What is URMD?

The Urban Road Maintenance District (URMD) is the funding mechanism for maintenance of urban local roads outside of cities. URMD was created by the Board of County Commissioners and approved by voters in urban unincorporated Washington County in 1987. URMD is a county service district, formed under ORS Chapter 451.

At the time URMD was formed, urban local roads had deteriorated due to lack of funding for preventive maintenance. The intent was to fund maintenance to prevent further deterioration, protect the traveling public, enhance property values and promote economic development.

Although it was formed in 1987, URMD was not funded until 1994.

What does URMD cost?

Voters in the urban unincorporated area approved an ad valorem property tax levy of $0.365 in 1994, which became a permanent rate of $0.2456 upon approval of Ballot Measure 50 in 1997.

Property owners in the URMD pay $0.2456 per $1,000 assessed value. The owner of a home with an assessed value of $200,000 pays less than $50 per year for URMD.

What is URMD’s purpose?

URMD provides preventive road maintenance services for public roads within URMD boundaries, except roads that are designated as Arterials or Collectors on the Washington County Transportation Plan.

How many road miles are maintained by URMD?

In 1994 urban unincorporated Washington County contained 353 miles of local neighborhood roads. Currently, the area contains 426 miles of URMD-eligible roads. The number of miles of URMD-eligible roads increases as the Urban Growth Boundary expands and new housing developments are created. Annexations by cities reduce the number of URMD-eligible roads.
How well is URMD doing?

Before URMD was funded, over 80 miles of local neighborhood roads within URMD were in “poor” or “very poor” condition. Only 77% were in “fair” or better condition.

The initial goal of URMD was to bring the overall condition of the system up to “fair” or better. That goal has been met and maintained.

After completion of the 2009-2010 construction season, over 99% of URMD road surfaces are currently rated in “fair” or better condition.

Maintenance strategy

Efficient and cost-effective maintenance planning and cyclical preventive maintenance surface treatments made these improvements in road condition possible.

The general pavement maintenance strategy is to seal the road surface every 10 years and overlay with new pavement every 30 years, depending on wear and condition. URMD roads are routinely inspected and scheduled for cost-effective and timely preventive maintenance as needed.

The 2009-2010 construction season marked URMD’s 16th year of pavement surface treatments. During the early years, focus was on reconstructing and repaving badly deteriorated roads. It is now time in the maintenance cycle to slurry seal those roads, and roads in the newer developments that were constructed over the last 10 years.
In addition to pavement maintenance, URMD fixes pot holes, trims back vegetation when it encroaches into the roadway or blocks visibility, repairs and replaces signs, and maintains road striping.

Related: [URMD Asphalt Overlay](#) [URMD Slurry Seal](#)

**Work program**

Planned preventive maintenance activities on URMD-eligible local neighborhood roads are included in Washington County’s annual [Road Maintenance Work Program](#). The work program is available online and is published for public review and comment prior to adoption by the Board of County Commissioners.

**Financial status**

**Revenue**

In fiscal year 2009-2010, URMD received about $3.5 million in revenue, primarily from the URMD property tax.

**Expenditures**

Pavement maintenance is cyclical. In fiscal year 2009-2010, URMD spent about $2.5 million. About 84% of URMD’s expenditures paid for pavement surface treatment contracts and related costs.

Although property owners are notified of upcoming service treatments and asked to trim back adjacent vegetation well in advance, county crews must ensure all vegetation is out of the way before surface treatment activities can begin.

![2009-2010 URMD Revenue $3.5 million](image1)

![2009-2010 URMD Expenditures $2.5 million](image2)

Contract prep and admin

Maintenance (vegetation)

CWS drainage

Pavement ratings

NSP traffic calming

Miscellaneous

Contract related costs = 84% of expenditures
Clean Water Services provides storm water and drainage maintenance services along all URMD-eligible roads through an Intergovernmental Agreement. URMD provides CWS $150,000 per year for these services.

All URMD pavement surfaces were recently rated by an outside contractor. Half of the roads were rated in fiscal year 2009-2010 and the other half in 2010-2011.

URMD sets aside about $250,000 a year for the Neighborhood Streets Program’s traffic calming activities on URMD-eligible local neighborhood roads.

**Fund Balance**

At the end of the 2009-2010 budget year, URMD had a fund balance of $3,218,437.

**Cost Trends**

The unit costs for asphalt overlay paving and slurry sealing are generally trending higher. Over the last five years, the cost of overlay has increased 26% and slurry seal 30%.

Unit costs are effected by general industry economic trends, as well as economy of scale: the greater the quantity of work, the lower the unit cost.

**Is URMD effective and sustainable?**

The County Auditor completed a Performance Evaluation of URMD in 2009, which concluded that URMD is:

- Meeting its original objective of improving urban local streets to fair or better condition.
- Using resources efficiently.
- Effectively maintaining the roads.
- Sustainable at the current property tax rate for the next 10 to 15 years, if assumptions hold true.

The audit findings and recommendations documents are available online.
How can citizens affect decisions made about URMD?

The County Auditor’s URMD Performance Evaluation recommended that a citizen advisory committee be formed to confirm URMD performance objectives and review periodic performance reports.

The Urban Road Maintenance District Advisory Committee (URMDAC) advises the Washington County Board of Commissioners and staff on matters related to road maintenance provided by URMD. URMDAC reviews and makes recommendations regarding service levels and annual work programs, assist in evaluating the cost effectiveness and efficiency of URMD, and advises on continuation of URMD and/or other long-range funding opportunities for road maintenance.

How can you request service or report problems on URMD roads?

Residents, property owners, and users of URMD-eligible local neighborhood streets may inquire about or request URMD services or report road problems to:

Washington County
Department of Land Use & Transportation
Operations & Maintenance Division
1400 SW Walnut Street
Hillsboro, OR 97123
Phone: 503-846-ROAD (846-7623)
FAX: 503-846-7620
e-mail: lutops@co.washington.or.us

An online form is also available to request a service or report a road-related problem.

To report a hazardous road condition outside of normal business hours, call the Washington County 911 non-emergency response number: 503-629-0111.