



WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

**Wednesday, June 14, 2017, 3:30-5:00 p.m.**

Gordon W. Rogers Conference Room  
314 East Champion Street  
Bellingham, Washington

**AGENDA**

PAGES

- A. CALL TO ORDER
- B. PUBLIC COMMENT  
Citizens may speak informally to the Board on matters pertinent to its statutory responsibilities and which are not the subject of a public hearing. *Each speaker is allowed a maximum of three minutes.*
- C. AGENDA APPROVAL (**ACTION**)
- 2-6 D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (**ACTION**)  
Meeting of May 10, 2017
- E. OLD BUSINESS
- F. NEW BUSINESS
- 7 F.1 Resolution No. 2017-01, Reaffirming the Whatcom Region's Support for Reconstruction of the Interstate 5 Exit 274 Interchange – Bob Wilson (**ACTION**)
- 8-9 F.2 Request for Surface Transportation Block Grant Funding to Update the Regional Transportation Demand Model – Hugh Conroy (**ACTION**)
- G. PUBLIC HEARINGS
- 10-11 G.1 Amend the 2017 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program
  - G.1.a Staff Presentation – Lethal Coe
  - G.1.b Open Public Hearing – Citizens may address the Board on the subject of the hearing *for a maximum of three minutes*
  - G.1.c Close Public Hearing (**ACTION**)
  - G.1.d Board Discussion and Vote (**ACTION**)
- 12 G.2 Adopt [Whatcom Mobility 2040](#)
  - G.2.a Staff Presentation – Hugh Conroy
  - G.2.b Open Public Hearing – Citizens may address the Board on the subject of the hearing *for a maximum of three minutes*
  - G.2.c Close Public Hearing (**ACTION**)
  - G.2.d Board Discussion and Vote (**ACTION**)
- H. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Hugh Conroy
- I. BOARD OPEN FORUM
- J. ADJOURN

WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD  
MINUTES – **DRAFT**  
MAY 10, 2017

IN ATTENDANCE:

**MEMBERS** VOTING: Bob Bromley, Sumas (Chairman); Michael McAuley, Port of Bellingham (1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairman); Jack Louws, Whatcom County (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman); Kelli Linville, Bellingham; Terry Bornemann, Bellingham; Harry Robinson, Blaine; Jon Mutchler, Ferndale; Scott Korthuis, Lynden; Tom Jones, Nooksack; Jay Drye, WSDOT; Paul Greenough, WTA; EX-OFFICIO: Luanne Van Werven, 42<sup>nd</sup> District Representative.

**GUESTS** Kaylee Galloway and Camorah King, Office of Rep. Suzan Del Bene; Reema Griffith, Washington State Transportation Commission; Pete Stark, WTA; Kirk Vinish, Lummi Nation; Bryan Yon, Office of Rep. Van Werven; Greg Young, City of Ferndale.

**STAFF** Bob Wilson (Secretary), Ron Cubellis, Hugh Conroy, Lethal Coe, Mary Anderson.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bromley called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. with a quorum present.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public were in attendance.

C. AGENDA APPROVAL

**MOTION:** Mr. Bornemann moved, Mr. Greenough seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

**MOTION PASSED**

D. MINUTES

**MOTION:** Mr. Bornemann moved, Mr. Robinson seconded, to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 8, 2017.

**MOTION PASSED**

E. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

F. NEW BUSINESS

F.1 Adoption of State Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Conroy briefly described the elements of the proposed UPWP. Referring to the section concerning tribal consultation, Mr. Vinish asked if a staff member had been designated to oversee that process, and Mr. Wilson responded that he would assign someone shortly. Mr. Conroy answered other questions posed by the members.

**MOTION:** Mr. Louws moved, Mr. Korthuis seconded, to approve the State Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019 Unified Planning Work Program for the Whatcom Metropolitan Planning Area, as presented.

**MOTION PASSED**

F.2 Request for Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program Funding for the International Mobility and Trade Corridor (IMTC) Program

Mr. Conroy explained that administrative funding for the IMTC Program – i.e., funds used by WCOG to pay staff and the direct and indirect expenses of operating the program – will run out in December 2017. The annual cost to operate the program is about \$240,000. Since last year, Mr. Conroy has been working with the program's principal partners to develop a proposed funding formula, under which IMTC participants in both the U.S. and Canada would contribute. He reminded the Board that WSDOT had recently committed \$100,000 a year to the program for 2018 and 2019, which might influence partners like the B.C. Ministry of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration and Transport Canada to contribute as well. To support IMTC in the short term, and as a further inducement to the aforementioned partners to contribute, WCOG is requesting an STBG allocation of \$40,000 per year for the next three years. Mr. Conroy then answered questions posed by the members.

**MOTION:** Mr. Korthuis moved, Mr. Bornemann seconded, to approve an allocation of \$120,000 of Surface Transportation Block Grant regional funding to the Whatcom Council of Governments for operation of the International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program.

**MOTION PASSED**

F.3 Appointment of Terri Hansen to the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG)

Mr. Louws expressed his enthusiasm for the appointment of Ms. Hansen to CTAG, adding that he has known her for a long time.

**MOTION:** Mr. Louws moved, Mr. Korthuis seconded, to appoint Terri Hansen to the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Group as the designated member with a disability that prevents her from operating a motor vehicle.

**MOTION PASSED**

G. PUBLIC HEARING

Amendment to the 2017 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Coe described proposed TIP Amendment No. 1705:

1. Amend WTA project *Replace Paratransit Mini Buses* by adding \$132,600 of federal 5307 funds to increase the replacement of paratransit buses from four to five.
2. Add WSDOT project *Whatcom Council of Governments IMTC 17-19*. This is a standard-form agreement between WCOG and WSDOT to provide \$200,000 in Coordinated Border Infrastructure planning funds to the International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program for the 2017-2019 biennium.

**PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 4:03 P.M.**

No members of the public were in attendance.

**MOTION:** Mr. Korthuis moved, Mr. Jones seconded, to close the public hearing.

**MOTION PASSED**

**PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 4:03 P.M.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Robinson moved, Mr. Korthuis seconded, to approve Amendment No. 1705 to the Whatcom Council of Governments' 2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

**MOTION PASSED**

H. REPORTS

H.1 Whatcom Mobility 2040

Mr. Conroy informed the Board that the full draft plan is posted on the Whatcom Mobility 2040 website. He also briefly discussed the public information sessions on the plan that were held in April, at the Bellingham Farmers' Market, Kendall, Lynden and Blaine. The four sessions combined attracted about 60 people. He also reminded the members that a special meeting of the Policy Board will be held on June 14<sup>th</sup>, at which they will be asked to act on the proposed plan.

## H.2 Planning Director's Report

Mr. Conroy updated the Board on the following:

- At the last Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) meeting, WSDOT reviewed recently drafted corridor summaries resulting from stakeholder input as part of its Corridor Sketch Initiative.
- WCOG has been in discussions with WSDOT and the Skagit Council of Governments regarding joint pursuit of an origin-destination survey, especially with respect to north-south corridors such as Interstate 5 and State Route 9.
- Recent TTAG discussions have addressed the need for a regional household travel survey update.
- A meeting of the bi-national Transportation Border Working Group was held the previous week in Bellingham. Attendees included officials from Canada and the U.S., including Washington Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar, who gave the keynote address and took the border tour with the other meeting participants.

### I. PRESENTATION: WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION (WSTC) ROAD USER CHARGE PILOT PROGRAM

Ms. Griffith, who serves as executive director of the WSTC, led the Board through an informative PowerPoint presentation on the pilot program, and then answered numerous questions from the members and staff.

### J. WHATCOM MOBILITY 2040 PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public were in attendance.

### K. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Wilson directed the Board to the letter included in the meeting packet informing WCOG that its application for a \$191,000 Mobility Management grant had been approved. Mr. Cubellis then informed the Board that Ms. Anderson had just received notification that WCOG's application to the Washington Traffic Safety Commission for a Pedestrian Safety grant had also been approved.

### L. BOARD OPEN FORUM

Rep. Van Werven mentioned some of the Whatcom County projects that were funded in the 2017-2019 State Transportation Budget that was adopted by the Legislature in April.

M. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

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Robert J. Bromley  
Chairman

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Robert H. Wilson, AICP  
Secretary

DRAFT



**WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD  
RESOLUTION NO. 2017-01**

**REAFFIRMING THE WHATCOM REGION’S SUPPORT FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF THE  
INTERSTATE 5 EXIT 274 INTERCHANGE**

**WHEREAS**, the Whatcom Council of Governments was designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the federally-delineated urbanized area of Whatcom County by Governor John Spellman in 1982, and

**WHEREAS**, the Whatcom Council of Governments was designated the Regional Transportation Planning Organization for all of Whatcom County following the passage of the Washington State Growth Management Act of 1990, and

**WHEREAS**, the Whatcom Council of Governments annually identifies unfunded transportation projects that will improve mobility in the Whatcom region, and then compiles a list of funding requests for those projects for the consideration of the State Legislature, and

**WHEREAS**, included on that list in September 2016 was a request for \$12.1-million in Transportation Budget funding for the reconstruction of the Interstate 5 Exit 274 interchange in the City of Blaine, which was approved by both houses of the State Legislature during its 2017 regular session, and

**WHEREAS**, on May 16, 2017, the Governor vetoed Section 306(17) of Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5096, “An Act Relating to Transportation Funding and Appropriations,” which authorized the funding for the subject project.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED** by the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board that it reaffirms the Whatcom region’s strong support for the reconstruction of the Interstate 5 Exit 274 interchange, which will significantly improve access to the Pacific Highway port-of-entry on the Canadian border for commercial vehicles and passenger cars, improve safety for all travelers on Interstate 5, and spur much-needed economic development in the City of Blaine.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Whatcom Council of Governments is committed to working with the Governor’s Office, the State Legislature and the Department of Transportation to ensure that this critically important project is funded and constructed as expeditiously as possible.

Adopted this Fourteenth day of June, 2017, in the City of Bellingham, Washington, a quorum being present.

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Robert Bromley, Chairman

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Robert H. Wilson, Executive Director



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## Memo

**To:** Whatcom MPO/RTPO Transportation Policy Board (WTPB)  
**Date:** June 7, 2017  
**From:** Hugh Conroy, Director of Planning *HC*  
**Subject:** The regional transportation model, cyclical costs, and funding allocation request

### WCOG’s regional transportation data products

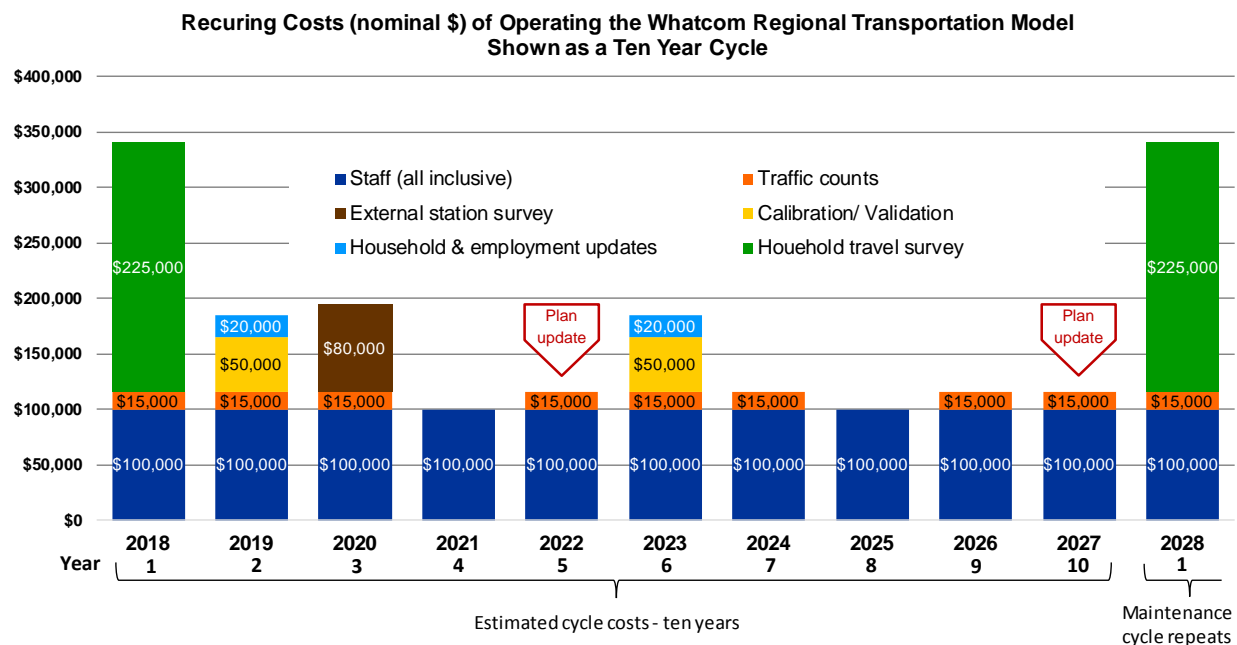
In carrying out its regional transportation planning program, supporting local jurisdictions’ planning activities, and meeting state and federal requirements, WCOG undertakes several data and analysis activities. These include traffic counts, geographic information systems (GIS) applications, data collection on multi-modal trade and travel trip characteristics, processing and application of demographic and land-use data, and operation of our region’s transportation demand model.

### Regional transportation demand model background

WCOG first acquired a four-step, trip-based transportation demand model in 2004. Since then, the model has received requisite updates to the underlying road network, traffic counts, regional household travel survey inputs, demographic factors, and calibration of trip assignment functions. The last 13 years have given WCOG a refined sense of the frequency and scale of the recurring costs of operating the model. Some of these costs (e.g. traffic counts, household and employment updates, road network updates) are relatively modest and fit within WCOG’s annual PL funds budget. Other costs (e.g. a periodic household travel survey, external station counts, and calibration by a consultant) are larger and have previously been paid for by grant funds available at the time (e.g. the Whatcom/Skagit/Island household travel survey conducted in 2008).

### The next model update - and recurring costs

Having recently used the model for key applications - to inform both county-wide and local jurisdiction GMA comprehensive plan updates (2016) and the system forecasts for *Whatcom Mobility 2040*, WCOG is needing to start the update process now so that the model is ready for the next round of plan updates starting in 2022. A sequence of model update and maintenance activities required to meet this timeline (and continue with intermediate updates) is shown with estimated costs in the table below.





The estimated non-staff model maintenance costs over the ten-year cycle are \$565,000 -- \$56,500 per year. While that amount seems possible to budget for on an annual basis, the FHWA PL funds that WCOG receives to support our work program is based on reimbursement so cannot be saved up in advance to cover known periodic cost spikes like a household survey.

### **Near term needs & near term funding options**

To keep the model on schedule for an update ready for use in 2022, WCOG needs to commence with a household travel survey in 2018 and a calibration process and land-use update in 2019-2020. The estimated costs of these three near term activities is \$295,000.

These costs are eligible for Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds. WCOG staff believes that preserving the value of previous large investments in the model and keeping it ready for known future applications (as well as numerous expected other applications with regional partners) is a priority activity. While WCOG believes that an allocation of regional STBG funds for this purpose is necessary for the reasons discussed above, it is also likely, that, this year, WCOG will benefit from identifying ready-to-go projects to offset funding sanctions resulting from missing our federal funding obligation authority (OA) target in consecutive years. Even if WCOG jurisdictions are able to obligate a sufficient amount of funds to meet our 2017 OA target, WCOG believes an allocation of \$255,175 (near term costs less required non-federal match) is critical to continuing our full planning work program, and would not impact projects already selected by the policy board for regional STBG funding.

### **Requested motion**

“Approve allocation of \$255,175 of regional STBG funds for completion of a household travel survey and other near term activities to update the regional transportation model.”



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## MEMORANDUM

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board  
From: Lethal Coe, Senior Planner  
Date: June 7, 2017  
Subject: WCOG 2017 TIP Amendments and Administrative Modifications

**Amendment #4 (1706)** of the 2017 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes the following changes:

1. Add WCOG project *IMTC Performance Measures Improvements* to develop border-related performance measures that will apply to operational improvements at regional border crossings. The project will use **\$80,000**, or other amount awarded, from Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Strategic Highway Research Program II (SHRP2) implementation program.
2. Add WCOG project *Regional Transportation Model Update* to update the regional travel demand model used to develop regional and local transportation planning forecasts. Project includes: household travel survey, base year socio-demographics update, and calibration and validation of travel model. The project will use **\$255,175** in federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program funds with a total estimated cost of **\$295,000**. Timeline expected for tasks completion is 3 years.

Formal TIP Amendments require review and resolution from the Policy Board to amend the current TIP and make federal funding accessible.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Approve Amendment #4 for the Whatcom Council of Governments 2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

Whatcom Council of Governments  
2017 Transportation Improvement Program

**Amendment #4 (1706) Table**

#	Agency	Project Title	Amended Action	Added Funds \$	Total Costs \$	Fed Source
1	WCOG	IMTC Performance Measures Improvements	Add new project	80,000 (or other)	80,000	Discretionary
2	WCOG	Regional Transportation Model Update	Add new project	295,000	295,000	STBG

**Recent Non-Amendment TIP Activities**

Administrative Modifications are less substantial project changes than amendments and are administered by WCOG staff.

**Administrative Modification: 1706**

Agency	Project	Modification Administered	Total Costs	Federal Source
WSDOT	I-5/Custer SB SRA – Sewer Line Replacement – NWR	Slight reduction of Construction phase	1,446,714	NHPP



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## Memo

**To:** Whatcom MPO/RTPO Transportation Policy Board (WTPB)  
**Date:** June 7, 2017  
**From:** Hugh Conroy, Director of Planning *HC*  
**Subject:** 2017 update to the regional and metropolitan long-range transportation plan – consideration of draft for adoption. .

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### Intro

The WCOG MPO and RTPO is responsible under federal and state law for updating and approving a long-range (20-year) regional (RTPO) and metropolitan (MPO) transportation plan every five years. An update to WCOG’s current 2012 plan is due by June 30, 2017. As discussed at previous Policy Board meetings, WCOG staff, with input from our regional partners, TTAG, CTAG, and other public feedback, has completed a draft of *Whatcom Mobility 2040*.

### **Whatcom Mobility 2040 highlights**

*Whatcom Mobility 2040* presents an updated inventory of our regionally significant transportation system, the demands currently placed on that system, and modeled estimates of how forecasted changes in population and employment will affect mobility on our regional road network. Along with this updated assessment, *Whatcom Mobility 2040* presents our region’s goals for our transportation system and our chosen strategies to accomplish those goals – projects, programs, policies, etc. Lastly, the plan reviews our region’s ability to pay for the next 20 years of planned investments in the regional transportation system – capacity increases, operations, system preservation, maintenance, demand management, etc.

### **A web-based product**

While *Whatcom Mobility 2040* is available as a traditional document, the media for the 2017 update is WCOG’s dedicated plan website, [whatcommobility.org](http://whatcommobility.org) (link e-mailed to you on June 2). While availing the core text and graphics of the plan, the website allows WCOG to include multiple other sources of information and visualizations pertinent to the plan and scalable to different readers’ interests – dynamic project data tables in Tableau® and story maps and multi-layer GIS maps on the Esri® platform.

We look forward to any continued feedback on the document as well as the format and added contents on the website.

### **Requested motion**

<p>“Adopt <i>Whatcom Mobility 2040</i>, as presented, as the updated regional and metropolitan long-range transportation plan for the Whatcom Planning Area.”</p>
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Attachment.