

**Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
Minutes
July 10, 2024**

In Attendance (In-person or via Zoom)

Members *Voting:* **Blaine:** Richard May; **Ferndale:** Greg Hansen (2nd Vice Chair); **Lynden:** Scott Korthuis (Chair); **Nooksack:** Kevin Hester; **Sumas:** Bruce Bosch; **Whatcom County:** Jon Scanlon (alternate for Kaylee Galloway). **WSDOT:** Chris Damitio; **Whatcom Transportation Authority:** Michael Lilliquist (1st Vice Chair);

Staff Lethal Coe, Hugh Conroy (Secretary), Ron Cubellis, Melissa Fanucci, Jaymes McClain, Emily Moran

Others **McBride Public Affairs:** Tom McBride, Intisar Bengge; **WSDOT:** John Schambaugh, Justin Resnick.

A. **Call to Order**

Hugh Conroy determined that there was a quorum, and Chair Korthuis called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

B. **Public Comment**

None

C. **Agenda Additions**

None

D. **Approval of Minutes** of May 8 meeting.

Motion: Mr. Lilliquist moved, second by Mr. Hansen, to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 13, 2024, as presented. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

E. **Old Business**

None

F. **Consideration for adoption – Amendment #4 (24-07) of the WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Korthuis opened the public hearing at 3:35. No members of the public were present. The public hearing was closed at 3:36.

Mr. Coe reviewed the associated memo and the individual amendments listed in the draft document. Mr. Korthuis asked if WSDOT’s two fish-passage projects would be underway during [the June/July 2026] FIFA World Cup soccer games [in Seattle & Vancouver, BC]. Mr. Damitio reviewed the timelines. Mr. Hansen asked if Bellingham’s Birchwood project would be at the same time as the WSDOT fish-passage projects. Mr. Coe clarified that the subject phases of the Birchwood project would occur after 2026.

Motion: Mr. Hansen moved, seconded by Mr. Scanlon, to adopt TIP amendment #4 (24-07) as presented.

Motion passed with no opposing votes.

G. **Consideration for adoption: Updated Development and Evaluation Process for Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements**

Mr. Coe reviewed the memo and the draft document included in the meeting packet.

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Mr. Lilliquist asked for clarification on the overall purpose of the review and possible response if a plan is found to be non-conforming or inconsistent. Mr. Coe and Mr. Conroy reviewed the related aspects of the state RTPO requirements as well as the portion of WCOG's process document that simply states that the RTPO members would collectively address any concerns they had with one or more member government's draft transportation element and work to make changes to enable regional (RTPO) certification.

Motion: Mr. Hansen moved, seconded by Mr. Lilliquist, to approve adoption of the updated development and evaluation process.

Motion passed with no opposing votes.

H. **Obligation Status Update**

Mr. Coe reviewed obligation status. Our region met its 2024 target and did so before June 31 (only exceeding it by \$472). This enabled WCOG to submit an application to WSDOT for redistributed funds. The project ready to take advantage of these funds if they are available and awarded is Bellingham's Meridian-Birchwood Phase II.

J. **Director's Report**

Mr. Conroy asked Tom McBride and Intisar Bengé to report on state legislative news. Ms. Bengé reviewed the high amount of turnover that will occur in the state legislature, the pending results of initiatives (Climate Commitment Act, capital gains tax, and long-term care). On the revenue side, the legislature is considering a fee on purchases resulting in vehicle deliveries.

Mr. Conroy reviewed several items:

- WCOG's work on a regional safety action plan as funded by USDOT's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program WCOG is currently rolling out a public engagement effort centered on an online survey branded as The Whatcom Crash Test.
- Smart Trips activities: summer camps, Parkview safe routes to school community engagement, commute trip reduction (CTR) plan updates.
- International Mobility and Trade Corridor (IMTC) Program: Discussion of FIFA impacts on the border, new additional funding from Transport Canada (\$40K CDN) for next year's personal vehicle survey, and an update on the Advanced Border Information System project.

Mr. Scanlon asked if the recent announcement of new U.S. requirements for entering the country with a dog have been discussed at IMTC – adding that he was hearing concerns, especially in Pt. Roberts. Mr. Conroy said that he'd only heard the issue alluded to very briefly at another recent meeting and that the announcement was likely subsequent to the last IMTC meeting. Mr. Bosch shared his knowledge of the issue, noting that the updated regulation is coming from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) which is responding to increased incidents of dogs with rabies – many of which are rescue dogs from world regions suffering war. Mr. Scanlon provided some links to more information. The new rules are scheduled to take effect in August. There is speculation that there will be a lot of discretion in how the rules are enforced.

K. **Correspondence**

Mr. Conroy reviewed a recently emailed letter from the director of the Peninsula RTPO in WA. PRTPO is currently spearheading the state-wide RTPO interest in obtaining a funding increase for the state's RTPO program and is reaching out to RTPO chairs to confirm their boards' positions. In December of 2023, the WCOG Council Board voted to support this effort (as summarized at the time by a working group of RTPO directors). The current effort builds on that dialog. WCOG has responded to PRTPO, noting the December 2023 Council Board action and thus its support for the current effort going into the upcoming legislative session.

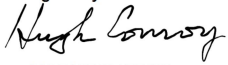
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L. **Board Open Forum**
None

M. **Adjourn**
4:20

Signed by:

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Hugh Conroy
Secretary

Approved October 9, 2024