

If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else.
-Yogi Berra

Journeys

2010 Regional Transportation Planning Highlights

Volume 8

January 2011

2010 Notable Projects in the Thurston Region

Bridging the Gap – Martin Way Overcrossing (Chehalis Western Trail at Martin Way) *Thurston County*

Mullen Road Extension (Ruddell Road to College Street – new connection) *City of Lacey*

I-5/Grand Mound to Maytown Stage 1 (lanes added, one northbound and one southbound) *WSDOT*

Yelm Highway Phase V (Rich Road to Henderson Boulevard, including additional lanes, roundabouts, sidewalks, bike lanes, street lighting, storm water management, and water and sewer installation) *Thurston County*

Transit Sales Tax Increase (voters approved an additional 0.2%) *Intercity Transit*

Boulevard Road/Log Cabin Road Roundabout (includes sidewalks, bike lanes, street lighting, landscaping and utility undergrounding) *City of Olympia*

SR 510 Yelm Loop Phase 1 (Mud Run Road to Cullens Road – new alignment including roundabout) *WSDOT and City of Yelm*

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Promoting Livable Communities

A pair of federal grants awarded to TRPC and our partners will help cut back on driving, create more walking, biking and transit friendly environs, and plan for sustainable future growth. Each grant has a three year work program reaching through 2013.

[Thurston Here to There](#), a \$2.1 million grant from the US Department of Energy, targets Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino, Tumwater and Yelm, with a focus on reducing auto-related fossil fuel emissions and greenhouse gases. The project will expand the Walk-n-Roll program, the Commute Trip Reduction program, and efforts to promote telework and compressed work weeks, addressing obstacles to infill and redevelopment, and creating a one-stop information website for the public.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded TRPC and our partners \$1.5 million to collaboratively develop a [Regional Plan for Sustainable Development](#). The plan will apply [livability principles](#) to housing, land use, transportation, economic development, water infrastructure planning, and environment.

R/T Huge Success

The Rural & Tribal Transportation Program – R/T – provides fare-based on-demand service to south and east Thurston communities, making connections with the transit systems in Thurston and surrounding counties. Since 2001, R/T has served people with disabilities, elders and youth, and economically disadvantaged residents, as well as the general public.

R/T does more but doesn't cost more. Over the last biennium, R/T decreased non-revenue hours and miles by 15% and implemented route scheduling efficiencies that decreased the cost of a trip by 35%. In the next biennium (July 2011-June 2013), R/T proposes a modest 4% program increase, but with a 40% increase in service. Over that period, R/T expects to provide more than 120,000 trips.

R/T is an essential service for its passengers, 75% of whom make less than \$10,000 a year and 15% percent who are people with disabilities requiring assistance. It provides connections to work, school, medical and other services.

R/T is supported through grants, fares and matching funds or services from many partner agencies. TOGETHER! and TRPC manage the program with contractor Northwest Connections/TransPro.

What is Sustainability?

US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood boils it down to, "...being able to take your kids to school, go to work, see a doctor, drop by the grocery store or post office, go out to dinner and a movie, and play with your kids in a park, all without having to get in your car."

Coordinated Transportation Plan

In 2007, TRPC adopted the first [Regional Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan for the Thurston Region](#). The plan emerges from more than 10 years of TRPC's leadership and facilitation in multi-organizational coordination. In December 2010, TRPC updated the plan to address two new areas – veterans' transportation and emergency transportation – and adopted a prioritized list of projects, making them eligible for state funding.

Little Rock Road Improvements (Phase 1 from 73rd Avenue to Odegard Road complete, Phase 2 from Odegard Road to Trosper Road under construction – includes roundabouts, center island, bike lanes, sidewalks, street lighting & storm water drainage) *City of Tumwater*

Hybrid Buses (six electric/diesel replacement buses use electricity, bio-diesel and ultra-low sulfur fuel) *Intercity Transit*

North Street Improvements (Cleveland Avenue to Hawthorne Place – rebuilt existing two lane roadway including bike lanes, sidewalks, planters strips and street lighting) *City of Tumwater*

18th Avenue Street Improvements Phase 2 (Hoffman Road to Fones Road – includes two roundabouts, street widening, sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping, street lighting and utility undergrounding) *City of Olympia*

I-5/Martin Way Overcrossing Bike Lanes (relocate sidewalk, add bike lanes and expand left turn lane) *WSDOT and City of Lacey*

Hawks Prairie Park & Ride (design and construction underway at the Thurston County Waste & Recovery Center closed landfill section) *Intercity Transit*

Harrison Avenue Street Improvement (Woodbury Crossing to Yauger Way – widen to 4-5 lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian crossing islands, new signal at Kaiser Road, street lighting, utility undergrounding and landscaping) *City of Olympia*

Prairie Creek Bridge Replacement & Old Hwy 99 Turn Lane Project (203rd Ave to north of Sargent Road SW) *Thurston County*

Legislative Focus

In this tight budget session, TRPC's [legislative requests](#) spotlight three key needs: 1) Fund a household travel survey, the next step in the I-5 mobility study, 2) support and expand essential local tools to raise revenues, prioritize needs and alleviate unfunded mandates, and 3) maintain Commute Trip Reduction Program funding and flexibility.

Surveys Are Us!

TRPC developed new survey capabilities in 2010 as part of the ongoing [I-5 Origin and Destination Study](#) (report expected this summer). Staff became proficient at using technology to create, process and analyze surveys.

For the I-5 Origin and Destination Study, TRPC staff mailed out nearly 37,000 surveys, then tabulated more than 4,500 paper and online responses (analysis is underway). This survey expertise was used to survey south county communities and will be employed next as part of the [US Department of Energy grant](#) work in Tumwater with a focus on commuters and on the Capitol Boulevard Corridor visioning.

Wyrick AMPO President

Lon Wyrick enters his second year as President of the [Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations](#) (AMPO) Board of Directors. Wyrick continues leadership on critical federal issues – transportation reauthorization, climate change, smart growth and the role of MPOs in transportation planning. AMPO represents more than 200 MPOs nationwide.

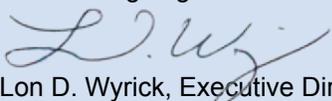
From the Executive Director...

Challenging Times, Yet We're Moving Forward

We've all faced hard decisions during these recent years of tough economic times. Many beneficial projects, programs and community services have been down-sized, put on hold and even eliminated. Transportation is no exception. Long range plans suffered setbacks and many projects were scaled back or delayed. Even so, some important transportation projects and planning efforts continue to successfully move forward. Regional support and collaboration are key in addressing our residents' needs.

Consider the I-5 corridor between Lacey and Lakewood. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) and surrounding jurisdictions are working together to address both the long term solutions and short term challenges to mounting congestion along this stretch of highway. The recently published [Joint Base Lewis McChord Growth Coordination Plan](#) (an 18-month collaboration) takes a long-range look at critical transportation needs and many other essential community services. WSDOT and JBLM are also working together to quickly address the recent sizeable increase in congestion on I-5. Last fall, JBLM opened an additional gate at Mounts Road and WSDOT is installing ramp meters (to go live in August). Their "can do" attitude is making a big difference.

As we begin to turn the corner on these economic times, many important transportation projects and planning efforts will begin to move forward. With this in mind, regional leaders should not lose sight of the ongoing successes and continue to be proud of their accomplishments.


-- Lon D. Wyrick, Executive Director

Regional Transportation Funding Kickoff

As a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), [TRPC will award more than \\$12 million of federal funding](#) to regionally prioritized transportation projects. In 2010, TRPC established grant procedures and funding priorities. TRPC will evaluate and select projects for funding in 2011.

Urban Corridors Task Force

TRPC and TPB established an [Urban Corridors Task Force](#) in late 2009 to conduct an in-depth evaluation of land use on the region's key transportation facilities and activities centers. This ad hoc committee honed its focus to two key corridors and about a dozen nodes. Members are considering tools to encourage growth in these centers. Their findings and recommendations are expected mid-2011.

Building a Generation of Safe and Healthy Walkers, Cyclists and Bus Riders

The popular Walk & Roll program promotes walking, biking and busing for kids attending school. The program is expanding to 10 schools in four districts, plus providing safety promotional materials in two more districts. TRPC is also helping districts draw up their school walk and bike route maps, a new state requirement.

Guided by the [Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan](#), flexible program activities and material templates allow a customized fit for each school setting. At the policy level, the Action Plan implementation committee is stressing three key points: 1) the importance of communication between school districts and municipalities, 2) school siting and design considerations and 3) prioritizing municipal infrastructure needs (sidewalks, crosswalks...) around schools to improve student safety.



2010 TPB Membership Changes

TPB welcomed new representatives in 2010 – Bret Brodersen (Tenino), Jeff Davis (Port of Olympia), Jerry Farmer (Business Representative), Andy Ryder (Lacey), Rhenda Strub (Olympia) and Tracey Wood (Yelm). Some of the new appointments for 2011 include George Barner (Port of Olympia), Doug Mah (Olympia) and Cathy Wolfe (Thurston County).

TRPC Staff Changes

2010 and early 2011 saw several staffing changes at TRPC. The position of Assistant Director changed hands from Susan Andrews, who retired in 2010, to Jared Burbidge. Senior Planner Pete Swenson retires in January 2011 with 37 years of service. Fred Evander (Associate Planner), Michael Ambrogi (GIS Analyst) and Christopher Montero (Planning Intern) joined the agency.

Partnerships

It takes a village of partners and funding sources to implement the schools programs including TRPC, Intercity Transit, Safe Kids Thurston County, North Thurston Public Schools, the Olympia, Tumwater, Yelm, Tenino, and Rainier school districts, the Cities of Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, Yelm, Tenino and Rainier, Thurston County, and WSDOT + National and State Safe Routes to School grants, Center for Disease Control grant, US Department of Energy grant, State Active Community Environments grant, and State Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center grant.

Did you know...

- Forty years ago 50% of students walked or biked to school – and today fewer than 15% do.
- Fifty percent of students living within ½ mile of school are being driven to school.
- As much as 25% of morning traffic is parents driving students to school.
- Student walk and bike trips increased from 24% to 57% during the Walk & Roll pilot project 'Walking & Wheeling Wednesday' event days.

I-5/Grand Mound to Maytown Stage 2 (construct a new interchange at Grand Mound – construction begins January 2011) *WSDOT*

Boulevard Road Sidewalk (22nd Avenue to 31st Court – install sidewalk on east side of street) *City of Olympia*

93rd Avenue/Littlerock Road Intersection Improvements *Thurston County*

Olympia Transit Center Expansion (State Avenue between Washington and Franklin Streets – Customer Service Center waiting room renovation completed; design underway to expand the site and add Greyhound service) *Intercity Transit*

18th Avenue Half-Street Frontage Improvements (Boulevard Road to Hoffman Road – utility work completed in 2010 with roadway construction in 2011 including sidewalk and landscaping on one side, street lighting, bike lanes in both directions and asphalt overlay) *City of Olympia*

Carpenter Road Asphalt Rehabilitation (Ruddell Road to College Street – coordinated with construction of the regional lift station) *City of Lacey*

Intercity Transit Operations Based Expansion (Pattison Street between Pacific Avenue and Martin Way – design underway) *Intercity Transit*

Main Street Sidewalks & Lighting *City of Tenino and Puget Sound Energy*



2010 Commute Smart Awards

Established in 1998, the [Governor's Commute Smart Awards](#) recognize communities, businesses, agencies and Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETCs) that champion Commute Trip Reduction (CTR). In 2010, Governor Gregoire honored three regional winners and two regional nominees.

- Washington State Department of Commerce – State Agency Leadership Award and Thurston County Champion Award (Affected Sites)
- City of Olympia – Commute Smart Community Award
- Al Papas (Office of the Insurance Commissioner) – Commute Smart ETC Champion and ETC Leadership Award
- Western Institutional Review Board – Nominee: Commute Smart Voluntary Recognition, Employers
- Kerry Tarullo (City of Olympia) – Nominee: Commute Smart Voluntary Recognition, ETC

TRPC ePresence

TRPC launched a revamped [website](#) in 2010. An updated software platform, new layout and upgraded graphics make the site even easier to use. Also, find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Outlook

TRPC Transportation Accomplishments from 2010 and New or Continuing Work in 2011

CORRIDORS

The Urban Corridors Task Force honed its focus, with recommendations expected in mid 2011. TRPC and WSDOT conducted the Thurston I-5 Origin and Destination license plate and traveler surveys, with the analysis and report coming in 2011. The regional transportation model is being updated with input from the Federal Transit Administration to support High Capacity Transportation analysis. WSDOT is launching an I-5/US 101 Interchange Analysis. The West Olympia Access Study resulted in a preferred alternative.



2010 saw the completion of the Lakewood I-5 Study and the Joint Base Lewis McChord Growth Coordination Plan involving multiple jurisdictions. Inter-regional coordination with JBLM partners continues. The Transportation Research Board issued *Federal Funding of Transportation Improvements in BRAC Cases* – concerning military bases (like JBLM) rapidly expanding personnel due to base closures and realignments. An eight county Draft Puget Sound Transportation Recovery Plan was completed with support of local and regional staff.

CLIMATE

The Governor's Climate Change Working Group (Executive Order 0905) continues its efforts in 2011. TRPC participated in a national effort developing the beta version of a Greenhouse Gas Model. The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Initiative will make rapid recharging locations available. TRPC staff are supporting local jurisdictions in developing land use regulations to accommodate them.

CYCLIST/PEDESTRIAN

In 2010, the community celebrated the opening of the Martin Way Over-Crossing, part of Bridging the Gap in the Chehalis Western Trail. The Pacific Avenue Over-Crossing - the last span in bridging the gap - should be under construction in 2011. The Nisqually Tribe Transportation Committee and TRPC staff completed a Draft Nisqually Tribal Trail Plan.

COORDINATION

The regional Commute Trip Reduction Program is expanding to address 127 newly affected State agency worksites. The Rural & Tribal Transportation Program (R/T) will expand service. The Regional Traffic Operations Group expects to complete a Smart Corridors Phase 1 implementation plan by mid-year. Work begins in 2011 to synch up regional transportation planning even more closely with sustainability planning. Many regional transportation planning tools were revised in 2010 and will be updated in 2011.

About TRPC

The Thurston Regional Planning Council – TRPC – is an intergovernmental board formed in 1967 to provide visionary leadership on regional plans, policies and issues. TRPC develops regional plans and policies for transportation, growth management, environmental quality, and other topics determined by the Council. TRPC provides data and analysis to support local and regional decision making, convenes local, state, tribal and federal policy makers to build community consensus on regional issues, and provides planning, historic preservation and technical services on a contractual basis.

TRPC's Role in Transportation Planning

- As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and state designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), the Regional Council ensures a continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated approach to local, regional and state transportation planning.
- The Transportation Policy Board (TPB) advises the Regional Council on issues ranging from the development of a Regional Transportation Plan to allocating federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding. In addition to jurisdictions represented on the Regional Council, TPB has representation from the state legislature, state agencies, business, and citizens.
- TRPC's standing transportation programs – the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP), Federal Functional Classification maintenance, Freight & Goods Transportation System (FGTS) updates, regional air quality conformance, regional Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding allocations, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture, and the Regional Transportation Plan – ensure regional compliance with state and federal requirements, enabling continued transportation funding from these sources.
- The regional transportation model and the regional population and employment (land use) forecast predict future conditions, supplying a variety of local and state data needs.
- Regional planning and programs address special needs transportation, commute trip reduction/ transportation demand management, the interdependence of transportation and land use, regional trails, performance measures, climate change, rail, transportation technology, and freight mobility.
- Contract transportation services aid local transportation planning, support regional coordination of services and information, and provide data for traffic impact analysis.

Getting Involved

The best way to track transportation issues at TRPC is to subscribe to the Transportation Policy Board's agenda packets. This will keep you abreast of the issues being tackled at the regional level. Public attendance and comment are always welcome at TPB meetings.

The TPB's agenda packet is available by regular post, or a monthly email notification directs subscribers to the material on the TRPC website. Register for either service by calling TRPC at (360) 956-7575.

Find additional information on TRPC's transportation plans and programs on our website – www.trpc.org – by following the program links for transportation.



TRPC Staff

January 2011

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City of Lacey
City of Olympia
City of Rainier
City of Tenino
City of Tumwater
City of Yelm
Town of Bucoda
Thurston County
Intercity Transit
LOTT Clean Water Alliance
Thurston PUD
North Thurston Public Schools
Olympia School District
Confederated Tribes of the
Chehalis Reservation
Nisqually Indian Tribe

Associate Members:

TComm911
Lacey Fire District #3
Puget Sound Regional Council
The Evergreen State College
Thurston Economic
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