PRTPO Biennial Currency Review of the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan

PRTPO's 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was adopted by the Executive Board in October 2019. Per a statutory requirement in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.80.030(2), PRTPO must review the RTP every two years for currency and forward this biennial review to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). That is the rationale for this 2021 biennial currency review.

2021 Statement of Currency

PRTPO's 2040 Regional Transportation Plan is current with all state requirements and continues to support the Executive Board's on-going planning and decision-making processes. No update to the long-range plan is warranted at this time.

The next biennial review will occur in late 2023.

Biennial Review Documentation

PRTPO's 2021 biennial review involves two tests to demonstrate that the RTP adopted in October 2019 is still current and useful for its intended purpose:

1 – It continues to comply with RCW and WAC requirements

2 – It continues to support PRTPO's work program and decision-making activities

The following brief documents findings of the biennial currency review.

1. Currency with RCW and WAC Requirements

Requirements spelled out in RCW 47.80.030 and in WAC 468-86-080 through 468-86-140 describe the elements of a statutorily compliant Regional Transportation Plan for state RTPOs. This biennial currency review of PRTPO's 2040 RTP looks for regionally significant changes in the last two years that render some or all of the required elements in the existing RTP outdated and thus meriting an update. Statutory requirements are summarized below. Reviewers wishing to read the full legislative language as well as the Growth Management Act implementing legislation governing the corresponding local planning processes are encouraged to follow the above links to the Washington State legislative website.

a. Identify existing and planned facilities of regional significance

Have plans for new regionally significant facilities been developed in the last two years that were not included in the RTP and now warrant an update for the RTP to remain relevant and useful for PRTPO?

No new plans for regionally significant facilities or services have been introduced in the last two years.

b. Establish level of service for state highways of regional significance

Have changes been made to LOS standards on state highways of regional significance in the last two years that warrant a plan update for the RTP to remain relevant and useful for PRTPO?

No changes have been made to established Level of Service standards on state highways of regional significance in the last two years.

c. Include a financial plan

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to the financial plan for the RTP to remain relevant and useful for PRTPO?

No significant changes to revenue sources or likely availability of project funds have occurred in the last two years that can be reasonably forecasted in the RTP.

d. Promote preservation and efficiency of existing system

Have any changes in the last two years reduced the RTP's support for system preservation and efficiency such that it needs to be updated to support PRTPO decision-making?

The RTP continues to emphasize the importance of system preservation and efficiency.

e. Regional transportation goals and objectives

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to any of the RTP goals and objectives for the RTP to remain relevant and useful for PRTPO?

PRTPO policy makers regularly use the RTP to inform on-going transportation planning and decision-making processes, to promote regional perspectives, to encourage partnerships and collaboration between local, state, and tribal governments, and to support public education and involvement. The current RTP supports Executive Board decisions about work program development (e.g. EV readiness, system resiliency), legislative priorities, and other regional transportation planning concerns relevant to PRTPO members.

f. Regional transportation strategy

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to the regional transportation strategy for the RTP to remain relevant and useful for PRTPO?

No changes to the transportation strategy or fundamental approach to coordinated regional transportation planning have been introduced in the last two years.

g. Needs, deficiencies, data requirements, and assumptions

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to any of these elements for the RTP to remain relevant and useful for PRTPO?

- Existing regional transportation facilities and services
- Identification of regional transportation needs
- Forecasts of future travel demand
- Future regional transportation system deficiencies
- Common regional assumptions used for modeling purposes

No significant changes have undermined the inventory and assessments of the existing RTP, nor have pronounced shifts in travel mode or demand materialized sufficiently to support any kind of long-range forecast update for the region.

Have new performance monitoring metrics been identified to augment traffic volumes and vehicle miles of travel (VMT), which the RTP already includes?

No new regional performance metrics have been introduced in the last two years.

Have regional growth patterns changed sufficiently that the RTP is no longer consistent with local Comprehensive Plans?

No regionally significant changes to local land use plans were proposed in the last two years.

h. Least cost planning

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to PRTPO's least cost planning approach for the RTP to remain relevant and useful for PRTPO?

PRTPO's advocacy for responsible, cost-effective strategies and investments, including emphasis on system preservation and multimodal efficiency, is still appropriate for the region.

2. Support for PRTPO Work Program and Decision-Making

The second test to demonstrate currency of the existing RTP is whether it adequately supports the Executive Board in developing the regional transportation work program and in its decision-making processes.

a. Work Program Support

Demonstration of how the RTP supports the on-going regional transportation work program is evident in the commitment PRTPO has made to RTP follow-up planning activities in the areas of climate response and system resilience.

- With its modest planning budget PRTPO is convening a diverse group of regional stakeholders in exploring and pre-positioning for grants to expand the region's capacity to support electric vehicles (EV) and other zero-emissions mobility options in the future.
- PRTPO established an online EV resource portal to support the work of its members and other agencies working to establish a regional network of charging facilities across the Olympic and Kitsap Peninsulas.
- PRTPO supports efforts of the WA Department of Fish & Wildlife in obtaining construction funds to elevate US 101 six feet over the Duckabush River estuary, restoring vital salmon habitat and increasing the seismic and inundation resilience of the vital US 101 route.

The RTP clearly provides guidance that supports practical and meaningful planning activities that are feasible within PRTPO's financially constrained work plan, the SFY 2022-2023 UPWP.

The UPWP also identifies some Unfunded Needs derived from the RTP that could be undertaken with additional resources, including efforts to enhance multimodal resilience, expand rural intercity bus travel, increase multimodal system safety, and innovations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in rural and small urban settings. These can all be traced back to recommendations and public input on the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and will be pursued by PRTPO or other partners as funding allows. This further demonstrates the currency and usefulness of the 2040 RTP to PRTPO in identifying planning activities that can support regional planning objectives.

b. Decision-making Support

Demonstration of how the RTP supports Executive Board decision-making is evident in the Transportation Outlook priorities PRTPO develops annually to educate legislators about regional concerns. Consistent with the RTP, Board priorities include stable and reliable funding for system preservation, support for ferry vessel replacement and operations, coordination with WSDOT to get funding support for important state projects, and more efficient use of existing resources. Funding concerns of local agencies reflected in the RTP drives PRTPO support for more efficient and flexible use of federal funds for small local projects. And the Board continues to promote support for EV readiness and system resilience as well as universal broadband access with its legislative delegation.

All projects identified in the 2022 Transportation Outlook are consistent with and supportive of the RTP. The Board has identified no regional policy concerns or priority project needs that conflict with or are inconsistent with the RTP. The RTP continues to adequately support Executive Board decision making and inform its communications and information outreach.

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