Chapter 468-86 WAC
RTPO PLANNING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

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WAC

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PART ONE
PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

WAC 468-86-010 Authority. The regional transportation planning program was authorized by the 1990 legislature as part of the state's Growth Management Act. The program is contained in chapter 47.80 RCW, with funding appropriations made as part of the Department of Transportation Appropriations Act.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-010, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-020 Purpose/intent. (1) The regional transportation planning program creates a formal mechanism for local governments and the state to coordinate transportation planning for regional transportation facilities. The act authorized the creation of regional transportation planning organizations (RTPO) by local governments to coordinate transportation planning among jurisdictions and develop a regional transportation plan. The regional transportation planning program is available to all counties and cities statewide (RCW 47.80.020).

(2) The legislature has authorized a grant program to fund this work. The department has the authority to administer this grant program, and to develop in cooperation with the RTPOs:

(a) Minimum planning standards for the development of a regional transportation plan;

(b) The RTPO regional transportation improvement program;

(c) Planning guidelines and principles;

(d) Certification standards for the transportation portion of local comprehensive plans and county-wide planning policies;

(e) The adoption of LOS standards on state transportation facilities; and

(f) RTPO regional transportation strategies.

(3) The purpose of the minimum planning standards is to guide RTPOs in the use of the regional transportation planning grants, and in the development of planning products under the program. Work proposed by each regional transportation planning organization shall be included in a work program that demonstrates adherence to the planning standards within this chapter. The intent of the department is to provide guidance that is sufficient to ensure a minimum level of consistency across the state, while providing flexibility for regions to meet specific mobility needs.

(4) The department will achieve this purpose through the establishment of these rules and through the cooperative development and maintenance of a set of RTPO planning standards and guidelines. Copies of these standards and guidelines will be available through the department's transportation planning office.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-020, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

PART TWO
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

WAC 468-86-030 Definitions. "Consistency" means that no feature of a plan or regulation is incompatible with any other feature of a plan or regulation. Consistency is indicative of a capacity for orderly integration or operation with other elements in a system.

"Department" means the department of transportation (WSDOT).

"Least cost planning" means a process of comparing direct and indirect costs of demand and supply options to meet transportation goals and/or policies where the intent of the process is to identify the most cost-effective mix of options.

"Level of service" means an established minimum capacity for both transit and regional arterials that must be provided per unit of demand or other appropriate measure of need.

"Organization" means regional transportation planning organization (RTPO).

"Region" means the area that includes the local jurisdictions that comprise the regional transportation planning organization.

"Urbanized area" means those areas designated as such by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

"Urban growth areas" means those areas designated by a county pursuant to RCW 36.70A.110.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-030, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-040 Determining the region. Local governments should decide the geographic extent and composition of their region. The region should reflect common transportation concerns and a willingness among the local governments to work together in a cooperative planning process.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-040, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-050 Establishing the organization. (1) A regional transportation planning organization is a voluntary association of local governments within the region. It shall be a formal organization formed through an interlocal agreement that establishes the organization, defines duties and relationships, and includes a transportation policy board. The establishment of a technical advisory committee (TAC) is recommended. The RTPO must determine its own structure to ensure equitable and acceptable representation by member governments. Regions are encouraged to seek Native American tribal involvement.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-050, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-060 Relationship to MPOs. The federal government requires a regional transportation planning process in urbanized areas with over fifty thousand population. This process is carried out by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) that have been jointly designated by local governments and the state. The intent is that the regional transportation planning program be integrated with the metropolitan planning organization program in these urbanized areas. RCW 47.80.020 requires that RTPOs shall be the same organization as that designated as the MPO. The regional transportation planning program provides the opportunity for transportation planning in rural areas within the RTPO. The department intends to jointly administer these two programs.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-060, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-070 Designation procedures. (1) Local governments desiring participation in the regional transportation planning program must submit an RTPO designation package to WSDOT. This information is necessary for WSDOT to verify that the RTPO meets the requirements of RCW 47.80.020. This package shall contain the following items:

(a) A description of the region;

(b) A formal designation of the RTPO, in the form of a resolution or other legal declaration;

(c) A list of all RTPO member local governments;

(d) A copy of the interlocal agreement that will govern RTPO operations;

(e) A formal designation by the RTPO of the lead planning agency; and

(f) A description of the RTPO's transportation policy board.

(2) WSDOT has the responsibility of verifying that RTPOs designated by local governments meet the state requirements. The most recent annual OFM population data will be used to verify population figures. WSDOT will review the RTPO designation package, make a finding of verification, and concur with or deny the local designation. Once verified, the RTPO may proceed in carrying out its duties and may receive regional transportation planning formula grants. If significant changes are made in the structure of the RTPO, WSDOT may request that another designation package be submitted for verification review.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-070, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

PART THREE
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

WAC 468-86-080 Least-cost planning methodology. The methodology shall consider direct and indirect costs and benefits for all reasonable options to meet planning goals and objectives. The methodology shall treat demand and supply resources on a consistent and integrated basis. The regional transportation planning organizations shall consult the guidelines set forth by the department for implementing a least-cost planning methodology. Regional transportation plans should incrementally incorporate least-cost planning methodologies as these concepts are developed. The regional transportation plan adopted after July 1, 2000, shall be based on a least-cost planning methodology appropriate to the region.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-080, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-090 Regional transportation goals and objectives. The regional transportation planning program is meant to foster an ongoing transportation planning and decision-making process that actively plans for the improvement of regional transportation systems and coordinates this process among jurisdictions. The goals and objectives of the regional transportation plan should incorporate existing transportation related county-wide planning policies or multicounty transportation related planning policies where adopted and adhere to the following principles:

(1) Build upon applicable portions of the existing local comprehensive plan and process and promote the establishment of a regional perspective into the local comprehensive plan;

(2) Encourage partnerships between federal, state, local and tribal governments, special districts, the private sector, the general public, and other interest groups during conception, technical analysis, policy development, and decision processes in developing, updating, and maintaining the regional transportation plan;

(3) Ensure early and continuous public involvement from conceptual planning through decision making;

(4) Shall be ongoing, and incorporate short and long range multimodal planning activities to address major capacity expansion and operational improvements to the regional transportation system;

(5) Use regionally coordinated, valid and consistent technical methods and data should be used in identifying and analyzing needs;

(6) Consider environmental impacts related to the development of regional transportation policies and facilities and;

(7) Address the policies regarding the coordination of transportation planning among regional jurisdictions, including the relationship between regional transportation planning, local comprehensive planning and state transportation planning.

Within these principles, regions shall develop their own ongoing planning process for the development and refinement of the regional transportation plan, and provide a forum for the discussion of regional transportation planning issues.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-090, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-100 Regional transportation strategy. Each regional transportation planning organization shall develop a regional transportation strategy. The strategy should identify alternative transportation modes within the region and recommend policies to:

(1) Address each transportation mode;

(2) Address intermodal connections between modes; and

(3) Address transportation demand management where required.

The regional transportation strategy is intended to guide development of the regional transportation plan and any periodic updates.

Adopted multicounty and county-wide planning policies and policies from local comprehensive plans that are regional in scope and regionally consistent should provide the basis for the regional transportation strategy. The regional transportation strategy should be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changing priorities or to maintain regional consistency.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-100, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-110 Needs, deficiencies, data requirements, and coordinated regional transportation and land use assumptions. (1) The following components shall be developed and incorporated in the RTP:

(a) An inventory of existing regional transportation facilities and services, including physical, operational, and usage characteristics of the regional transportation system;

(b) An evaluation of current facilities and services, comparing current usage, and operational characteristics to level of service standards, and identification of regional transportation needs;

(c) Forecasts of future travel demand, based on the regional transportation strategy and local comprehensive plans;

(d) Identification of future regional transportation system deficiencies, comparing future travel needs for movement of people and goods to available facilities and services; and

(e) Coordinated common regional assumptions (growth, population, employment, mode split, etc.,) among local jurisdictions for the development of all transportation models to ensure consistency within the RTPO, and:

(i) These common regional assumptions shall recognize the planning requirements of the state's Growth Management Act, and;

(ii) Be consistent with population forecasts prepared by the office of financial management.

(2) **Performance monitoring.** An integral part of the regional transportation plan is monitoring the performance of the regional transportation system over time. This information is necessary to determine the success of plan implementation and the effect of the desired improvements on the performance of the regional transportation system. Each RTPO shall describe their performance monitoring system in the regional transportation plan. The performance monitoring measures shall include traffic volumes and vehicle miles of travel (VMT) at a minimum and can include, but are not limited to, travel time, speed, safety standards and other measures. Performance monitoring measures should be coordinated and measurable on a consistent basis throughout the RTPO.

(3) **Regional development patterns and investments.** The regional transportation plan shall include a general assessment of regional development patterns and investments. This analysis is intended to provide direction and background information for updates of the regional transportation plan. The RTP updates shall be based upon a general retrospective discussion of current land use and transportation patterns and their relationship to the region's goals and objectives and elsewhere in the regional transportation plan. Current and projected development patterns and the expected magnitudes and time frame in which these developments are expected to occur should be reviewed and evaluated against the regional growth and transportation strategies. If the regional growth and transportation strategies have changed or current and projected development can be shown to be inconsistent, the plan should be updated to reflect these changes, or development policies should be updated to assure consistency and continuity of transportation and land use issues within the region. The region’s interrelationships between growth and transportation should be discussed along with strategies such as access control, development of heritage corridors, and other measures designed to maintain current and proposed development patterns consistent with the regional transportation plan and the transportation and land use elements of local comprehensive plans.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-110, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-120 Financial component. The financial component shall include the following:

(1) An analysis of funding capacity including an inventory of revenue sources for regional transportation improvements, and probable funding levels available for regional transportation improvements from each source;

(2) Probable funding comparisons with identified current and future needs, including identified funding shortfalls; and

(3) If funding shortfalls are identified, an analysis of additional funding resources to make up the shortfall, or a reassessment of the regional transportation strategies, at a minimum, to ensure that transportation needs fall within probable funding levels.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-120, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-130 Proposed future transportation network. Based upon the identified needs and probable funding levels within the region, the proposed future transportation network defines specific facility or service improvements, transportation system management strategies, and demand management strategies proposed for implementation on the regional transportation system. The plan shall identify priority levels for these improvements to guide local jurisdictions and the state in implementation and development of the regional transportation improvement program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-130, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

WAC 468-86-140 High capacity transit and public transportation interrelationships. Within those RTPOs where there is an existing or proposed high capacity transit system, the regional transportation plan shall discuss the relationship between the high capacity transit system and conventional public transit system. This could include policies to maintain coordinated arrivals and departures of interconnecting routes, coordination with other multimodal transportation centers, and other strategies targeted at improving these intermodal relationships over time.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-140, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

PART FOUR
CERTIFICATION

WAC 468-86-150 Certification. (1) By December 31, 1996, each RTPO shall certify, that the transportation element of all comprehensive plans for cities and counties planning under the Growth Management Act:

(a) Reflect the transportation guidelines and principles established in the regional transportation plan;

(b) Are consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan; and

(c) Conform with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.070.

(2) Each RTPO shall also certify that county-wide planning policies adopted under RCW 36.70A.210 and the adopted regional transportation plan are consistent.

(3) Regions shall cooperatively define and establish measures and processes to determine regional consistency with the adopted regional transportation plan.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-150, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]

PART FIVE
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

WAC 468-86-160 Regional transportation improvement program. (1) Each RTPO shall compile a regional transportation improvement program (TIP) at least once every two years. The regional TIP shall:

(a) Be developed on a cooperative basis by local government agencies, public transit agencies, and the department of transportation within each region;

(b) Consist of a list of regionally significant transportation projects and programs including projects proposed for construction and transportation demand management measures proposed to be implemented during each year for the next six-year period;

(c) Consist of regionally significant projects included in the local six-year transit development plans and six-year comprehensive transportation programs required by RCW 35.58.2795, 35.77.010, and 36.81.121 for transit agencies, cities, towns, and counties;

(d) Include all proposed WSDOT projects in the region;

(e) Include only projects consistent with the regional transportation plan;

(f) Include a financial section outlining:

(i) Sources of funding reasonably expected to be received for each year of the ensuing three-year period; and

(ii) All assumptions and explanations supporting the expected levels of funding consistent with information included in the financial component of the regional transportation plan.

(2) The six-year regional TIP developed by each RTPO is intended for use as a planning document and shall be available at the lead planning agency office of the RTPO.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 47.80.070 and SHB 1928, Section 5. WSR 97-09-046 (Order 169), § 468-86-160, filed 4/15/97, effective 5/16/97.]