

ATTACHMENT 11

Background on Regional Travel Surveys

Regional Household Travel Surveys are prepared by contractors working for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). A survey is conducted for each of Oregon's Metropolitan Statistical Areas. The Portland metropolitan area is one of these. The Washington Department of Transportation (WDOT) does the same for its metropolitan areas. The Vancouver/Clark County area is one of these.

ODOT and WDOT provide survey information to Metro, and Metro uses travel information to calibrate the regional transportation mode. This model informs the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which in turn informs the City's Transportation System Plan. The model informs these plans by forecasting future travel demand and patterns by mode. These forecasts allow local governments to estimate future transportation needs.

The latest published survey was completed in 1994, and the latest (2010) Regional Transportation Plan was prepared using revised assumptions to the 1994 survey, rather than a new survey. It was expected that 1994 survey would have been updated before 2010, but that update was scheduled during the time that the downtown transit mall was being reconstructed to accommodate light rail. Conducting a travel survey during transit mall construction would have produced misleading results.

WDOT completed a travel survey for Vancouver/Clark County in 2009. The ODOT contractor has completed a survey of the travel patterns of 4,800 Portland metropolitan area households. The survey includes two days, one in the spring of 2011 and another in the fall of the same year. Surveyed households were promised confidentiality, so agencies and organizations receiving the "raw data" must sign confidentiality agreements. Preserving confidentiality usually involves displaying data in aggregate form (by, for example, census block or travel analysis zone), so that the travel habits on any individual household cannot be discerned.

Both WDOT and ODOT have provided the latest survey information to Metro, but Metro has yet to publish the travel survey results or to provide any part of the survey data to local governments.