

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

- ❖ Grays Harbor County Region Regional Transportation Planning Organization
- ❖ Regional/State Transportation Improvement Plan
- ❖ Surface Transportation Program
- ❖ US101 Regional Circulation Project

**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**  
**GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY REGION**  
**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

Objective

GHCOG is a member of the Southwest Washington five-county Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). As such, GHCOG serves as the lead for countywide transportation efforts.

Our objective is to support the required functions of the RTPO and identify and establish priorities for identifying, planning and implementing transportation improvements and resolving transportation issues within Grays Harbor County.

Work Items

1. Facilitate meetings of the Grays Harbor RTPO. Provide agendas, meeting minutes and support materials.
2. Develop policies related to specific transportation needs within Grays Harbor, forward policy documentation to WSDOT and affected agencies.
3. Provide research of transportation needs and identify solutions on an as-needed basis. This may include the development of issue papers, route development plans and various traffic studies.
4. Develop Grays Harbor County segment of the annual Unified Planning Work Program, as required by the Federal Highway Administration and WSDOT in order to receive funding for long range transportation planning and system improvements.
5. Develop Grays Harbor County segment of the Regional Transportation Plan as required by the Federal Highway Administration and WSDOT in order to receive funding for long range transportation planning and system improvements. Update when relevant.
6. Maintain and update Grays Harbor County segment of the Washington Transportation Plan as required by the Federal Highway Administration and WSDOT in order to receive funding for long range transportation planning and system improvements.
7. Attend MPO/RTPO/WSDOT coordinating committee meetings in representation of Grays Harbor County; provide relevant information.
8. Development and updating of the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan.
9. Provide a schedule of various transportation funding mechanisms.
10. Provide assistance in developing project applications for federal and state transportation grants.
11. Review legislative activity that impacts rural transportation funding, notify as appropriate.
12. Facilitate intergovernmental communication and coordination.
13. Maintain a general overview of aviation and rail elements – needs, strategies and funding opportunities. Implement elements into appropriate plans and policies.
14. Oversee the inclusion of local aviation needs into the WSDOT statewide assessment.

### Output

A local and regional transportation planning process to include:

- Fulfillment of RTPO lead agency status, committee and subcommittee facilitation
- Policy Development
- Transportation plans such as route development plans and traffic studies
- Unified Planning Work Program
- Regional Transportation Plan
- Washington Transportation Plan (Grays Harbor elements)
- Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan
- Improved intergovernmental coordination for planning and implementing transportation improvements
- Quarterly and annual reports to Southwest Washington RTPO (funding agency)
- Complete Grays Harbor segment of the WSDOT statewide airport assessment

### Coordination

The Grays Harbor County Region RTPO is comprised of Grays Harbor County, all cities within Grays Harbor, the Port of Grays Harbor, Grays Harbor PUD, Grays Harbor Transit, the tribes and multiple special interest groups. As lead agency, GHCOG facilitates the communication between the members as well as state and federal agencies.

### Citizen Involvement

All meetings of the GHCOG are advertised and open to the general public. RTPO meetings at both the five county and local levels are open to the public. Public participation also occurs through public information meetings and project related meeting and public hearings.

### Community and Regional Contributions and Benefits

The RTPO is the vehicle that provides a unified regional voice on transportation related issues. This vehicle allows for policy direction at both the local and five county level. Work items performed at the RTPO level ensure that state and federal requirements are met which, in turn, keep our local agencies in a position to apply for and receive funding. A unified regional plan ensures transportation needs and goals are met throughout the region, reducing duplication of effort and conflicting interests.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

### **REGIONAL AND STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

#### Objective

Meet state and federal regulations governing the need for a regional transportation improvement plan (TIP) and submission of federally funded projects to WSDOT for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).

#### Work Items

1. Provide education and workshops on the need for TIP/STIP and training in using WSDOT TIP/STIP software. Provide on-site software assistance and training as needed and when requested.
2. Provide direct assistance in TIP/STIP development.
3. Review local TIPs for accuracy and recommend needed corrections or additions.
4. Hand input data into WSDOT software for those entities that do not have electronic capabilities.
5. Combine all local TIPs for approval by GHCOG as regional TIP.
6. Input all local TIPs into state database, sort and forward those projects identified as federally funded for inclusion in the STIP.
7. Ensure approval of STIP at regional level through the GHCOG.
8. Maintain database of regional TIP and STIP projects.
9. Publish reports as necessary.
10. Coordination between state, federal and local agencies.

#### Output

TIP/STIP development and software class. Technical assistance as requested. Regional TIP. State TIP. Respond to requests for data and information related to local, regional and state TIPs.

#### Coordination

The GHCOG facilitates coordination between Grays Harbor County, all cities within Grays Harbor, the Port of Grays Harbor, Grays Harbor Transit, Quinault Indian Nation and state and federal agencies.

#### Citizen Involvement

All meetings of the GHCOG are advertised and open to the general public. Regional TIPs are presented at GHCOG meetings for approval. State TIPs are presented at the state level through a series of public hearings to ensure citizen involvement. Public participation also occurs through public information meetings and project related meetings and public hearings.

#### Community and Regional Contributions and Benefits

The development and approval of local, regional and state TIPs meet the need for federal and state planning requirements. Most importantly, there is a direct correlation between these documents and the ability to receive transportation related funding. GHCOG's effort in complying with TIP/STIP regulations ensures local agencies the ability to apply for and accept transportation funding through multiple granting programs.

Local and regional TIPs provide a planning tool allowing local agencies to set their directions for transportation planning needs and allows for the presentation of a regional plan that identifies transportation needs.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM**

### Objective

Meet state and federal regulations governing the channeling of SAFETEA-LU funding. Facilitate the Surface Transportation Program (STP) Committee.

### Work Items

1. Facilitate meetings of the STP committee. Provide agendas, meeting minutes and relevant data and support materials.
2. Assist in the development of the STP application and funding cycle process.
3. Develop and maintain policy guidelines relevant to the operation of the STP committee.
4. Provide direct assistance with project development and compiling/writing of STP project applications.
5. Review applications submitted to the STP process for threshold compliance and accuracy.
6. Produce public notification of upcoming STP funding cycles.
7. Oversee application rating and ranking process.
8. Assist local agencies in the production of necessary agreements to obligate funding.
9. Track legislation concerning the re-authorization of the Federal Transportation Act and subsequent impacts to the STP.
10. Coordination between state, federal and local agencies.

### Output

Publications of STP cycle and process requirements. Development of applications and procedures. Technical assistance as requested. GHCOG resolution forwarding recommended projects and funding amounts to appropriate state and federal agencies. Respond to requests for data and information.

### Coordination

The GHCOG facilitates coordination between Grays Harbor County, all cities within Grays Harbor, the Port of Grays Harbor, Grays Harbor Transit, Grays Harbor PUD, tribes, special interest groups and state and federal agencies.

### Citizen Involvement

All meetings of the GHCOG and STP committee are advertised and open to the general public. Public participation also occurs through public information meetings and project related meetings and public hearings. The news media are notified of the application cycle and the outcomes.

### Community and Regional Contributions and Benefits

The development and maintenance of the Surface Transportation Program channels federal dollars that were previously block granted to the state directly to the local level. As lead agency of the STP program, the GHCOG ensures that a mechanism is in place to receive and disperse of those federal dollars. This allows local flexibility over the types of projects that are funded and the funding amounts. Local needs are met directly since the funding process is developed at the local level.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

### US 101 REGIONAL CIRCULATION PROJECT

#### Objective

To promote and develop the final recommended project priorities as identified in the US 101 Regional Circulation Project plan.

The US 101 Regional Circulation Project identified and prioritized transportation projects that reduce congestion, resolve traffic issues, improve mobility throughout the core cities of Aberdeen, Hoquiam, and Cosmopolis and improve traffic flow region-wide.

#### Work Items

1. Work with the Grays Harbor Regional Transportation Planning Organization (GHRTPO) and a US 101 Tech Team to identify and organize project elements and sequencing, and to compile necessary documentation and cost estimates.
2. Facilitate Tech Team meetings and public meetings.
3. Research, develop and promote best possible funding opportunities and solutions.
4. Develop and maintain the necessary plans and documents enabling participating communities and agencies to achieve funding eligibility.
5. Recognizing that US 101 is a WSDOT facility, gather WSDOT Olympic Region staff input on planning requirements and encourage financial participation when appropriate.
6. Implement projects and track progress, resolve issues as they arise.
7. Develop a legislative outreach committee whose sole function is to educate state and federal legislators about US 101 projects and maintain a hi-profile funding agenda.
8. Oversee informational product development such as studies, brochures, fliers, press releases, etc.
9. Foster Community Partnerships. Early public involvement from communities, transit, tribes, emergency services, minorities, special interest groups and local governments can provide simple, low-cost, operational fixes (i.e. signage and right-of-way clearing, etc.).

#### Output

- Plans, studies, and reports as needed to support project development.
- Identification of funding sources and options.
- Development of specific data sets to use in plans and funding applications.
- Oversee funding processes and facilitate individual entities with appropriate program applications.
- Project related educational materials.
- Program all projects into local and regional Transportation Improvement Plans.
- Incorporate overall projects and individual elements, as necessary, into regional and state plans to ensure funding eligibility.
- Public information campaign.
- Map development and production.

### Coordination

The Grays Harbor Council of Governments will provide coordination between participating jurisdictions involving local, state and federal elected officials, staff, outside expertise and community members. State agencies will be included in the process on an as needed basis.

### Citizen Involvement

All meetings of the GHCOG are advertised and open to the general public. RTPO meetings at both the five county and local levels are open to the public. Public participation also occurs through public information meetings and project related meetings and public hearings as well as at the individual community/agency level.

### Community and Regional Contributions and Benefits

Communities and agencies along US 101 will work through a collaborative process to develop a prioritized plan of project elements, funding opportunities and outreach, the end goal of which is to fund and build the projects as identified in the US 101 Regional Circulation Project plan.

The US 101 corridor and connecting highways function as the major transportation routes through the cities of Aberdeen, Hoquiam and Cosmopolis as well as the primary route to the ocean beaches and the western Olympic Peninsula. This network of highways provides a critical economic link between the region and the rest of our state. Congestion on these routes negatively affects the movement of people and goods. Implementing the projects identified within the US 101 Regional Circulation Project will reduce congestion, resolve traffic issues and improve mobility throughout the core cities of Aberdeen, Hoquiam, and Cosmopolis and improve traffic flow region-wide ensuring continued economic vitality, growth and sustainability.