



Southwest Washington
Regional Transportation Council
January 2024



CLARK COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic	CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	FMS	Freeway Management System	NHPP	National Highway Performance Program (federal funding program)
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials	CIC	Communications Infrastructure Committee	FMSIB	Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board	NHS	National Highway System
ACS	American Community Survey	CM/AQ	Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality	FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact	NHTS	National Household Travel Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	CMM	Congestion Management Monitoring	FRA	Federal Railroad Administration	O/D	Origin/Destination
ADT	Average Daily Traffic	CMP	Congestion Management Process	FTA	Federal Transit Administration	ODOT	Oregon Department of Transportation
APTA	American Public Transportation Association	CRAB	County Road Administration Board	FY	Fiscal Year	OFM	Washington Office of Financial Management
APTS	Advanced Public Transportation System	CREDC	Columbia River Economic Development Council	FFY	Federal Fiscal Year	P&M	Preservation and Maintenance
AQMA	Air Quality Maintenance Area	CRESA	Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency	GIS	Geographic Information System	P&R	Park and Ride
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009	CRFC	Critical Rural Freight Corridor	GHG	Greenhouse Gas	PBP	Performance Based Planning
ATIS	Advanced Traveler Information System	CTR	Commute Trip Reduction	GMA	Growth Management Act	PBPP	Performance Based Planning and Programming
ATCI	Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative	C-TRAN	Clark County Public Transportation Benefit Area Authority	HB	House Bill	PE	Preliminary Engineering
ATM	Active Traffic Management	CUFC	Critical Urban Freight Corridor	HCM	Highway Capacity Manual	PEA	Planning Emphasis Area
ATMS	Advanced Transportation Management System	CV	Connected Vehicle	HCT	High Capacity Transportation	PFN	Primary Freight Network
AVL	Automated Vehicle Location	DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise	HOV	High Occupancy Vehicle	PHFS	Primary Highway Freight System
AVO	Average Vehicle Occupancy	DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement	HPMS	Highway Performance Monitoring System	PM10	Particulate Matter
AWDT	Average Weekday Traffic	DNS	Determination of Non-Significance	HSC	Human Services Council	PM2.5	Particulate Matter (fine)
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics (federal)	DOE	Washington State Department of Ecology	HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program (federal)	PMS	Pavement Management System
BMS	Bridge Management System	DOH	Department of Health	HSP	Highway System Plan	POD	Pedestrian Oriented Development
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe	DS	Determination of Significance	HSS	Highways of Statewide Significance	PORTAL	Portland Transportation Archive Listing
BOS	Bus on Shoulders	DSHS	Washington Department of Social and Health Services	HSTP	Human Services Transportation Plan	PPP	Public Participation Process of Public Participation Plan
BPAC	Clark Communities Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	EA	Environmental Assessment	ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991)	PTBA	Public Transportation Benefit Area
BRACC	Bridge Replacement Advisory Committee	ECO	Employee Commute Options	ITS	Intelligent Transportation System	PTMS	Public Transportation Management System
BRRP	Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program	EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	JARC	Job Access and Reverse Commute	PTSP	Public Transportation Systems Program
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit	EJ	Environmental Justice	JPACT	Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation	PWTF	Public Works Trust Fund
CAA	Clean Air Act	EMME/4	EMME/4 is an interactive graphic transportation planning computer software package distributed by INRO Consultants, Montreal, Canada.	LCP	Least Cost Planning	RAP	Rural Arterial Program
CAC	Citizens' Advisory Committee	EOC	Emergency Operations Center	LEP	Limited English Proficiency	RCW	Revised Code of Washington
CAPP	County Arterial Preservation Program	EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	LOS	Level of Service	REET	Real Estate Excise Tax
CAV	Connected and Autonomous Vehicles	ETC	Employer Transportation Coordinator	LPA	Locally Preferred Alternative	ROW or RW	Right of Way
CBD	Central Business District	ETC	Electronic Toll Collection	LRT	Light Rail Transit	RTAC	Regional Transportation Advisory Committee
CCAC	C-TRAN Citizens Advisory Committee	ETRP	Employer Trip Reduction Program	M&O	Management and Operations	RTC	Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
CCTA	Clark County Transportation Alliance	FACT	Southwest Freight and Commerce Task Force	MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (2012 Federal Transportation Act)	RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television	FAF	Freight Analysis Framework	MDNS	Mitigated Determination of Non-significance	RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organization
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant	FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement	MOA	Memorandum of Agreement	RW	Right of Way
CERB	Community Economic Revitalization Board	FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	SAFE-TEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (2005)
CEVP	Cost Estimating Validation Process	FGTS	Freight and Goods Transportation System	MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area	SEIS	Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
CFP	Capital Facilities Plan	FHWA	Federal Highways Administration	MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization	SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
CFP	Community Framework Plan			MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan	SGR	State of Good Repair
				MUTCD	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices	SIP	State Implementation Plan
				MVET	Motor Vehicle Excise Tax		
				NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act		
				NHFN	National Highway Freight Network		

SOV	Single Occupant Vehicle
SR	State Route
SRTS	Safe Routes to School
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
STBG	Surface Transportation Block Gran
SWCAA	Southwest Clean Air Agency
TA	Transportation Alternatives (federal)
TAM	Transit Asset Management
TAMP	Transit Asset Management Plan
TAZ	Transportation Analysis Zone
TC	Transit Center
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TDP	Transit Development Program
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
TIB	Transportation Improvement Board
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TMC	Traffic Management Center
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
TPA	Transportation Partnership Account (2005 Washington state funding program)
TPAC	Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee
TPM	Transportation Performance Management
TPMS	Transportation Performance Measurement System (WSDOT)
TriMet	Tri-county Metropolitan Transportation District
TSM	Transportation System Management
TSMO	Transportation System Management and Operations
TSP	Transportation System Plan
UAB	Urban Area Boundary
UGA	Urban Growth Area (Washington)
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
UZA	Urbanized Area
V/C	Volume to Capacity
VAST	Vancouver Area Smart Trek
VHD	Vehicle Hours of Delay
VMS	Variable Message Signs
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
WSP	Washington State Patrol
WTP	Washington Transportation Plan



CHAPTER 1. WHAT IS THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN?



Introduction

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the foundational document for transportation infrastructure, policy, and planning in Clark County. It identifies future regional transportation system needs and outlines transportation plans and improvements necessary to preserve mobility within and throughout the region, as well as access to land uses within the region.

Looking 20-plus years into the future, the RTP's analyses, recommendations, and fiscally-constrained funding plan guide local, state, and federal funding needs. Using growth forecasts and employment trends (Appendix E), the RTP considers how to build and maintain a multimodal transportation system that will serve the needs of people who live, work, and travel in Clark County. It provides an opportunity to identify transportation strategies today to address the mobility needs that come with planned future growth, while addressing the growing need to make transportation services more equitable and accessible for all.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 showed how quickly future needs can change. The pandemic caused massive social and economic disruption but also reinforced the need for safe, efficient, and reliable transportation. The next several decades will motivate stakeholders to address challenges such as an aging population, rapidly changing technologies, climate change impacts, and limited resources to maintain or replace aging transportation infrastructure. This RTP defines a regional transportation system that will be well positioned to meet these challenges.

RTP Planning Area

The RTP covers the whole of Clark County (see Figure 1-1). Clark County is in southwest Washington at the head of the navigable portion of the Columbia River. The Columbia River forms the western and southern boundaries of the county and provides over 41 miles of river frontage. The county's northern boundary is formed by the Lewis River and to the east are the foothills of the Cascades. Urban Clark County is part of the northeast quadrant of the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA metropolitan area.

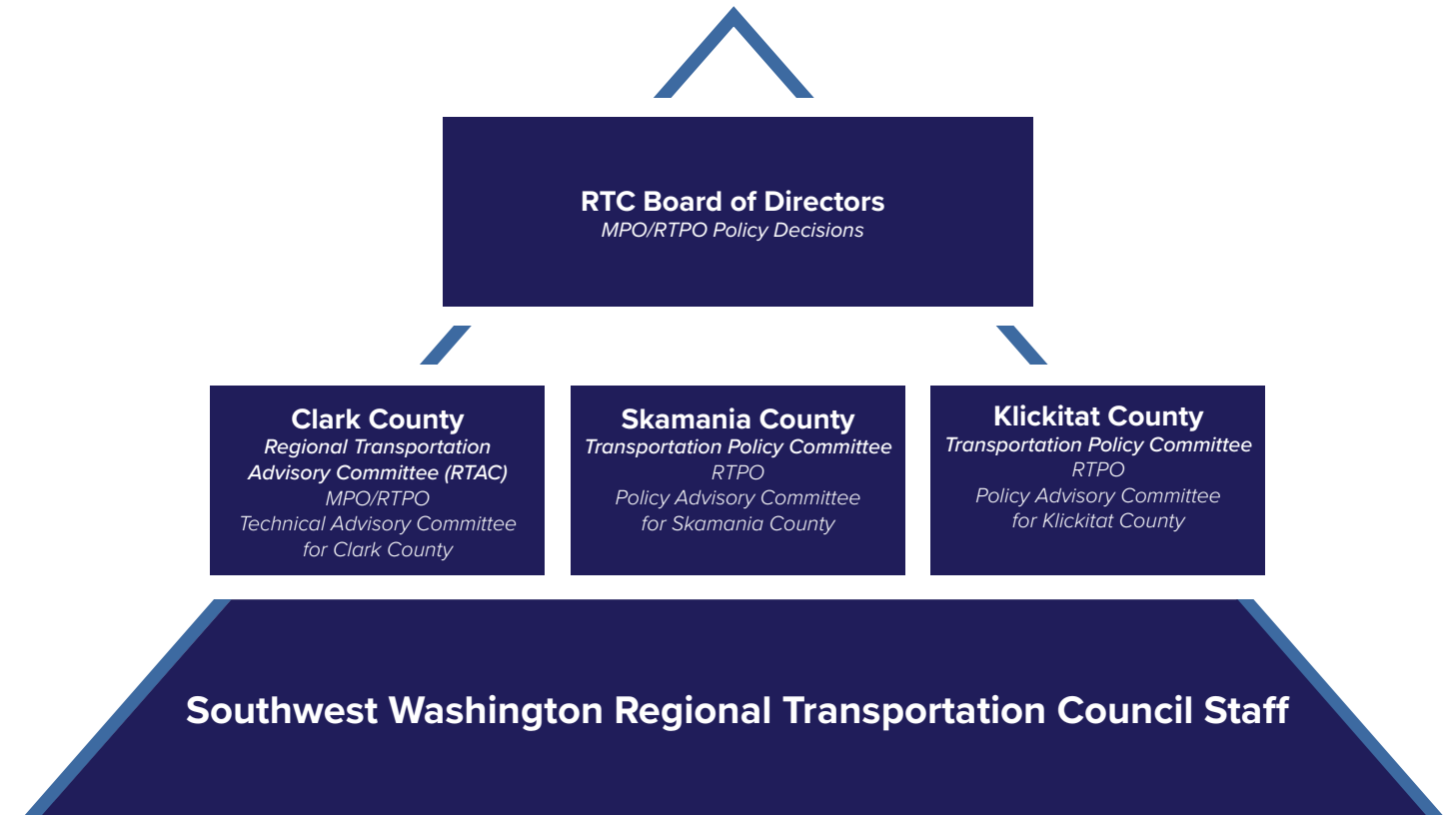
People and goods move through the regional transportation system without considering city, county, and state jurisdictional street/road/highway boundaries. Transportation problems extend beyond these boundaries.

This RTP analyzes the future transportation needs for the entire region and, at the same time, provides a cooperative framework so that all participating jurisdictions can coordinate their actions.



Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Clark County. RTC represents the Washington portion of the Portland-Vancouver Transportation Management Area (TMA). A TMA is designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation for an urbanized area with a population of at least 200,000. Congress provided for this greater role by MPOs through a certification review that formalizes the continuing oversight and day-to-day evaluation of the planning process. MPOs attaining certification enjoy certain benefits, but they also incur additional requirements beyond those of smaller urbanized areas for congestion management, project selection, and certification.



Federal law requires any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000 to have an MPO. MPOs follow a formal set of federal regulations. This includes producing and periodically updating a long-range transportation plan, a Unified Planning Work Program, and a Transportation Improvement Program. In addition to producing these documents, RTC must also establish and conduct an inclusive public participation process; comply with all federal Title VI, environmental justice, and nondiscrimination requirements; and maintain transportation models and data resources to support air quality conformity determination and long- and short-range planning work and initiatives.

Figure 1-1. Clark County MPO region



As the MPO for the Clark County region, RTC must meet a number of federal transportation [planning requirements](#) in order for the region to be eligible to receive federal transportation funds. The key federal resource documents are listed below.

- [Title 23 USC Section 134](#) Metropolitan Transportation Planning. Title 23 United States Code is the codification of the surface transportation portion of federal law.
- [Title 49 USC Section 5303](#) further provides federal guidance to the metropolitan transportation planning program.

RTC ensures that existing and future transportation projects and expenditures are based on a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative regional framework for the multimodal transportation planning process with state and local agencies. The [federal funds](#) for transportation projects and programs are channeled through this planning process and awarded to local agencies and jurisdictions responsible for the transportation systems within the MPO.

Transportation issues cross the boundaries and responsibilities of individual jurisdictions and organizations. Each member agency of RTC brings unique perspectives and jurisdictional responsibilities to the transportation planning process. However, when these members come together as RTC, they collectively pursue their shared vision for regional mobility and its relationship to future growth and development of the Clark County region. To carry their shared vision, the RTC has a decision-making board of directors that is assisted by a technical advisory committee.

RTC Board of Directors

A three-county [RTC Board of Directors](#) provides a forum for local governments to work together on issues that affect residents on a regional level. The RTC Board is the governing body that acts to adopt the RTP.

The RTC Board currently includes three representatives from Clark County (Ridgefield, La Center, and Battle Ground), one from Skamania County, one from Klickitat County, two from the City of Vancouver, one from small cities in eastern Clark County (Camas and Washougal), one from small cities in north Clark County, one from C-TRAN, one representative for the ports of Clark County, Washington State Department of Transportation, bistrate representation from Oregon Department of Transportation and Metro as well as, state legislators from the 14th, 17th, 18th, 20th, and 49th districts. Representation on the RTC Board of Directors and individual County Policy Boards and Committees is described in the [Bylaws of Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council](#) and [Interlocal Agreement for Establishment of the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council](#).

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee

The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee ([RTAC](#)) provides technical advice and assistance to the RTC Board. RTAC coordinates and guides the regional transportation planning program in accordance with RTC Board policy.

Bistate Coordination Committee

The Bistate Transportation Committee provides RTC, the [Metro Council](#), and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation ([JPACT](#)) a forum to facilitate regional dialogue, review bistate transportation issues, and collaborate with stakeholders from Washington and Oregon. The committee's charter and bylaws identify land use, economic development, and transportation as issues to be addressed. There are six committee members from Clark County and seven from the Portland Metro Area.

Regional Transportation Planning Organization

RTC also serves as the regional transportation planning organization ([RTPO](#)) for the three-county area of Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat counties, as authorized by the State Growth Management Act (GMA). RTC was designated as an RTPO by the [Washington State Legislature](#) and serves both urban and rural areas in these counties. The guiding statute for RTPO responsibilities is [RCW 47.80](#). Figure 3 provides an overview of the RTPO service area.

The RTPO program is designed to be integrated with and augment, the federally required MPO program. The RTPO and MPO have to be the same organization. The RTPO program extends transportation planning by the RTPOs to rural areas not covered by the MPO program. In addition, the RTPO program is intended to be consistent with local comprehensive planning in urban and rural areas.





The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

At the center of the regional transportation planning process is the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP serves as a strategic blueprint for the region's transportation system. It provides a vision of the transportation system's needs and requirements approximately 20 years into the future. The RTP will help shape local, regional, and state strategies for addressing economic growth, safety, congestion, air, and mobility.

Every five years RTC identifies the system's strengths and weaknesses; forecasts changes in population, employment, and land use; and creates a plan to address existing and future mobility needs. The resulting RTP allocates funds for major projects in the Clark County region and guides the funding of capital investment programs.

Under the Federal Transportation Act, the RTP must be updated at least every five years. The State's GMA requires that the RTP be reviewed for currency every two years. The RTP must comply with all applicable federal and state laws. It is required to have at least a 20-year horizon. There are requirements related to consultation and discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities developed in consultation with federal, state, tribal, land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies.

Should changing policies, financial conditions, or growth patterns warrant, the RTP can be amended subject to meeting the public participation requirements and within fiscal constraints. The RTP history can be found in Appendix B.

The 2024 RTP is being updated to meet federal requirements and to maintain consistency between federal, state, regional, and local plans. Future results and recommendations from transportation studies currently underway will be incorporated into future RTP updates or amendments.

2024 Regional Transportation Plan Update

The RTC Board adopted the first RTP for Clark County in December 1982. The Board adopted an Interim Regional Transportation Plan, which acted as a framework for developing [GMA](#) transportation elements, in September 1993. The first RTP for Clark County to comply with the requirements of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 was adopted by the Board in December 1994. Since then the RTP has been updated every five years.

The horizon year for the 2024 RTP is 2045. This plan complies with the requirements of the current federal transportation act, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The RTP continues to support land uses and growth allocations resulting from the most recent (June 2016) update to the local [Comprehensive Growth Management Plan](#). The RTP also includes updated transportation data and recommendations from recent transportation studies. Projects and/or planning concepts whose scale, financial structure, and economic significance are beyond the "fiscally constrained" RTP's scope are included in the 20-Year RTP Project List.

The 2024 RTP has been developed at a time when the region is enjoying a healthy economy, with low unemployment rates and increasing transportation demand. This update does not diverge too greatly from the 2019 RTP, as it is developed to support locally adopted comprehensive plans. The 2019 RTP was the first to report on performance-based transportation planning, performance measures, and transportation target setting, consistent with the requirements of the federal transportation acts, beginning with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act (2012) and continuing through the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (2015) and the current Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) (2021). It also incorporated WSDOT's concept of practical solutions to address transportation challenges.

The 2024 RTP uses a 2040 population growth forecast consistent with Washington Office of Financial Management's (OFM) State and County population forecasts for Growth Management planning purposes released by OFM in 2023. For additional information, see Appendix E.

Federal Planning Requirements

The regulations guiding MPOs (see Appendix A, Statutory Requirements) define the factors they must consider throughout the planning process. These factors orient transportation funding for projects towards community-based outcomes, ensuring that projects benefit the communities in which they are built and make the most effective use of limited funds.

The federal planning factors are:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation;
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system;
- Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation;
- Enhance travel and tourism.



Figure 1-2. Washington Transportation Plan



Washington Policy Framework

Within Washington, regional transportation plans are expected to be consistent with the policy framework and objectives described in the state transportation plan. The Washington Transportation Commission published the latest Public Participation Plan update, [Washington Transportation Plan 2040 and Beyond](#), in December 2018.

The Washington Transportation Plan is based on the following six transportation policy goals established by the legislature:

- **Economic Vitality:** To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.
- **Preservation:** To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services;
- **Safety:** To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system;
- **Mobility:** To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State;
- **Health and the Environment:** To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment; and
- **Stewardship:** To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.



2024 Regional Transportation Plan - Public and Stakeholder Outreach Process

The 2024 RTP establishes a blueprint for growth that supports a well-functioning economy, improves and preserves our multimodal transportation system, and enhances overall quality of life for people living in Clark County. It builds on community values through a comprehensive stakeholder and public outreach and engagement process.

Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council – Public Participation Plan

[RTC's Public Participation Plan](#) outlines a broad range of opportunities for the public and stakeholders to participate in the region's transportation planning process. In the plan, RTC continues its commitment to publish, or make available for public view, transportation plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), and to hold meetings at convenient and accessible times and locations. RTC also commits to using maps, charts, graphics, transportation models, and its website to help explain the metropolitan transportation planning process and to make information available to the public.

2024 Regional Transportation Plan - Public and Stakeholder Outreach

The current RTP meets federal requirements for metropolitan transportation planning, including a notice of its release for public comment that was published in selected local newspapers, including *The Columbian*, *The Reflector*, *The Camas-Washougal Post Record*, *El Latino de Hoy*, and the *Vancouver Business Journal*. The RTP was made available at branches of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District system and at the Camas library. Notice of the plan was circulated to RTC's mailing list and to city and county neighborhood associations through the neighborhood online news and neighborhood liaisons and was posted on RTC's website.

Public involvement efforts build from those carried out at the local level as part of developing local plans and programming transportation projects. Since the last RTP update, public meetings have been held regarding regional transportation issues. These public meetings, hosted by RTC member agencies and jurisdictions, include open houses and hearings to discuss projects and programs.

Throughout the 2024 RTP process, which began in 2022, the public and stakeholders have been encouraged to participate. RTP information and RTC Board materials on the RTP were made available on RTC's website both in RTC Board agenda packets and on the RTP web page. The public has been able to provide RTP comments via the RTC website, e-mail, phone, or mail.

The draft 2024 RTP was released for public comment on Monday, November 22, 2023 to allow at least a 45-day comment period prior to the February 6, 2024 RTC Board meeting.

RTC received a number of public comments on the RTP and component projects during the development phase of the RTP.