

RCW 81.104.100 Planning process. To assure development of an effective high capacity transportation system, local authorities shall follow the following planning process only if their system plan includes a rail fixed guideway system component or a bus rapid transit component that is planned by a regional transit authority:

(1) Regional, multimodal transportation planning is the ongoing urban transportation planning process conducted in each urbanized area by its regional transportation planning organization. During this process, regional transportation goals are identified, travel patterns are analyzed, and future land use and travel are projected. The process provides a comprehensive view of the region's transportation needs but does not select specified modes to serve those needs. The process shall identify a priority corridor or corridors for further study of high capacity transportation facilities if it is deemed feasible by local officials.

(2) High capacity transportation system planning is the detailed evaluation of a range of high capacity transportation system options, including: Do nothing, low capital, and ranges of higher capital facilities. To the extent possible this evaluation shall take into account the urban mass transportation administration's requirements identified in subsection (3) of this section.

High capacity transportation system planning shall proceed as follows:

(a) Organization and management. The responsible local transit agency or agencies shall define roles for various local agencies, review background information, provide for public involvement, and develop a detailed work plan for the system planning process.

(b) Development of options. Options to be studied shall be developed to ensure an appropriate range of technologies and service policies can be evaluated. A do-nothing option and a low capital option that maximizes the current system shall be developed. Several higher capital options that consider a range of capital expenditures for several candidate technologies shall be developed.

(c) Analysis methods. The local transit agency shall develop reports describing the analysis and assumptions for the estimation of capital costs, operating and maintenance costs, methods for travel forecasting, a financial plan and an evaluation methodology.

(d) The system plan submitted to the voters pursuant to RCW 81.104.140 shall address, but is not limited to the following issues:

(i) Identification of level and types of high capacity transportation services to be provided;

(ii) A plan of high occupancy vehicle lanes to be constructed;

(iii) Identification of route alignments and station locations with sufficient specificity to permit calculation of costs, ridership, and system impacts;

(iv) Performance characteristics of technologies in the system plan;

(v) Patronage forecasts;

(vi) A financing plan describing: Phasing of investments; capital and operating costs and expected revenues; cost-effectiveness represented by a total cost per system rider and new rider estimate; estimated ridership and the cost of service for each individual high capacity line; and identification of the operating revenue to operating expense ratio.

The financing plan shall specifically differentiate the proposed use of funds between high capacity transportation facilities and services, and high occupancy vehicle facilities;

(vii) Description of the relationship between the high capacity transportation system plan and adopted land use plans;

(viii) An assessment of social, economic, and environmental impacts; and

(ix) Mobility characteristics of the system presented, including but not limited to: Qualitative description of system/service philosophy and impacts; qualitative system reliability; travel time and number of transfers between selected residential, employment, and activity centers; and system and activity center mode splits.

(3) High capacity transportation project planning is the detailed identification of alignments, station locations, equipment and systems, construction schedules, environmental effects, and costs. High capacity transportation project planning shall proceed as follows: The local transit agency shall analyze and produce information needed for the preparation of environmental impact statements. The impact statements shall address the impact that development of such a system will have on abutting or nearby property owners. The process of identification of alignments and station locations shall include notification of affected property owners by normal legal publication. At minimum, such notification shall include notice on the same day for at least three weeks in at least two newspapers of general circulation in the county where such project is proposed. Special notice of hearings by the conspicuous posting of notice, in a manner designed to attract public attention, in the vicinity of areas identified for station locations or transfer sites shall also be provided.

In order to increase the likelihood of future federal funding, the project planning processes shall follow the urban mass transportation administration's requirements as described in "Procedures and Technical Methods for Transit Project Planning", published by the United States department of transportation, urban mass transportation administration, September 1986, or the most recent edition. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to preclude detailed evaluation of more than one corridor in the planning process.

The department of transportation shall provide system and project planning review and monitoring in cooperation with the expert review panel identified in RCW 81.104.110. In addition, the local transit agency shall maintain a continuous public involvement program and seek involvement of other government agencies.

(4) This section does not apply to a ballot proposition submitted to voters of an enhanced service zone authorized in RCW 81.104.220(3) (a) and (c). [2022 c 285 s 5; 2011 c 127 s 1; 1992 c 101 s 23; 1991 sp.s. c 15 s 68; 1991 c 318 s 9; 1990 c 43 s 31.]

Construction—Severability—1991 sp.s. c 15: See note following RCW 46.68.110.