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Executive Director's Report

This is the second issue of the PRTPO quarterly newsletter. In this issue, we'll review the progress of two important studies taking place within the region. These studies are being conducted to update the Palouse Regional Transportation Plan and the Human Services Transportation Plan, and will be used to qualify for transportation funding from the state and federal governments. Simply stated, the aim of these studies is to identify deficiencies within the region and propose solutions. During the first two weeks of May, a series of meetings will be held in the region to gather stakeholder (i.e., public interests, non-profit organizations, government agencies, educational institutions, tribes, and for-profit business) input to the two plans.

Also summarized in this issue is upcoming funding through the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program through the Federal Government and State of Washington.

Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP)

We are nearing the midway point of completion of the 2010 HSTP. After issuing a RFQ and reviewing consultant submittals, a decision was made in February to hire Nelson-Nygaard Consulting Associates of Portland, Oregon. Nelson-Nygaard conducted the 2007 HSTP for the PRTPO. With a target completion date of September 1, 2010, Nelson-Nygaard has been asked to fulfill the following six tasks:

1. Participate in a kick-off project management meeting to finalize the scope of work, budget and timelines.
2. Update existing conditions.
3. Conduct stakeholder workshops.
4. Prioritize strategies.
5. Write a draft final plan.
6. Revise the final plan and close-out the project.

These six tasks will be completed in accordance with a template provided by the Washington State Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT).

Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) cont:

The stakeholder workshops will be held the week of May 3 – May 7 at the following locations, dates and times:

Columbia County
10 a.m. – 12 noon
Tuesday, May 4
Delaney Building
111 South 3rd St., Dayton

Garfield County
2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Tuesday, May 4
Senior Center
695 Main Street, Pomeroy



Whitman County
10 a.m. – 12 noon
Wednesday, May 5
Visitor's Center, Cougar Depot
225 North Grand Ave., Pullman

Asotin County
2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Wednesday, May 5
Asotin County Aquatic Center
1603 Dustin Loop, Clarkston

Stakeholder input will be used to identify the transit needs of people with special needs as defined in RCW 47.06B as people “including their personal attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation.” These workshops will provide an opportunity for those attending to share their ideas on: (1) how to improve the mobility of county residents; (2) provide input on the county’s public transportation needs and priorities; (3) discuss public transportation options; (4) recommend strategies to improve regional mobility; and, (5) learn about ongoing development of the HSTP. We ask you to attend if you are a bus rider, transit representative, human service agency representative or concerned community resident.

Palouse Regional Transportation Plan

The PRTPO is also updating the long range regional transportation plan in accordance with the requirements of RCW 47.80.030 and the Federal SAFETEA-LU. This plan is intended to identify the region’s key multi-modal transportation issues through the collection of relevant data and stakeholder input, and then provide recommended strategies for dealing with these issues. These strategies are to be in line with the following six Washington State transportation policy goals:



1. **Preservation:** To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investment in transportation systems and services;
2. **Safety:** To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system;
3. **Mobility:** To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington state;
4. **Environment:** To enhance Washington’s quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment;
5. **Stewardship:** To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system;

6. Economic Vitality.

During the week of May 10 – 14th, stakeholder meetings will be held to review the regional plan and gather input. The meetings will be as follows:

Asotin County	Whitman County	Garfield/Columbia Counties
Asotin Co Annex	Public Works Bldg.	Public Works Bldg
095 2nd Street, Asotin	310 N. Main, Colfax	415 N Guernsey Ave, Dayton
Wed., May 12	Wed., May 12	Thursday, May 13
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	4 p.m. – 6 p.m.	4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

We invite all who are interested to review the current RTP which was published in 2004 and the 2005 Addendum on the SEWEDA website at <http://seweda.org/Reports.html> to become familiar with the regional transportation issues previously identified. A draft of the 2010 RTP Update will also be posted to this site for your review prior to the stakeholder sessions. We will have materials for review at the above listed meetings, although we encourage you to review the draft document on the website prior to the meetings.

Transportation Enhancement Funding

The Federal Government recently passed the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act which included the extension of the SAFETEA-LU through December, 2010, restoring the 2010 funding level to the originally authorized 2009 level without the funding cuts made at the end of FFY 2009. WSDOT has also sent a notification of upcoming Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds. WSDOT will be allocating the TE funds to the Regional Transportation Planning Organizations and they will be responsible for their own calls for projects, prioritization and selection of projects. The PRTPO is expected to receive a total of \$213,000 for Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Whitman Counties combined. This allocation, based on total regional county population, is expected to be made this year. The PRTPO will form a committee, an application process, and criteria to prioritize and select projects within the region.

The TE program was created to invest in a more balanced, multi-modal approach to mobility and accessibility. The purpose of the transportation enhancement program is to fund projects that allow communities to strengthen the local economy, improve the quality of life, enhance the travel experience for people traveling by all modes, and protect the environment. Projects must relate to surface transportation and include at least one of the twelve (12) qualifying activities listed below:

1. Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles.
2. Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.
4. Scenic or historic highway programs (including the provision of tourist and welcome center facilities).
5. Landscaping and other scenic beautification.



6. Historic preservation.
7. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals).
8. Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion the use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails).
9. Control and removal of outdoor advertising.
10. Archaeological planning and research.
11. Environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity.
12. Establishment of transportation museums.

All public agencies and non-profit organizations in Washington are eligible to apply. There is no match requirement. A more detailed description of the TE program funds and application procedures will be forthcoming.

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