Walla Walla Valley
Metropolitan and Sub-Regional
Transportation Planning Organization

Annual Listing of
Obligated Projects
January 1, 2021 through
December 31, 2021

Final – April 12, 2022
Acknowledgements

This report is the product of a study financed in part by the U.S. Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration), the Oregon and Washington State Departments of Transportation, and local government contributions.

The contents of this report reflect the views of the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization/Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (WWVMPO/SRTPO), which is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect official views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Approval of the report by federal or state agencies constitutes acceptance of the report as evidence of work performed, but does not imply endorsement of the report’s findings or recommendations. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.

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Please Contact the WWVMPO/SRTPO for Questions, Concerns, or Comments:

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Walla Walla, WA 99362
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wwvmpo.org
Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization/Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization Membership & Committee Roster

Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (WWVMPO) Member Agencies
City of College Place (WA) • City of Milton-Freewater (OR) • City of Prescott (WA) • City of Waitsburg (WA) • City of Walla Walla (WA) • Umatilla County (OR) • Walla Walla County (WA) • Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (OR) • Port of Walla Walla (WA) • Valley Transit (WA) • Oregon Department of Transportation • Washington State Department of Transportation

Walla Walla Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SRTO) Member Agencies
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WWVMPO/SRTO Policy Board (PB)
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Mike Rizzitiello, City Administrator, City of College Place
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Douglas Venn, Council Member, City of Prescott
Randy Hinchliffe, City Administrator, City of Waitsburg
Brian Casey, Council Member, City of Walla Walla
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Ron Dunning, Commissioner, Port of Walla Walla
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Craig Sipp, Region Manager, ODOT Region 5
Todd Trepanier, Regional Administrator, WSDOT South Central Region

Ex Officio:
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U.S. District 4/5: Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray; Representatives Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Dan Newhouse

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Laurel Sweeney, City Planner, City of Milton-Freewater
Douglas Venn, Council Member, City of Prescott
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Neal Chavre, City Engineer, City of Walla Walla
Megan Davchevski, Planner/Transit Coordinator, Umatilla County
Tony Garcia, Public Works Director, Walla Walla County
J.D. Tovey, Planning Director, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Meagan Blair, Governmental Affairs/Community Outreach Specialist, Port of Walla Walla
Jesse Kinney, Deputy General Manager, Valley Transit
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Timothy J. Barrett, Assistant Planner
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Introduction

Metropolitan and regional transportation planning organizations facilitate the coordinated planning and implementation of a seamless transportation system for all users. This effort requires cooperation and close collaboration among all entities involved in implementing, maintaining, and improving individual network segments.

In the Walla Walla Valley, this facilitation responsibility is assigned to the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization and Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (WWVMPO/SRTPO), which includes representation from Oregon and Washington State, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Valley Transit, the Port of Walla Walla, as well as the cities and counties in the region.

Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

Established on March 27, 2013, the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (WWVMPO) is a bi-state transportation planning agency located in the Walla Walla Valley region. As the federally designated MPO for an urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000, the WWVMPO carries out the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) multimodal transportation planning process that encourages and promotes the safe and efficient development, management, and operation of surface transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people and freight, and to foster economic growth and development, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution (23 USC 134).

Federal regulations require the WWVMPO to develop a regionally coordinated long-range transportation plan and short-range improvement program to ensure consistency and efficient use of federal transportation funds. The bi-state planning area, shown in the map on Page 2, was expanded in early 2017 and includes the cities of College Place, Milton-Freewater, Prescott, Waitsburg, and Walla Walla, and portions of the counties of Umatilla and Walla Walla.

The majority of funding for the WWVMPO is provided through transportation planning grants from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), administered and supported by the Oregon and Washington State Departments of Transportation (ODOT and WSDOT).

Walla Walla Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization

The Walla Walla Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SRTPO) was created by an agreement, effective July 1, 2013, between the Benton-Franklin-Walla Walla Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) and the WWVMPO in order to make regional planning efforts with the new MPO more efficient. The SRTPO boundary, also shown in the figure on Page 2, assigns almost all of Walla Walla County to the WWVMPO, as the area covered under the newly established SRTPO. The Burbank area, a small portion of western Walla Walla County, is by U.S. Census determination within the Kennewick-Pasco-Richland urbanized area. Therefore, this portion of Walla Walla County is part of the Benton-Franklin RTPO and MPO planning area.

The Walla Walla SRTPO activities comply with Washington State’s RTPO requirements (RCW 47.80), which call for transportation planning, at all jurisdictional levels, to be coordinated with local comprehensive plans in order to achieve both statewide and local transportation goals.
Instead of creating a separate Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the SRTPO, the WWVMPO chose to expand the current MPO Policy Board and TAC to include additional members. Agencies participating as members of the SRTPO include the MPO members in Washington State and representatives from the cities of Prescott and Waitsburg.

State funding for the SRTPO, appropriated through WSDOT, is used to carry out the regional transportation planning activities.

Transportation Planning and Programming Overview

Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation - 2045 Plan

Adopted on February 3, 2021, the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation - 2045 Plan was developed in collaboration with the Oregon and Washington State Departments of Transportation, local governments, transit operators, resource agencies, stakeholders, and the public. The 2045 Plan offers an overview of cross-jurisdictional transportation services and inventories, identifies existing needs and region-wide challenges, and analyzes future growth and travel demand. The 2045 Plan includes multi-modal policy, action, and investment recommendations to address mobility concerns, support continued growth, and work to achieve community goals. Based on federal and state laws, the plan must:

- Have no less than a 20-year horizon and undergo an update every four years;
- Address all mode of transportation, as well as operational and management strategies;
- Inventory existing and proposed transportation infrastructure and services;
- Analyze current and projected transportation demand;
- Evaluate and document system performance, primarily focused on safety and infrastructure conditions;
- Discuss potential environmental impacts and mitigation activities; and
- Demonstrate financial constraint for planned projects.

Developed in compliance with these requirements, the 2045 Plan provides a regional vision for future multimodal transportation strategies and investments that improve access and mobility within the entire Walla Walla Valley. The plan establishes the strategic framework for meeting the region’s existing and future transportation needs, and it serves as the link between local agency comprehensive plans and their transportation elements and the Oregon and Washington State Transportation Plans. The plan also integrates the region’s Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan and the Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan.

The 2045 Plan addresses all modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, and freight services and infrastructure, as well as roadways, focusing on those highways, county roads, and city streets that are deemed regionally significant and have a federal functional classification.
Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program

Federal and state laws also require that the WWVMPO/SRTPO develop a short-term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for its Metropolitan and Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization study areas. Federal requirements call for a four-year, financially constrained list of projects, whereas Washington State requirements stipulate a six-year list of projects. In lieu of producing two separate documents, the combined Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (M/RTIP).

The M/RTIP is a six-year project program, which demonstrates financial constraint for federal funds throughout the first four years of the integrated financial plan. The M/RTIP builds on the 2045 Plan, adopted by the WWVMPO/SRTPO; the city and county six-year Comprehensive Transportation Programs, developed annually by each of the local Washington State member entities; the Transportation System Plans adopted by Oregon member entities; the six-year Transit Development Plan, developed annually by the local public transportation agency, and the project lists generated by the Departments of Transportation with jurisdiction in the region.

The projects contained in the M/RTIP must be consistent with the 2045 Plan policy, action, and project recommendations. The M/RTIP is updated annually and functions as a project programming document and as a financial plan that identifies all federally funded transportation projects, as well as other state and local transportation improvements of regional significance, regardless of their funding source.

General steps in the development of the M/RTIP include:

- On a biennial basis, the WWVMPO/SRTPO issues a Call for Projects for the anticipated federal funding; local entities select projects from the fiscally constrained project list in the 2045 Plan; and the submitted projects are prioritized using the regionally adopted selection process.
- Washington State city and county governments and public transportation agencies prepare and submit their local six-year programs to WSDOT and the WWVMPO/SRTPO. State- and locally funded but regionally significant projects contained in the six-year plans are integrated into the M/RTIP.
- Prior to the M/RTIP adoption, the WWVMPO/SRTPO reviews all projects to ensure that:
  - All projects scheduled to receive federal funding are included in the M/RTIP;
  - Projects are fiscally constrained by year and funding source;
  - All regionally significant projects are included, regardless of their funding source;
  - The projects are consistent with policies, actions, and projects laid out in the 2045 Plan; and
  - Stakeholders and the public were given early and reasonable opportunities for involvement.

The approved M/RTIP is then included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs) and ODOT and WSDOT are responsible for the statewide coordination of their respective STIPs. Following the federal approval of the STIPs and the integrated M/RTIP, local jurisdictions may begin obligating federal funds for their projects. Both DOTs manage the local portion of the federal highway funds on a first-come, first-served basis up to the region’s allocation amount. Additional projects may proceed using advance construction and the sponsors are reimbursed once additional federal funds are available.
Purpose and Scope
In calendar year 2021, federal funding obligated for transportation projects in the WWVMPO/SRTPO study area totaled just over $14.2 million dollars. These federal funding awards are documented in an Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (ALOP), which serves as a record of federal project delivery and as a progress report for the purpose of disseminating public information and providing government transparency.

Regulatory Requirements
According to 23 CFR 450.334, the WWVMPO/SRTPO is required to annually publish a list of transportation improvements, for which federal funds have been obligated. While regulations give primary responsibility for this report to the WWVMPO/SRTPO, the report is a collaborative effort among all recipient agencies. ODOT, WSDOT, Milton-Freewater Public Transportation, Valley Transit, and other WWVMPO/SRTPO member entities who provide information and feedback. The ALOP fulfills the following requirements:

- Within 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, an annual listing must be developed for projects that received funding authorized under 23 USC and 49 USC Chapter 53;
- The listing must be cooperatively developed by the MPO, the State, and public transportation operators, based on their respective, agreed-on responsibilities (23 CFR 450.314(a));
- For activities within the MPO area, the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects must include –
  - All federally funded projects authorized or revised to increase obligations in the past year;
  - Sufficient description (i.e., type of work, termini and length) to identify the project or phase, along with information on the lead agency for the particular project or phase;
  - Total project cost as well as the federal funding requested in the M/RTIP, obligated during the past year, and any amount remaining and available for obligation in subsequent years; and
- The ALOP must be published in accordance with the region’s public participation criteria for the M/RTIP.

Based on this guidance, the ALOP only lists transportation projects that have received federal funds during the reporting period, which is defined as calendar year 2021 for this report. Other projects that were programmed, but received no federal obligation, are not included.

A single project may appear multiple times in this report, due to obligation activity occurring for either different phases of the same project, multiple transactions occurring within the reporting period, or by way of using multiple federal funding sources on a single project.

Frequently Used Terminology
Obligation
In the context of this report, obligation is the federal government’s legal commitment to pay the Federal share of a project’s cost, and an obligated project is one that has been authorized by the federal agency as meeting eligibility requirements. The amount of the obligation usually does not equal the total cost of the project, as an obligation may be for only one phase of a multi-phased project, and the obligation amount does not account for state or local funding contributions. It is also important to
understand that projects, for which funds have been obligated, are not necessarily initiated or completed in the indicated year.

- For FTA funded projects, obligation has two separate meanings: First, obligation occurs when the recipient is awarded federal assistance through a Grant or Cooperative Agreement. Second, when used in connection with a recipient’s use of the FTA Award, obligation means an order placed for property and services, a third-party contract entered into, a sub-agreement made, or a similar transaction. For the purpose of this ALOP, the first definition of obligation applies.
- For FHWA funded projects, obligation occurs when a Project Agreement is executed, and the State or local grantee requests that the funds be obligated. Thereafter, the recipient can begin incurring eligible project expenses; subsequent reimbursement requests must demonstrate that the incurred costs are consistent with the project agreement and all applicable federal rules.

**Deobligation**

In the event that the obligated funding set aside for a specific project has not been spent, deobligation (also called release) occurs and the promise of funds is returned to the federal government.

**Project Phase**

Project implementation most often occurs in phases. Typically, obligation covers a particular phase of a project, such as the preliminary engineering or purchase of right-of-way for a highway project. Therefore, projects listed in this report indicate the phase or portion of work for which the federal funds have been secured.

- **Preliminary Engineering (PE)** - includes evaluation of a range of design options and elements; data on which to base final design is gathered, including community needs and desires. This phase may include preparation of detailed plans adequate for construction contracting.
- **Right of Way (RW)** - involves securing all of the land needed for a project. This phase includes detailed property identification, settlements with owners, and obtaining any necessary permits.
- **Construction (CN)** - carries a project from the construction onset through the final payment to contractors.

In select cases, projects may also include phases for planning, environmental assessment, or utility relocation activities.

**Project Funding Sources**

Transportation projects are funded from a variety of sources, and federal funds rarely cover a project’s full cost. Most federal programs require a non-federal match, which typically accounts for 10.27 percent of the total cost for projects in the Oregon portion of the study area and 13.5 percent for projects implemented in the Washington State portion of the WWVMPO/SRTPO.

The overview of federal funding covers just a small portion of the sources available to the WWVMPO/SRTPO members, but addresses most federal funding programs identified in the obligation table. For a complete listing of potential funding sources, please review the WSDOT STIP Training Manual (P. 74ff).

**Federal Highway Administration Programs**

**Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)** – as continuation of the Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, the STBG program provides flexible funding that may be used by state DOTs, counties,
and cities for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, roadway, bridge, and tunnel project. Also eligible are pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals. The STBG program includes sub-allocated funds based on population (US = Urban Small; R = Rural) and flexible (FLEX) funds for use anywhere.

**STBG Set-aside for Transportation Alternatives (TA)** – as a continuation of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding, the TA program provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities; infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility; community improvement activities and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for the planning, design, or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

**National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)** – funds construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation of highways and bridges for projects located on the National Highway System (NHS); funding is also provided for bridge and tunnel inspection and evaluation, safety projects, environmental restoration and mitigation, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

**Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)** – provides funding for engineering countermeasures to reduce fatal and serious injury collisions in order to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. These funds are made available to all state and local agencies and tribal nations, and can be applied to all public roadways. DOTs prioritize and program state and local projects based on the respective Strategic Highway Safety Plan – Oregon’s Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP) and Washington State’s Target Zero. The HSIP program has a set-aside for the railway/highway crossing program.

**Highway Improvement Program (HIP)** – funds construction of highways, bridges and tunnels per 23 USC 133 (b)(1)(A), including related design and right of way. These funds were first made available through the 2018 Omnibus bill.

**Federal Transit Administration Programs**

**Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants** – are apportioned by a formula to each urbanized area, and are available for planning, capital expenditures, and operating assistance.

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC – previously Section 5316) program activities, which focused on providing services to low-income individuals to access jobs, became eligible activities under the Urbanized Area Formula program in 2012.

**Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities** – enhances mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services. Projects selected for funding must be included in a locally developed Coordinated Public Transit - Human Service Transportation Plan for the respective area. State DOTs administer these funds through a competitive grant program.

New Freedom (previously Section 5317) activities, which focused on services and improvements to benefit individuals with disabilities above and beyond the ADA requirements, were folded into the Section 5310 program in 2012.
Section 5304 Transportation Planning – supports cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning and other technical assistance activities for making transportation investment decisions. These formula funds are apportioned to each state for metropolitan and statewide planning.

As stated above, most federal grants require matching funds, which are not included in the obligation report.

Additional Terms Used in the Obligation Table

- **Agency** - Name of the agency that is administering the project (signatory to the project agreement)
- **Project Name** - Title of project
- **Begin** - Beginning terminus of project
- **End** - Ending terminus of project
- **Length** - Length of project (in miles)
- **Project Number** - Portion of the federal aid number that uniquely identifies the project
- **STIP ID** - Unique project identifier from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
- **Fund Program Name** - Source of funding program that were obligated/deobligated
- **Phase** - Stage of the project where the obligated/deobligated funds are being utilized –
  - PE = Preliminary Engineering
  - RW = Right of Way
  - UR = Utility Relocation
  - CN = Construction
- **Previous Federal** - Total federal funds previously obligated within the noted funding program and phase
- **Current Federal** - Total federal funds obligated within the noted funding program and phase as of the approved date
- **Obligated** - Change in amount of federal funds (‘Current Federal’ minus ‘Previous Federal’) within the noted fund program and phase on the approved date; if positive, funds were obligated (made available to an agency); if negative, funds were de-obligated (reduced from an agency’s available funding)
- **Approved** - Date the obligation/deobligation activity was approved by FHWA or FTA
- **Closed** - Date of the Administrative Review letter; if blank, no letter was sent during the reporting period

Public Involvement

Citizens and interested parties are provided opportunity to comment on the draft ALOP as required under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The public review and comment period for the 2021 ALOP was held from March 29, 2022 through April 12, 2022.

Public notices announcing the availability of the document were published in the newspaper of record and on the WWVMPO/SRTPO website. A copy of the 2021 ALOP was made available for public viewing on the agency’s website at https://wwvmpo.org/public-participation.html. All public comments related to the 2021 ALOP have been included in Appendix A of the final document.
List of Calendar Year 2021 Federal Fund Obligations

The projects listed in the following table were previously approved by the WWVMPO/SRTPO Policy Board through adoption of the region’s M/RTIP.

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Funding Program Key: BRIDGE - Bridge Replacement/Rehabilitation Program; ER - Emergency Relief Program; FTA 5307 - Urbanized Area Formula Grants; FTA 5339 - Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program; HIP - Highway Improvement Program; HSIP - Highway Safety Improvement Program; NHPP - National Highway Performance Program; Railroad - HSIP Railway-Crossing Program; STBG(R) - Surface Transportation Block Grant Rural Program; STP - Surface Transportation Program; STP(US) - STP Urban Small; TA - STBG Set-Aside for Transportation Alternatives Program.
Appendices

Appendix A – Public Comments

Public Comments Period March 29 through April 12, 2021

The public comment period for the WWVMPO/SRTPO Calendar Year 2021 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects was provided from March 29 through April 12, 2021.

Public Comments Received:
Thank you for the opportunity for public comment on the Annual List of Obligated Projects, January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. [Link to website]

Four listed WSDOT projects STIP ID# 51250Y36, 512502R36, 512501Y36, BPWWV directed substantially to SR 125/9th Avenue are concerning due to the cumulative outcome of these scheduled projects to inadequately address the safety and mobility needs of the community that has more than 20% minorities and 25% poverty rates.

There was a question in last years Blue Zones built environment summit asking why a more equitable transportation system wasn’t available. The answer given was that form follows funding. However, in this case form follows institutional refusal to bring safer streets to neighborhoods with high poverty and minority populations. WSDOT’s speculation that the addition of sidewalks and a crosswalk will provide adequate safety improvements is not based on sound engineering practices. Reducing travel lanes and the addition of bike lanes has been, and will continue to be, a regionally adopted safety countermeasure that WSDOT is choosing to ignore while utilizing over $400k in federal funds.

SR125/9th Avenue was once an important freight highway allowing agricultural products to travel to processing plants in Walla Walla. Those plants are no longer operational and the characteristics of the roadway has developed to an urban street. A high speed urban street with significant crash history that provides no provision for bicycle movement in an area of town with lower incomes and higher race diversity. WSDOT is failing the citizens of Washington by not implementing a Safe System active transportation design for SR125/9th Avenue.

Walla Walla Valley has committed to Complete Streets in the WWVMPO 2045 Plan. Walla Walla Valley needs WSDOT to be a good partner in bringing safety and mobility for everyone.

Thank you for addressing my concerns.

Andy Pryor

Dixie, WA