



CTAG

citizens' transportation advisory group

It matters how we get there

Meeting Summary
October 10, 2017

Attendees:

Bob Hendricks	Bellingham / WTA Gold Card holder
Bruce Prior	Blaine Public Works Advisory Committee
Chris Comeau	City of Bellingham Public Works
Elizabeth Sjostrom	WSDOT
Hugh Conroy	WCOG
Izaak Post	Happy Valley Neighborhood (Bellingham)
Jaymes McClain	WCOG
Jillian Trinkaus	WWU / Columbia Neighborhood (Bellingham)
Mathew Santos	Bellingham Technical College
Maureen McCarthy	WTA
Myron Wlaznak	Silver Beach Neighborhood (Bellingham)
Nathan Zylstra	Lynden
Stoney Bird	York Neighborhood (Bellingham)
Terry Terry	Lummi Island

Citizens' Transportation Advisory Group

City of Bellingham's Lakeway Drive Bikeway Study – Chris Comeau

Chris Comeau, a transportation planner for the City of Bellingham, presented to the group findings from the city's Lakeway Drive Bikeway study. Mr. Comeau encouraged CTAG members to visit the city's website, cob.org, and search "Lakeway" to find more resources on the city's efforts to improve Lakeway Drive. Under the maps section of the website, users can find the city's Bike Route Map, which displays bicycle-friendly routes on roadways and trails throughout the city.

Mr. Comeau explained that Bellingham strives to provide a multimodal transportation system for all while prioritizing and improving safety for the most vulnerable users. Bicycling is one the main modal components that the City identifies in its multimodal transportation system in addition to Pedestrians, WTA Transit, Vehicles and Freight, and Multiuse Trails. By improving bicycle safety and route options, the City is hoping to tap into the large "interested but concerned [about transportation by bicycle]" group of transportation users.



The City of Bellingham started a Bike Network Analysis in 2013, which looked at bicycling destinations, connectivity, traffic volumes and speeds, terrain, housing and employment locations, and transit service corridors. In the City's Bicycle Master Plan, they have identified several bike network links that need further study, one of the most prominent being Lakeway Drive. Issues on such a complex bike network link include heavy traffic volumes, intersections, and limited space for riders. The Lakeway Drive Bikeway Study is the second highest prioritized project in the Bicycle Master Plan.

The Lakeway Drive Bikeway Study brings together a project team of local transportation agencies and a stakeholder group of neighborhood associations, property owners, businesses, and the Bellingham School District. In 2016, Bellingham's Public Works department organized outreach meetings with stakeholder agencies and businesses and neighborhood meetings in the Whatcom Falls, York, and Puget neighborhoods. A public open house was organized in September 2016 at Carl Cozier Elementary School.

Chris Comeau reviewed the bicycle safety improvements the City of Bellingham will be implementing in 2018 thanks to a \$1.25MM Pedestrian-Bicycle Safety grant from the Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]. Improvements that intersect the Lakeway Drive study area include three new HAWK signals at the intersections of Lakeway Drive/Grant Street, Lakeway Drive/Orleans Street, and Lakeway Drive/Undine Street.

Mr. Comeau reviewed the seven segments (A-G) of the Lakeway Drive Bikeway Study and the potential improvements and improvement-costs for each segment. He also presented the City's short-, mid-, and long-term objectives for bicycle infrastructure on the Lakeway Drive corridor:

Short-term (2017 thru 2019)

- 1.) 2017 - Uphill climbing lane on Woburn (Iowa to Lakeway)
- 2.) 2017 - Green bike box on north leg at Woburn/Lakeway
- 3.) 2018 – HAWK signals at three locations on Lakeway Drive
[Lakeway/Undine; Lakeway/Orleans; Lakeway/Grant]
- 4.) Marked EB/WB bike lanes from Undine HAWK to Puget bike lanes
 - Green bike box on north leg at Puget/Lakeway;
 - Bike Blvd thru Civic Field parking lot (Puget-Orleans) & Potter St
- 5.) 2018 – WSDOT Ped-Bike Safety grant application for Lakeway protected bike lane from Undine HAWK to Old Lakeway Bike Blvd

Mid-term (2020 thru 2025)

- 6.) 2020 – *If* protected bike lane funded with WSDOT grant, *then*
 - Old Lakeway Bike Blvd (Yew-Lakeway) connect to Woburn/Lakeway
- 7.) Work with BSD and Parks to re-organize Orleans-Lincoln block
 - Consider timing of Safe Route to School grant with reconstruction of Carl Cozier Elementary School (2024-2025)

Long-term (2025 and beyond)

- 8.) Further Study Needed on Lakeway corridor from Lincoln to Ellis



In the short term, Mr. Comeau explained that they would like to improve bicycle routing on Potter Street, Lakeway Drive, and Woburn Street to better connect to existing bicycle lanes on Lincoln Street, Puget Street, and Fraser Street.

Whatcom Transportation Authority Community Advisory Panel

WTA Updates

Route 65

Maureen McCarthy reported that the Whatcom Transportation Authority's [WTA] Route 65 began service in late September. The new route, funded by a two year grant from WSDOT, is a pilot east-west connector, connecting the communities of Nooksack, Everson, Lynden, Birch Bay, and Ferndale without stopping in Bellingham.

Other Updates

Ms. McCarthy said that WTA did not receive the grant they applied for to acquire electric buses.

How-to-ride videos

WTA recently shot new how-to videos this past summer for riding the bus. The videos cover fare payment, seating etiquette, bike storage, stroller storage, and handicap assistance.

Tour of WTA headquarters

Continuing a discussion from the last CTAG meeting, Ms. McCarthy said she would still like to schedule a tour of the WTA corporate office. There was discussion about planning the tour for 2018 as a CTAG meeting separate from the normal Whatcom Transportation Policy Board schedule.

Review of 2018 budget planning components

Shonda Shipman reviewed the WTA's 2018 draft budget. Based on cash receipts from the last year, they are forecasting an 8 percent increase in sales tax in 2018, increasing the WTA budget. There is no sunset for WTA's sales tax levy. WTA has a number of purposed operating initiatives for 2018, such as:

- Employee Maintenance Center
- Fuel for 2017 service expansions and R99
- Enhance marketing services
- Increase software maintenance
- Increase vehicle maintenance
- PR/HRIS consultant
- LED Headlights on Fixed Route vehicles
- Transit Planning Software



- Equipment for remodeled Dispatch workspace
- 4 Additional positions

Ms. Shipman also reviewed WTA's proposed capital initiatives for 2018, which include:

- Smart Bus (computer aided dispatch, vehicle locators, wifi on buses, automated stop announcements, etc.)
- Improve Midway Lot
- Replace 3 fixed route buses
- Convert new Paratransit vehicles to propane
- Paratransit Mobile Data Terminal Replacement
- Replace PR/HRIS system
- Facility Video Expansion
- Facility Video System Storage

Demonstration of *Remix*, a trip planning software

Rick Nicholson explained that WTA is looking to internally conduct more long-term planning. They are looking at software that can test different bus service scenarios and how the simulated effects might impact the transportation network, different demographics in the population, operational costs, and other factors. Mr. Nicholson showed a product video for *Remix*, a transit planning software where such analyses are possible. WTA is writing a request for proposals [RFP] for a transit planning software. They hope to acquire the software by the end of the year and use it immediately in 2018.

Discussion of Community Advisory Panel charter

Maureen McCarthy reviewed the draft Community Advisory Panel [CAP] charter with the group. Bob Hendricks suggested inviting an international student to provide an outside perspective on transit in our region. Julian Trinkaus suggested that there be a clarification in the charter that CAP meetings are open to the public.

Discussion of proposed 2-year planning cycle

Rick Nicholson reviewed WTA's newly proposed 2-year service planning cycle. The 2-year outlook would be perpetual, and alongside the short-term service planning elements are long-range planning elements that will affect operations beyond 2 years.

Stoney Bird suggested having a larger joint-meeting with community groups similar to WTA's CAP from nearby regions like Skagit, San Juan, and Island Counties. There was discussion on coordinating a transit-oriented meeting with the North Sound Connecting Communities Program, or "Farmhouse Gang", which brings together transportation agencies from Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island, and San Juan Counties multiple times a year to discuss regional transportation challenges.