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’s primary mission is to provide 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.

As of November 2011, URMD funds may also be used to fund safety improvements on public roads within URMD boundaries, including county roads that are designated as Arterials and Collectors. Fiscal year 2012-2013 will be the first year for construction of URMD-funded safety improvements.
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 430 miles of URMD-eligible roads. The number of miles of URMD-eligible roads increases as the Urban Growth Boundary expands and as 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% of local neighborhood roads within URMD were in “fair” or worse condition. The goal of URMD was to bring the overall condition of the system up to “fair” or better.

That goal has been surpassed and maintained. After completion of the 2011-2012 construction season, only 4% of URMD road surfaces are rated in “fair” or worse condition. On a rating scale of 1 to 100, with 100 representing a brand new road, the average pavement condition rating (PCI) of URMD roads is 84, which is “good” to “very good”. In 2011, the Board adopted a target average PCI of 75 (with 90% at or above 65) for all URMD-eligible roads. As of 2012, 98% are at or above PCI 65.


**Maintenance strategy**

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

The 2011-2012 construction season marked URMD’s 18th year of pavement surface treatments. During the early years, focus was on reconstructing and repaving badly deteriorated roads. The general pavement maintenance strategy has been to seal the road surface every 10 years and overlay with new pavement every 30 years, depending on wear and condition.

With the goal of reaching a system-wide average PCI of 75, the Urban Road Maintenance District Advisory Committee recommended a uniform and consistent maintenance spending strategy over the next ten years. This maintenance strategy will be reviewed and adjusted annually as needed to achieve the target PCI.

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**URMD Surface Treatment History**

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

**Slurry seal surface treatment**  
[Image 1](#)  
[Image 2](#)

**Asphalt overlay surface treatment**  
[Image 1](#)  
[Image 2](#)
Work program

URMD roads are routinely inspected and scheduled for cost-effective and timely preventive maintenance. Pavement surfaces are inspected and rated by an outside contractor. Half the URMD roads were rated in fiscal year 2009-2010 and the other half in 2010-2011. Starting in fiscal year 2012-2013 one-fourth of all URMD roads will be rated each year.

Planned preventive maintenance activities are included in Washington County’s annual Road Maintenance Program. The program is available online and is published for public review and comment prior to adoption by the Board of County Commissioners.

Service requests

In addition to pavement maintenance, URMD repairs and replaces signs, trims back vegetation when it encroaches into the roadway or blocks visibility, fixes pot holes, and maintains road striping.

In fiscal year 2011-2012, a total of 384 requests for service were received.

Citizens submitting a service request should receive a response within 7 days and work should be complete within 30 days.

If the work cannot be completed within 30 days, an explanation and an estimated time of completion will be provided to the requestor.

Property owners are notified of upcoming surface treatments and are asked to trim back adjacent vegetation well in advance. When the work isn’t done by the property owner, URMD pays for crews to make sure all vegetation is out of the way before surface treatment activities begin.
Financial status

Revenue

In fiscal year 2011-2012, URMD received about $3.8 million in revenue, primarily from the URMD property tax.

Expenditures

In fiscal year 2011-2012, URMD spent about $2.2 million, of which about 77% was for contracted services and contract-related costs. Contract administration was equal to about 9.8% of contracted costs.

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.

URMD also allocates $250,000 a year to the county’s Neighborhood Streets Program (NSP). The NSP coordinates and pays for traffic calming activities on local neighborhood roads.

Fund Balance

At the end of the 2011-2012 fiscal year, URMD had a fund balance of $6,352,647.
Cost Trends

The unit costs for asphalt overlay paving and slurry sealing are affected by general industry economic trends, as well as economy of scale: in general, 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 are 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 Urban Road Maintenance District Board of Directors (County Commissioners) and staff on matters related to road maintenance provided by URMD. URMDAC reviews and makes recommendations regarding service levels and annual work programs, assists 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 web form and a smartphone app are 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.

Your feedback is important to us. Please let us know what we did well and how we can improve. Visit www.co.washington.or.us/lut/feedback.cfm