

Wenatchee Valley



Transportation Council

ANNUAL REPORT

of the **SFY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program**



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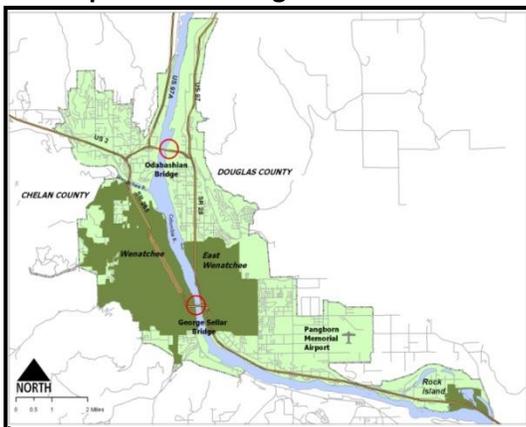
INTRODUCTION

The Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council (WVTC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Wenatchee, Washington urbanized area and serves as the lead agency for the North Central Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NCRTPO) including Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan counties.

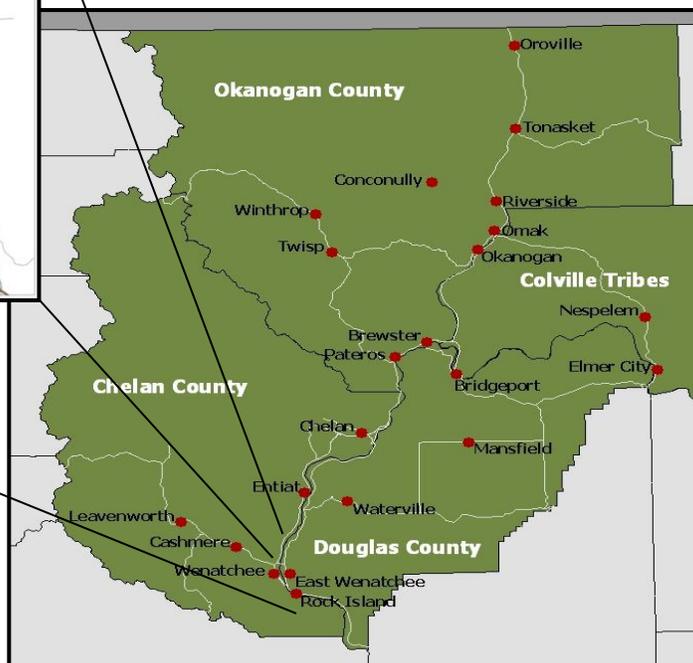
WVTC administers 23 U.S.C. 134 and section 5303 of the Federal Transit Act, which require that a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) be designated for each urbanized area and that each metropolitan area has a “continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive” transportation planning process that results in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes. WVTC also administers RCW 47.80, established as part of the Washington Growth Management Act to ensure coordinated transportation and land use planning across regional subsets of the state. This legislation is further defined in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 468-86.

This report summarizes the work completed during the 2014 State Fiscal Year based on the SFY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program. Accomplishments and key deliverables are outlined below along with a financial summary of grant expenditures and work program elements.

Metropolitan Planning Area



NCRTPO Planning Region



FISCAL YEAR 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishments for the 2014 State Fiscal Year are outlined below by task and key deliverable, in accordance with the administrative and transportation planning and programming elements of the Unified Planning Work Program:

1. Program Administration
2. Transportation Planning
3. Data Collection & Analysis
4. Transportation Improvement Program
5. State & Local Agency Transportation Planning Activities

For the reporting period, WVTC focused on three primary topics: governance restructuring, completing the metro area freight study, and early preparation for the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan update. The topic of governance restructuring began in response with an expansion of the metropolitan planning area boundary, in response to the 2010 Census and changes to the federally-designated “Urbanized” and “Small Urban Area,” and “Metropolitan Statistical Area” boundaries. The Executive Council evaluated MPA boundary adjustment options ranging from the minimum amount of geographic expansion out to the largest geographic boundary allowed in statute, the Metropolitan Statistical Area that encompasses the combined area of Chelan and Douglas counties. Once the new MPA boundary was established, the WVTC Executive Council and NCRTPO Executive Council began evaluating options for merging the two boards into a single, integrated policy board structure. This effort continued through early CY 2014 and ultimately resulted in a decision to re-structure the RTPO planning area boundary into a smaller region matching the Chelan and Douglas counties MPA boundary. As of the beginning of FY 2015 Okanogan County is no longer a member of the RTPO and is in the process of establishing a stand-alone planning organization that will qualify to receive ongoing financial support from the state’s RTPO program. A new Interlocal Agreement is expected to be in place by the end of CY 2014 to formally re-establish the integrated MPO and RTPO for the Chelan and Douglas counties region.

The ongoing work toward completion of the Metro Freight & Truck Routes Plan represents completion of a multi-year focus on corridor and subarea studies undertaken in the years between the long range Regional Transportation Plan update. In the intervening years since the last RTP and MTP updates, WVTC has completed a corridor study for SR 285, developed the Greater Wenatchee Bicycle Master Plan, and the Metro Freight & Truck Routes Plan, among a number of other small-scale studies and data collection programs. With the transition into the FY 2015 UPWP, the focus and use of staff and financial resources has narrowed on the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan update. The following pages summarize task completion by each FY 2014 UPWP work program element.

1. Program Administration

This work program element focuses on all aspects of agency and personnel management, Executive Council support and meeting coordination, budgeting, policy development and review, and annual work program development and reporting, and otherwise meeting all state and federal requirements for MPO and RTPO planning program administration. Most tasks in this element are routine and ongoing in nature, but a significant additional task was included for FY 2014 to undertake a governance reorganization of both the MPO and RTPO.

Completed Tasks:

- ✓ Scheduled monthly WVTC Executive Council (policy board) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings were held with appropriate public notification. Agendas, minutes, staff reports and financial records from all policy board meetings have been retained on file.
- ✓ The SFY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program was prepared in coordination with Link Transit and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and submitted to the WSDOT Planning Office in May of 2014.
- ✓ The WVTC 2015 fiscal year budget was prepared and adopted by the Executive Council in June of 2014, along with the final amendment of the WVTC 2014 fiscal year budget in order to begin preparation of the annual financial report to the Washington State Auditor.
- ✓ WVTC Staff and member agencies conducted public outreach throughout the reporting period in accordance with the WVTC Outreach & Environmental Policy. Specific examples include an open house for the Regional Transportation Improvement Program in September 2013, and additional public outreach meetings, planning commissions and civic club presentations, and general media outreach occurred in support of the Metro Area Freight Study and the development of new Public Participation Plan that was adopted in June 2014.
- ✓ The Title VI Nondiscrimination Annual Report for the 2013 State Fiscal Year reporting period was submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation in October 2013. The next annual report is due in October of 2014.
- ✓ Entered into a planning grant agreement with WSDOT Public Transportation Division (GCB1742) for the development of the locally-developed *Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan*. WVTC in-turn entered into an Interlocal Agreement with Link Transit to engage their assistance in carrying out elements of the planning grant.
- ✓ WVTC entered into a Local Agency Agreement with WSDOT Department of Highways & Local Programs (LA 7771) to undertake development of a Complete Streets Policy.

- ✓ Entered into in Interlocal Agreement with the City of Wenatchee in order to contribute up to \$5,000 toward a multi-agency study led by the city to evaluate the feasibility of relocating the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad switchyard two miles away from the central business district to a rural location as mitigation for at-grade train blockages in the urban area.
- ✓ In July of 2013 WVTC received an approval letter from the Governor for the expansion of the WVTC Metropolitan Planning Area to encompass all of Chelan and Douglas counties. There were several meetings throughout the 2014 fiscal year to consider integrating the WVTC Board with the NCRTP Board, but agreement was not achieved. WVTC subsequently received letters from several RTPO members to withdraw their membership from the NCRTP in order to force reorganization into a single entity covering only Chelan and Douglas counties as a combined MPO and RTPO. This reorganization is still in-process but is expected to be accomplished in the first half of FY 2015.
- ✓ WVTC staff worked with WSDOT to develop a new Procurement Policies & Procedures Plan. This plan was adopted by the WVTC Executive Council in February 2014.

Ongoing/Progress Tasks:

- ✓ A multi-year *Local Agency Agreement* with WSDOT Highways & Local Programs for *Regional Planning & Programing* was carried forward in order to continue utilizing federal STP funds to accomplish UPWP tasks.
- ✓ WVTC carried forward the *Standard Consultant Agreement* with Transpo Group, Inc. for work on the Metro Area Freight Routes Study. The contract work was completed by June 30, 2014 and the Study was adopted by the WVTC Board at the August 2014 WVTC meeting.
- ✓ WVTC staff actively monitored state and federal legislative transportation issues and provided written information and verbal briefings routinely to the WVTC Executive Council.
- ✓ WVTC staff coordinated and consulted with WSDOT and other MPOs, RTPOs and elected officials on regional transportation planning issues, policy concerns and transportation project priorities. Much of this was accomplished through participation on the MPO/RTPO/WSDOT Coordinating Committee. Staff participated on a committee of the Washington State Transportation Commission in support of the Washington Transportation Plan update and is continuing engagement in this effort into FY 2015.

Incomplete/Deferred Tasks:

- ✗ The scheduled preparation of the 450.314 Memorandum of Agreement between WVTC, WSDOT and Link Transit was deferred for completion during FY 2015 based on direction from WSDOT.

2. Transportation Planning

The FY 2014 UPWP focused on completing studies carrying over from FY 2013, continued and expanded the scope of the regional non-motorized planning program and initiating the next major long-range plan update. Based on the outcome of governance restructuring, WVTC is working toward an integrated Regional Transportation Plan that will satisfy state and federal requirements.

Tasks Completed:

- ✓ WVTC maintained a GIS system, to include purchasing and maintaining licenses and maintenance agreements for software, hardware, printing equipment, and ongoing staff training.
- ✓ WVTC staff monitored and participated in relevant state and federal policy, funding and/or planning matters. This included coordination with other MPOs, RTPOs and elected officials on state, regional and local transportation projects and policy issues, ongoing coordination with Link Transit and other non-profit and private sector transportation providers on public transportation projects and policy issues, and active participation on committees and/or to review and provide input into statewide transportation planning efforts led by WSDOT, WSTC and others.
- ✓ Staff work and coordination with the consultant team continued throughout FY 2014 to finalize the Metropolitan Area Freight & Truck Routes Plan. The document was still under its final public comment period at the end of the reporting period, but adopted in August 2014 and is therefore considered complete for reporting purposes.

Ongoing/Progress Tasks:

- ✓ The Regional Transportation Plan update was started during FY 2014 with an initial focus on updating the Regional Travel Demand Model to a 2014/5 base year and a 2040 forecast horizon year.
- ✓ Staff work continued throughout FY 2014 to assist member agencies with local adoption and project-level planning to implement the Greater Wenatchee Area Bicycle Master Plan.
- ✓ Coordination work with Link Transit began during the reporting period to re-establish a Human Services Coalition for the update of the *Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan*; this project is continuing into FY 2015.
- ✓ Preliminary research and stakeholder outreach elements were accomplished of the scope of work for the Complete Streets Policy; this project is continuing into FY 2015.

Incomplete/Deferred Tasks:

- ✘ The FY 2014 UPWP and budget included funding to begin work on the *Confluence Parkway Environmental Scan*. This project was scoped as an attempt to begin work on certain elements of the NEPA process, but with uncertainty about the ability to fund ongoing work this task was not initiated. At this point WVTC still considers the project a priority, but will focus on securing funds to undertake a formal NEPA environmental assessment.
- ✘ The update of the NCW Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan was put on hold due to workload prioritization.

3. Data Collection & Analysis

This major activity includes collecting, analyzing, maintaining and reporting activities necessary to support the transportation planning process and work program. Various data is captured, processed and subsequently used in identifying transportation issues, proposing solutions, and monitoring trends. All data maintained by WVTC is accessible to member agencies and the public. Certain tasks are associated with technical tools and functions necessary to support analytical work and forecasting, including computer hardware and software and licenses for travel demand modeling and traffic operations microsimulation, and for electronic hardware used in various types of traffic counting. Certain data collection tasks such as traffic counts on state highways are provided to WVTC by WSDOT. Other activities are coordinated with WSDOT, cities, counties and port districts.

Completed Tasks:

- ✓ Staff collected various traffic data including general vehicle volumes, vehicle turning movements, bicycle screenline volumes, truck screenline volumes and at-grade railroad crossing delays.
- ✓ Traffic data collected by staff and provided by WSDOT was documented in the WVTC data library.
- ✓ Staff began initial preparation to retain a consultant for the biennial regional pavement quality and condition rating on all federal-aid city and county roadways in the WVTC planning area (this effort excludes state highways).
- ✓ Staff initiated work to recalibrate the Regional Travel Demand Model with an updated base year of 2014 that will be used for providing forecasts in the Regional Transportation Plan update; work continues into FY 2015 in collaboration with local agencies to develop the year 2040 RTP horizon year land use and employment scenario.
- ✓ Following the expansion of the Metropolitan Planning Area, staff began evaluating options for developing small area models in certain sub-regions outside of the Wenatchee urbanized area.

- ✓ Staff collected updated financial data from member cities and counties to update the fiscal constraint assessment for the *2014-17 Transportation Improvement Program*, and to assist with updating the long-range financial feasibility forecast for the Regional Transportation Plan update.

Incomplete/Deferred Tasks:

- ✗ The public opinion survey was delayed and carried forward into the FY 2015 UPWP.
- ✗ The anticipated Environmental Justice demographic profile was delayed and carried forward into the FY 2015 UPWP as part of the Regional Transportation Plan update.

4. Transportation Improvement Program

WVTC conducts a programming process to authorize expenditures of federal funds for regionally significant transportation improvement projects. As part of the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds are typically awarded through competitive solicitation on a biennial cycle. Development of the Regional TIP begins in April by providing eligible local agencies with information about the programming process, schedule and notification of available STP funding. The WVTC policy board works through the summer months to evaluate projects and conduct a public engagement process in order to approve a final TIP by October, at which point the program is transmitted to WSDOT for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Completed Tasks:

- ✓ Developed and submitted to WSDOT the *2014-17 Regional Transportation Improvement Program*.
- ✓ Between January and June of 2014 WVTC approved two formal amendments to the Regional TIP and staff worked with WSDOT to process the associated STIP amendments.
- ✓ Staff provided training and assistance to member jurisdictions in the use of the Secure Access Washington online STIP database.
- ✓ Staff continued refining the financial feasibility assessment and reporting table in order to demonstrate year-by-year fiscal constraint; additional refinements are anticipated in FY 2015.
- ✓ Staff worked in coordination with WSDOT Highways & Local Programs to assist in the Local Agency Obligation Policy for federal funds, and to develop and provide the necessary tracking and documentation of progress and accomplishment of the FFY 2013 regional obligation target. Work began in early CY 2014 on tracking project obligation activity toward the region's FFY 2014 target.

6. Interagency Coordination & Support Services

Due to the integrated nature of metropolitan transportation planning and the requirement for ongoing consultation and coordination, and the fact that the organization is comprised of dues-paying local and state governments and agencies, many WVTC staff activities are related to support and engagement in planning activities lead by other entities. Ongoing work activities include traffic counts and related data collection, and preparation of travel demand forecasts for city and county transportation and land use planning activities that have relevance to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. WVTC staff will also continue to participate in regional and statewide-interest planning activities undertaken by WSDOT, including attendance at meetings, provision of data and review of materials.

Completed Tasks:

- ✓ In support of the Port of Douglas County, staff served on a steering/management committee for the *North-End Infrastructure and Land Use Feasibility Study*.
- ✓ In support of the Wenatchee Downtown Association, staff provided ongoing technical assistance for non-motorized accommodation in the Wenatchee central business district.
- ✓ Staff worked in coordination with Chelan County, the City of Cashmere, Port of Chelan County and WSDOT North Central Region to develop a scope of work and solicit a consulting team for the US 2 Cashmere Area Transportation Study. Chelan County is serving as lead agency for the project and the consultant contract.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

WVTC staff attended various trainings, conferences and interagency coordination meetings throughout the reporting period, including:

- The Executive Director attended quarterly MPO/RTPO/WSDOT Coordinating Committee meetings and the annual conference of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations in October 2013.
- The Clerk of the Board attended the Washington Municipal Clerks Association Fall Academy in October of 2013.
- The Senior Transportation Planner participated in the following training sessions:
 - 3/2014 LED Lighting Seminar (Chelan PUD)
 - 4/2014 Private VISUM Travel Demand Model Refresher Course (by vendor)
 - Vendor-provided briefing on AirSage cellular phone data for use in travel demand model calibration
- The Associate Transportation Planner participated in the following:
 - 7/2013 Webinar: “Neighborhood Planning through a Health Equity Lens”
 - 8/2013 Webinar: “Safe Routes for All”
 - 8/2013 Webinar: “Facebook 101” by the Alliance for Bicycling & Walking
 - 8/2013 Webinar: “Creating a Bike Friendly Business District”
 - 9/2013 Webinar: “Guidance on Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Flexibility”
 - 10/2013 Webinar: “Twitter 101” by the Alliance for Bicycling & Walking
 - 12/2013 Webinar: “Making the Case with Infographics”
 - 2/2014 Webinar: “Bicycle Planning in Berkeley”
 - 3/2014 Webinar: “Keeping Pedestrians Safe in Urban and Suburban Settings”
 - 4/2014 Webinar: “Statewide Complete Streets”
 - 4/2014 Workshop: “Yakima County Complete Streets Workshop”

FINANCIAL POSITION & EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

State and federal grant funding sources for metropolitan and regional transportation planning have remained nominally stable, but have not kept pace with annual inflationary pressure on staffing and overhead costs. WVTC member dues continue to exceed the minimum amount required to match the federal planning grants in order to provide a satisfactory overall level of funding and staffing, and the overall balance of state and federal funds from the planning grants will shift in FY 2015 to reflect the changes in the integrated MPO and RTPO planning area boundary. Additional federal STP funds set aside to provide adequate resources for certain data collection activities identified in the UPWP. The following tables summarize expenditures during the reporting period.

Table 1: FY 2014 Expenditures by Fund Source

Program / Fund Source	Budgeted	Expended	Local Match	Total
FHWA PL Planning Grant	\$248,861	\$224,983	\$35,113	\$260,096
FTA 5303 Planning Grant	\$39,054	\$26,169	\$4,084	\$30,253
RTPO Planning Grant	\$111,094	\$105,036	\$0	\$105,036
STP-R Planning and Programming	\$158,295	\$91,579	\$14,293	\$105,872
ACE Grant	\$4,600	\$4,600	\$0	\$4,600
Human Services Grant	\$0	\$692	\$0	\$692
WVTC Dues/Cash	\$90,282	\$40,612*	-	\$40,612*
FY 2014 Total	\$652,186	\$493,671	\$53,490	\$547,161

* Total Dues/Cash expended shows only the remainder of \$40,612 after the local match accounted for on each of the federal grants, to avoid double counting.

Table 2: FY 2014 Expenditures by Work Program Element

Program / Fund Source	Budgeted	Expended	Local Match	Total
Program Administration	\$ 190,927	\$131,878	\$53,739	\$185,617
Transportation Planning	\$345,388	\$212,240	\$28,652	\$240,892
Data Collection & Analysis	\$43,294	\$50,711	\$5,912	\$56,623
Transportation Improvement Program	\$52,377	\$48,786	\$4,577	\$53,363
State & Local Transportation Planning	\$20,200	\$9,444	\$1,222	\$10,666
FY 2014 Total	\$652,186	\$453,059	\$94,102	\$547,161