

SRTC

Spokane Regional Transportation Council

"SRTC provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods into, within, and through the Spokane Region with an integration of balanced multi-modal transportation choices."

Win A GPS By Playing Games!

Have you ever wanted to redesign transportation in Spokane? Now you can try your hand at being a transportation planner by playing our 'A Thousand Visions - Transportation Planning Game' - and maybe win a TomTom GPS unit for doing so! The game is part of the 'Transportation Vision Project' SRTC has been working on for almost a year.



The goal of the project is to develop a unified transportation vision for the region - an ideal multimodal transportation system (as identified by community members) to be developed over the next 30-50 years. The process also includes creating an implementation plan for that 'vision'.

The online game will help determine the transportation priorities of the public. **Go to www.spokanetransportationvision.com to play the game starting Wednesday, Oct. 27** and for more information on the Transportation Vision Project. The game will be available to play until early November.

The Transportation Vision Project is expected to be wrapped up in early 2011.

Inland Pacific Hub Update

The project to establish the Inland Pacific Region as a multi-modal global gateway to increase domestic and international commerce is moving forward. A request for proposals is expected to go out in late October for a consulting firm to assist with Phase 2 of the Inland Pacific Hub project.

Phase 1 was an outreach and research effort aimed at collecting information on freight activity levels, supply chain structures, and opinions on transportation services in the Inland Pacific Hub region. Phase 2 will determine strategies for implementation.

All documents and reports from Phase 1 of the project are available on the IPH website at www.inlandpacifichub.org/documents.html.



SRTMC Website Can Help You Avoid Delays Caused by Winter Weather

Winter is on the way and bad driving conditions aren't far behind. This time of year, the Spokane Regional Transportation Management Center (SRTMC) shifts its focus from helping drivers avoid delays caused by construction projects to helping drivers avoid delays caused by accidents and icy conditions.

The SRTMC is a high-tech traffic management center that has a real-time website with customizable information for the Spokane area. That means 24-hours a day you can watch over 70 live traffic cameras on the internet, check your daily commute route for accidents or construction projects, and find alternate routes when roads are closed due to weather or other conditions.

The SRTMC website can be found at www.srtmc.org.

Check out www.srtc.org for all SRTC's latest projects



Bridging the Valley Update

There has been increased interest recently in Bridging the Valley (BTV). BTV is a series of projects that will separate vehicle traffic from train traffic in the corridor between Spokane and Athol, Idaho. The separation of railroad and roadways will decrease traffic congestion at railroad crossings, promote economic growth, and traffic safety. The BTV projects include constructing road overpasses or underpasses at most existing railroad/ roadway crossings on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe corridor, as well as relocating the Union Pacific mainline within BNSF's mainline corridor. That will eliminate at-grade crossings on the UPRR line.

Many people have asked when individual BTV projects will be constructed. Currently, the only BTV project under construction is the Havana Street Bridge. A lack of available funding has slowed the construction of other BTV projects. Congress has not reauthorized a transportation bill since SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) expired earlier this year, meaning there is no new money available for BTV projects. A new bill isn't expected to be passed until late 2011 so BTV is in a waiting phase to see what kind of transportation funding will become available.

There is *some* money dedicated to BTV projects though. The Park Road project has \$5 million of funding available, which isn't enough to fully fund it. The Barker Road project was recommended for Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board funding and it has been 'recommended' that it receive a grant of \$10 million. The Federal Highway Administration has appropriated \$5 million for engineering and design of the grade separation/ interchange for the Pleasant View project and potentially the SH41/53 bridge project in Rathdrum. Recently, the highway district has approved its \$150,000 share and the Idaho Transportation Department approved its \$130,000 portion. It's expected to take about two years for money to be appropriated for construction. All other BTV projects are still awaiting funding.

You can find more information on Bridging the Valley, and descriptions for each BTV project, at <http://www.bridgingthevalley.org/>.

Recent Calls for Projects

SRTC has been busy compiling lists of projects for current and future possible funding.

The lists include Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) projects, Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects, and Regionally Significant Transportation Projects. CMAQ projects are those that improve air quality by increasing the efficiency of existing transportation facilities or reducing travel demand. CMAQ funds available for the Spokane area are estimated to be \$3.5 million per year through 2014.

Transportation Enhancements (TE) are transportation-related activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the transportation system. SRTC has been allotted approximately \$2.5 million in TE funds.

Regionally Significant projects are those that benefit two or more jurisdictions within the SRTC Transportation Management Area, benefit the economic health of the region, or enhance the area state or federal transportation system.

All three lists, and the projects included on each list, can be found on the SRTC website at www.srtc.org.

WP-SIA Update

Final touches are being put on the West Plains- Spokane International Airport Transportation Study. Recently, study stakeholders made safety recommendations that include controlling access to high accident intersections, speed enforcement on Airport Drive, and adding traffic calming projects in Airway Heights. The committee meets again soon to review study area non-motorized conditions.

An open house is tentatively scheduled for early 2011 to share study findings with the public. More WP-SIA information can be found at www.srtc.org on the 'Projects' page.