Asotin County in addition to the City of Lewiston and its environs. Therefore, Asotin County is considered an adjunct member of the PRTPO and a close working relationship and coordinated planning effort is maintained with the Lewis Clark Valley MPO.

Transportation planning by nature is a long-term process. Many factors need to be considered, studies conducted, funding allocated, and solutions designed before projects can be constructed. The purpose of the PRTPO is to facilitate the development of regionally based plans.

II. REGION'S KEY ISSUES

The Palouse region has important transportation issues that are unlike those found in more urbanized areas. Important issues in this region include improving economic vitality and providing access to jobs, recreational areas, medical services, and social activities. Investments addressing these issues will produce large returns for the region.

The region has enjoyed a fairly balanced multi-modal system that includes river, road, rail, and air transportation. However, several factors affect the ability of the multi-modal system to service the economic and social needs of the region.

The region relies on the Snake River and short-line railroads to transport the bulk of grain and other regionally produced commodities to major ports for shipment within and outside of the United States. The Snake River requires on-going silt removal dredging to maintain sufficient depth for fully loaded barge traffic. If less than full loads are shipped the cost per ton is high, reducing economic gain for the region. Short-line railroads are a critical link for transport from local areas to barging facilities or rail terminals for onward movement. Maintenance of rail facilities is necessary for efficient rail operations. If tracks continue to deteriorate, travel speeds will be further reduced increasing operating costs and reducing profitability. This may result in additional rail line abandonment. Both of these systems are critical in moving freight through the region. A reduction in capability of one or the other will result in significant increases the third critical component, the road system. The road system is not adequate in many areas to support year-round trucking. During the spring thaw, many local, county, and state roads have weight restrictions imposed to prevent surface deterioration.

Air service is another key component to the transportation infrastructure both in term of passenger and cargo capabilities. As operating costs increase service may be reduced by the carriers.

The Palouse RTPO continues to support the efforts of the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). We acknowledge the following planning emphasis areas, in the WTP, as important to the Palouse region and our transportation needs.

- **Preservation** –vital to this region is the preservation of our existing transportation infrastructure. Extending the service life of the roadway, rail, river, and air systems are needed to connect Palouse communities and commerce with each other, the rest of the state, and the world.
- **Safety** – many safety deficiencies in the Palouse RTPO are due to the area's challenging topography of rolling hills and river valleys resulting in poor sight distance. Reducing the number, risk, and societal costs due to collisions is important to the Palouse region.
- **Environmental Quality** – the Palouse region continues to promote healthy communities and a well-protected environment through its transportation program. A better inaction between people, wildlife, and the transportation system will improve the quality of life for all.

- **Economic Vitality** – economic vitality is a key issue in the Palouse region. The region’s economy has not kept up with the rest of Washington State. It is important to recognize and capitalize on the relationship between transportation and economic development.
- **Mobility** – all weather roads, a navigable river system, and an efficient rail system are critical to the movement of freight into and out of the Palouse region. Access to airfreight is also becoming more important to the region as it diversifies its economy.

III. WSDOT UPWP GUIDANCE

A. Continue implementation of regional transportation and growth

management planning: The Growth Management Act of 1990 authorized creation of Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO). The act provided a formal mechanism for local governments and the state to coordinate transportation planning for regional transportation facilities. State statutes (RCW 47.80 and Chapter 468-86 WAC) define the basic requirements and other allowable activities of RTPOs. The RTPO duties in RCW 47.80 are paraphrased below:

- Prepare and periodically update a transportation strategy for the region.
- Prepare a regional transportation plan.
- Certify that the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties, cities, and towns within the region reflect guidelines and principles that are consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan.
- Where appropriate, certify that county-wide planning policies and the regional transportation plan are consistent.
- Develop a six-year regional transportation improvement program in cooperation with the WSDOT, public transportation providers, and local governments in the region.
- Designate a lead planning agency to coordination preparation of the regional transportation plan and to carry out the other duties of the RTPO.
- Review level of service methodologies used by cities and counties to promote consistent regional evaluation of transportation facilities and corridors.
- Work with cities, counties, transit agencies, WSDOT, and others to develop level of service standards or alternative transportation performance measures.

In addition, for SFY 2008, emphasis should be placed on the following:

- Review and update the regional transportation plan to be consistent with county-wide planning policies, county, city, and town comprehensive plans, and the state transportation plans.
- Review as appropriate and certify the transportation element of the comprehensive plans adopted by counties, cities, and towns within the region. Certification should reflect the RTPO guidelines and principles and be consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan and underlying

policies. We strongly encourage an examination of land use and economic development in the local comprehensive plan as both may impact the regional and state transportation systems. The process of certification should include a transmittal of the review and certification to the WSDOT Region and Headquarters planning to promote ongoing coordination and consistency with the statewide plan.

- B. Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) development and implementation (on-going):** RTPOs will use their proportionate share of the funds for long-range planning consistent with the Investment Guidelines and Key Policy Recommendations of the WTP. Long-range planning examples could include:
- Prepare corridor plans or studies on facilities of statewide and regional significance.
 - Participate in development, implementation, and statewide activities related to the Highway System Plan and other modal plans as appropriate.
 - Coordinate efforts with neighboring RTPOs on common issues, such as identification of all-weather road systems.
 - Collect, model, and analyze data applicable to the statewide plan, modal and issue plans, and the regional long range plan.
 - Communicate with elected officials and conduct public involvement in support of the statewide plan, modal and issue plans, and the regional long-range plan.
 - Funding augmentation for the activities in 1 above to continue implementation regional transportation and growth management planning.

IV. UPWP WORK ELEMENTS

To achieve greater consistency with WSDOT UPWP Guidance for FY 2008 the work elements in the Palouse RTPO UPWP have been change from previous years. The purpose/function, work tasks, work products format will remain as from the past. The agency assigned to complete the task will remain with the PEDC unless otherwise noted.

The work elements are:

- A. Administration
- B. Continue implementation of regional transportation and growth management planning.
- C. Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) & long-range planning.
- D. Regional Transportation Planning Organization
- E. Data Collection/Technical Assistance.
- F. STP Planning.

A. Administration

1. Purpose/function: As the lead planning agency, PEDC will provide management for the regional transportation planning process.
2. Work tasks:
 - a. Arrange personnel activities, training, conferences, and clerical support.
 - b. Schedule and facilitate meetings of the PRTPO to review, address and decide issues of significance to the regional transportation system.
 - c. Provide on-going communication and coordination channels between the PRTPO and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
 - d. Provide on-going communication coordination channels between the PRTPO and the Lewis Clark Valley MPO.
 - e. Provide opportunities for citizen participation to ensure that transportation-planning efforts are consistent with public interest and participation is continuous throughout the planning process.
 - f. Provide administrative support for the Palouse RTPO Technical Committee and Policy Board.
 - g. Develop, negotiate, and manage consulting contract opportunities.
 - h. Coordinate and manage funding priorities such as Transportation Enhancement Grants and the WTP funds.
 - i. Mail out meeting notices, agendas, and other material to all TPB and TAC members as needed.
 - j. Prepare news items for the media concerning the regional transportation planning process.
 - k. Prepare the UPWP and amendments as necessary.
3. Work products: PRTPO meetings, meeting minutes, payroll, dissemination of transportation information, correspondence, public notices, the hiring of specialized planning consultants, Title VI compliance, and other administrative duties as necessary.

<u>RTPO REVENUES</u>	<u>STP REVENUES</u>	<u>WTP REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>
\$ 27,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 27,000.00

B. Continue implementation of regional transportation and growth management planning

1. Purpose/function: To complete RTPO duties in accordance with the state RCW's and WAC.
2. Work tasks:
 - a. Review and update the transportation strategy for the region including the goals and policies, land use assumptions, the regional transportation system, and key transportation issues identified in the region transportation plan.

- b. Perform a biennial review of the regional transportation plan to determine currency of the plan. Forward the results of the review to WSDOT including the RTPO schedule for the next plan update.
 - c. Columbia and Garfield Counties are required to update their comprehensive plan and development regulations by December 1, 2007. The RTPO will work with both counties to ensure as a minimum that consistency exists between county and regional transportation issues, goals and policies, land use assumptions, and regional transportation systems identified in the RTPO Regional Transportation Plan. Although Asotin and Whitman Counties are not required to fully plan under the Growth Management Act, the RTPO will request acknowledgement that these items are consistent with the projected ideas of transportation in these two counties.
 - d. Where appropriate certify that the Columbia County and Garfield County county-wide planning policies and the regional transportation plan are consistent.
 - e. Prepare the Regional Six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in conjunction with member jurisdictions, transit agencies, and WSDOT. This document is to be submitted to WSDOT Transportation Planning and the Highway and Local Programs Division in October. The lead agency will work with WSDOT on the development of the TIP and the software input to the listing of projects.
 - f. Continue to perform lead agency duties of the RTPO as identified in this UPWP.
 - g. Work with Columbia and Garfield Counties to ensure the adopted level of service and methodology is consistent with the regional transportation plan.
 - h. Work with all member jurisdictions and agencies to ensure consistent level of service in the region.
 - i. After adoption of update comprehensive plans in Columbia and Garfield Counties, the RTPO will review and certify the transportation elements are consistent with the regional transportation plan. Land use, economic vitality in relationship to transportation will be included in the certification.
 - j. Inclusion of “transportation facilities and services of statewide significance” and their improvements in regional and local plans, and as adopted in the WTP.
3. Work products: Updated RTPO transportation strategy, completed RTP currency review, consistency between city, county, and the regional transportation plans, a six-year TIP for the region, and consistent levels of service within the region.

<u>RTPO REVENUES</u>	<u>STP REVENUES</u>	<u>WTP REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>
\$ 23,672.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 23,672.00

- C. Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) & long-range planning**
1. Purpose/function: To perform long-range planning consistent with the Investment Guidelines and Key Policy Recommendations of the WTP
 2. Work tasks: Proposed work tasks are being discussed at this time and will be evaluated with TAC and Policy Board members. The tasks will be amended into the UPWP after July 1, 2007, if necessary.
 - a. Continue to coordination of transportation planning among region jurisdictions, including the relationship between metropolitan and regional transportation planning, local comprehensive planning and state transportation planning.
 - b. Coordinate the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy into the transportation planning process.
 - c. Participate in development, implementation, and statewide activities related to the Highway System Plan.
 - d. \$8,000.00 of these funds is for the LCVMPPO area in Asotin County, Asotin City, and Clarkston. The RTPO and LCVMPPO will coordinate a project compatible with the purpose/function described above.
 - e. Communicate with elected officials and conduct public involvement in support of the statewide plan, modal plans, transportation issue plans, and the regional transportation plan.
 - f. Insure the regional transportation plan addresses the regional corridors and associated intermodal connections associated with issues of statewide intercity mobility services.
 - g. Utilize the Palouse RTPO Technical Committee to identify planning projects, studies and needs that address regional long-term issues of statewide significance and secure the services of consultants, if needed, to prepare data and written materials that address issues authorized by the Palouse RTPO Policy Board.
 3. Work products: Develop reports and products based on the projects, studies and needs identified by the Technical Committee and approved by the Policy Board.

<u>RTPO REVENUES</u>	<u>STP REVENUES</u>	<u>WTP REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>
\$ 24,537.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 24,537.00

D. Regional Transportation Planning Organization

1. Purpose/function: Maintain and perform the duties of the Palouse RTPO.
2. Work tasks:
 - a. Establish and implement a procedure for the solicitation, collection, prioritization and processing of Transportation Enhancement Projects.
 - b. Include “least cost planning” methodology in all PRTPO activities (after methodology is determined by WSDOT).
 - c. Participate in region or national training opportunities to learn best practices.
 - d. Coordinate plans and planning process with LCVMPPO.
 - e. Monitor and participate where appropriate in complying with SAFETEA-LU such as:
 - Incorporate increased safety, security and accessibility in the transportation planning process.
 - Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
 - Enhance the integration, connectivity and efficient management and operation of the transportation system, across and between modes for people and freight.
 - Promote consistency between transportation improvements, the environment and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
3. Work products.
 - a. Mail out meeting notices, agendas, and other material to all TPB and TAC members as needed.
 - b. Prepare news items for the media concerning the regional transportation planning process.
 - c. Prioritize Transportation Enhancement Projects submitted to the State Enhancement Committee.
4. Agency assigned to complete task. PEDC
5.

	<u>RTPO REVENUES</u>	<u>STP REVENUES</u>	<u>WTP REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>
\$	16,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 16,000.00

G. Data Collection/Technical Assistance

1. Purpose/function: Work with member jurisdictions and transit agencies to provide for the collection of data that is pertinent to their transportation plan or element and the Regional Transportation Plan. Provide technical assistance as needed.
2. Work tasks:

- a. Assist members gather and maintain data to implement and support the regional transportation planning process.
 - b. Identify and utilize regional and local studies as necessary for analysis of transportation issues within the region using appropriate technical methods as established by state and federal guidelines and policies.
 - c. Identify new funding sources for identified deficiencies within the region.
3. Work products: Population and employment data, traffic and accident data, a Regional Deficiency/TIP Comparison Matrix, and data for transportation plans.

<u>RTPO REVENUES</u>	<u>STP REVENUES</u>	<u>WTP REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>
\$ 6,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 6,000.00

E. STP Funded Planning

- 1. Purpose/function: To provide transportation planning within the RTPO area.
- 2. Work tasks:
 - a. Hire a consultant, if needed, to assist with the function and planning of the RTPO.
 - b. Pay travel expenses of designated PRTPO members who attend regional or national meetings.
 - c. The PRTPO has \$28,058.00 for regional planning which requires a 13.5% local match.
- 3. Work products: PRTPO planning projects and implementation of enhancement projects.

<u>RTPO REVENUES</u>	<u>STP REVENUES</u>	<u>WTP REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>
\$ 0.00	\$ 28,058.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 28,058.00

F. Funding

ELEMENT	RTPO	STP	WTP	Totals
Administration	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$27,000.00
Regional Planning & GMA	23,672.00	0.00	0.00	23,672.00
WTP/Long-range planning	0.00	0.00	24,537.00	24,537.00
Regional Transp. Plng. Org.	16,000.00	0.00	0.00	16000.00
Data Collection/Tech Asst.	6,000.00	0.00	0.00	6,000.00
STP Planning	0.00	28,058.00	0.00	28,058.00
TOTALS	\$ 72,672.00	\$ 28,058.00	\$ 24,537.00	\$125,267.00