

Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
Minutes
March 12, 2025

In Attendance (In-person or via Zoom)

Members *Voting:* **Bellingham:** Kim Lund, Skip Williams; **Everson:** John Perry; **Ferndale:** Greg Hansen (2nd Vice Chair); **Nooksack Tribe,** Rosemary Laclair; **Nooksack:** Kevin Hester; **Port of Bellingham:** Bobby Briscoe; **Whatcom County:** Jon Scanlon; **WSDOT:** Chris Damitio, Justin Resnick; **Whatcom Transportation Authority:** Michael Lilliquist (1st Vice Chair).

Staff Lethal Coe, Hugh Conroy (Secretary), Melissa Fanucci, Michelle Grandy, Emily Moran.

Others **City of Bellingham:** Joel Pfundt; **Whatcom Transportation Authority,** Les Reardanz;

A. **Call to Order**

Hugh Conroy determined that there was a quorum, and Vice Chair Lilliquist called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

B. **Public Comment**

None

C. **Agenda Additions**

A second public hearing, for the board's action on considering the Commute Trip Reduction Plan update, was added to the agenda

D. **Approval of the minutes – meeting of January 15, 2025.**

Motion: Mr. Williams moved, second by Mr. Briscoe, to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 15, 2025, as presented. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

E. **Old Business**

None

F. **Amendment #2 (25-03) – of the WCOG 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).**
Mr. Coe introduced the TIP amendment and memo.

Public hearing: Mr. Lilliquist opened the public hearing at 3:34. No members of the public were present. The public hearing was closed at 3:34.

There was no further discussion.

Motion: Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, moved to approve Amendment #2 (25-03) to the WCOG 2025 TIP. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

G. **New Business**

1. Consideration for adoption: WCOG 2025-29 Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Plan

Ms. Moran introduced the subject memo and recapped the state's CTR law and WCOG's role in updating a regional CTR plan and coordinating with other local governments that the CTR law applies to. Ms. Moran pointed out some elements of the updated plan that are different from the current plan.

Public hearing: Mr. Lilliquist opened the public hearing at 3:38. No members of the public were present. The public hearing was closed at 3:38.

Motion: Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, moved to adopt the 2025 update of WCOG's CTR Plan as presented. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

H. **Obligation Status Update**

Mr. Coe reviewed the regional, federally funded projects that are expected to obligate this year. Mr. Coe also presented some scenario planning discussions with Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) that explored reallocation of Surface Transportation BI funds if previous regional allocations of federal Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funding is redirected. While there is some speculation that is likely to happen, there haven't been any official statements one way or the other about the CRP specifically.

I. **Director's Report**

Mr. Conroy reviewed the status of various planning and program activities:

- The Executive Committee's previous action to approve engagement with RSG to conduct the Household Travel Survey.
- Significant staff time on phone calls and meetings attempting to understand the implications of the many federal policy moves related to executive orders. E.g., new requirements for TIP approvals and UPWP updates were announced which may have delayed project funds and created contradictions with federal MPO requirements and state RTPO requirements. The policy was then changed back to how it was before the announcement.
- Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan (SAP): Mr. Conroy gave a quick overview of the draft SAP that had been sent to the board a few weeks prior. A final draft will be on the agenda for adoption on May 14.
- Border issues:
 - Mr. Conroy noted that Transport Canada's funding for the IMTC Personal Vehicle Survey was still in place. BC Ministry of Transportation & Transit is still on track to contribute its funding share to the project.
 - Cross-border travel in the region is way down. This goes along with widespread media coverage citing Canadian residents' disappointment with the U.S. Administration's recent policy announcements and other statements about Canada. Year-to-year comparisons show regional February 2025 cross-border traffic is an estimated 31 percent down from February 2024. The reduction is composed of a 6 percent drop in WA state license plates and a 25 percent drop in BC license plates.
 - On March 5, the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) Region 10 office in Auburn, WA was essentially shut down – the GSA employees there, were all terminated. This includes the project managers for the projects to replace the border inspection stations in Sumas and Lynden (and booth additions at the Pacific Highway border station). Management of these projects has been switched to Region 8 (Denver). It is not yet known what impact this will have on the project schedule.

J. Adjourn: Vice Chair Lilliquist adjourned the meeting at 4:15.



Hugh Conroy
Secretary

Approved June 11, 2025