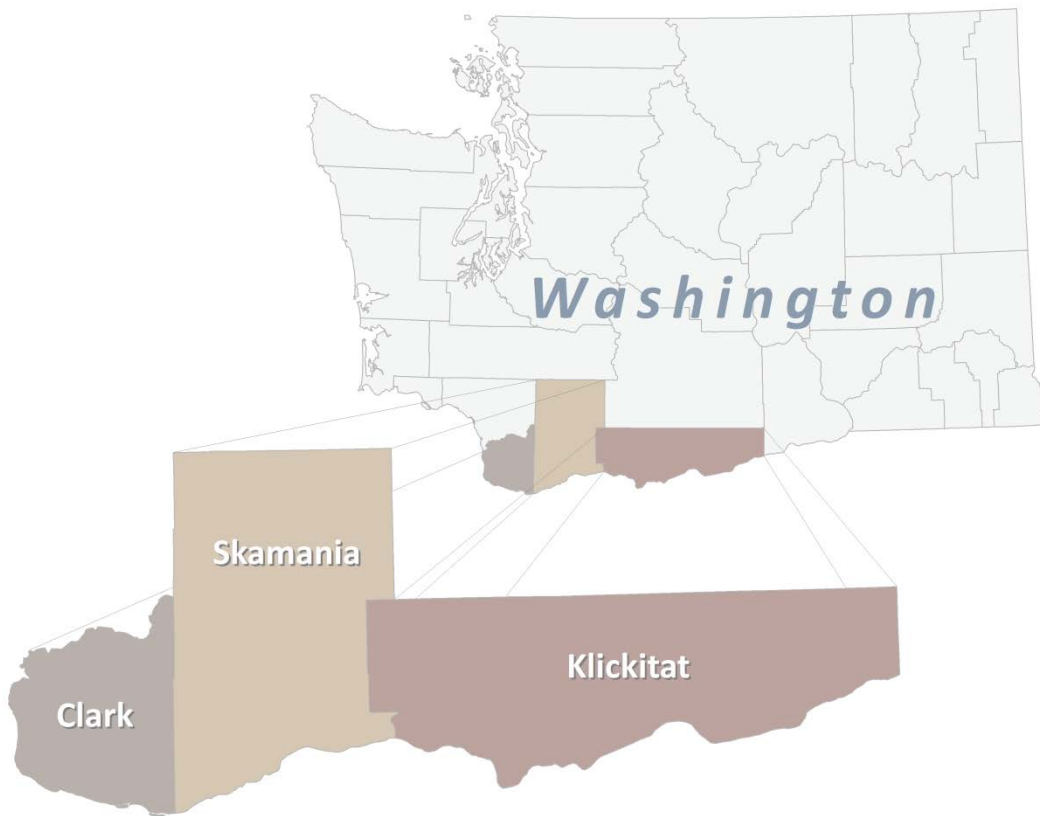


# Annual Report

2015

---



**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council**





## Mission of RTC

To encourage and promote the development of a balanced, efficient and affordable regional transportation system to meet the mobility and accessibility needs of people and goods, within and through this region, and minimize transportation-related air pollution.

## RTC Board of Directors

Clark County .....	3 Councilors
Klickitat County .....	1 Elected Official
Skamania County .....	1 Elected Official
City of Vancouver .....	2 Council Members
Camas/Washougal .....	1 Council Member
Battle Ground/Ridgefield/La Center/Yacolt.....	1 Council Member
Ports of Vancouver/Ridgefield/Camas-Washougal .....	1 Port Commissioner
Clark County Public Transportation Benefit Area (C-TRAN) .....	Executive Director
Washington State Department of Transportation .....	Southwest Region Administrator
Oregon Department of Transportation .....	Regional Administrator
Metro.....	1 Council Member

### ***Ex-officio Members***

14 <sup>th</sup> Legislative District.....	3 Legislative Members
17 <sup>th</sup> Legislative District.....	3 Legislative Members
18 <sup>th</sup> Legislative District.....	3 Legislative Members
20 <sup>th</sup> Legislative District.....	3 Legislative Members
49 <sup>th</sup> Legislative District.....	3 Legislative Members

## Legislative Mandate

Federal and State laws mandate regional transportation planning and decision making as a pre-requisite for use of Federal and State transportation investment funds. The RTC acts as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) under Federal law ([Title 23, USC 450](#)) and the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) under State law ([RCW 47.80](#)). The RTC carries out the duties of an MPO and RTPO on an annual basis and ensures compliance with all applicable Federal and State regulations.

## Functions

The RTC's 1992 [Interlocal Agreement](#) establishes the organization's responsibilities and select functions are highlighted as follows:

- ◆ Maintain a process for developing plans and programs that consider all modes of transportation and is continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive.
- ◆ Ensure that interstate transportation issues are coordinated between Washington and Oregon. Develop and adopt a [Regional Transportation Plan](#) that is consistent with the comprehensive plans of the counties, cities, and towns within the region and the state transportation plans.
- ◆ Develop a [Transportation Improvement Program](#) for the area.
- ◆ Provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation departments, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity for comment on the long range plan.

Through 2015, the RTC delivered a host of major regional plans and recommendations designed to advance smart investments in regional transportation systems over the coming decades.

## Regional Funding and Smart Technology

YR 2015 marked a major breakthrough in funding the next wave of regional transportation investments on the RTC region's state highway system.

At the conclusion of one of the longest legislative sessions in state history, the Washington Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, a multi-year \$16 Billion dollar transportation bill ([Connecting Washington](#)) which funds major state highway maintenance and safety programs and several key transportation investments within the RTC region. In addition, the Connecting Washington program solidifies funding for many competitive grant programs utilized by RTC members, funds multi-modal solutions, and also distributes a portion of the newly enacted gas tax to all local governments. The Connecting Washington program is an ambitious program and one that members of the RTC are ready to implement in the years ahead.

At the federal level, there is hope that a new Federal bill might come to fruition, as the House recently passed a bill similar to the Senate bill acted on this past fall. The federal funding needs within the RTC region are significant, and all eyes look to see whether Congress can ratify a joint bill, one that the President signs into law and Congress funds.

Beyond funding, the RTC region continues to nurture smart investments in technology through the VAST program. A highlight of this past year is the continued evolution of the multi-agency VAST partnership and exploration of the next round of signal and technology investments that are needed as we transition into the age of connected and "smart" vehicles. RTC and VAST members hosted a half day workshop to explore this topic and regional dialogue is ongoing relative to the standards needed for cutting edge signal and supporting systems. While not all answers are defined at this point, one thing is for sure, RTC and its members are in tune with many of the questions about the region's "connected" future and will continue to work collaboratively to ensure regional signal and related investments accommodate the vehicle fleets of the future by wise technology investment and planning for impacts to congestion, safety and how people travel.

## 2015 Top Line Results

The remainder of the report highlights major 2015 Work Program accomplishments. The work of RTC supports regional progress towards investing and building the systems and infrastructure for future population growth and to promote a vibrant and resilient economy. The 2015 results are reported by line of business as follows:

1. Grant and Project Funding;
2. Regional Planning;
3. Technical Services;
4. Regional Partnerships and Collaboration; and
5. MPO Administration.

# Grant and Project Funding

## Grant Project Awards

The RTC administers the largest annual seed investment grant fund in Clark County. On average, the investment fund awards \$9-10 million in competitive grants for regional roadway improvements each year. In 2015, the [RTC Board of Directors](#) awarded 19 grant awards equaling \$8.9 million in investment.

Over the past 10-years, the RTC has awarded over \$120 million in grant awards. These seed investment dollars are further leveraged, creating a multiplier effect of hundreds of millions in regional transportation investments being catalyzed by the RTC investment fund over the past decade.

## 2015 Grant Awards

Program	#	Jurisdiction	Project Name/Description	Phase	STP	Total
STP-UL	1	Clark County	NE 119th Street, 50th Av. to 72nd Av. <i>Widen to 3 lanes with bicycle lanes, sidewalks, etc.</i>	CN	\$1,385,000	\$5,896,000
	2	Clark County	Highway 99 Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvement <i>Sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and Hawk Signal</i>	PE CN	\$100,000 \$200,000	\$350,000 \$1,036,000
	3	Clark County	NE 10th Avenue, 154th St. to 164th St. <i>Bridge 10th Av. over Whipple creek and upgrade road</i>	CN	\$1,840,000	\$16,086,000
	4	Vancouver	Clark County Transportation Demand Management <i>Transportation Demand Management</i>	PE	\$350,000	\$589,000
	4	RTC	VAST Coordination and Management <i>ITS coordination</i>	PE	\$275,000	\$255,000
	4	RTC	UPWP and Congestion Management <i>Support work elements of the UPWP and CMP</i>	PE	\$350,000	\$404,624
	<b>Total STP</b>					<b>\$4,500,000</b>

Program	#	Jurisdiction	Project Name/Description	Phase	CMAQ	Total
CMAQ	1	Vancouver	Mill Plain Blvd. Arrival on Green Improvement <i>Signal Upgrades to improve arrival on green</i>	CN	\$72,700	\$97,600
	2	Clark County	Working to Refine IntelliGent Highway Transportation <i>Adaptive Traffic Signals NE 139th St.</i>	PE	\$685,400	\$920,000
	3	WSDOT	SR-14 ATIS Infill, 1-5 to Evergreen <i>Install ITS devices and data stations</i>	PE CN	\$67,000 \$753,500	\$90,000 \$1,010,000
	4	C-TRAN	Mill Plain Transit Signal Priority Phase 2 <i>Transit Signal Priority</i>	PE CN	\$139,700 \$55,900	\$187,500 \$75,000
	5	WSDOT	Centralized Signal System - Join ATMS <i>Central Traffic System - ATMS.now</i>	CN	\$149,000	\$200,000
	6	Vancouver	Fort Vancouver/Mcloughlin Sidewalk Infill <i>Sidewalks and HAWK Signal</i>	PE CN	\$108,100 \$821,700	\$125,000 \$950,000
<b>Total CMAQ</b>					<b>\$2,853,000</b>	<b>\$3,655,100</b>

### 2015 Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Grant Awards

Rank	Projects	Agency	TAP Request	TAP Award	Source
1	Port Connector Segment 2	Port of Vancouver	\$500,000	<b>\$500,000</b>	Urban
2	Highway 99 Pedestrian / Bike Improvements	Clark County	\$250,000	<b>\$250,000</b>	Urban
3	East 4th St. LED Pedestrian Sign	La Center	\$47,000	<b>\$47,000</b>	Rural
4	Columbia River Renaissance Trail	Vancouver	\$800,000	<b>\$600,000</b>	Urban/Flex
5	Main Avenue Access Improvements	Clark County / Ridgefield	\$200,000	<b>\$148,000</b>	Rural/Flex
				<b>\$1,545,000</b>	

## Regional Projects Moving Forward

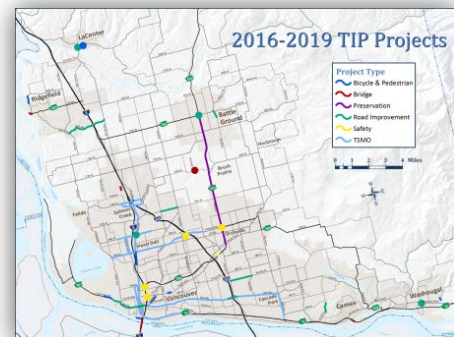
Through calendar year 2015, local agencies obligated \$11.4 million in regional federal funds. This obligation level allowed the region to exceed the required statewide obligation target.

RTC staff also administered [12 amendments](#) to the 2015-2018 TIP to ensure regional projects had timely access to awarded grant funds.



## 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program

The [RTC Board of Directors](#) adopted the 2016-2019 [Transportation Improvement Program](#) in October 2015. The TIP programs \$194.5 million in funds for regional transportation investment over the next four years.



## Connecting Washington Funding Program

Governor Inslee and the Washington Legislature enacted a 16 year, \$16 billion multi-modal transportation funding program during the 2015 legislative session.



This multi-year investment plan will benefit the RTC region. The plan invests in: funding major state highway system spot investments, adds state funds for additional maintenance and safety projects, and funds many competitive grant programs across the array of multi-modal programs which benefit the RTC region.

Notable funded projects within the RTC region include over \$238 million in needed system investments. Those include:

### RTC Region Gas Tax Distribution to Local Agencies

Projects in Clark County	Total (1000s)
I-5 Mill Plain Interchange	\$98,700
SR-14/Camas Slough Bridge	\$25,000
SR-502 Main Street Project/Widening	\$7,700
I-5/179 <sup>th</sup> St. Interchange	\$50,000
SR-501/I-5 to Port of Vancouver	\$6,000
Ridgefield Rail Overpass	\$7,768
West Vancouver Freight Access	\$1,900
27 <sup>th</sup> Street Extension & Rail Overpass	\$7,500
Brady Road	\$6,000
Street Improvements near School for Blind	\$50
<i>Subtotal:</i>	\$210,618
<b>Transit Projects in Clark County:</b>	
Vancouver Mall Transit Center	\$3,200
<i>Subtotal:</i>	\$3,200
<b>Projects in Gorge Region:</b>	
SR-14/Bingen Overpass	\$22,900
SR-14/Wind River Junction	\$5,150
<i>Subtotal:</i>	\$28,050
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$238,668</b>

Compiled by RTC; July 2015.

[Connecting Washington](#) enacted July 15, 2015, for FY2016-FY2031

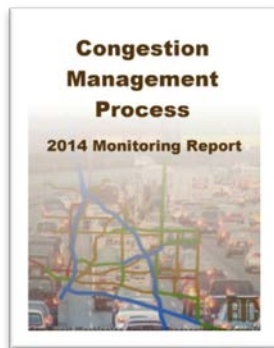
## Wrap up of Prior State Funding Program

Significant progress was made in finalizing construction on two major state projects funded through prior state funding packages (Nickel, Partnership) in 2015. [SR-502](#) and [I-205/18<sup>th</sup> St interchange](#) improvements were well underway and should be completed for use in 2016. These two projects will provide significant safety and access improvements to rapidly growth areas in Clark County, represent a milestone for enhancing regional mobility, and should act as a catalyst for economic development.



# Regional Planning

Regional transportation planning is a primary responsibility of the RTC. Multiple long-range plans were developed within the RTC region through 2015 and are highlighted below. Each plan is designed to identify needs and smart investments to keep the region's regional transportation systems safe, accessible to all populations, and moving to support economic growth.



## Congestion Management Process

Annual evaluation of [traffic and congestion conditions](#) within Clark County was completed in July 2015. The 2014 Report confirms that the region's traffic is exceeding pre-recession travel levels and the transportation system is showing signs of stress during the peak travel periods. The findings of this monitoring report indicated significant uptick in congestion delay on major bi-state commute routes (ex. I-5, I-205, and SR-14) as well as the highest ever recorded number of [bridge crossings](#). Monitoring and planning for investments along these critical bi-state corridors is ongoing.



## Vancouver Area Smart Trek (VAST)

RTC worked closely with the [VAST](#) agency partners to identify projects and develop funding applications for the partner agencies. \$2.2 million in federal funds were programmed in 2015 through the VAST process including projects for signal optimization, transit signal priority, fiber communications, common software platforms and program oversight projects. Implementation of the long-awaited freeway travel time reader boards went active in the fall, and continued migration of data feeds into the multi-agency [PORTAL](#) data-warehouse system will augment the region's ability to research and plan the next wave of system investments. VAST partners also hosted a regional workshop on the future of traffic signal and connected vehicle infrastructure in order to anticipate and prepare for the coming wave of "connected" and smart vehicle technologies. Working together, the VAST program will stage the RTC region to utilize advanced signal and data technologies and increase the efficiency and operating capacity of the regional transportation systems.



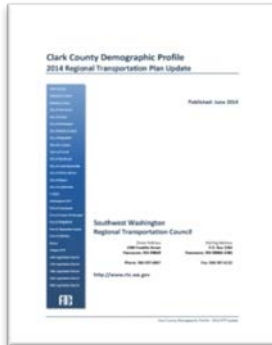
## Commute Trip Reduction Plans

The RTC worked as part of a multi-agency effort to update both the regional and local Commute Trip Reduction plans. The Regional CTR Plan supports the region's and state strategy to use trip demand management tools to help commuters and

offset some demand on the transportation system during peak-travel periods. The RTC's Regional Transportation Plan emphasizes the need for a robust commute trip reduction program. The CTR Plan updates emphasize the region's need to expand the emphasis on promoting carpools and other alternatives to driving during peak periods.

Long term benefits of demand management strategies include helping to offset some demand during peak periods and also offer individual benefits to users, which could include a more active lifestyle and compressed work week schedules. Together with other congestion management tools, the commute trip reduction plan and strategies are techniques the region is using to offer a comprehensive and efficient transportation strategy.

# Technical Services

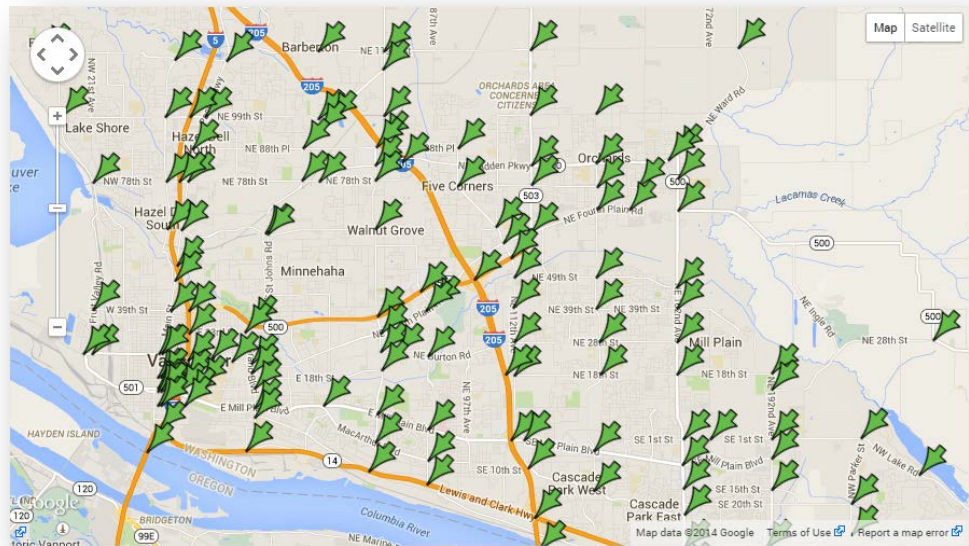


## Growth and Demographic Forecasting

RTC staff continued to provide technical services and analysis to member agencies in conjunction with the [Clark County 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update](#) process. An analysis of persons with Limited English Proficiency was provided to the City of Camas to assist their staff in the development of the city's Title VI program. Additionally, maps of minority and low-income populations were produced for C-TRAN to assist C-TRAN staff in the development of their Title VI program documentation for the Federal Transit Administration.

## Traffic Counting and Data

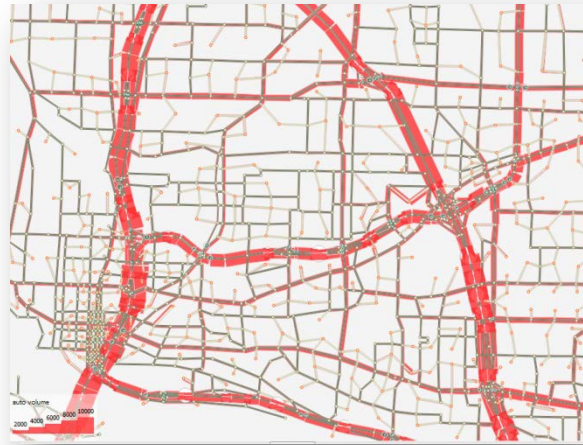
Traffic and collision count data collections efforts were completed in 2015. The RTC collects, stores, and makes available to all member agencies and the public [historical traffic count records](#). An emphasis of the 2015 count program included the additional collection of freight data at 27 key locations in support of a regional freight study. Through the [VAST](#) partnership efforts, additional software enhancements are now underway which will result in live traffic count feeds into the database structure.



## Regional Traffic Modeling

Throughout the year, the RTC has participated in County Comprehensive Plan Update discussions to lay the groundwork for incorporating a new 2035 land use forecast. RTC's modeling efforts included inputting growth targets into the regional travel forecasting model, as well as updating the 2035 model transportation networks based on soon to be updated local

transportation Capital Facilities Plans. RTC staff continued to participate in a statewide expert panel in support of WSDOT's efforts to develop a statewide transportation modeling tool as well as committees guiding the improvement of regional travel forecasting tools.



## Project Traffic Modeling

RTC provided travel model forecasts for internal and external transportation studies and projects, including support for the following studies:

- ◆ City of Ridgefield – Downton Circulation Study
- ◆ City of Vancouver - Westside Mobility Strategy, including the application of new Dynamic Traffic Assignment tools
- ◆ Clark County – Manley Road/ NE 259<sup>th</sup> Street
- ◆ Clark County – NE 99<sup>th</sup> Street
- ◆ City of Camas – NW 6<sup>th</sup> and Norwood Intersection

## Fee-for-Service

RTC provides technical data and modeling services to private business on a pay-for-service basis. During 2015, the RTC processed 25 data requests and billed private vendors for direct hours of service, creating a net revenue stream to the RTC.

# Regional Partnerships and Collaboration

## Agency Outreach

Opportunities for strengthening and building new partnerships with member agencies, and stakeholders were advanced in 2015. Significant efforts were put into information sharing of regional project priorities in concert with the Washington State legislative sessions. The RTC partnered with the Clark County Transportation Alliance and participated in numerous meetings and forums in pursuit of securing additional state and federal transportation funding for regional projects. Outreach to other agencies and organizations such as the Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC), Identity Clark County (ICC), the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD), local Chambers of Commerce, and related stakeholders continued to be emphasis areas through 2015, with the goal of leveraging regional resources and information.

## Regional Initiatives

The RTC has consulted with Identity Clark County and other regional partners in the formation of the [Southwest Washington Freight and Commerce Task Force](#) (SW-FACT). Led by the private sector, SW-FACT was organized to advance regional dialogue and funding for critical freight and commerce related projects. The coalition is currently sponsored by over 100 private sector businesses that are interested in or dependent upon regional freight movements to advance their business interests. Given the freight and export dependence of the RTC and greater Portland region, initiatives such as SW-FACT can be used as coordinating and organizing forums where special attention is given to advancing critical freight system investments identified as priorities with the RTC's Regional Transportation Plan. The RTC provided in-kind consulting and mapping services to this effort.

## Bi-State Collaboration

The RTC jointly hosted three [Bi-State Coordination Committee](#) meetings with Metro-JPACT. A range of topics were explored including: regional commute patterns, regional economic development initiatives, and regional community values. The findings of these meeting reports and discussions indicate that the Portland/Vancouver region is inextricably tied together economically, freight transportation wise, and that our values are mostly the same. Continued collaboration among agencies assigned to the Bi-State Committee is expected in 2016.

# MPO Program Administration



## Federal and State Program Compliance

The RTC remained fully compliant with federal laws governing MPO business through 2015. The RTC's Unified Planning Work Program was approved by the State, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration on June 29, 2015.

## General Administration

The RTC continues to achieve high marks from the Washington State Auditor for financial accounting and reporting and the RTC's annual audit was completed with no recommendations for improvement on May 11, 2015. Multiple Interlocal Reimbursement Service Agreements were executed with member agencies to advance efficient and cost effective contracting and service delivery among members.