



TTAG July 28, 2016 Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Jaymes McClain	Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]
Lethal Coe	WCOG
Gary Davis	Whatcom County
Joe Rutan	Whatcom County
Chad Schulhauser	City of Bellingham
Ron Cubellis	WCOG
Kevin Rentz	City of Ferndale
Mary Anderson	WCOG
Becky Kelly	Whatcom Transportation Authority [WTA]
Tom Stacey	Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]

Current event updates

Joe Rutan reported that Whatcom County will be starting construction soon on a crosswalk on Lakeway Dr at Parkstone Ln. They are also laying down chip seal in the northeast part of the county. He said they are hopeful that they can get the Birch Bay berm project out to bid this fall – they are currently in negotiations with property owners.

Kevin Rentz said that Washington St in Ferndale is being worked on right now. Crews were dealing with unforeseen issues with the utility lines, and so that project is delayed slightly. The Washington St section from Vista Dr to Main St project is proceeding forward. The Portal Way overlay plan, from Enterprise Rd to Grandview Rd, is wrapping up and the project is about to go out to bid, Mr. Rentz said. The central city water project has some roads under construction, he added.

Becky Kelly informed the group that the Whatcom Transportation Authority is in the middle of looking at their service plan for their strategic plan update. They have held committee meetings and are now incorporating input from the meetings into the final plan, which they will ask their board to hold a public hearing for at the end of September. They hope to implement their strategic plan in March.

Tom Stacey gave an update for the Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]. Crews are paving on I-5 to the south of Bellingham through August. There is also paving occurring from the Nooksack bridge to Blaine, with the Slater Rd interchange paving already completed. Mr. Stacey said that WSDOT is working on a commercial truck parking plan, with the study going through the end of year. They are assessing where future investments may be needed. They previously did a survey of truck drivers in April. Mr. Stacey also talked about the new federal authorization act (the FAST Act) that has



opportunities for funding freight projects. The FAST lane grant program avails \$800-\$900MM nationwide, though the barriers for qualifying are steep, he said.

Jaymes McClain said that staff WCOG have wrapped up the data collection portion of the International Mobility and Trade Corridor program [IMTC] border freight operations study [BFO]. The project is co-managed by the Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI]. Student research assistants from Western Washington University [WWU] spent four weeks total at the three commercial truck crossings in the Cascade Gateway – Pacific Highway, Lynden-Aldergrove, and Sumas-Abbotsford-Huntingdon. They recorded inspection times, border wait times, vehicle types, commodity information, routing information, among other data. Mr. McClain said that they are now cleaning the data of errors and organizing the database, after which they will conduct analyses and write a report. Tom Stacey said there is interest in the Sumas data, as there have been discussions at WSDOT concerning heavy commercial trucks using Highway 9 to pass the weigh stations on I-5.

Gary Davis told the group that Whatcom County's comprehensive plan was introduced Tuesday and published for the public to view. The plan will be up for adoption in a couple weeks. There will be a public hearing held on the proposed date of adoption.

Ron Cubellis updated the group on the obligation status of our MPO region. He said that we will not meet the \$3MM target by the July 31st deadline, but the Washington State as a whole will meet its target. September 30th (the end of the federal fiscal year) is the actual date for MPOs to meet obligation targets, so there are still a couple months, Mr. Cubellis said. They are about \$1.5MM behind of the \$3MM target. He added that if the paperwork for the Riverview Rd project in Lynden goes through, the shortage will be cut to about \$870k. The paperwork for Bellingham's Woodstock Way project is set to be in by September, and Chad Schulhauser said that Bellingham's Mahogany St project will most likely obligate \$200k in the next three weeks. Mr. Cubellis reminded the group that if they are short of the target, they potentially could lose money for the next call for projects, which hasn't happened before, he said.

Lethal Coe said that he is constructing WCOG's 2017 transportation improvement program [TIP].

Mary Anderson informed the group that WCOG, Whatcom County, and WSDOT are working together on the Kendall-Columbia Valley trail with the Kendall-Columbia Valley Citizens Planning Association [KCVCPA]. The non-profit group was awarded \$73k in funding for preliminary engineering. WCOG is helping send out a request for quotation [RFQ].



Human Services Transportation Plan - call for projects and changes in the project scoring process

Mary Anderson said there is new grant funding coming from WSDOT for human services transportation projects. To qualify for the grant funding, projects must be in WCOG's Employment Access and Coordinated Human Services [EACH] plan. WCOG, as the state-designated regional transportation planning organization [RTPO], must rank the projects. The projects will then go on to WCOG's board and then to WSDOT.

Mary Anderson invited planning staff from each jurisdiction to attend a stakeholder meeting as technical support. Several individuals in the public who would be served by these grants (those who do not drive due to age, income, or disability, as described in the EACH plan) have to be in attendance. She handed out a memo that included the meeting dates. The Citizens' Transportation Advisory Group [CTAG] will participate in the scoring process. WTA will help in finding individuals who would be served by the projects.

Draft sections of Whatcom Mobility 2040 (metropolitan & regional transportation plan) - for posting on WCOG website for broader review and feedback

Lethal Coe pointed out that WCOG's regional transportation plan (Whatcom Mobility 2040) now has a page on the WCOG website. He also handed out draft sections of the plan covering regional goals, the regionally significant system, and level-of-service [LOS] and performance measures.

Regional Goals

Mr. Coe said that the regional goals section is in draft form right now, and can change as the plan develops. Currently the goals are directly extracted from jurisdiction comprehensive plans and subsequently ranked. So far only Lynden's goals are missing from the aggregation of local goals presented in the section.

Regionally significant system

Lethal Coe reminded the group of the effort to expand the regionally significant system to include more than just representing car travel. There are 35 classifications as it now stands, which includes multiple modes, facilities, and even programs (such as Target Zero and travel demand management [TDM] programs).

Level of service & performance measures

At the regional level, LOS is much higher clip, Mr. Coe said, and in the plan strict measurements of the whole region are not emphasized. This section details WCOG's role in coordinating LOS frameworks and



developing transportation system performance measures per the Growth Management Act [GMA] and the federal authorization acts (MAP-21 and the FAST Act).

Discussion on section drafts will continue into next meeting.

Status of RTPO certification review of comprehensive plan transportation elements

Hugh Conroy has worked one-on-one with jurisdictions on the certification process, so a summary overview of all meetings may not be necessary, Lethal Coe said, unless jurisdictions would like a summary. The group agreed that as long as there are no problems, that should be fine.

Anticipated schedule for next STBG (formerly STP) call for projects

Lethal Coe said that in the new federal authorization act, the Surface Transportation Program [STP] changed names to the Surface Transportation Block Grant program [STBG]. The program is essentially the same as before, he said. Mr. Coe continued that he will have a schedule out for next year's call for projects. STBG and its Transportation Alternatives set-aside will be for years 2021 and 2022. There will be about \$5.5MM in available funding for STBG and \$500k for Transportation Alternatives.