



Meeting of the Board of the Whatcom Council of Governments

Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 3:30 p.m.

Gordon W. Rogers Conference Room

314 East Champion Street, Bellingham, Washington

Join using **Zoom** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88129681123>

Or phone: (253) 215-8782

Page(s)

Agenda

- 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. Additions to the Agenda (if any)**
- D. Consent Agenda***
 - 2-3 1. Minutes of the meeting of October 11, 2023
 - 4-6 2. October and November 2023 claims
 - 7 3. Proposed 2024 meeting calendar
- E. Budget Report**
8 Budget report for the period ending October 31, 2023
- F. Old Business (if any)**
9-14 Draft 2024 Legislative Priorities - Hugh Conroy*
- G. New Business**
 - 15-18 1. Final draft 2024 WCOG budget - Ron Cubellis and Hugh Conroy*
 - 19 2. Other new business (if any)
 - i) Discussion and possible action regarding WCOG support for WA RTPOs' legislative request for increased, state-wide funding*
- H. Director's Report - Hugh Conroy**
- I. Correspondence (if any)**
- J. Board Open Forum**
- K. Adjourn**

* Action item

DRAFT Whatcom Council of Governments
Board Minutes
October 11, 2023

In Attendance (In person or via Zoom):

Members *Voting:* **Bellingham:** Michael Lilliquist (Vice-Chair), Edwin “Skip” Williams;
Blaine: Richard May; **Ferndale:** Greg Hansen (Secretary/Treasurer); **Lake
Whatcom Water & Sewer District:** Jeff Knakal; **Lynden:** Scott Korthuis
(Chair); **Nooksack:** Kevin Hester; **Port of Bellingham:** Bobby Briscoe; **Sumas:**
Bruce Bosch.
Ex Officio: None

Guests Tom McBride

Staff Ron Cubellis, Hugh Conroy, Melissa Fanucci

A. **Call to Order**

Mr. Conroy determined that a quorum was present, and Chairman Korthuis called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

B. **Public Comment**

None

C. **Agenda Additions**

None

D. **Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda included the minutes of the meeting of May 31, 2023 and May-September 2023 claims.

Mr. May moved to approve, seconded by Mr. Lilliquist - **Approved as presented by unanimous consent.**

E. **Old Business**

None

F. **New Business**

1. Draft 2024 Budget

Mr. Conroy and Mr. Cubellis presented the draft 2024 budget. Mr. Cubellis answered a question about the formula for dues increases.

2. Approval to enter a contract with Transpo Group

Mr. Conroy presented the project background, the RFP process, and selection of Transpo Group to complete the Advanced Border Information System (ABIS) project. Mr. Williams moved to approve entering into the contract with Transpo, seconded by Mr. May. **Motion passed.**

3. Draft 2024 legislative transportation priorities

Mr. Conroy introduced a first draft of the list of projects and project-descriptions that the Council Board could consider for submission to our state legislative delegation for funding requests during the 2024 legislative session.

Mr. Korthuis reminded the board of the current organization of the list which identifies a top priority for the City of Bellingham, for Whatcom County, and the small cities collectively. Other projects are listed after these top-three priorities.

Mr. McBride discussed how there is a lower potential for new project funding to be identified in a short-session / supplemental budget year but still important to keep our priorities in front of the delegation.

Mr. Conroy asked if funding allocation changes could be more feasible in the short session, e.g., shifting funds towards preservation or changing the funding year of programmed projects. Mr. McBride noted that these types of issues have been coming up – especially as individual project costs have increased due to inflation or supply-chain delays.

I. **Director’s Report**

No items to report

J. **Correspondence**

None

K. **Board Open Forum**

No discussion or announcements

L. **Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

Greg Hansen
Secretary-Treasurer

Hugh Conroy
Director

Approved December 13, 2023

Whatcom Council of Governments
CLAIMS LISTING
October through November 2023

<u>Date</u>	<u>Num</u>	<u>Source Name</u>	<u>Memo</u>	<u>Paid Amount</u>
Oct - Nov 23				
10/01/2023	LC 091423	WA St Assn of Boundary Review Boards	Professional Development	190.00
10/01/2023	HC 091123	Whole Foods	Supplies	82.42
10/01/2023	HC 091223	The Bagelry	Supplies	39.12
10/01/2023	HC 091123	Whole Foods	Supplies	80.72
10/01/2023	HC 092223	Bellair Airporter Shuttle	Travel	101.00
10/01/2023	MF 090123	Mailgun Technologies	Office Equipment & Software	9.41
10/01/2023	MF 090223	Amazon Web Services	Communication Services	1,220.91
10/01/2023	MF 090323	Bellair Airporter Shuttle	Travel	101.00
10/01/2023	MF 090423	Jivirus Technologies	Communication Services	290.00
10/01/2023	MF 090823	GAPPS Experts Inc.	Communication Services	287.04
10/01/2023	MF 090723	Mailmeteor	Communication Services	48.07
10/01/2023	MF 090823	DigiThought	Office Equipment & Software	6.00
10/01/2023	MF 090823	DigiThought	Communication Services	10.00
10/01/2023	MF 091323	Mailmeteor	Communication Services	47.28
10/01/2023	MF 092323	Homewood Suites	Travel	893.97
10/01/2023	MG 083123	McClatchy Company LLC	Communication Services	274.68
10/01/2023	MG 091523	Safe Routes Partnership	Professional Development	99.00
10/01/2023	LB 091523	Flying J Pilot	Travel	64.28
10/01/2023	LB 091523	City of Eugene, OR	Travel	1.50
10/01/2023	LB 091823	ARCO	Travel	73.09
10/01/2023	EC 090823	Safe Routes Partnership	Professional Development	99.00
10/01/2023	EC 091623	Diamond Parking	Travel	6.90
10/01/2023	EC 091723	Diamond Parking	Travel	6.90
10/01/2023	EC 091823	Starvin Sam's	Travel	15.46
10/01/2023	EC 091823	Enterprise Rental	Travel	806.40
10/01/2023	JM 092123	Pendragon Software Corporation	Office Equipment & Software	40.00
10/01/2023	RC 082623	Right Networks LLC	Office Equipment & Software	174.08
10/01/2023	RC 090123	Google LLC	Communication Services	131.39
10/01/2023	RC 090123	Google LLC	Communication Services	76.30
10/01/2023	RC 090223	Intuit Inc.	Office Equipment & Software	43.52
10/01/2023	RC 090523	Comcast Corporation	Communication Services	222.44
10/01/2023	RC 090623	Amazon.com, Inc.	Supplies	107.37
10/01/2023	RC 090723	Amazon.com, Inc.	Supplies	106.63
10/01/2023	RC 090723	Heroku Inc.	Communication Services	136.01
10/01/2023	RC 090823	CenturyLink	Communication Services	73.95
10/01/2023	RC 091223	Comcast Corporation	Communication Services	225.08
10/01/2023	RC 091423	Monster Scooter Parts	Supplies	133.99
10/01/2023	RC 091523	Sanitary Service Corporation	Utilities	93.09
10/01/2023	RC 091823	Intermedia.net Inc	Communication Services	344.32
10/01/2023	RC 092323	Federal Express	Communication Services	53.38
10/10/2023	ACH	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	4,190.33
10/10/2023	ACH	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	6,278.91
10/10/2023	3636	Bruce's Janitor Service	Janitorial	625.00
10/10/2023	3637	Cascade Natural Gas	Utilities	17.84
10/10/2023	3638	CenturyLink	Communications	65.00
10/10/2023	3639	Champion Building LLC	Office Lease	5,864.31
10/10/2023	3640	McBride Public Affairs LLC	Professional Services	4,070.00
10/10/2023	3641	McClatchy Company LLC	Public Hearing Notices	106.15
10/10/2023	3642	Puget Sound Energy	Utilities	247.37
10/10/2023	3643	Saturna Capital Corporation	Incentives	50.00
10/10/2023	3644	US Bank	Purchase Cards	6,815.70
10/10/2023	EFT	WCOG Petty Cash	Petty Cash Refill	250.00
10/10/2023	1157	Burke, Kevin	Incentives	1,000.00
10/11/2023	ACH	Melissa Fanucci	Expense Reimbursement	526.42
10/11/2023	ACH	Lethal Coe III	Expense Reimbursement	3,487.18
10/11/2023	ACH	Hugh Conroy	Expense Reimbursement	150.00
10/11/2023	ACH	Michelle Grandy	Expense Reimbursement	102.04
10/11/2023	ACH	L. Blanche Bybee	Employee Reimbursement	169.00
10/11/2023	EFT	Arcadis Professional Services Inc.	Professional Services	826.00
10/17/2023	1158	Alvarenga Magana, Jose	Incentives	250.00
10/18/2023	eft	WA Dept of L&I	Payroll Taxes	815.97
10/18/2023	eft	WA Dept of Employment Security	Payroll Taxes	1,172.82
10/18/2023	eft	WA Dept of Employment Security	Payroll Taxes	662.94
10/26/2023		QuickBooks Payroll Service	Fee for 1 direct deposit(s) at \$1.75 each	1.75
10/26/2023		QuickBooks Payroll Service	Sales Tax	0.15
10/26/2023	eft	HSA Bank	HSA Fees	11.25

Whatcom Council of Governments
CLAIMS LISTING
October through November 2023

Date	Num	Source Name	Memo	Paid Amount
10/26/2023	eft	Arcadis Professional Services Inc.	Miscellaneous Expenses	826.00
10/27/2023	ACH	Arcadis Professional Services Inc.	VOID: Direct Deposit	0.00
10/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	8,948.00
10/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	1,023.41
10/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	1,023.41
10/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	0.00
10/30/2023		QuickBooks Payroll Service	Payroll	48,808.87
10/31/2023	eft	AFLAC	Employee Paid Coverage	129.56
10/31/2023	eft	Empower Retirement	Retirement	90.00
10/31/2023	eft	Empower Retirement	Retirement	318.03
10/31/2023	eft	Empower Retirement	Retirement	300.00
10/31/2023	eft	HSA Bank	HSA Fees	1,650.00
10/31/2023	eft	HSA Bank	HSA Fees	821.00
10/31/2023	eft	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	4,190.33
10/31/2023	eft	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	6,278.91
10/31/2023	eft	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	1,871.49
10/31/2023	eft	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	3,852.15
10/31/2023	eft	AWC via Vimly	Benefits	8,392.61
10/31/2023	eft	AWC via Vimly	Benefits	62.85
11/01/2023	HC 092923	Uber Technologies Inc.	Travel	16.49
11/01/2023	HC 092923	Uber Technologies Inc.	Travel	36.95
11/01/2023	HC 092923	Uber Technologies Inc.	Travel	7.39
11/01/2023	HC 092923	Hilton Hotels & Resorts	Travel	388.32
11/01/2023	MF 092623	406 Rides	Travel	49.20
11/01/2023	MF 100223	Mailgun Technologies	Communication Services	9.39
11/01/2023	MF 092923	Hilton Hotels & Resorts	Travel	388.32
11/01/2023	MF 100323	Amazon Web Services	Communication Services	1,305.21
11/01/2023	MF 101023	Port of Bellingham (vendor)	Supplies	287.50
11/01/2023	MF 101723	Amazon.com, Inc.	Supplies	23.93
11/01/2023	MF 101723	Amazon.com, Inc.	Supplies	59.24
11/01/2023	MF 102023	Amazon.com, Inc.	Supplies	55.00
11/01/2023	MF 102023	Amazon.com, Inc.	Supplies	15.98
11/01/2023	MF 102423	The Bagelry	Supplies	85.52
11/01/2023	MG 100123	Skamania Lodge	Travel	166.36
11/01/2023	MG 100123	Skamania Lodge	Travel	165.98
11/01/2023	MG 100123	Skamania Lodge	Travel	165.98
11/01/2023	MG 100123	Skamania Lodge	Travel	165.98
11/01/2023	MG 100323	Starvin Sam's	Travel	49.81
11/01/2023	MG 093023	Fountain Rental & Leasing	Travel	197.42
11/01/2023	MG 101823	META (Facebook) Inc.	Communication Services	25.00
11/01/2023	LB 092923	Haggen	Supplies	13.05
11/01/2023	LB 100323	Chevron	Travel	59.32
11/01/2023	JM 101823	ESRI Inc.	Office Equipment & Software	522.24
11/01/2023	JM 102023	Pendragon Software Corporation	Office Equipment & Software	40.00
11/01/2023	RC 092623	Right Networks LLC	Office Equipment & Software	174.08
11/01/2023	HC 092923	Amazon.com, Inc.	Supplies	61.15
11/01/2023	RC 100123	Google LLC	Communication Services	169.73
11/01/2023	RC 100223	Zoom.us	Office Equipment & Software	761.39
11/01/2023	RC 100223	Intuit Inc.	Office Equipment & Software	43.52
11/01/2023	RC 100923	Heroku Inc.	Communication Services	136.01
11/01/2023	RC 101623	Intermedia.net Inc	Communication Services	344.79
11/01/2023	RC 101623	Sanitary Service Corporation	Utilities	95.23
11/01/2023	RC 101723	T-Mobile US, Inc.	Communication Services	20.00
11/01/2023	RC 102023	CenturyLink	Communication Services	91.95
11/01/2023	RC 102023	Recycling & Disposal Services Inc.	Utilities	77.28
11/09/2023	3645	Applied Digital Imaging	Printing	740.93
11/09/2023	3646	Bruce's Janitor Service	Janitorial	625.00
11/09/2023	3647	Cascade Natural Gas	Utilities	95.99
11/09/2023	3648	CenturyLink	Communications	65.00
11/09/2023	3649	Champion Building LLC	Office Lease	5,864.31
11/09/2023	3650	McBride Public Affairs LLC	Professional Services	4,070.00
11/09/2023	3651	Puget Sound Energy	Utilities	182.31
11/09/2023	3652	US Bank	Purchase Cards	6,274.71
11/09/2023	3653	Arcadis Professional Services Inc.	Professional Services	1,652.00
11/09/2023	EFT	WCOG Petty Cash	Petty Cash Refill	1,250.00
11/13/2023	ACH	L. Blanche Bybee	Employee Reimbursement	52.00
11/13/2023	ACH	Ron Cubellis	Expense Reimbursement	110.04

Whatcom Council of Governments
CLAIMS LISTING
 October through November 2023

<u>Date</u>	<u>Num</u>	<u>Source Name</u>	<u>Memo</u>	<u>Paid Amount</u>
11/13/2023	ACH	Jaymes McClain	Expense Reimbursement	88.06
11/13/2023	ACH	Elizabeth Chenault	Employee Reimbursement	221.00
11/14/2023	3654	United Way	Employee Contributions	401.00
11/15/2023	1159	Erickson, Brian	Incentives	250.00
11/28/2023	ACH	Empower Retirement	Retirement	90.00
11/28/2023	ACH	Empower Retirement	Retirement	318.03
11/28/2023	ACH	Empower Retirement	Retirement	300.00
11/28/2023	ACH	HSA Bank	HSA Fees	11.25
11/29/2023		QuickBooks Payroll Service	Payroll	48,738.17
11/29/2023	3655	United Way	Employee Contributions	401.00
11/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	8,924.00
11/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	1,020.44
11/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	1,020.44
11/29/2023	E-pay	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	0.00
11/30/2023	ACH	AFLAC	Employee Paid Coverage	129.56
11/30/2023	ACH	AWC via Vimly	Benefits	62.85
11/30/2023	ACH	HSA Bank	HSA Fees	1,650.00
11/30/2023	ACH	HSA Bank	HSA Fees	821.00
11/30/2023	ACH	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	1,871.49
11/30/2023	ACH	WA Dept of Retirement Systems	PERS Contribution	3,845.95
11/30/2023	eft	AWC via Vimly	Benefits	8,392.61
Oct - Nov 23				238,972.30

The Council Board retroactively approves the payments made during October through November 2023, for the above listed claims in the total amount of \$238,972.30*

Secretary/Treasurer

Board Officer	Title	Date
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whatcom council of governments

Memo

To: WCOG Council Board
Date: December 5, 2023
From: Hugh Conroy, Director *HC*
Subject: Proposed 2024 WCOG Meeting Calendar

The proposed schedule of meetings of the Council Board, Executive Committee and Whatcom Transportation Policy Board follows for the Board’s consideration:

1/17/24	3:00	Council Board	3:30	Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
3/13/24			3:30	Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
5/8/24	3:00	Council Board	3:30	Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
7/10/24			3:30	Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
10/9/24	3:00	Council Board	3:30	Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
12/11/24	3:15	Exec. Committee	3:30	Council Board

All meetings will be hybrid: both held at the WCOG office at 314 East Champion Street, Bellingham, WA and virtually on Zoom.

Please be aware that Executive Committee meetings may be called when needed in those months when no Council Board meeting is scheduled.

Suggested motion

“Approve the proposed 2024 WCOG meeting calendar as presented.”

Whatcom Council of Governments
Board Budget Report
 January through October 2023
 (83% of the year)

	<u>Jan - Oct 23</u>	<u>2023 Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Income			
333 · Federal Grants	906,223	1,144,980	79%
334 · State Grants	148,860	203,510	73%
337 · Local Grants	143,166	176,282	81%
361 · Interest Income	6,867	3,000	229%
368 · Membership Dues	185,070	185,210	100%
369 · Other Income	1,087		
Total Income	<u>1,412,417</u>	<u>1,712,982</u>	<u>82%</u>
Expense			
505 · Communication Services	27,147	34,600	78%
510 · Consultants & Contract Services	135,045	254,780	53%
515 · Incentives	10,709	13,000	82%
520 · Insurance- Property & Liability	11,236	11,900	94%
530 · Office Equipment & Software	32,013	23,010	139%
535 · Pass-Through Funding	2,000	20,000	10%
545 · Printing	7,843	15,700	50%
550 · Professional Development	7,886	9,050	87%
555 · Rent	65,521	73,400	89%
560 · Repair & Maintenance	542	3,000	18%
565 · Payroll - Salaries & Wages	772,653	898,669	86%
566 · Payroll - Taxes & Benefits	264,116	322,405	82%
575 · Supplies	9,771	8,800	111%
580 · Travel	17,293	5,600	309%
585 · Utilities	13,334	15,000	89%
590 · Miscellaneous Expense	2,064		
Total Expense	<u>1,379,173</u>	<u>1,708,914</u>	<u>81%</u>
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash	<u>\$33,244</u>	<u>\$4,068</u>	

Balance Sheet as of:

	<u>1/1/2023</u>	<u>10/31/2023</u>	<u>Cash & Investments</u>	
Cash on hand	\$ 33,264	\$ 100,157	Target (4 mos.)	\$478,045
Investment Account	381,014	233,675	Available	\$333,832
Accounts Receivable	197,973	285,910		
Total	\$ 612,251	\$ 619,742		
Accounts Payable	29,637	16,199		
Net Equity	<u>\$ 582,614</u>	<u>\$ 603,543</u>		



whatcom council of governments

MEMO

December 6, 2023

To: WCOG Council Board
From: Hugh Conroy, Director
Re: DRAFT Transportation Priorities of Whatcom County, 2024

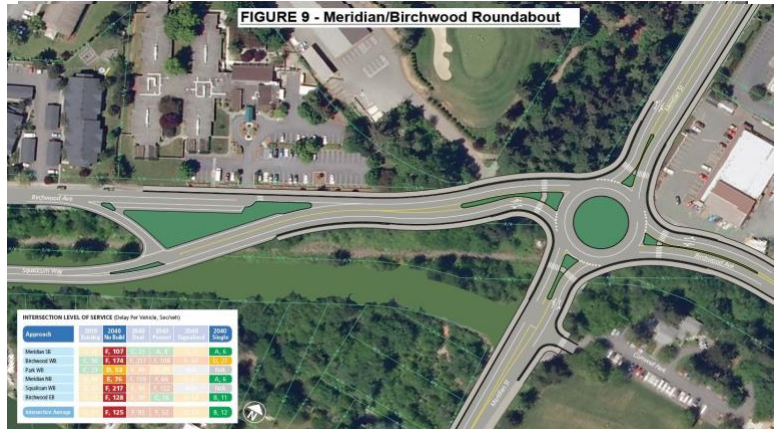
Based on the transportation funding request list that was submitted to the legislature last year, along with recent updates submitted by WCOG member governments, the following is a draft list for legislative requests in the 2024 session.

TOP THREE REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The Council Board has determined that three projects are the Region's highest priorities, with one from the City of Bellingham, one from among the Region's six small cities and one from Whatcom County.

CITY OF BELLINGHAM PRIORITY: Meridian Street/Birchwood Avenue Roundabout

The existing signalized intersections at Meridian/Birchwood and Meridian/ Squalicum Parkway serve as a critical freight route and multimodal transportation link between the industrial Bellingham waterfront and the U.S.- Canada border via Interstate 5 and State Route 539. With the completion of the Orchard Street-Birchwood extension, traffic volume, as well as the volume of bicyclists and pedestrians, will increase, further congesting these corridors' closely spaced intersections.



Bellingham's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan calls for sidewalks and bicycle facilities, while the Park and Recreation Plan calls for a multi-use trail on the vacated railroad bed.

Additionally, the Whatcom Transportation Authority has indicated that Meridian Street-SR 539 is a candidate corridor for future high-frequency GO Line transit service.

This project must be completed in two distinct but interrelated phases. Phase 1 – which is funded – would merge the Squalicum Parkway truck-freight route with Birchwood Avenue on the west side of Meridian while decommissioning the Meridian/Squalicum traffic signal. Phase 2 would reconstruct the Meridian/Birchwood intersection as a multimodal roundabout. The City seeks funding for Phase 2. Request: **\$7-million (Reduce to \$5 million after recent STBG award of \$2 million?)**

SMALL CITIES' PRIORITY: Sumas Emergency Evacuation Route – In response to the catastrophic flooding that took place in Sumas in November 2021, the City has identified the need for a flood-resistant travel route that would allow emergency evacuation of its residents and others from the City and surrounding area when all current transportation routes are unavailable during a major flood event. In the November 2021 flood, flood waters cut off access to all routes out of the city except the international border crossing, which was also closed. Citizens were trapped in an area near the northwest corner of downtown Sumas and could not travel west to higher ground elsewhere in Whatcom County. The City is proposing to elevate and reconstruct an approximately 1.5-mile emergency evacuation route that would include Kneuman Road from Garfield Street (near the BNSF rail crossing) to Barbo Road, and Barbo Road from Kneuman Road to West Front Street (near Halverstick Road). These roadways would be elevated to the height of the 100-year flood to allow evacuation and safe passage out of the City, including evacuation of federal employees at the Sumas Port of Entry. This route would also provide an access route into the City for emergency services during and immediately following a major flood event. Request: **\$2.2-million**

WHATCOM COUNTY PRIORITY: Pavement Rehabilitation for Major Collector and Arterial Roads – This project would replace aged road surfaces on sections of four major collectors/arterials (Birch Bay-Lynden Road, Birch Bay Drive, Everson-Goshen Road and Northwest Drive) with heavy volumes of commercial and commuter traffic that also experienced extensive damage during winter storms and floods in the winter of 2021-22. Work will include repaving, minor safety upgrades and updates to ADA facilities. Pavement rehabilitation projects require only minor environmental permitting, straightforward engineering design and minimal or no land acquisitions. Request: **\$6.5-million**

Lummi Island Ferry System Modernization and Preservation (Whatcom County) – The *M/V Whatcom Chief* (built in 1962) and its terminal facilities exceeded their design lives long ago. The system often experiences unplanned service disruptions and faces growing maintenance costs and major facility replacements, including a complete and unavoidable repower by 2029 to comply with EPA Tier 3 emissions requirements for marine diesel engines. This repower would require substantial and expensive reconfigurations belowdecks and puts at risk the vessel's "grandfathered" status, especially because it also does not meet present-day safety, ADA or service standards. Replacement of the vessel will avoid those costs and prevent months of service disruption that would result during the repowering process.

The Whatcom County Council conducted a systematic, publicly-informed design process for a hybrid diesel-electric replacement that meets all current standards and will meet the needs of residents, emergency services, taxpayers, crew members and the environment for decades to come. This project must be advanced immediately, since construction of the vessel requires two years, followed by another two years to upgrade the terminal.

The County was awarded a federal RAISE (Rebuild American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) grant for ferry modernization for \$25-million -- of the required total project cost of \$50.3 million. The State Legislature has also approved \$10 million of County Roads Administration Board

(CRAB) County Ferry Capital Improvement Program (CFICP) funding. Completion still requires \$11-million.

Request: **Legislative appropriation of an additional of \$11 million to complete the project**

Benson Road Complete Street Improvements (Lynden) Benson Road between Sunrise and Badger Road (SR-546) is only 20-22 feet wide with narrow shoulders, a deep fish-bearing ditch on one side and no bike or pedestrian facilities. A new PeaceHealth North County Medical Facility is being constructed in the southeast corner of Benson and Badger. To the south is Isom elementary school which uses Benson Road as its primary access. The properties to the west are currently being annexed into the City for residential and multi-family development. There is also a small commercial overlay zone in this area. Finally, this area includes 40 acres of Public Use zoned land to be used as a multi-faceted regional park facility. All these managed growth requirements will greatly increase traffic on Benson Road, an old rural county road badly needing to be upgraded to a “complete” street. The proposed project will construct an all-weather arterial street, 36 feet in width with bike lanes, curb, gutter, and sidewalk where none exists. This project will create a true Complete Street providing for multi-modal travel. This widened cross-section will occur to the west to avoid impacting the fish-bearing roadside ditch on the east. The State Department of Transportation is currently scheduled to improve the intersection of Badger Road (SR-546) with Benson Rd to a compact roundabout in 2024.

Lynden has used local funds to complete survey and preliminary design. Based on this work, the City has obtained \$1,866,000 in federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding which requires a match of \$291,225 in City funds. Current estimates have the total project cost at \$3.22 million dollars, leaving a funding shortfall of \$1,063,775 million dollars. This difference requires the City to seek additional funding which can be matched with local traffic impact fees. **Request: \$850,000 (Still needed after STBG award of \$1.45 million)**

Birch Bay-Lynden Road Arterial Preservation (Lynden) – Birch Bay-Lynden Road is a primary all-weather road that provides access to Lynden from I-5 and State Route 539 (Guide Meridian Road), the latter being the primary freight connection to the Lynden-Aldergrove border crossing as well as to the Sumas-Huntingdon port-of-entry via SR 546. Most west Lynden commercial and industrial businesses – including Lynden Door, Scholten Equipment, Preferred Freezer and Oxbo International – use Birch Bay-Lynden Road as their primary access to I-5. Despite the City’s diligence in maintaining the roadway (chip sealing, asphalt patching, etc.), this critical corridor is reaching the end of its useful life and requires a structural grind and overlay to restore it to a state of good repair. Request: **\$750,000**

Birch Bay-Lynden Road/Blaine Road Roundabout (Whatcom County) – This project involves the construction of a roundabout to ensure that this intersection, which is projected to experience a significant increase in traffic volume, will operate at an acceptable level of service. The design incorporates safe-pedestrian paths that meet ADA requirements, provide bike lanes, upgrade lighting and improve site drainage as required by the Department of Ecology. (Click [here](#) for current information on this project.)

Request: **\$3.5-million**

Marine Drive Improvements, Phase Two (Whatcom County) – Marine Drive is an important regional corridor for commuters and recreational bicyclists. The roadway parallels the bluff



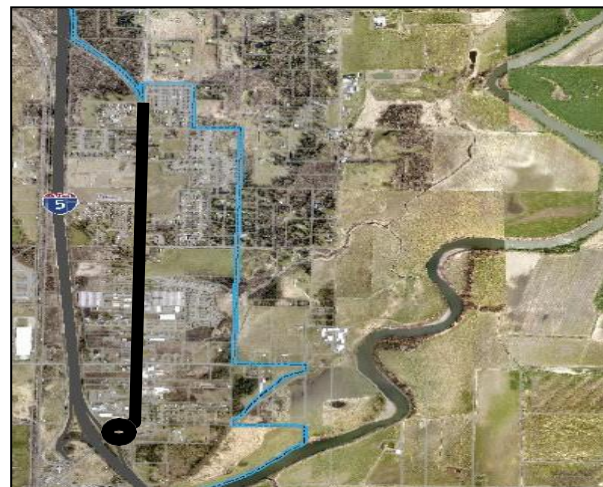
The lack of bike lanes and sidewalks – as well as inadequate or non-existent shoulders – makes bicycling and walking hazardous in many locations along Marine Drive.

on the north shore of Bellingham Bay from Bellingham and crosses the Nooksack River delta on its way to the Lummi Nation. This project between Locust Avenue and Alderwood Drive is the second of a three-phase project to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety from the Bellingham city limits across the BNSF railway. (Additional information can be found [here](#).) Request: **\$2.5-million**

Portal Way Entry Roundabout and Corridor Improvements (Ferndale) – Provide missing multi-modal access along one of Whatcom County’s fastest-growing multifamily/ mixed-use areas by reconstructing and widening critical transportation infrastructure along approximately 3,500 feet of the approximately 7,500 feet of the Portal Way corridor. Improvements will include two 11-foot travel lanes, a 12-foot center turn-lane, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks. Improvements to an existing compact roundabout at the northbound Portal Way exit (Exit 263) to include a slip lane or other improvements are also anticipated.

Portal Way is the primary north-south surface street in Ferndale and is the only arterial street serving one of the fastest-growing mixed-use areas in Whatcom County, including several residential neighborhoods, commercial and medical uses, and job-producing industries.

Growth in the area is expected to triple the number of employees and double the number of households by 2036. Approximately 750 residential units have been constructed within the last two years or are proposed to be constructed within the next three years, and about 500,000



square feet of commercial/industrial space have been constructed within the last five years or is proposed to be constructed within the next three.

The existing corridor has lacked improvement since the inception of Interstate 5 and does not include non-motorized transportation options. Increased development along the corridor will continue to exacerbate conflicts between

motorized and non-motorized transportation. Piecemeal reconstruction of the corridor by private development will not yield a coordinated transportation corridor. Request: **\$11 million**

Blaine Marine Drive (Blaine)- The City of Blaine’s economic vitality is supported by maritime trades, border traffic and recreational tourism. The Wharf District within the City is a key driver of these industries, offering breathtaking views, water recreation, bird watching, marine wildlife viewing and serving as a major hub for commercial fishing in the region.

The City, in partnership with the Port of Bellingham, has undertaken several efforts to improve the vitality of the Wharf District, culminating in a new Wharf District Master Plan completed in 2020. One of the key initiatives identified in the plan is the restoration and improvement of Marine Drive and Jorgensen Pier, both of which serve the activities and businesses in the Wharf District. The wharf area and Jorgensen Pier are also historic, having been in commercial use before Washington became a state in 1889. The access to Jorgensen Pier has been severely limited due to failure of the roadway leading up to the pier; since 2015, this section of Marine Drive has not been usable for vehicle traffic. The southern half of the roadway is structurally unstable (and is now fenced off) and the northern half is open for pedestrian access only.



Significant road and pedestrian improvements are needed to Marine Drive to improve access and mobility; as well as enhance the safety and security of this important transportation linkage between downtown Blaine and waterfront, particularly for those with mobility challenges and for maritime businesses operating at the pier. These improvements will improve the quality of life in the City, promote community health providing active recreational opportunities, and assist with economic recovery, which has been significantly impacted by the closure of the border that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. The City has invested \$2.4-million for Phases 1 and 2 and is seeking \$4.0-million for the final phase of the project.

Request: **\$4.0-million**

Bell Road and Peace Portal Road Grade Separation Project (Blaine) – For many years, traffic congestion and safety concerns at the intersection of Bell Road and Peace Portal Road caused by the at-grade BNSF crossing, U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s VACIS train inspection system and the four-way stop at the intersection has resulted in long backups and long wait times (sometimes exceeding 45 minutes). Several projects and redesigns of the intersection have been proposed and rejected over the years. Most recently, in 2019, WSDOT determined that the proposed grade-separation project (without replacement Dakota Creek bridge) was too large and expensive to design and construct. That project was replaced by an electronic signal and lane improvement project. In late 2022, City of Blaine and BNSF leadership staff met and learned about BNFS’ strong interest in the previously proposed grade-separation project, including a new Dakota Creek bridge. It is BNSF’s position that the highest level of safety is attained when vehicles and trains are separated and is the best way to eliminate train and vehicle collisions.



The funds for the design and construction of the grade-separation project, including a new Dakota Creek bridge, would be acquired from federal grants (requiring a 20 percent non-federal match) that are designed to improve railroad crossings and vehicle safety. The City has contracted with David Evans and Associates to develop the grant applications with support from BNSF and WSDOT. The first application, due February 2023, is for the design, engineering, and permitting of the project. The construction grant application grant will follow.

BNSF has offered to match WSDOT funding support for the project on a dollar-for-dollar basis. This is a very generous offer which the City of Blaine wishes to maximize. Request: **Legislative support in a manner and amount to be determined**

For more information on any of these requests, please call **Tom McBride** of McBride Public Affairs, at (360) 481-1824, or **Intisar Surur** at (206) 387-8368. On behalf of the Whatcom Council of Governments, thank you again for your ongoing support and consideration.



whatcom council of governments

Memo

To: The WCOG Council Board Executive Committee & Council Board

From: Hugh Conroy, Director *HC*

Date: December 6, 2023

Subject: Proposed 2024 Budget – Draft

Attached to this memo please find the final draft of the proposed 2024 Budget for review by the Executive Committee and the Council Board prior to your sequential meetings on December 13.. I draw your attention to the following:

Dues

Dues are determined using both population and the average cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of the member jurisdictions, as is WCOG's adopted practice. Annual population change is drawn from Office of Financial Management estimates for Whatcom County, the seven cities and the Lummi Nation. We have received the 2024 COLAs from the member jurisdictions and determined the average to be 3.6 percent, which is incorporated into the final draft. The Port's dues increase is the average increase of the nine jurisdictions.

Salaries

As discussed at last month's Council Board meeting, WCOG will be proceeding with hiring an entry-level planner in early 2024. Two members of the staff are receiving grade increases along the salary matrix in recognition of increasing project and program management responsibilities. All members of the staff will receive the approved COLA. One staff member will receive a one percent longevity increase. WCOG's expected salary expense will increase by 2.6% percent over 2023.

Notable Other Expenses

2024 will again see large consulting services costs. This is primarily a function of the IMTC-endorsed and USDOT grant-funded project to plan and design replacement border wait time systems with partner agencies in Canada.

Large increases in printing and supplies are anticipated as part of a robust public engagement effort as part of the USDOT grant-funded Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Safety Action Planning project.

Ron and I look forward to discussing the draft 2024 Budget with you next week.

Whatcom Council of Governments
2024 Budget DRAFT #2 12-06-2023

<i>CONSOLIDATED</i>	2024 Draft #1 10/4/2023	2024 Draft #2 12/6/2023	2024 Changes 10/4/23 to 12/6/23
Beginning Net Cash and Investments	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	\$ -
REVENUE			
Programs & Projects			
Local	\$ 115,270	\$ 114,859	\$ (411)
State	189,185	194,422	5,237
Federal	1,653,477	1,614,228	(39,249)
Canadian	0	18,000	18,000
Miscellaneous (foundations, classes, rebates)	3,000	3,000	-
Total Programs & Projects	\$ 1,960,931	\$ 1,944,508	\$ (16,423)
Dues			
Bellingham	\$ 69,091	\$ 67,172	\$ (1,919)
Blaine	4,543	4,417	(126)
Everson	2,257	2,195	(62)
Ferndale	11,758	11,431	(327)
Lummi Nation	4,162	4,080	(82)
Lynden	11,894	11,564	(330)
Nooksack	1,123	1,092	(31)
Sumas	1,303	1,267	(36)
Whatcom County (unincorporated)	63,644	61,842	(1,802)
Port of Bellingham	30,255	29,414	(841)
Lake Whatcom Water & Sewer	230	230	-
Opportunity Council	150	150	-
Public Utilities District #1	150	150	-
Sudden Valley Association	150	150	-
Western Washington University	150	150	-
Total Dues	\$ 201,860	\$ 195,304	\$ (6,556)
Other Revenue			
Interest Income	5,000	5,000	-
Total Other Revenue	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -
Total Revenue	\$ 2,166,791	\$ 2,144,812	\$ (21,979)
EXPENSES			
Salaries & Benefits			
Salaries	\$ 912,393	\$ 899,113	\$ (13,280)
Dental Insurance	13,378	13,378	-
Disability Insurance	3,859	3,803	(56)
Health Insurance	152,796	152,798	2
Life Insurance	810	810	-
Retirement Contribution	94,798	85,685	(9,113)
Social Security Equivalent	69,571	68,555	(1,016)
Vision Insurance	2,318	2,318	-
Workers Compensation Insurance	3,679	3,906	227
Total Benefits	\$ 341,209	\$ 331,253	\$ (9,956)
Total Salaries & Benefits	\$ 1,253,602	\$ 1,230,366	\$ (23,236)

Whatcom Council of Governments
2024 Budget DRAFT #2 12-06-2023

<i>CONSOLIDATED</i>	2024	2024	2024
	Draft #1 10/4/2023	Draft #2 12/6/2023	Changes 10/4/23 to 12/6/23
Other Expenses			
Communication Services	\$ 59,600	\$ 59,600	-
Consultants & Contracted Services	577,922	576,598	(1,324)
Incentives	18,000	18,000	-
Insurance - Property & Liability	12,360	12,360	-
Office Equipment & Software	29,560	29,560	-
Pass Through to Partners	45,000	45,000	-
Printing	36,000	36,000	-
Professional Development	8,000	8,000	-
Rent	74,967	74,967	-
Repair & Maintenance	3,000	3,000	-
Supplies	26,700	26,700	-
Travel	12,000	12,000	-
Utilities	16,000	16,000	-
Total Other Expenses	\$ 919,109	\$ 917,785	\$ (1,324)
			0
Total Expenses	\$ 2,172,711	\$ 2,148,151	\$ (24,560)
			0
Ending Net Cash and Investments	\$ 394,231	\$ 396,662	\$ 2,431

Board Officer

Executive Director

Capital Expenditures by Category

	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Office Equipment		
Postage Meter Lease	1	\$ 700
Workstation/Laptop additions/replacements	1	3,200
Monitor additions/replacements	4	1,600
Contingency		<u>1,000</u>
		\$ 6,500
Software		
Accounting & Payroll updates	2	\$ 2,180
Adobe licenses & updates	10	4,880
Cloud computing & storage	10	2,500
GIS licences & updates	2	4,500
Microsoft licenses & updates	10	1,300
TransCAD Transportation Modeling licenses & updates	2	3,200
Website & web-based applications		2,500
Contingency		<u>2,000</u>
		\$ 23,060

*Agenda item G.2.i: Description of RTPO Program
funding need prepared by WA RTPO directors.*

Restoring Capacity of Washington's Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs)

Introduction

Established by the legislature in 1990, the RTPO Program is the state's strategy for ensuring that Washington's transportation system is interconnected and that planning and facility development, at all jurisdictional levels, is coordinated between state and local comprehensive plans.

The RTPO program is at a financial tipping point. Three factors have combined to compel the state's 17 Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) to issue this collective call for action and urge our legislature to fix this untenable situation:

1. Two RTPOs were added in 2017 with no corresponding change to the state-wide appropriation.
2. RTPOs' duties have steadily increased with several new responsibilities added in the 2023 legislative session.
3. The original biennial appropriation for the state-wide RTPO program was \$3.2 million and is currently at \$4.9 million. The increases over the program's 34 year life have not kept up with the need to implement the legislative requirements.

For these three reasons, the RTPO program is at a critical juncture. The biennial appropriation needs a long-overdue realignment with legislated responsibilities at \$12 million.

For many years, RTPOs have repeatedly initiated this discussion about addressing the combined impact of inadequate appropriations and increasing duties. We are hopeful that this current alarm bell will spur legislative action.

For more information:

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Jeff Wilkins, Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council, jeff@chelan-douglas.org