

Lessons Learned: Regional Transportation Planning Organizations in Washington State



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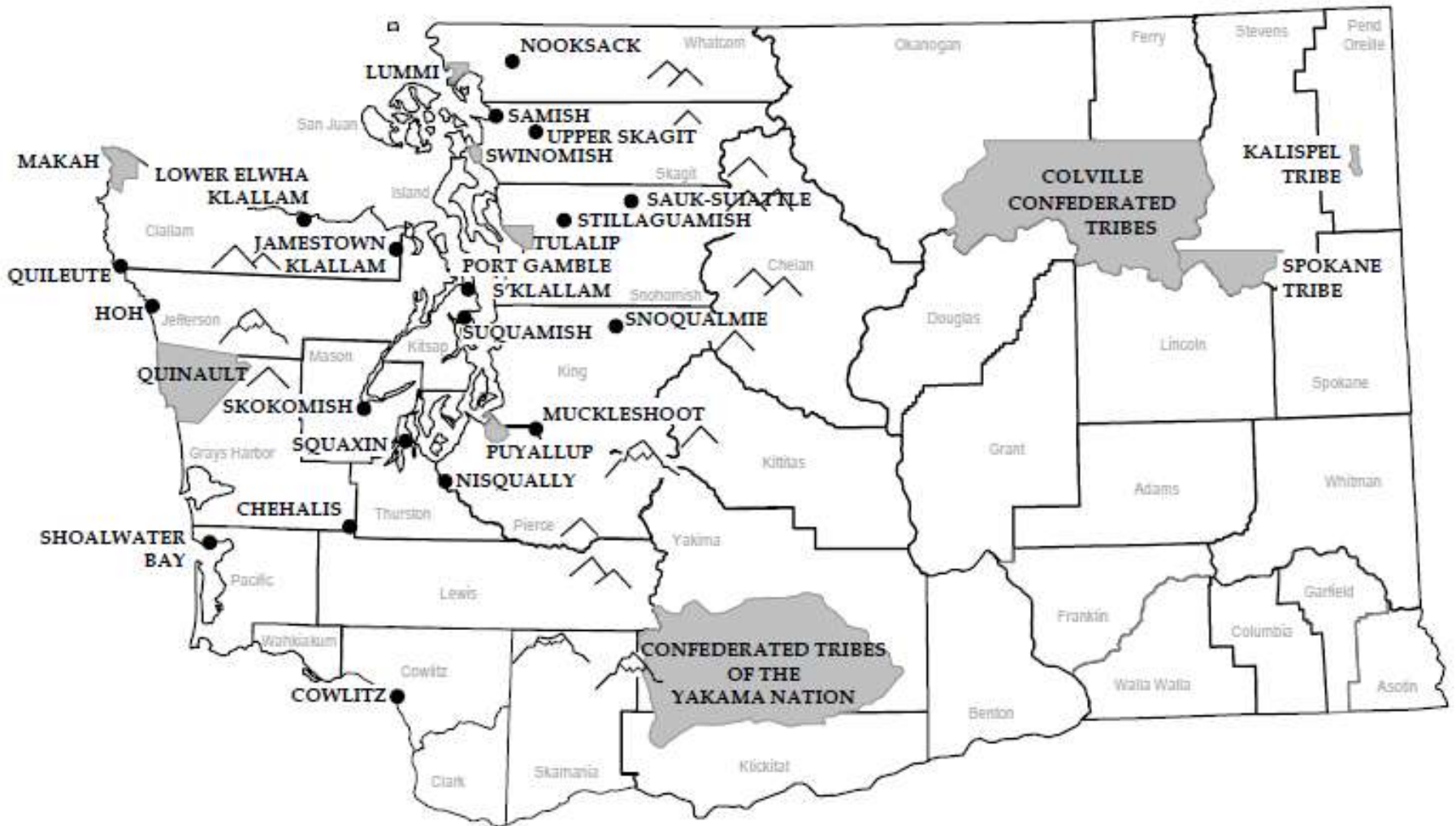
Today's Discussion

- Welcome to Washington
- Brief History of Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO)
- Differences Between Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and RTPOs
- RTPO Membership and Organizational Structure
- RTPO Duties and Functions
- Plan Relationships - Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) and Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP)
- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Role in RTPOs
- Administrative and Funding Aspects of RTPOs
- Lessons Learned

Welcome to Washington



FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBES OF WASHINGTON STATE



Washington State Department of Transportation Regions

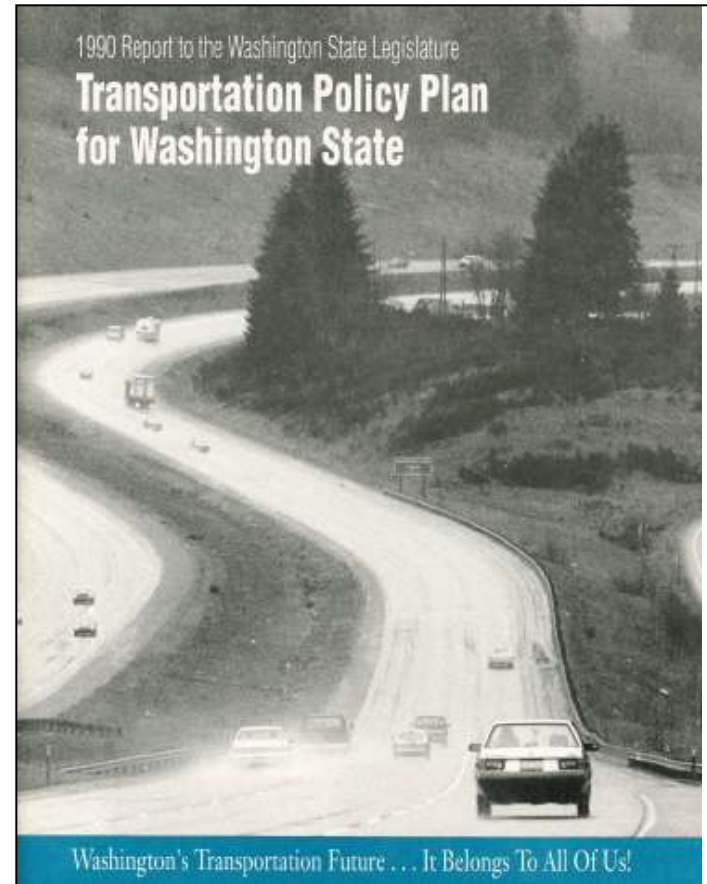


History of RTPOs



RTPOs Were Created in 1990

- The 1990 Transportation Policy Plan recommended that the legislature create RTPOs.
- RTPOs were created as part 3 of the Growth Management Act and the statewide planning process to address:
 - Transportation issues that crossed jurisdictional boundaries
 - Transportation and land use relationships



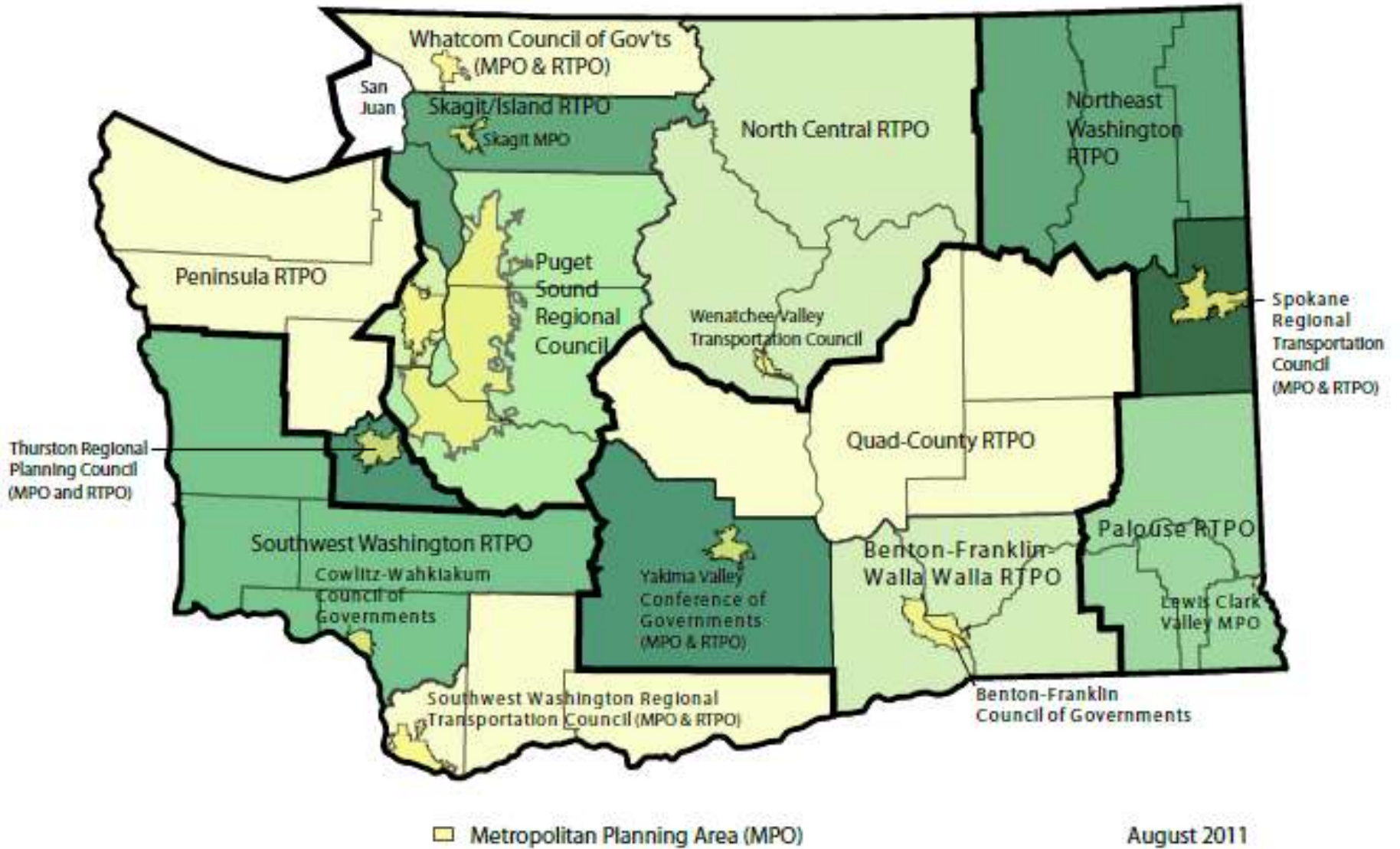
The Purpose of an RTPO

WAC 468-86-020 (1)

RTPOs are a formal mechanism for local governments and the state to coordinate transportation planning for regional transportation facilities.



Washington State MPO/RTPO Map



RTPO Establishment Criteria

RCW 47.80.020

Each RTPO...shall:

- *Encompass at least one complete county*
- *Have a population of at least 100,000, or contain a minimum of three counties; and*
- *Have as members all counties within the region, and at least 60% of the cities and towns within the region representing a minimum of 75% of the cities' and towns' population.*

In urbanized areas, the regional transportation planning organization is the same as the metropolitan planning organization designated for federal transportation planning purposes.

Determining Region Planning Boundaries

WAC 468-86-040

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.

The Difference Between MPOs and RTPOs



The Difference Between RTPOs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

- State legislation created RTPOs.
- Federal legislation created MPOs.
- An RTPO covers both urban and rural areas and receives state funding in support of its planning efforts.
- An MPO covers an urbanized area and receives federal funding in support of its planning efforts.

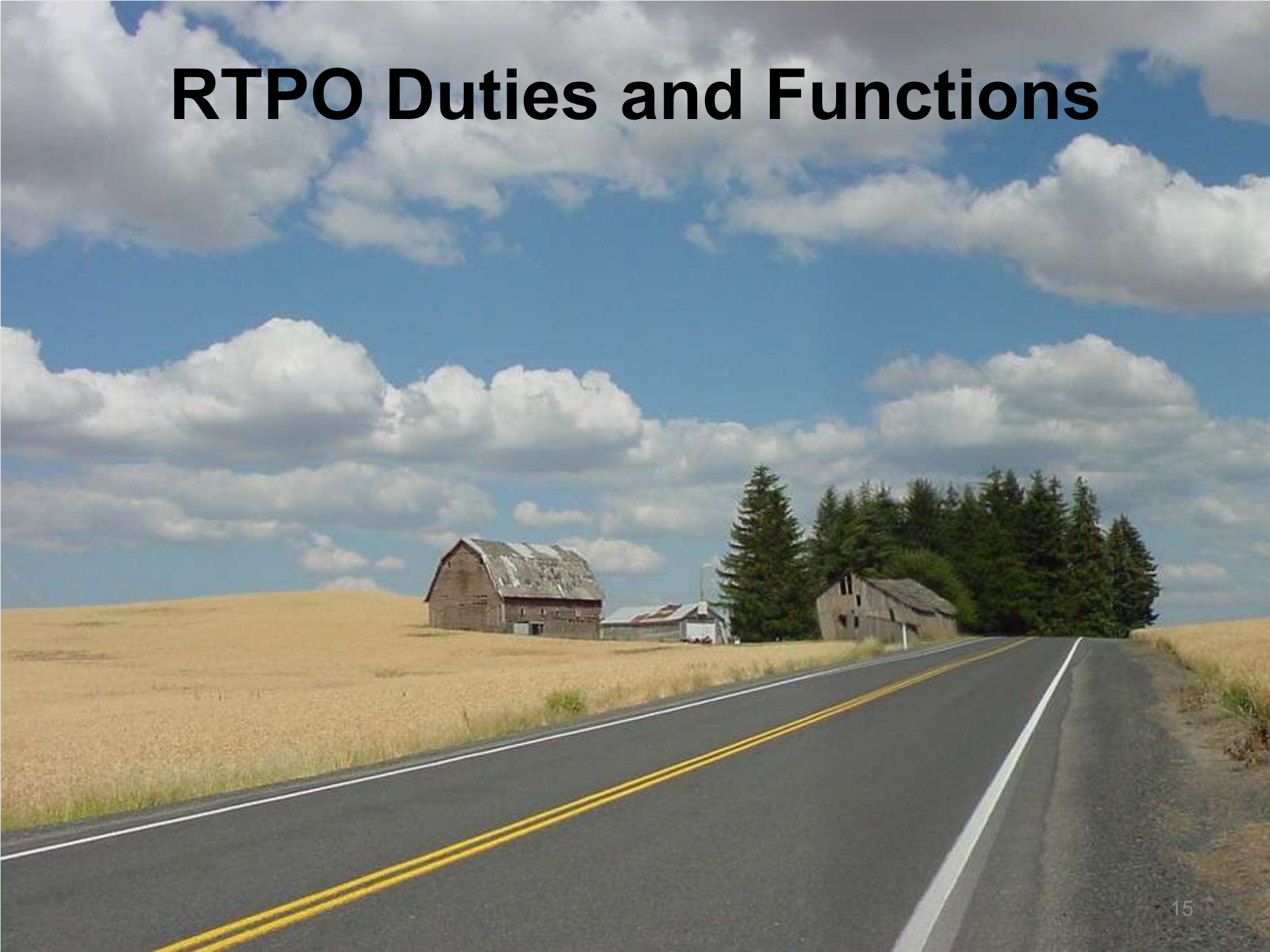
Relationship to MPOs

RTPOs should be integrated with the MPO program in urban areas.

- **The federal MPO and state RTPO requirements of these organizations are complementary.**



RTPO Duties and Functions



Functions of RTPOs

WAC 468-86-020

RTPOs cooperatively develop:

- A long-range transportation plan
- Minimum planning standards for the development of a regional transportation plan;
- The RTPO regional transportation improvement program;
- Planning guidelines and principles;
- Certification standards for the transportation portion of local comprehensive plans and countywide planning policies;
- Level-of-service (LOS) standards on state transportation facilities; and
- Regional transportation strategies

Planning Opportunity

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

RTPOs have the opportunity to develop a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) which:

- Address Emergency Management transportation needs for people who cannot transport themselves
- Provide new technologies to better deliver transportation to people with special needs
- Provides transportation alternatives for people with special needs crossing jurisdictional boundaries

The plans are required to be updated every four years.



Elements of RTPs and RTIPs

Regional Transportation Plan

RCW 47.80.030

- Each RTPO shall develop, adopt, and periodically update a regional transportation plan that:
- Identifies and gives emphasis to those facilities, services, and programs that exhibit one or more characteristics:
 - Crosses member county lines
 - Is or will be used by a significant number of people who live or work outside the respective county
 - Significant impacts are expected in more than one county
 - Potentially adverse impacts can be better avoided or mitigated through adherence to regional policies

Regional Transportation Plan, continued

RCW 47.80.030

- Provides for system continuity
- Establishes level of service standards for state highways and state ferry routes
- Includes a financial plan
- Assesses regional development patterns, capital investment and other measures
- Includes a proposed regional transportation approach
- Where appropriate, defines the relationship of high capacity transportation providers and other public transit providers regarding responsibility for and coordination between services and facilities

Regional Transportation Plan, continued

RCW 47.80.030 (3)

All transportation projects, programs, and transportation demand management measures within the region that have an impact upon regional facilities or services must be consistent with the plan and with the adopted regional growth and transportation strategies.



Regional Transportation Improvement Programs

WAC 468-86-160

Regional transportation improvement programs (TIPs) are developed at least once every two years and shall:

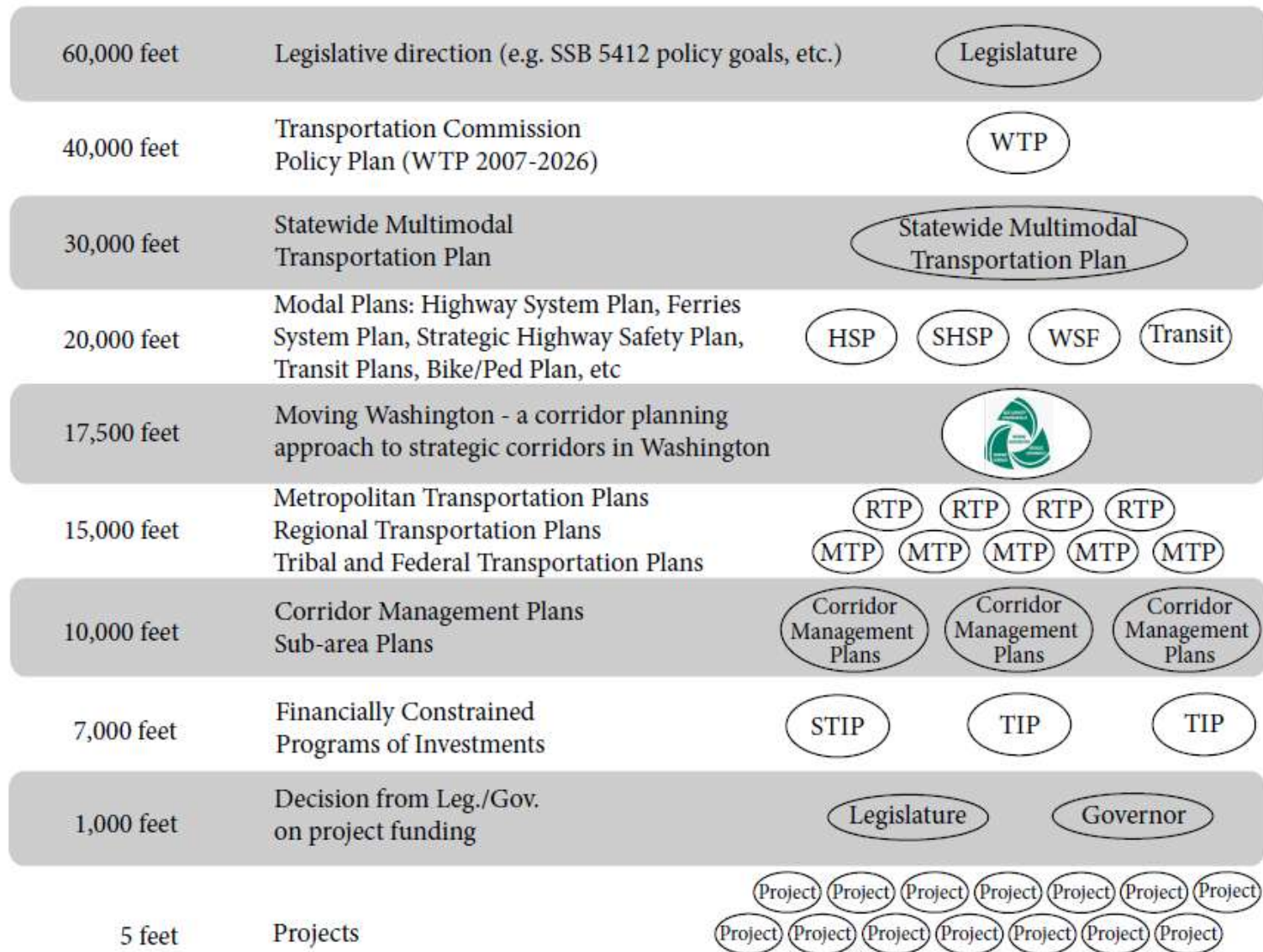
- Be developed on a cooperative basis*
- Consist of a list of regionally significant transportation projects and programs*
- Consist of regionally significant projects included in the local six-year transit development plans and six-year comprehensive transportation programs*
- Include all proposed WSDOT projects in the region;*
- Include only projects consistent with the regional transportation plan;*
- Include a financial section*

- Cities and counties develop comprehensive plans
- Counties develop countywide or multicounty planning policies
- Regional transportation plans are then developed to mesh with local plans and countywide planning policies
- Each regional transportation plan is a guide for achieving consistency among the local transportation plans in the region

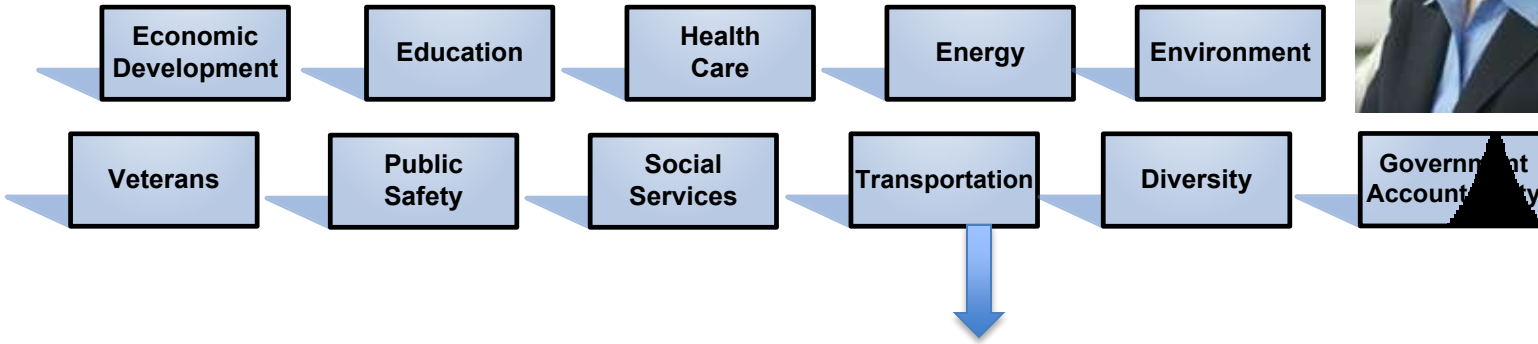


Plan Relationships

Planning for projects in Washington State



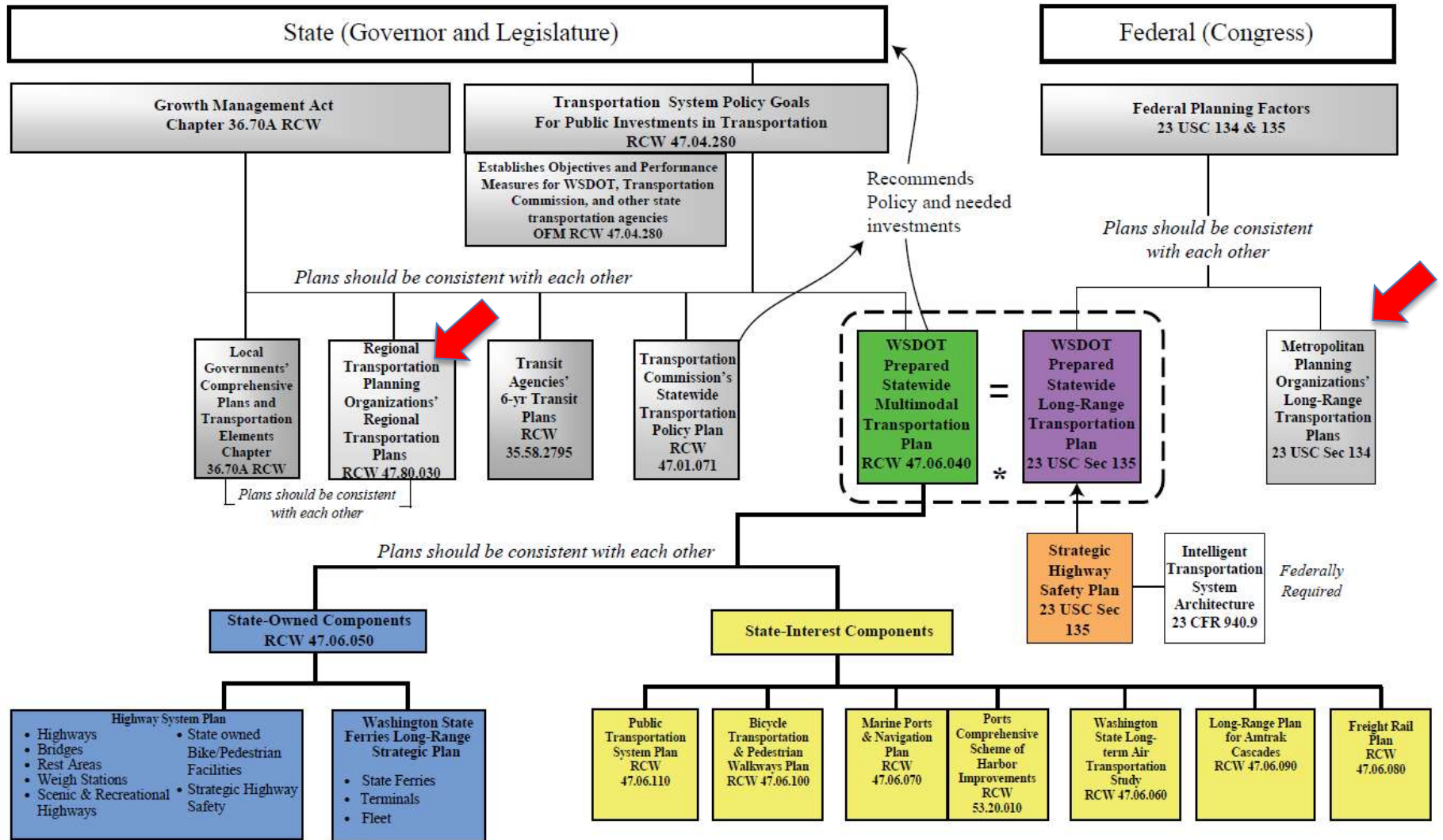
Governor Gregoire's Priorities for Washington



State Transportation Policy Goals
Preservation, **Safety**, Mobility, Environment, Stewardship, and Economic Vitality



The Legal Framework of Transportation Planning in Washington



*WSDOT also relies on coordination and other planning processes not specifically named in law



RTPO Membership and Organizational Structure

RTPO Policy Board

Membership must include:

- *Cities and towns*
- *Counties*
- *WSDOT*
- *Transit agencies*
- *Ports*
- *Private employers*

RTPOs are also encouraged to include tribes.



RTPO Policy Board, continued

RCW 47.80.040

Each regional transportation planning organization shall create a transportation policy board.

*Transportation policy boards shall provide policy advice to the regional transportation planning organization **and shall allow representatives ... within the region to participate in policy making.***



RTPO Policy Board, continued

RCW 47.80.040

Any members of the house of representatives or the state senate whose districts are wholly or partly within the boundaries of the regional transportation planning organization are considered ex officio, nonvoting policy board members of the regional transportation planning organization.

This does not preclude legislators from becoming full-time, voting board members.

WSDOT's Role in RTPOs



WSDOT's Role with RTPOs

WSDOT:

- Administers the RTPO/MPO grant program
- Monitors and ensures compliance with state regulations
- Provides technical assistance
- Serves as a member of the Policy Board
- Serves as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Coordinates and consults on regional transportation planning activities and studies
- Coordinates inter-agency planning activities

Administrative and Funding Aspects of RTPOs



RTPO Funding

RCW 47.80.050


RTPOs receive biennial state appropriations through WSDOT to carry out their program.

Funding is calculated by formula and distributed to the lead agencies.

This formula includes a base amount for each county within an RTPO plus an amount based on population.

RTPO Funding, continued

RCW 47.80.050



WSDOT can retain an amount to be administered as a discretionary grant program for special regional planning projects.

This includes grants to allow counties with significant transportation interests in common with an adjoining county to participate in that region's planning efforts.

Programming Opportunities

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

STP Enhancement Program (STP-E)

- RTPOs volunteered to manage the program
 - Select projects
 - Prioritize projects
 - Administer funding
- WSDOT determines final project approval
- RTPOs compile projects programmed at the local level into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Programming Opportunities, continued

- Current STP-E program was announced in 2010
- It is a three-year program 2010-2012
- New program announcement is expected in 2012
 - Contingent upon federal reauthorization
- New federal and state transportation acts may offer new opportunities
- Recent discretionary call for projects on a short turn around time was coordinated using the RTPOs



Summary

Governance and Everyone's Rules Always Apply

- Planning for what you own, operate, maintain
- Planning to understand future demands on the transportation system and facilities
- Planning to forecast land use changes you do not control
- Planning to keep the network performing
- Planning to do more with less

Common Ground



Leadership

Transition

Observations

- Bottom Up
- Voluntary
- Forum for regional communication
- Funding support
- WSDOT chooses to use RTPOs for distributing federal funds
- GMA vs. Transportation
- Use of RTPOs for outreach

Questions?

