



Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Serving Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Whitman Counties

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FINAL PROGRESS REPORT FY 2014 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

The Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO) serves the Southeastern Washington Counties of Asotin, Columbia, Garfield and Whitman. This Final Progress Report for the 2014 fiscal year covers the Unified planning Work Program elements adopted at the beginning of the year.

A. Program Administration:

The Palouse RTPO has designated the Southeast Washington Economic Development Association (SEWEDA) as its Lead Planning Agency. As such, SEWEDA provides technical, program and management services for the PRTPO on a reimbursement basis, cash flowing the organization in-between reimbursements.

During the past year, there were six Policy Board meetings, loosely defined as a combination of Policy Board meetings while being recognized as established, organizational meetings post expiration of the 2003 Interlocal, and two special meetings called to work upon redesignation issues within the Palouse RTPO. Also held were Technical Advisory Committee meetings to work on several regional projects and issues.

Administration of Policy Board and TAC meetings was performed through the administration portion of the work plan, utilizing a number of administrative tasks.

The 2013 Annual Report was completed; continued participation with the LCVMPPO was accomplished, mostly through engaging with the TAC of the MPO.

SEWEDA's Executive Director also serves as the PRTPO Executive Director. Other staff provide bookkeeping, administrative, research, and website maintenance services. All appropriate expenses for personnel are paid according to the WSDOT - Palouse RTPO Grant Agreement. Appropriate administrative and technical service expenses are also paid through the same grant source.

The Palouse RTPO Executive Director attended four statewide RTPO/MPO Coordinating Committee meetings, filed the required reports with WSDOT, and administered contracting procedures in the fulfillment of work items. The Executive Director also worked with managers of the Port Districts to identify transportation-related

projects in need of additional funding. Transit TAC meetings were held, and staff attended transportation related meetings and conferences outside the region as available. One specific training was received in the use of GIS software, administered at the WSDOT Eastern Region Headquarters.

The Unified Planning Work Plan (UPWP) for the fiscal year 2014 – 2015 was written, being reformatted to be consistent with a new budget template. The process with writing the Plan differed from years past due to the additional effort expended by several members' organizations to assist the process. The draft Plan was sent to WSDOT for review, and after minor modifications, was adopted by the Policy Board. All meeting minutes, correspondence, bookkeeping records, and documentation of expenses have been maintained on a consistent basis. The Palouse RTPO was audited during this fiscal year by the State Auditor's office, with no recommendations being made regarding any deficiencies in the books or changes to the methods of bookkeeping being addressed to the RTPO. SEWEDA's books receive an annual audit on a two-year basis, and have consistently passed without material defect.

The relationship with the Lewis-Clark Valley MPO continues with cross-participation by board and staff, particularly at the TAC level. In future years, there is interest in collaborating upon studies and planning activities.

New officers were installed in January 2014. Once the RTPO was determined to be an interim group, the President of the RTPO served as temporary custodian/lead for the interim Planning Agency as issues relating to re-incorporating as a RTPO were worked through.

The primary task accomplished in the administrative area for the year was the transition from the old RTPO Policy Board to an interim group with equal representation between the eligible organizations, much like what was in practice, just not legally formed to operate in that manner. To accomplish the transition, numerous documents and iterations of a draft Interlocal Agreement were worked upon; meetings were held to put the redesignation issue upon the table for discussion and partisan statement-making, and a meeting facilitation service was procured to manage a meeting. The end of the grant year saw progress being made upon the development of a final document to be concluded at the first part of the following year.

B. Transportation Planning:

Coordination is an ongoing process within the RTPO, both to internal and external stakeholders. The Executive Director coordinated announcements, staff communicated issues to the membership on a regular basis, and public outreach efforts were made for the appropriate work tasks performed.

Coordination with WSDOT was achieved through contact with the Southcentral and Eastern Regions Planning Offices, through participation through the Coordinating Committee, through interfacing for consultant procurements and scope of work and plan formation.

The Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan was started through the procurement of a consulting firm, with initial outreach efforts performed by staff.

Continued engagement with public outreach efforts relating to the dredging of the Snake River was performed, including defending the local member organizations stances to promote dredging with the Economic Development Administration's Environmental Officer.

C. RTPO Planning in Addition:

Reviews of transportation policy goals and MAP-21 requirements were made, with additional information obtained from Coordinating Committee meetings.

D. Data Collection and Analysis:

Data collection activities were at a low ebb this fiscal year due to the inordinate amount of resources devoted to redesignating the Palouse RTPO. Governance issues dominated the year's work. The TIP was maintained and attention was given towards the RTP to make sure it remained current.

Socio-demographic data and information is obtained from EMSI (Economic Modeling Services, Inc.) at no cost through membership benefits SEWEDA receives from Inland Northwest Economic Alliance, a regional economic development organization.

E. Budget / Financial Planning:

The organizational plan for the Palouse RTPO is under construction at the end of the fiscal year through the redesignation process. A draft interlocal agreement and draft organizational by-laws is under construction to be delivered to the membership in late summer.

Financial planning continues to be performed on a biennium basis, as the sole source of funds for the Palouse RTPO is allocated on that schedule.

For the July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014 period, the funding and expenditures were for the WTP and RTPO funds:

FY 2013 – 2014 Budget:	\$ 92,440.00
Carryover from previous periods:	<u>0.00</u>
Sub-total	\$ 92,440.00
Funds Spent:	\$ 58,672.17
Unspent funds to forward to 2014 – 2015:	\$ 33,767.83