

# Journeys

## 2014 Notable Projects in the Thurston Region

**Washington Traffic Safety Commission 2014 Target Zero Award** (Systemic Curve Safety Project) *Thurston County*

**Light Emitting Diode (LED) Streetlights Conversion** (Converted remaining 1,300 PSE owned streetlights, with expected energy savings totaling \$60,000 per year) *City of Olympia*

**SR 510/SE of Reservation Road – Intersection Improvements** (Completed roundabouts at intersections of SR 510 with Reservation Road & Yelm Highway) *WSDOT, Thurston County, & Nisqually Indian Tribe*

**Linderson/Lee Streets Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements** (Sidewalk & bicycle lane infill) *City of Tumwater*

**Smart Corridors Installation** (Citywide & nearby County signals installation) *City of Lacey with Thurston County*

**Boulevard Road & 22nd Avenue Roundabout** (Constructed single lane roundabout, sidewalks, streetlights, pedestrian crossing islands, & bike lanes) *City of Olympia*

*Continued on Page 3*



## We Bridged the Gap

From concept in 2001, to completion in 2014, policy makers stayed-the-course to [bridge the gap](#) in the Chehalis Western Trail. The gap of about one-half mile included crossing I-5 and two major urban arterials – Martin Way and Pacific Avenue.

In 2001, TRPC policy makers dedicated \$500,000 in regional funding to seed construction of three pedestrian bridges, two at-grade street crossings, and the remaining ground-level portions of the trail. That initial regional investment (and subsequent regional additions) spurred state and federal policy makers to secure the additional funding needed to realize this vision as reality.



*Hub Junction, on the south side of the Pacific Avenue Bridge, will feature way-finding signs and highlight local business districts.*

The cherry-on-top was construction of a trail roundabout where the Chehalis Western and Woodland Trails meet. This first-of-its-kind roundabout will feature art and structures commemorating both the past use of these routes as rail roads and the present collaboration of Thurston County, WSDOT, the Cities of Lacey and Olympia, and TRPC in completing this effort.



*From top to bottom: I-5 Crossing, Martin Way Bridge, Pacific Ave. Bridge*

**The Chehalis Western Trail** stretches 22 miles, from Woodard Bay to the north, following the border between the cities of Lacey and Olympia, through much of Thurston County, to the City of Rainier. The trail features access to Puget Sound, Chambers Lake, the Deschutes River, wetlands, forests, farm lands, creeks, prairies, and other habitats. It connects with the Woodland Trail, and the Yelm-Tenino Trail – providing an integrated system with 42 miles of paved trails.

# Bike Map Update

The fifth edition of the Thurston County Bicycle Map will be published spring 2015.

The fifth edition of the [Thurston County Bicycle Map](#) will be published this spring. Available online and on paper, the regional bike map is TRPC's most popular publication in both media. 30,000 maps will be printed thanks to a TRPC regional funding grant to Olympia Safe Streets Coalition. The paper copy is distributed widely through dozens of outlets and it's hard to keep up with demand.

The online version includes an interactive map, a Google-driven route planner with elevations, and printable versions for both the countywide and north urban views. Whatever's in your basket or pannier – paper, iPad, or smart phone – we've got you covered.



## Executive Order 14-02

Governor Inslee directed state agencies to boost telework and flexible schedule use by 2017. TRPC - lead agency for Commute Trip Reduction in the region - is assisting with implementation.

### Current

6.8% Telework

29% Flex Hours

### By 2017

9% Telework

40% Flex Hours

## Legislative Priorities

### 5 Key Messages

TRPC's 2015 state [legislative priorities](#) highlight 5 key messages:

- Fix I-5: Improve interchanges and add capacity near Joint Base Lewis McChord.
- Preserve and maintain the multimodal system, and complete current projects – including state highways, local roads, bridges, and bike and pedestrian facilities.
- Maintain and increase Regional and Rural Mobility funding.
- Maintain and grow public transportation services – with increased local transit funding options and state funding for interregional services.
- Create a facilities replacement account to allow money from sale of WSDOT properties to be banked for WSDOT facilities' projects.

# Kicking the Can Down a Short Road

For the past several years, Congress has continued to pass budget extensions, continuing resolutions, and ignoring the Highway Trust Fund crisis. "Kicking the Can Down the Road" is the common phrase used to define this effort. There is always a budget deadlock, budget short falls, elections, and stalled partisan issues. Although we have been able to continue providing federal funds to our local jurisdictions for transportation projects, the dollars have been shrinking because of Congressional inaction. We are nearing the end of that short road the can has been kicked down. Congress, and the nation, are at a critical juncture. Legitimate congressional actions must be taken to ensure the nation has a safe and efficient transportation system. The Thurston region will soon realize the lack of federal funding support in our transportation projects and partnerships. The time to act is now. Any chance you get to remind our Congressional representatives that we all can no longer afford to "Kick the Can Down the Road," do it. If you need further details on what your message should include, please feel free to contact me or any of the transportation staff for assistance.



Lon Wyrick

-- Lon D. Wyrick, Executive Director

# Boardmember Farmer Recognized

Jerry Farmer retired from the Transportation Policy Board in December after four years of service. He offered balanced business perspectives on transportation issues, and great support to staff in shaping and delivering public messages. Special thanks for lending his silken tones to videos for Sustainable Thurston and the Regional Transportation Plan.



Jerry Farmer

## Accessibility Improvements to 22 Bus Stops

(Constructed 7 new shelters & added solar lighting at 13 existing shelters) *Intercity Transit*

## Bridging the Gap 3 – Chehalis Western Trail

(Completion of a new shared use path bridge over Pacific Avenue) *Thurston County*

## I-5/Nisqually River Bridges Painting

(Painting the bridges extended their service life) *WSDOT*

## Capitol Boulevard/M Street to Capitol Bridge

(Accepting bids, construction expected 2015 including bicycle lanes, pedestrian amenities, & pavement improvements) *City of Tumwater*

## 5th Avenue Paving Project

(Water Street to Capitol Way, repaved & added bulb-outs & a one-block section of wider sidewalk) *City of Olympia*

## 10 New Hybrid Electric Coaches

(7 replacements & 3 for service expansion) *Intercity Transit*

## Emergency Salmon Creek Bridge Replacement

(New bridge constructed on Littlerock Road SW) *Thurston County*

## I-5/US 12 Interchange Replacement

(Completed rebuild of the Grand Mound interchange to improve mobility & safety, including traffic lights installation) *WSDOT*

## Cleveland Avenue/Somerset Hill Outfall Improvements

(Installed bio-retention facilities to treat roadway runoff) *City of Tumwater*

# Walk N Roll Update

In May 2014, Walk N Roll joined Lacey Parks, North Thurston Public Schools, Safe Kids Thurston County, and others to plan and host the region's first youth Community Bike Fair and Rodeo at Mountain View Elementary School. Hundreds of youth and families attended. Participants acquired bike safety skills and were fitted with free bicycle helmets.

Tumwater School District launched its *Bikes in P.E. Curriculum* to all sixth graders, with logistics and training support by Walk N Roll.

Ten schools participated in 2014 International Walk to School Day.

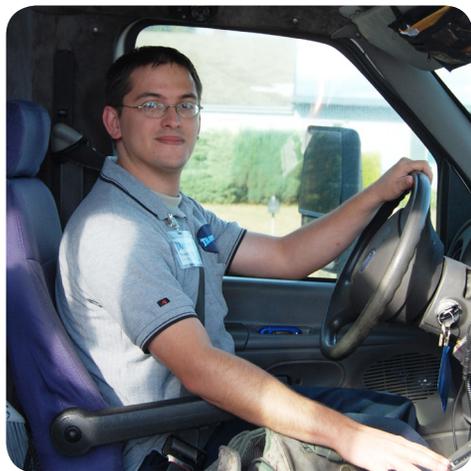
Peter G. Schmidt Elementary School in Tumwater took top honors in Feet First's statewide IWALK challenge earning the school 30 pairs of running shoes for its energetic and sustained efforts in encouraging students to walk to school.



Michael T. Simmons Wolf Pups make tracks to school on January 7th Walk N Roll Wednesday

[Walk N Roll](#) encourages and supports students and families walking, bicycling, and taking the bus to school. TRPC and Intercity Transit team up with cities and schools throughout the region to provide this grant funded program.

# RT Expands Service



Lead RT driver Brandon helps connect residents living in Thurston County's rural communities with Intercity Transit services

The Thurston Region's [Rural & Tribal Transportation Program \(RT\)](#) provides nearly 40,000 trips a year. We expanded service in September 2014, improving system efficiency, and options and predictability for riders. We achieved these updates without increasing fares or the overall cost of providing the service.

For the last 12 years, TRPC has provided transportation services to residents living in the rural communities outside of Intercity Transit's service boundary. The service operates Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in most areas. RT serves the Nisqually Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, and the communities of Bucoda, Rainier, Rochester, Tenino, and Yelm. RT also connects to Intercity Transit in Thurston County and Twin Transit in Lewis County.

TRPC and TOGETHER! partner to provide this service through a contract with Northwest Connections. Financed by state and federal grant funding matched by local cash and in-kind services from many partners, RT is funded through June 2015. We've applied for continuing funding through June 2017, and should learn the outcome of that application this spring.

# Human Services Transportation ... by the numbers

4

## Goals

Help people with limited transportation options because of age, income, or ability by ...

- Increasing mobility options
- Increasing coordination with other systems and programs
- Improving individual service
- Improving efficiency

12

## Percent

of Thurston households/residents

- earn < \$15,000
- don't own a car
- have a disability
- are veterans
- are 65 or older

18

## Years

The Thurston County Human Services Transportation Forum found innovative, cooperative strategies to address the needs of a growing population, but dwindling funding.

- Rural and Tribal Transportation (RT)
- Intercity Transit Village Vans
- Thurston County Bus Buddies
- The Regional Plan

## No Congestion?

In September 2014, WSDOT made critical expansion joint repairs on I-5 at US 101. Over two weekends, I-5 had around-the-clock lane and ramp closures- but no congestion! WSDOT used a three pronged approach: 1) a tight work schedule, 2) creative traffic control, and 3) a simple, widely broadcast message - **Avoid I-5**. WSDOT used every type of traditional and social media

- including the region's CTR program - to spread the word from Oregon to B.C.

The results? WSDOT saw traffic reductions ranging from 25% to 60% over the two key weekends. The low traffic volumes allowed more lane closures, which in turn led to work being completed early. Success!

## TRPC Awards \$2.3 Million in 2014

In 2014, TRPC selected six projects for regional [grant funding](#) totaling more than \$2.3 million. The region awards these federal funds for preservation, maintenance, safety, and transportation alternatives. 2014 recipients include:

- Willamette Drive/31st Avenue Roundabout Construction
- Rural Chip Seal Program
- Bus Stop Enhancements for Safety and Accessibility
- Walk and Roll Schools Program
- Tumwater Historical Park Trail Connection
- Chehalis Western Trail/Woodland Trail Hub Junction

*Congratulations everyone on these great projects!*

# Community Planning Projects Update

TRPC is partnering with Bucoda, Lacey, Olympia, Rainier, Tenino, and Tumwater to plan and implement sustainable revitalization and redevelopment practices. 2014 saw major strides in these efforts.

Urban District and Corridor Planning builds from policy makers' work on Urban Corridors and Sustainable Thurston, and earlier work on the Vision/Reality Disconnect. The four highlighted district plans to the right were funded through federal HUD and Energy grants matched with local dollars.

More district and corridor (re)development is underway, such as the Olympia Downtown Community Renewal Area, and a transit oriented development in the vicinity of Pacific Avenue and Boulevard Road.

Find out more in TRPC's report [Urban Corridors and Districts: Connecting People and Places](#) due for publication in early 2015.



The Main Street 507 project, funded by a TRPC grant, looks to preserve the through-traffic capacity of SR 507 while enhancing local community aesthetics and mobility for other transportation modes in the communities of Bucoda, Rainier, and Tenino. The project is closely coordinated with local community visioning, planning, and zoning efforts.

The communities want to make the downtowns more walkable, invite and encourage additional business and community vitality, and improve traffic flow at key intersections with SR 507 – at Minnesota and Centre Streets in Rainier, and Old Highway 99 and Wichman Street in Tenino. In 2014, Rainier and Tenino held several public and technical group meetings to evaluate potential options, and [created a set of preferred alternatives](#).

## BREWERY DISTRICT SE

Tumwater's Brewery District encompasses the commercial area surrounding the former Olympia Brewery property. Building on the community's 2011 vision, [the Brewery District Plan](#) and zoning updates, adopted in 2014, lay out strategies to redevelop the area into a mixed-use neighborhood of residential, commercial, and public spaces.

The city is already at work studying a new "E" Street connection crossing Tumwater Valley and installing bike lanes along Capitol Boulevard. The plan calls for redevelopment of Cleveland Avenue as the district's Main Street, redesign of streets and intersections, enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities, new transit access, and parking strategies.

## 5700 CAPITOL BLVD SE

In early 2014, Tumwater adopted a [Capitol Boulevard Corridor Plan](#), design guidelines and zoning for the boulevard, from Southgate shopping center to Israel Road. Strategies will reinvigorate the economic climate, improve corridor aesthetics, increase transportation options, and emphasize safety for walkers, bicyclists, and motorists. This effort is central to the City's economic development and strategic plans.

Transportation elements include re-design of Capitol Boulevard using medians, roundabouts, and bicycle lanes; adding new pedestrian and bicycle facilities; enhancing transit access; improving circulation with new connectivity, and adding neighborhood traffic calming.

## MARTIN WAY DISTRICT SE

The [Martin Way District](#) Study focused on Olympia's east side between Wilson Street and Lilly Road. The study, completed in 2014, explored if a lack of infrastructure was a barrier to redevelopment. The study found that infrastructure needs were not an immediate barrier; rather, the area is not ripe for redevelopment.

Residents and businesses at the west end of the corridor want to enhance safety and access, and stimulate economic development. To the east, Ensign Road will be extended to Pacific Avenue in the future to provide better long term connectivity.

## WOODLAND DISTRICT SE

Lacey adopted the [Woodland District Plan](#) in 2013. Bounded by Sleater-Kinney Road, College Street, I-5, and Pacific Avenue, the plan aims to continue progress in creating a vibrant mixed use district, with housing, offices, services, and public spaces supported by a complete transportation network. Transportation strategies focus on increasing street connectivity, improving pedestrian access, enhancing transit, and managing parking. A future extension of Golf Club Road will result in a new Main Street in the heart of the district.

In 2014, construction started on extending Golf Club Road to 3rd Avenue; the adjacent Chehalis Western Trail Pacific Avenue Bridge was completed; construction began on the new SPSCC campus; foreclosed properties were purchased for redevelopment consistent with the vision; and the City continued development of form-based code for the district.

### Neighborhood Pathways

(Completed the Woodard Avenue Pathway, the first project in the neighborhood-led program to build non-motorized paths) *City of Olympia*

### Bus Buddy Program Initiated

(Pairs experienced, trained & qualified riders with people who would like a riding companion until they feel comfortable on their own; this is a free service often used by senior citizens & people with disabilities) *Intercity Transit with Catholic Community Services of Western Washington & WSDOT*

### I-5/Vicinity of Tumwater Boulevard to Gravelly Lake Drive – Paving

*WSDOT*

### West Bay Drive Sidewalk

(Brawne Avenue to Schneider Hill Road, provides a continuous sidewalk on West Bay Drive) *City of Olympia*

**2014 - 3rd Highest Fixed Route Ridership** (4.47 million boardings in 2014) *Intercity Transit*

**I-5/SR 510 to SR 512 Congestion Management – Transportation Technology** (Ongoing project, with expected completion in 2015, to install ITS devices) *WSDOT*

### State Avenue Overlay

(underway from Central Street to Plum Street/East Bay Drive, repaving & adding bulb-outs) *City of Olympia*

## Learn More

Visit [TRPC.org](http://TRPC.org) to access an interactive Journeys, containing added info.

# Being Green

Congratulations to Intercity Transit – recognized twice in 2014 for green achievements! They received the [ISO 14001 certification](#) for establishing an effective environmental management system. Intercity Transit is the smallest of nine transit agencies in the U.S. (and a quarter-million organizations worldwide) to receive this certification.

Intercity Transit cut their usage of water (6%), electricity (20%), and natural gas (24%), while reducing waste (10%) and greenhouse gas emissions (13%). Being good to the environment has helped the bottom line too. In one year, no-idling policies saved the agency \$186,000 by avoiding the use of 62,000 gallons of diesel.



Hybrid electric coaches are part of Intercity Transit's sustainability strategies.

Organizations use [ISO 14001 Standards](#) to design and implement an effective Environmental Management System. These entities set their own targets and performance measures. The standard helps them meet objectives and goals, and in the subsequent monitoring and measurement. The intention is continual improvement of a company's environmental performance.

The Thurston County Chamber of Commerce honored Intercity Transit with a [2014 Green Business award](#) in the government category. Participating in the Chamber's Green Business Program since 2007, Intercity Transit was recognized for its efforts in waste reduction, water conservation, energy efficiency, transportation and commute trip reduction, buying and selling green, and pollution prevention.

These laurels are the latest in a string of accolades for sustainable practices. Way to go, Intercity Transit!

# ThurstonHereToThere.org

Do you know there are free car seat inspections every month in the Thurston Region? Would you like to plan a walk visiting historic sites? Check out [www.thurstonheretothere.org](http://www.thurstonheretothere.org)!

TRPC developed this website to encourage people to try alternative ways to travel around our community and to find fun ways to get more physical activity. You can also learn more about biking and telework and riding the bus and links to veterans activities and services. We can help you travel from Here to There.

