

“Modern man drives a mortgaged car over a bond-financed highway on credit card gas.”
-Earl Wilson

Journeys

2012 Regional Transportation Planning Highlights

Volume 10

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2012 Notable Projects in the Thurston Region

New Transit Ridership Record
(4.57 million boardings in 2012 – 1.4% increase over 2011 and 89% increase over 2002) *Intercity Transit*

Yelm Highway Capacity Project
(Henderson Boulevard to Rich Road – adds general purpose lanes, roundabouts, sound walls, landscaping and many other features) *Thurston County*

Fireweed Road Improvement
(Fireweed Road to Overhulse Road – repaving and street lights) *The Evergreen State College*

18th Avenue Half-Street Frontage Improvements (Boulevard Road to Hoffman Road – sidewalk and landscape strip on one side, lighting, bike lanes both directions, some underground utilities and asphalt overlay) *City of Olympia*

SR-510 Roundabouts (at Reservation Road and Yelm Highway) *WSDOT and Nisqually Tribe*

Carpenter Road Reconstruction
(Pacific Avenue to Martin Way – widen, underground utilities, bike lanes, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping and extensive stormwater, sewer and reclaimed water system work) *City of Lacey*

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One Stop Traveler Information

Looking for the best route for your daily travels - or an alternative to driving in your car? In March 2012, TRPC launched a new user-friendly website that offers a variety of traveler resources and tools to help people get from here to there, regardless of age, physical ability, or income level.

A visit to ThurstonHereToThere.org will connect travelers to a range of local and regional travel options and services:



- Transit
- School Transportation
- Seniors
- Special Needs
- Rail and Air Travel
- Walking
- Maps
- Vanpool and Carpool
- Commute Trip Reduction
- Veteran Transportation
- Cycling
- Rental Vehicles

Whether you want to try riding the bus, biking, walking, carpooling, or telecommuting, you can find all of the information you need to get started on this website. You will also find outreach and promotional materials, travel calculators, maps, health-related resources and tools to help individuals and businesses find different ways to travel.

The website is part of a broader Thurston Here-to-There program promoting energy efficiency and conservation throughout south Thurston County. Read more on page 3.



TRPC Awards Grants

TRPC awarded nearly \$3.2 million in federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to the [Smart Corridors](#) collaborators – the Cities of Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater, Thurston County, Intercity Transit and Washington State Department of Transportation. Funding is targeted to transportation sources of PM10 – idling and brake dust – in the Lacey/Olympia/Tumwater urban area. The demonstration project focuses on signal timing, signal coordination and transit signal priority along the Capital and Martin/State/4th Avenue corridors.

Howanut Road Realignment (Black River Bridge to Willamette Creek Bridge - construction of a 1.1 mile new alignment) *Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Indian Reservation*

New Traffic Signal (Tumwater Boulevard and Henderson Boulevard) *City of Tumwater*

Hawks Prairie Park & Ride Opens (off I-5 Exit 111 on a closed section of Thurston County's Waste and Recovery Center – 332 stalls, security lighting and 24/7 cameras, transit island, electric vehicle charging stations, and environmentally friendly landscaping) *Intercity Transit*

2030 Transportation Chapter (adopted in the Lacey Comprehensive Plan) *City of Lacey*

Cooper Point Road Pedestrian Crossing Island (near West Hills Office Park – installed island, crosswalk and flashing beacons) *City of Olympia*

Rich Road Improvements (Deschutes River to 87th Avenue – completed first phase of bridge replacement over Spurgeon Creek) *Thurston County*

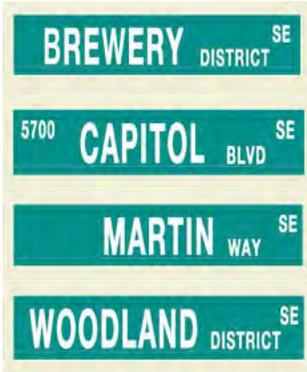
Commuter Vanpool Grows (Added 12 commuter groups for a total of 214 vans, with 30 operating to/from JBLM) *Intercity Transit*

Marvin Road and 32nd Avenue NE Intersection Improvement (widen and add left turn lane) *City of Lacey*

Boulevard Road and 22nd Avenue Roundabout (In design for single lane roundabout, sidewalks, lighting, pedestrian crossing islands and bike lanes) *City of Olympia*

Vail Road Safety Project (138th Avenue to Bald Hills Road) *Thurston County*

Neighborhoods and the Role of Transportation



TRPC is partnering with the cities of Lacey, Olympia, Rainier, Tenino and Tumwater in neighborhood [visioning projects](#) – some that will transform places and others that will maintain community character. Each project focuses on transportation that works well for many users – cars, trucks, cyclists, pedestrians, and many uses – work, shopping, school, play. This emphasis on neighborhoods is made possible by the Thurston Here-to-There energy block grant (see page 3) and a federal community challenge grant. Projects include:

• **Rainier & Tenino** place-making and revitalization

- **The Brewery District** in Tumwater around the shuttered Olympia Brewery
- **Capital Boulevard** between Southgate and Israel Road in Tumwater
- **Martin Way** from the Pacific Avenue “Y” to Lilly Road in Olympia
- **The Woodland District** in Lacey bounded by Sleater-Kinney Road, College Street, I-5 and Pacific Avenue.

Focus on Urban Corridors

TRPC endorsed recommendations from the [Urban Corridors Task Force](#) for a suite of measures to achieve more transit-supportive development along the Capital and Martin/State/4th Avenue corridors by reducing barriers that discourage private sector investment there. Initial activities include sub-area analysis of transit-oriented districts in Lacey (Woodland District) and Tumwater (Brewery District), and formation of a new Urban Corridor Communities Partnership. Charter Partnership members Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, and Thurston County agreed to take on leadership roles in pursuit of corridor development initiatives.



Transportation Recovery Planning



How will we get around if an earthquake destroys a section of I-5 or US 101 in Thurston County? What if local roads buckle or bridges fail like we saw in 2001? The [Puget Sound Regional Catastrophic Disaster Coordination Plan](#) tackles tough scenarios like these. Funded by FEMA, it covers a seven county area. The plan provides information and guidelines for coordination, collaboration, decision-making and priority setting among

emergency response and transportation agencies. TRPC staff worked with project consultants to lead personnel from local public works, emergency management, law enforcement, transit, fire and emergency medical service, WSDOT and State Patrol through a series of disaster scenarios. Each scenario offered opportunities to learn how the checklists, guidance, tools and mitigation strategies could be used to restore the critical transportation infrastructure.

Block Grant Promotes Energy Efficiency & Conservation

Thurston Here-to-There is a [coordinated set of activities](#) with one goal – to improve access to travel options for the people who live, work, play, or go to school in Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino, Tumwater and Yelm. These options help our community to:

- Lower transportation costs
- Reduce congestion – including around schools – improving safety at the same time
- Enhance the sense of community
- Plan for future needs
- Respond to challenges such as environmental concerns, sustainability, rising fuel costs, and the increase in childhood obesity
- Reduce greenhouse gases, our carbon footprint, and vehicle miles traveled

A federal grant from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program targets energy solutions that will strengthen the economy, create jobs and immediately deploy the cheapest, cleanest, and most reliable energy technologies we have—energy efficiency and conservation.



Walk & Roll

Three new schools joined the Walk & Roll program during the 2011-12 school year. Tumwater's Michael T. Simmons Elementary and Yelm's Mill Pond and Fort Stevens Elementary Schools all kicked off Walk & Roll activities that provide safety information and encourage more walking, biking and bus trips.

The Winner Is...

People who live or work in Tumwater, Tenino, Rainier, Yelm, or Bucoda - and who use an alternative to driving alone - were eligible to enter the 2012 Here to There travel challenge. Of the 500 entrants, 25 weekly drawing winners received a bus pass or a gift certificate – each prize worth \$40.

The Survey Says...

In a recent survey of Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino and Yelm residents:

- 57% work in Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Pierce County.
- 27% work in Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino, Yelm and Thurston County.
- 11% carpool or vanpool to work.
- 84% drive alone to work.

Telework Pilot Success

Thurston County and WSDOT established pilot telework programs with promising early results. Workers, managers and technical services staff documented benefits such as increased productivity, improved morale and better workload prioritization with no significant increase in internal technical support.

GOOD FOR BUSINESS



CTR Good for Business

Staff visited more than 140 small businesses and non-affected public worksites in Tumwater expanding the region's commute trip reduction program. Next are similar efforts in Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino and Yelm. In these visits we educate employers and employees about commute alternatives, and encourage participation in a voluntary commute behavior survey to gather baseline data for future program evaluation.

Youth Education Program (7,000 students participated in 2012 – grant partnerships with local schools, Bike PARTners build-a-bike program, Un-driver Licensing Station, Science of Transportation curriculum, walk to school days, and field trips on transit buses) *Intercity Transit*

Neighborhood Pathways (funding \$125,000 in 2013 for resident proposed pathway shortcuts for walkers and bikers) *City of Olympia*

Ruddell Road Overlay (Pacific Avenue to Yelm Highway) *City of Lacey*

Traffic Signal, Sidewalk, Overlay and Inter-Tie (Trosper Road and Lakepark Drive) *City of Tumwater*

Multiple Projects in Design (Golf Club Road Extension, Yelm Highway Sidewalk Connection, Marvin Road and Hawks Prairie Roundabout, Willamette Drive and 31st Avenue Intersection Improvement, Hogum Bay Road Reconstruction, and College Street and 22nd Avenue Intersection Improvement) *City of Lacey*

Harris Creek Culvert Replacement (South of Oakville on South Bank Road - construction of a 98 foot span multi-cell concrete box culvert system) *Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Indian Reservation*

Wilkinson Road Safety Project (Centralia Power Canal north through curve – realigned curve) *Thurston County*

LED Streetlights (converted 150 streetlights to energy efficient light emitting diodes – LEDs – and pursuing grant funds to complete conversion citywide) *City of Olympia*

From the Executive Director...

INTERPRETING THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION - In a surprise move on July 6th of last year, Congress and the President ratified the transportation reauthorization bill “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century” (MAP-21). This new bill provides communities and the states with a two year steady source of funding for roads, bridges and transit. Upon passage, DOT Secretary LaHood stated, “We look forward to working with Congress, states and local communities to put this bill to work...” Clarifying and developing the funding process, developing new rules and guidance, and spanning funding gaps from old to new authorization is now the huge task at hand.

Working closely with state and federal regulators, TRPC staff (as the MPO) is helping to define a new transportation planning and funding process that meets the intent of Congress and MAP-21. It’s easier said than done. Over the last several years, TRPC staff has at times been unable to give the Council and the Policy Board definitive answers on transportation issues because of the lack of a federal bill. Even with the reauthorization, we will still struggle to give clear guidance to our membership for some topics.

We should all find comfort in having the transportation bill passed and moving forward, but we will still have to “make it up as we go along” to implement the intent of the bill and assure a productive transition to MAP-21! We are allocating a good deal of staff time to numerous state and federal teams, joint committees and oversight groups to make sure that we not only understand the new direction and guidelines, but also that our regional issues and needs are addressed and not compromised. Although it looks a lot like making sausage, I’m sure that this effort will result in a positive outcome for the TRPC membership. Hang in there with us!


-- Lon D. Wyrick, Executive Director

Commute Smart Awards 2012



Christine Rawlings (center), ETC for the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services, receives the Commute Smart ETC Champion Award.



The Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts, represented by Ramsey Radwan (center left), Jan Wilson (center) and Callie Dietz (center right), receives the Commute Smart Employer Champion Award.

Legislative Focus

“All or nothing” language in the transportation benefit district (TBD) statute precludes Thurston County and some of the cities from working together to form such a district. TRPC supports a policy change to this legislation during the [2013 session](#).

Mounting congestion on I-5 between Lakewood and Tumwater creates increasingly long yet unpredictable delays. TRPC wants legislators and WSDOT to create a strategic blueprint for this stretch of highway, and prioritize both short- and long-term investments to implement it.

TRPC is partnering to get the ball (or car, truck, bus and RV) rolling. The [JBLM / I-5 Congestion Relief Action Plan](#) starts by identifying low-cost, high-value, quick-to-implement measures that can improve travel while longer-term, more expensive strategies are being designed.

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 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.



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January 2013

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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
Port of Olympia
North Thurston Public Schools
Olympia School District
Confederated Tribes of the
Chehalis Reservation
Nisqually Indian Tribe

Associate Members:

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The Evergreen State College
Thurston Economic
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