



Transportation

Overview

Location advantages support trade within and outside the region, offering options for expanded export opportunities. The region has a distinct geographic advantage in being centrally located in the Pacific Northwest and is uniquely positioned to do business with approximately a 6,000 mile area from the West Coast to the East Coast to Asia, all within one regular business day. The region is a significant transportation corridor and offers market access through:

- Interstates and Highways both East/West and North/South with connecting bridges.
- Airports, with close proximity to Portland International Airport and the presence of regional and local airports.
- Rail Service: Burlington Northern and Union Pacific offer rail services for the movement of goods in Oregon and Washington. Currently, passenger rail service is only available on the Washington side of the river.
- Barge traffic along the Columbia River which is particularly important for transporting waste and ag products.
- Bicycle/Pedestrian/Transit connections.

While market access and the mix of transportation modes available for the movement of goods and people are a distinct asset to the region, maintaining that infrastructure, and expanding it to meet growing industry and population needs, is a challenge. Issues include County/City road maintenance and funding, limitations to Interstates and Highways, the need for expanded Columbia Gorge Regional Airport runways and facilities, rail safety, aging bridges, aging dams, and challenges maintaining access to federal lands. In addition to infrastructure, our transportation network increasingly serves the needs of a mobile workforce. Data describing commuting habits in the Mid-Columbia by place of work show that workers in the Mid-Columbia region travel outside their state of residence to work to a greater extent than the average worker in Oregon, Washington, or the nation. Public transportation is necessary both from a human and social services standpoint but also from an economic standpoint.

Infrastructure: Transportation Action Plan

Our goal is to “provide a safe and efficient regional transportation system to enhance the livability and economic vitality of the Mid-Columbia region.”

	Collaborators	Timeline
4.1 Coordinate transportation investments to support the region’s economies and communities.		
4.2 Advocate to enhance federal, state and private investments into transportation.		
4.7.1 Identify opportunities to advance regional transportation priorities in a potential Oregon Transportation Package.	Local govts- counties, cities, ports, transportation providers	Current session
4.7.2 Pursue Federal Lands Access Program funding options.	TransLink and providers, Hist Hwy, DOTs	Next round
4.7.3 Identify and pursue opportunities through federal transportation programs	Local govts, Hist Hwy, Ports, DOTs	Current session
4.3 Maintain, preserve and enhance existing infrastructure to improve the transport of goods and movement of people.		
4.3.1 Improve connections between rail, air, highway, and river systems.	Regional airport, port, DOTs, FHWA	Long term
4.3.2 Pursue immediate truck parking opportunities to support regional economic development.	Cities, counties, county ec dev, ODOT	Short term
4.8.3 Commit resources to address facility modernization critical to the overall transportation system.	DOTs, counties, cities, Ports	Mid-long term
4.4 Identify, seek funding and complete priority highway, road and bridge transportation infrastructure projects.		
4.9.1 Participate in the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) and Lower John Day ACT to identify priority projects. Integrate annually to this strategy with regional project prioritization.	Local govts, ACT, SW WA RTC, TransLink and providers, MCEDD, DOTs	Immediate, ongoing
4.9.2 Focus on key corridors and market roads necessary for the transport of goods. Address bottlenecks on the road system and bi-state connections.	Local govts, ACT, SW WA RTC, TransLink and providers, MCEDD, DOTs	
4.10 Support regional airport enhancements.		

4.10.1	Further develop the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport, serving key healthcare and tech businesses. Further develop capacity of the airport as a bi-state firefighting base.	Col Gorge Regional Airport, Klickitat County, City TD, industry	Mid term
4.10.2	Identify opportunities to further Goldendale airport's potential as a distribution center.	City Goldendale, Klickitat County ec dev	Mid term
4.10.3	Support enhancements to the Hood River Jernstedt airport.	Port of Hood River	Mid-term
4.11	Enhance the Columbia River system transportation system (eg docks to support commerce and cruise ships)		
4.12	Increase access to cargo and passenger rail.		
4.12.1	Advocate for facilities at Amtrak passenger rail stops.	Local governments- WA counties, cities, MCEDD	Mid-long term
4.13	Improve safety of regional transportation network.		
4.13.1	Address parking, issues, especially along Hwy 14 and at access points (e.g. trailheads) that impact safety.	WSDOT	Mid term
4.14	Increase capacity of regional transportation network with efficient and accessible bi-state transit options.		
4.14.1	Address priorities expressed in Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plans.	TransLink and providers, RTC	Immediate-long term
4.14.2	While there are practical limitations to dramatic increases in transit, focus on incremental and sustainable success on both the local and regional scale for transit both inter and intra community.	TransLink and providers, RTC, DOTs	Ongoing
4.14.3	Actively engage and follow-through with feasibility assessments for fixed route transit.	Local governments, providers	Long term
4.14.4	Further bolster the Gorge TransLink Alliance to support a seamless bi-state transit system.	TransLink Alliance and providers	Immediate-long term
4.14.5	Support transportation options programs through Drive Less Connect.	MCEDD	Ongoing
4.14.6	Facilitate employment transportation needs; coordinating vanpools and pursuing transportation options.	MCEDD, Industry	Ongoing
4.14.7	Build awareness of available services.	TransLink, MCEDD , providers	Short term-Ongoing
4.15	Provide modal options with facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.		
4.15.1	Support completion of the Historic Columbia River Highway trail.	Hist Hwy	Advocacy:

		immediate; completion: long term
4.15.2 Further facilitate Gorge Hubs facilities.	Gorge Hubs communities, Hist Hwy, MCEDD, ODOT	Short term
4.15.3 Assess opportunities and develop strategies for all bridges to enable bike/pedestrian access	Ports, DOTs	Long term
4.15.4 Complete a usage study for impact of pedestrian traffic and tourism.	TBD	Long term



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