



# LTAP news

## ADA Sidewalk Transition Planning for Small Agencies, Pasco Washington Experience

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### Introduction:



There is an old saying: “At some point you need to shoot the engineer and build the thing.” Engineers have never been quite comfortable with the literal interpretation of this saying and would prefer “Done is better than perfect”. This is particularly true of meeting the Federal mandate that requires all public agencies with 50 or more employees to prepare an ADA Transition Plan. It is no wonder why many, many small cities have not followed through with this

requirement when you talk to City staff. What we hear is that they don’t see this as a priority for the community, they don’t have funding for ADA upgrades to the sidewalks and if you read the Title II of the ADA, the process of preparing an ADA Transition Plan

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is quite involved and expensive to prepare. Based on our experience in Pasco and Vancouver, Washington and discussions with many professional that work on ADA issues, we know that many, many agencies are not following through at significant risk of a significant financial judgment from the Department of Justice (DOJ). Especially for small agencies, these reasons should not prevent agencies from doing the right thing and minimizing the risk of a DOJ judgment.

Based on the work preparing the ADA transition plan in Pasco, we have developed a streamline process that meets the needs, fulfills the intent of Title II and can be completed at a modest cost.

ADA Transition Plan can include a long list of city service. Our work only focused on an ADA Transition Plan for Sidewalks. ADA Sidewalk Transition Plans for small agencies are best done by first establishing priorities, then inventory the missing/ substandard ramps of high priority locations and then set a schedule based on available funding. But before we get into the streamline process, let's discuss reasons why agencies don't take actions:

### **This is not a priority to the community.**

Most people support making sidewalk accessible but not spending a large amount of limited capital to bring their facilities up to standards. Many people tell us that they don't see the need. There are not that many disabled citizens walking the streets.

- A. Most people will be disabled at some point in life. You may not be disabled for the rest of your life but your mobility will be limited with knee, back or hip problems to name just a few.
- B. If people spend any time at medical offices, offices that provide services for the disabled or the other important destinations for the disabled such as transit stations, they would see plenty of disabled citizens.



*Temporarily disabled citizens need ADA compliant ramps.*

C. If most people spent any time in a wheelchair they would see the need. So we set up a tour of good and bad ramps in wheelchairs for the Mayor, Assistant City Manager and the City Engineer. It was clear by the end of the ride the value of a curb ramp built to current standards.

D. At every opportunity we made the point that well designed, constructed and maintained sidewalks and ramps are useful to a wide range of citizens. From parents with strollers to kids on bikes, ramps make sidewalks more accessible to many more than wheel chair users.

### **No funding available for ADA upgrades.**

DOJ doesn't accept this as an excuse. In past judgments, they have required agencies to commit a large portion of their capital budget to implement a plan that attempts to catch up for past neglect. The City of Bend Oregon is a prime example. They are still struggling to meet the terms of the DOJ settlement. The good news is that like Pasco, you may find through the preparation of the plan, that many high priority locations are substantially complete. Pasco has only a modest budget toward implementing the plan but with upgrades



*Disabled citizen in route to transit stop at community center*



*Wheelchair tour with Pasco Mayor and City Engineer getting firsthand experience with substandard ramps.*



*Parent with children taking advantage of roadway with curb ramps*

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by private development projects or through pavement overlay projects and grants you can still get a lot done.

In Pasco's case we used pedestrian collisions as criteria for ranking locations and this proved very useful at qualifying for a large safety grant for the highest priority locations.

### **The cost to prepare the plan is too expensive.**

Through the process of developing the Pasco ADA Sidewalk Transition Plan, we found ways to streamline the process that keeps the cost of preparing the plan to a reasonable amount. Here is our recommendation on a process:

1. Form a committee as early as possible that includes members of the disabled community. Your dial-a-ride transit service is a great source of contacts as well as public service agencies such as Goodwill Industries. This committee will be small but it is key to demonstrating that your plan addresses the right issues. You will be lucky to get more than 3 to 6 individuals in a small to medium size town, so the cost of committee meetings will be modest. We found 3-4 meetings were enough to identify high priority areas or locations, discuss ranking criteria, and review staff recommendations. One aspect we found our committee very helpful with was discussing what sub-standard ramps should be replaced. The law states that if you touch a substandard ramp you replace it, but if you want to upgrade a street with a limited budget, it really helps to know that they did not expect us to replace a ramp that had a grade 1% too steep. So our plan discussed first replacing the worst ramps with our ADA ramp projects and getting the others as the opportunity presents itself, such as with an overlay.
2. Map out ranking criteria and don't get caught up in a numerical ranking process, keep it simply high, medium and low ranking. Generating a numerical score of locations does not improve the decision making and slows the process. The mapping can be done as simple as colored markers on a map to show hospitals, public services, and transit to name a few typical destinations. We found having a graphical representation helps the committee and staff see areas and streets with higher needs. Putting a dot at each pedestrian crash location over the last 5 years was particularly useful.

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3. Prepare the plan as though it was a five to ten year plan. We know that even with a robust budget, it will take small cities 10 to 50 years to completely upgrade the sidewalks. The reality is, no matter how complete the plan, it will need updating. Pasco's plan is proposed as a living document that assumes it will need updating in 5 years where we can celebrate our success and learn from our mistakes.
  4. Lastly don't get bogged down in the preparation of an inventory. Our recommendation is to only manually inventory the high priority locations for the following reasons:
    - A. The city-wide inventory requirement of the Self-evaluation is not useful if you have a very limited budget
    - B. In small cities it only takes a few minutes to get across town to check out a complaint.
    - C. In this age of Street view in Google Maps, and digital cameras on most cell phones, having a database of the accessibility barriers does not improve service to the citizens.

If you read Title II of the Americans with Disability Act, the process appears daunting. Going through a "Self-assessment" that includes an inventory of all city streets and preparing a plan that includes a schedule for upgrading all barriers to the disabled could take a lot of time and staff resources to prepare. If you look what other agencies have done, you can see examples of agencies putting out huge efforts to meet the intent of Title II. Bellevue Washington, through a demonstration grant, went through a very elaborate inventory process that was quite sophisticated and expensive. We recommend reversing this process of ranking the streets, then inventory the few streets that you are concerned with in the short term.

There are a few other things that should be included in a plan such as a "grievance process", establishing a go-to individual to follow through with the plan and a review of City policies and practices related to ADA standards. These are not that time consuming, not costly but very important. From our experience in Pasco, having the standard plan for sidewalk and ADA ramp construction up to date and having the ramps construction inspected correctly has a huge step in the right direction.

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## Arguments against this process:

Preparing this plan will not guarantee the agency will not be sued. But after discussing this with many professionals related to ADA transition planning, it vastly reduces the likelihood.

Having a plan does not guarantee action will be taken. It requires follow-through and one important aspect of the plan is establishing a go to person - ADA Transition Plan Manager. This doesn't have to be a new position but someone needs to be assigned responsibility to follow-through.

Doing a quick and dirty plan will have flaws. This is very likely but waiting for time and money to do a perfect plan that never gets done is worse. Remember "done is better than perfect".

## Conclusion:

We don't recommend doing the plan to avoid a Department of Justice settlement, although this is a real risk to your community. We recommend doing an ADA Sidewalk Transportation Plan because it is the right thing to do to make your community a better place to live. Just don't neglect this requirement because it is too expensive because it does not have to be.



*Wheelchair user in street due to non-compliant sidewalks*

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# Laws and Standards for Developing Paths and Trails in Washington

*By Paula Reeves, WSDOT H&LP Community Design Assistance Manager*



WSDOT's Highways and Local Programs (H&LP) participates in revising WSDOT policies, guidelines, and manuals that relate to bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. H&LP works to resolve complex bicycle and pedestrian design issues of all kinds and offers training and technical assistance to local agencies, as well as WSDOT offices and divisions.

This article provides a summary of key laws, standards, guidelines, and resources intended to help planners and engineers develop, construct and maintain path and trail projects.

Trails can support economic vitality by increasing property values and supporting businesses nearby. They are becoming a more important part of the transportation discussion in both rural and urban settings where people want to be separated from motor vehicle traffic and safely bike and walk to school, work, shopping and services. In some rural communities, trails are now being considered as a way to attract people to town centers that are in need of revitalization. In urban areas that have experienced growth, these trails, separated paths or cycle tracks provide desirable, time saving commute options and also help to accommodate the growing recreation and physical activity needs of residents.

## **Planning Paths and Trails**

Transportation agencies, tribes and others should approach trail planning with all the seriousness of a road or highway project and incorporate trail system or network plans in their comprehensive plans, zoning maps, and subdivision and land

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development ordinances. Comprehensive plans should address several key questions that commonly arise related to paths and trails including:

- Ownership of trails once they are constructed - as with sidewalks, trails and paths can be the responsibility of state or local agency, the homeowners association, or individual landowners.
- Ongoing maintenance
- Easements and assessments
- Security



After a trail project has emerged as a community priority through the local comprehensive planning process, school walk route planning, or other planning process, the first step in project development is to perform a feasibility study or preliminary engineering assessment of the proposed project. Feasibility studies performed early in the project development process are effective in determining a more accurate scope of work including potential impacts on environmentally sensitive areas or historic structures.

## **Designing Paths and Trails in Washington**

Communities may now use a larger toolbox of design guidance already resulting in more innovative and cost effective projects. In 2011, the Washington State Legislature amended the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 35.78) to allow cities, towns, and counties to use the most current version of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) or equivalent guidelines when designing paths, trails and other pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. This is an important step forward for Washington state communities because AASHTO's Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and other related guidance from

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National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) are generally more flexible and comprehensive. View minimum standards for trail design in Washington at:

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/LAG/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/LAG/)

## **Expenditure of Statewide Fuel Tax for Paths and Trails**

There is a Paths and Trails Law (RCW 47.30) in Washington State that defines paths and trails as part of the state’s transportation system and requires state and local transportation agencies to spend a portion of fuel tax revenue on these facilities. The Paths and Trails Law (RCW 47.30.030), specifically addresses the expenditure of statewide fuel taxes for paths and trails. It gives WSDOT, or the county or city with jurisdiction over the particular transportation facility the authority to expend reasonable amounts of gas tax as necessary for the planning, accommodation and establishment of and maintenance of paths and trails.

Additionally, RCW 35.75.060, amended by the State Legislature in 2011 also addresses use of fuel tax and other street and road funds for paths and trails. It states,

“Any city or town may use any funds available for street or road construction, maintenance, or improvement for building, improving, and maintaining bicycle paths, lanes, roadways, and routes, and for improvements to make existing streets and roads more suitable and safe for bicycle traffic: Provided, That any such paths, lanes, roadways, routes, or streets for which any such street or road funds are expended shall be suitable for bicycle transportation purposes and not solely for recreation purposes.”

## **Trails on State Highway Right of Way**

The Paths and Trails Law (RCW 47.30.020) is particularly important in defining joint usage of rights of way. It



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requires that paths and trails and other pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle facilities be incorporated into the design of highways and freeways along corridors where they do not exist as long as they conform to the local comprehensive plans, do not duplicate existing routes, making these circumstances safer for both motorists and pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists.

This clarification of joint usage of rights of way gives WSDOT the flexibility to permit construction on state highway right of way, in some cases, without going through the often lengthy and costly process of leasing it for the purpose of constructing a path or trail if no highway expansion is anticipated in the trail vicinity in the foreseeable future.

### **Ensuring Maintenance of Paths and Trails**

Trails require on-going maintenance like any other public facility. Using designs that reduce maintenance costs and increase security is important in development of paths and trails. Annual trail maintenance costs can range from \$3,000 to \$30,000 depending on location and other circumstances. It is critical to clearly identify which agency or organization will be responsible for ongoing maintenance in the planning phase of paths and trails.

For technical assistance, funding programs, and additional resources related to paths and trails, go to WSDOT's website at:

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/localprograms](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/localprograms)

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# Knowledge Management in Changing Times

By: Leni Oman, Director, Office of Research & Library Services, WSDOT, and Chair, TRB Task Force on Knowledge Management (AB010T).

At a time when many transportation agencies are seeking transformational change, they are also experiencing the loss of institutional knowledge upon which to build that transformation.

- Experienced employees are retiring or resigning taking with them operational knowledge and a history of changing practices.
- Agencies are reorganizing to align with budget constraints, new strategic directions, and outsourcing expectations, disrupting patterns of communication and information management.
- Agencies are responding to increased expectations for efficiency, accountability, and open government, putting more pressure on an aging information management infrastructure.
- In the increasingly mobile workforce, employee tenure is decreasing. In addition to the risk of knowledge loss, this churning of the workforce also brings new knowledge that the organization may wish to leverage. Likewise, there are increasing opportunities to leverage knowledge from industry partners due to increased outsourcing.
- Technologies that facilitate remote communication and increase personal computing capability as well as increased use of remote offices and telework are disrupting patterns of institutional information management at a time when security concerns, transparency, and networking are growing.

Agencies need proven, cost-effective strategies to navigate these changes and demonstrate the capacity to be high-performing, responsive, and agile organizations.

Education, experience, manuals, and job specific orientation and training all play a part. But the efficiency and effectiveness of job performance also includes more intangible aspects about how to do our work – the know-how to be successful in working with partner organizations or troubleshooting a problem. How do we effectively capture and share that know-how?

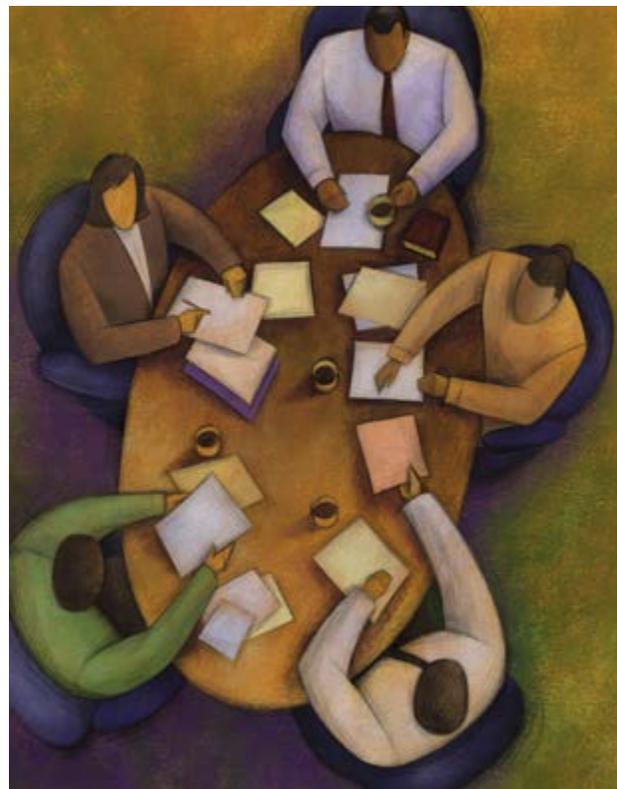
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The practice of knowledge management provides strategic steps to address this need. Organizations already employ many of these practices such as mentoring, double filling positions, after-action reviews and double-filling positions. Knowledge management as a practice helps organizations look strategically at knowledge needs and gaps and deploy knowledge capture tools that best fit the knowledge gap. In organizations with more mature knowledge management programs, knowledge management helps them identify knowledge that is at risk due to retirement eligibility or movement, whether that knowledge will be easy or difficult to replace, whether knowledge has been documented for those issues that can be written down, and how to transfer critical operational knowledge before employees leave.

Several activities are underway to increase awareness and use of knowledge management in the transportation sector. The National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) recently conducted a domestic scan to gather information from state DOTs, federal agencies, and private industry about their knowledge management practices. Outreach about the domestic scan is expected to include webinars, discussion at the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Meeting in January 2014, presentations at other forums, and a report.

The National Cooperative Highway Research Program project 20-98, *A Guide to Agency-Wide Knowledge Management for State Departments of Transportation*, has been initiated to provide a reference guide for transportation organizations.

And the TRB Task Force on Knowledge Management (AB010T) has been formed to help raise awareness of knowledge management and practices. To stay in touch on knowledge management products and activities, register as a Friend on the TRBKM.org website.



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# WSDOT and King County Partner to “Right Size” Parking

By: Daniel Rowe, King County Metro Division, Market and Service Development

King County Metro’s Right Size Parking Project (RSP) has developed tools to balance multifamily parking issues with community, government, and real estate interests. The project provides an empirical, research-based approach to estimating residential parking demand that enables policymakers and housing developers to use empirical data when making parking allocation and pricing decisions. Aligning parking supply and demand supports a wide range of community goals, including housing affordability, smart growth, and economic development. Most cities in King County require a minimum ratio of parking stalls per housing unit, but until this study, there was no clear understanding of parking “demand” and as a result these existing minimums are often an inaccurate indicator of how much parking is needed. With WSDOT’s support, King County received funding to investigate this issue through a 3-year grant from the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Value Pricing Pilot Program. Because RSP results reveal the community and development factors drive parking demand, they can be used to better inform both parking requirements and pricing decisions in the local context.

The RSP project gathered data about parking utilization and pricing at over 200 multifamily residential properties in King County and used statistical analysis to determine which characteristics of the neighborhood and property drove occupancy rates. These characteristics account for over 80% of the variation in parking use, and include the price charged for parking, the area’s density of population and employment, and the development’s proximity to transit, the number of affordable housing units, and average rental cost, per unit size, and number of occupied bedrooms.

The RSP study determined that existing parking capacity exceeds utilization by an average of 0.4 parking spaces per housing unit, which can lead to approximately \$800,000 in wasted construction costs for a 150 unit suburban development.

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Armed with this knowledge, the Project team developed a calculator ([www.rightsizeparking.org](http://www.rightsizeparking.org)) that allows stakeholders such as local governments, developers, and community groups to view estimations of parking use at the parcel level. The RSP calculator will inform decision makers' choices about how much parking to require or to build in King County, and demonstrates the effectiveness of unbundling parking price from housing costs where appropriate, given contextual factors. Separating the largely hidden cost of residential parking from the cost of housing allows consumers to make educated decisions about car ownership and where to park their cars, often reducing demand for parking, requiring less capacity, and better utilizing existing supply.

There are several pilot projects underway or in development that put this research into practice and test RSP concepts. These pilots are driven by stakeholder engagement and fit into one of two categories: a policy-based approach that aligns parking regulations with research and a pricing-based approach to test market parking charges along with innovative parking management and transportation demand management strategies.

The four King County cities of Kent, Kirkland, Seattle and Tukwila are participating in the policy pilots, which all held recent kickoff meetings. A Request for Proposals for pricing pilots closed November 1, 2013, and received five responses. Final awards will be decided in November 2013 and pilots will begin in 2014.

This project has garnered national attention, spurring initiatives in other regions, and many communities are examining the project to identify how RSP concepts can be implemented in their area. For more information on the project, visit:

[www.kingcounty.gov/RightSizeParking](http://www.kingcounty.gov/RightSizeParking)





**SAVE THE DATE**  
**26<sup>th</sup> Annual**

**2014 Asphalt Pavement Training Conference**

The Washington Asphalt Pavement Association, American Public Works Association and the Washington State Department of Transportation are presenting the 2014 Asphalt Pavement Training Conference.

The goal of this conference is to provide up-to-date information on current Asphalt Paving issues.

This conference is intended for; Managers, Engineers, Consultants, Superintendents, Foremen, Inspectors and Front Line Workers in both the Asphalt Industry and the Public Works Departments.

This conference has been specifically designed to provide the practical resources and Best Practices to ensure long-lasting, high-quality Asphalt Pavements. The conference will be repeated at three locations to make this valuable training more accessible to all attendees.

**Meeting Times & Locations**

**Moses Lake, WA**

Mon., March 3, 2014  
 Big Bend Community College  
 9:00AM – 3:30PM

**Centralia, WA**

Tues., March 4, 2014  
 Great Wolf Lodge  
 9:00AM - 3:30PM

**Lynnwood, WA**

Wed., March 5, 2014  
 Lynnwood Convention Ctr.  
 9:00AM - 3:30PM

**Agenda**

2014 Asphalt Spec Changes & Current Issues	Bob Dyer, Assistant State Const. Eng., WSDOT
APWA Specifications	Ruth McIntyre, LTP Eng., WSDOT
Crack Sealing	Greg Sharp, Area Manager, Crafcro Inc.
Best Practices for Stockpiling	TJ Morgan Quality Control Inland Asphalt
Lunch (supplied)	
RAP/RAS Asphalt Pavements	Steve Landers, Asphalt Testing Eng., WSDOT
Performance Grade Binder	Steve Landers, Asphalt Testing Eng., WSDOT
Safety at the Asphalt Paving Zone	Doug Donegan, Safety Manager, Granite
Asphalt Placement – Best Practices	Asphalt Contractor
Intelligent Compaction	Equipment Manufacturer

**Contact information on conference:**  
 E-mail: [bob@glennconsultinginc.com](mailto:bob@glennconsultinginc.com)  
 Phone: Bob Glenn 360-701-7157

**Mailing Information:**  
 Glenn Consulting Inc.  
 615 Summit Lake Shore Rd NW  
 Olympia, WA 98502

# SAVE THE DATE

(NEW Conference)

## 2014 Bituminous Surface Treatment Conference (BST/Chip Seal)

The goal of this conference is to provide up-to-date information on current Bituminous Surface Treatment (BST/Chip Seal) issues.

This conference is intended for; Managers, Engineers, Consultants, Superintendents, Foremen, Inspectors and Front Line Workers in both the BST/Chip Seal Industry and the Public Works Departments.

This conference has been specifically designed to provide the practical resources and Best Practices to ensure long lasting, high-quality BST pavements. The conference will be repeated at two different locations to make this valuable training more accessible to all attendees.

### Meeting Times & Locations

#### **Seattle, WA**

Monday, March 24, 2014  
Double Tree Hotel – Southcenter  
9:00AM -3:30PM

#### **Moses Lake, WA**

Tuesday, March 25, 2014  
Big Bend Community College  
9:00AM -3:30PM

### Agenda

Quality Control & Quality Assurance

Tim Moomaw, DOT Training Mgr., WSDOT

Tom Doolittle, President, Doolittle Const.

Chip Seal Design and Materials

Steve Van De Bogert, GM, Western State Asphalt

BST Best Practices

Kevin Littleton, Eastern Region Mat. Eng., WSDOT

Lunch (supplied)

Chip Spreader and Best Practices

Brian Horner, Region Manager, E D Etnyre

Distributor and Best Practices

Steve Karl, President, Karl Equipment

Reasons why BST Fail

Steve Van De Bogert, GM, Western State Asphalt

Solutions to BST Problems

Tom Doolittle, President, Doolittle Const.

Hot BSTs

Andy Anderson, Field Tech., Albina Asphalt

#### **Contact information on conference:**

E-mail: [bob@glennconsultinginc.com](mailto:bob@glennconsultinginc.com)

Phone: Bob Glenn 360-701-7157

#### **Mailing Information:**

Glenn Consulting Inc.

615 Summit Lake Shore Rd NW

Olympia, WA 98502

NATIONAL **BRIDGE PRESERVATION PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE 2014**



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MORE INFORMATION  
[WWW.NBPPC2014.ORG](http://WWW.NBPPC2014.ORG)



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SAVE THE DATE



**2014 Pacific Northwest Bridge Maintenance Conference**  
***All Hands on Deck - Maintaining a State of Good Repair***  
**Tuesday 10/14/2014 - Thursday 10/16/2014**

Red Lion Hotel on the River - Jantzen Beach  
909 North Hayden Island Drive  
Portland, Oregon 97217

**Key Benefits of the 2014 Conference:**

- Become better equipped and prepared to perform assigned tasks by being exposed to lessons learned from others
- Become more efficient in the area of bridge maintenance
- Become more productive by using assigned resources wisely
- Ensure a higher level of On-the-Job Safety and
- Ensure a higher level of environmental awareness
- Increase communication skill set by formulating and delivering presentations
- Increase knowledge of effective bridge maintenance strategies and/or activities

**Who Should Attend:**

*Local, state, federal, and other agency bridge owners involved in bridge maintenance activities. Staff members may include:*

- Bridge maintenance crews
- Bridge maintenance managers and superintendents
- Bridge maintenance planners, programmers, and analysts
- Bridge and maintenance inspectors
- Bridge designers
- Bridge product exhibitors

*16 PDH's are earned by attending this conference*

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## **Title VI Notice to Public**

It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinators, George Laue at (509) 324-6018 or Jonté Sulton at (360) 705-7082.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information**

This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the WSDOT Diversity/ADA Compliance Team at [wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov) or by calling toll free, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.