



## Meeting of the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board

Wednesday, July 12, 2023, 3:30 p.m.

Gordon W. Rogers Conference Room

314 East Champion Street, Bellingham, Washington

Join using [Zoom](#)

Or phone: (253) 215-8782

### Agenda

Pages

- 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)
- 2-4 **D. Approval of the Minutes** -- Meeting of May 10, 2023. \*
- E. Old Business** (if any)
- F. New Business**
  - 5 1. Considering approval of the Whatcom Transportation Technical Advisory Group's (TTAG's) recommended allocation of FFY '27-'29 federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding. - Lethal Coe\*
  - 6 2. Certification of upcoming City of Ferndale amendment to the transportation element of its 2016 comprehensive plan. - Lethal Coe\*
  - 7 3. City of Bellingham request to transfer previously awarded STBG funds to another project. - Lethal Coe\*
- 8-9 **G. Public Hearing: 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment No. 2023-04**
  - 1. Staff Presentation - Lethal Coe
  - 2. Open Public Hearing - Members of the public may address the Board about the subject of the hearing for a maximum of three minutes each.
  - 3. Close Public Hearing\*
  - 4. Board Discussion
  - 5. Vote on Proposed TIP amendment\*
- H. Obligation Status Update** - Lethal Coe
- I. Director's Report** - Hugh Conroy
- J. Correspondence** (if any)
- K. Board Open Forum**

\* Action item

WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD  
MINUTES – **DRAFT**  
MAY 10, 2023

IN ATTENDANCE (IN PERSON OR VIA ZOOM):

MEMBERS     VOTING: **Blaine:** Richard May; **Ferndale:** Greg Hansen (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair); **Lynden:** Scott Korthuis (Chair); **Nooksack:** Kevin Hester; **Sumas:** Bruce Bosch; **WSDOT:** John Shambaugh; **Whatcom County:** Satpal Sidhu, Kaylee Galloway; **WTA:** Michael Lilliquist (1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair) EX OFFICIO: Chris Roselli, Western Washington University

STAFF         Ron Cubellis (Secretary), Hugh Conroy, Melissa Fanucci, Lethal Coe

A.     CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Fanucci determined that there was a quorum, and Chairman Korthuis called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

B.     PUBLIC COMMENT

None

C.     AGENDA ADDITIONS

None

D.     APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 8, 2023

**MOTION:** Mr. Hansen moved, second by Mr. Sidhu, to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 8, 2023, as presented.

**MOTION PASSED**

E.     OLD BUSINESS

None

F.     NEW BUSINESS

1.    Adoption of State Fiscal Year 2024 WCOG Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Conroy gave a brief summary of the UPWP and answered questions from the members.

**MOTION:** Mr. May moved, seconded by Mr. Hansen, to adopt the SFY 2024 WCOG Unified Planning Work Program.

**MOTION PASSED**

2. Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program Allocations

Mr. Coe directed the members' attention to his memo contained in the meeting packet regarding the proposed STBG allocations that had been unanimously recommended by the Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) at its last meeting, which follow:

- Transfer \$450,000 of STBG funds from the Orchard Drive Extension deobligation to Telegraph Rd Multimodal Safety Improvements
- Transfer \$1,000,000 of STBG funds from James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction to Telegraph Rd Multimodal Safety Improvement. This action will leave \$1,000,000 of STBG funds in James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction to use once NEPA is resolved.

**MOTION:** Mr. May moved, seconded by Mr. Lilliquist, to award Surface Transportation Block Grant funds as follows to the following projects:

- Transfer \$450,000 of STBG funds from the Orchard Drive Extension deobligation to Telegraph Rd Multimodal Safety Improvements
- Transfer \$1,000,000 of STBG funds from James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction to Telegraph Rd Multimodal Safety Improvement. This action will leave \$1,000,000 of STBG funds in James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction to use once NEPA is resolved.

**MOTION PASSED**

PUBLIC HEARING

Amendment No. 23-05 to the 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Coe described the proposed amendment to the 2023 TIP:

Add Whatcom County's project Lummi Island Ferry System Modernization & Preservation that was awarded by Moving Ahead Washington to replace the ferry vessel with a new hybrid diesel-electric vessel as well as modify terminal and improve operations. The total project cost is estimated at just over \$50 million. The preliminary engineering phase will begin in 2023.

**PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 3:34 P.M.**

No public comment was offered.

**PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 3:35 P.M. BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**

**MOTION:** Mr. Hansen moved, second by Mr. Satpal, to approve Amendment No. 23-05 to the 2023 WCOG TIP, as presented.

**MOTION PASSED**

H. OBLIGATION STATUS UPDATE

Mr. Coe briefed the Board on the region's current progress toward meeting its Federal Fiscal Year 2023 obligation target.

I. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Conroy briefed the Board on recent transportation planning activities.

J. BOARD OPEN FORUM

K. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

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Hugh Conroy  
Secretary

Approval scheduled for July 12, 2023



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## MEMO

**To:** Whatcom MPO/RTPO Transportation Policy Board (WTPB)  
**From:** Lethal Coe, Principal Planner  
**Date:** July 5, 2023  
**Subject:** Allocation of FFY 2027-29 regional Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds and Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds.

### Background

In response to this year’s request for project funding proposals, local jurisdictions submitted seven STBG proposals and four TA proposals. Applying the criteria and scoring methodology adopted by the Policy Board earlier this year, the WCOG Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) evaluated and scored all proposals. At the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the TTAG reviewed the compiled scoring results and, based on those results, developed their recommended funding allocation detailed below.

### Project scores, rankings, and TTAG funding recommendation

The tables below summarize the projects’ scoring results and TTAG’s recommendation for STBG and TA funding allocation available by geographic area: Urban, Rural and Any Area.

STBG - All Projects Ranked						FFY 27-29 Funds Available			
						Urban Medium	Urban Small	Rural	Any Area
Sponser	Project	Area	Amount Request	Total Points	Overall Rank	2,500,000	0	1,375,000	1,450,000
Bellingham	<i>Meridian/Birchwood Transportation Improvements, Phase 2</i>	UM	2,000,000	720	1	1,250,000			
Lynden	<i>Benson Rd Complete Streets Improvements</i>	US	1,450,000	670	2				1,450,000
Sumas	<i>Sumas Ave Reconstruction</i>	R	1,375,000	646	3			1,375,000	
Whatcom	<i>Lakeway Dr - COB to Cable St Pavement Rehabilitation</i>	UM	1,250,000	626	4	1,250,000			
Lummi	<i>Slater Rd and Ferndale Rd Intersection</i>	R	350,000	587	5				
Whatcom	<i>Everson Goshen Rd and E Smith Rd Intersection Improvements</i>	R	1,250,000	559	6				
Whatcom	<i>Lincoln Rd II, Reconstruction and New Road</i>	US	350,000	542	7				
TA - All Projects Ranked						FFY 27-29 Funds Available			
						Urban Medium	Urban Small	Rural	Any Area
Sponser	Project	Area	Amount Request	Total Points	Overall Rank	1,050,000	320,000	265,000	835,000
Everson	<i>SR 544 S. Everson Sidewalk Improvements</i>	R	1,100,000	65	1			265,000	685,000
Lynden	<i>Liberty St Sidewalk Gap Removal Project</i>	US	636,640	58	2		320,000		150,000
Whatcom	<i>Lakeway Dr - COB to Cable St Pavement Rehabilitation</i>	UM	250,000	52	3	250,000			
Bellingham	<i>Meridian/Birchwood Transportation Improvements, Phase 2</i>	UM	TBD	50	4	800,000			

TTAG Allocation notes:

- Bellingham and Whatcom agree to split the available Urban Medium Area STBG and TA funds (with \$50k additional for Bellingham).
- Everson and Lynden agree to split of Any Area TA funds between Everson Sidewalks and Liberty projects

**SUGGESTED MOTION:** “Approve allocation of FFY 2027 – 2029 regional STBG and TA program funds as recommended by the Whatcom TTAG.”



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## Memo

**To:** Whatcom Transportation Policy Board  
**From:** Lethal Coe, Principal Planner  
**Date:** July 5, 2023  
**Subject:** Certification review of 2023 Transportation Element update

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As the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the Whatcom County region, the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) Policy Board is required by state law ([RCW 47.80.023](#) Sec. 3) to certify that the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties and cities in the region conform with state Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements and are consistent with the RTPO's regional transportation plan.

Additionally, the *WCOG Development and Evaluation Process for Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements* requires re-certification of transportation elements when they are substantively amended. WCOG certified the City of Ferndale's current transportation element in 2017.

The City of Ferndale's draft transportation element amendments (planned for adoption in August, 2023) consist of the following changes that pertain to the regional transportation system:

- Change Level of Service for signalized intersections from C to D, and for unsignalized intersections from D to E.
- Remove their local concurrency requirement for Slater Rd corridor (small segment west of interchange where travel through it is predominately regional).
- Revise projects list to remove completed projects, add new projects, and re-estimate financial projections.

**WCOG staff review of Ferndale's draft, amended transportation element finds that the element would still be consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan and conformity to GMA requirements.**

**Suggested Policy Board Action:**

Certify the pending amendment of the City of Ferndale's Comprehensive Plan transportation element.



## MEMO

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board  
From: Lethal Coe, Principal Planner  
Date: June 30, 2023  
Subject: Request to transfer regional STBG funding

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### **Previous Policy Board action to transfer funding for City of Bellingham**

The City of Bellingham received notice in April that their existing project submission for a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) permit is no longer valid due to updated regulatory requirements. Redoing the NEPA permit application to the new standard could take two years.

Advancing this project is critical to meeting our regional, obligations-delivery target for 2023. In May, the WCOG Policy Board approved the request to transfer \$1,000,000, or half of the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds awarded to *James/Bakerview Intersection Improvements*, to *Telegraph Rd Multimodal Improvements*.

Bellingham has successfully obligated the construction phase for *Telegraph Rd Multimodal Improvements* to keep our region on track to meet its annual project-delivery requirement.

### **With permitting delay confirmed, Bellingham chooses to defederalize the project**

The City of Bellingham has exhausted opportunities to expedite the full NEPA permitting process without success. Because this project ranks highest on Bellingham's priorities to advance alongside *Telegraph Rd Multimodal Safety Improvement*, the city has chosen to defederalize the project and instead use local funding. The project will be constructed under the same design standards and mitigations required under the *original* preliminary engineering and NEPA permit requirements.

### **TTAG recommendation for City of Bellingham's request**

The WCOG Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) convened on June 28<sup>th</sup>, discussed the Bellingham circumstances, and has provided a recommendation to the WCOG Policy Board to approve the following action for the City of Bellingham:

- Transfer the remaining \$1,000,000 of STBG funds from *James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction* project to the *Meridian-Birchwood Roundabout Phase 1*. This will increase available STBG funding for *Meridian-Birchwood Roundabout Phase 1* to \$3.5 million. Construction phase is currently scheduled for 2025.

#### **Suggested Policy Board Action:**

Approve the transfer of regional STBG funds for the City of Bellingham as presented.



## MEMORANDUM

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board  
From: Lethal Coe, Principal Planner  
Date: June 30, 2023  
Subject: WCOG 2023 TIP Amendment

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**Amendment #4 (23-07)** of the WCOG 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes the following:

1. Add City of Lynden project *Bradley Road Safe Routes Pedestrian Improvements* that was awarded by Moving Ahead Washington to construct bike lanes and ADA compliant sidewalks adjacent to Lynden High School. The total project cost is estimated for \$3 million. Preliminary engineering is scheduled to begin later this year and construction is planned for 2025.
2. Amend City of Bellingham project *Meador Avenue/Whatcom Creek Bridge* to increase the construction phase funds by \$2,346,009. This project is funded with Federal Bridge program and is speedily preparing for construction obligation late summer/early Fall 2023.
3. Amend City of Bellingham project *James Street/Whatcom Creek Bridge* to increase the construction phase funds by \$2,481,232. This project is funded with Federal Bridge program and is speedily preparing for construction obligation late summer/early Fall 2023.
4. Amend WSDOT project *I-5/Tributaries to Friday, Lake & Chuckanut Creeks - Fish Passage* to increase phase funding for preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction. The project is funded through the WA Motor Vehicle Account and Coronavirus State Recovery Fund.
5. [Pending policy board action] Remove City of Bellingham project *James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction*. The project is currently federally funded through Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and regional Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding. COB has moved forward to defederalize the project through WSDOT Local Programs.
6. [Pending policy board action] Move the City of Bellingham project *Meridian-Birchwood Roundabout Phase 1* from a 2026 to 2027 construction year for the remainder of the 2023 TIP/STIP program and add the \$1 mil of STBG funding transferred from *James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction*. This will remove the project from the four-year fiscal constraints that is currently overprogrammed due to the lower-than-anticipated STBG and TA allocation in 2023. The lower-than-anticipated STBG-TA allocation is currently expected to continue in 2024. (Note that we currently do not estimate that this will affect the advancement of STBG-TA projects.) The *Meridian-Birchwood Roundabout Phase 1* project will be brought back into the 2024 TIP/STIP with the full \$3.5 million of STBG allocation with planned construction year 2025.



Formal TIP Amendments require review and resolution from the Policy Board to amend the current TIP and make federal funding accessible.

**Suggested Policy Board Action:**

Approve Amendment #4 of the Whatcom Council of Governments 2023 Transportation Improvement Program.

**WCOG TIP Amendment #4 (23-07) Table**

#	Agency	Project Title	Amended TIP Action	Added Funds	Total Cost	Source
1	Lynden	<i>Bradley Road Safe Routes Pedestrian Improvements</i>	Add new project	3,000,000	3,000,000	MAW
2	Bellingham	<i>Meador Avenue/Whatcom Creek Bridge</i>	Increase construction funding	2,346,009	6,229,885	Bridge
3	Bellingham	<i>James Street/Whatcom Creek Bridge</i>	Increase construction funding	2,481,232	6,365,108	Bridge
4	WSDOT	<i>I-5/Tributaries to Friday, Lake &amp; Chuckanut Creeks - Fish Passage</i>	Increase program funding all phases	39,239,932	61,039,781	MVA, CSRF
5	Bellingham	<i>James/Bakerview Intersection Reconstruction</i>	Remove project	4,050,000	4,050,000	HSIP, STBG
6	Bellingham	<i>Meridian-Birchwood Roundabout Phase 1</i>	Remove project	7,000,000	7,000,000	STBG

**Recent or Upcoming Administrative Modifications** - Administrative modifications are less substantial project changes and are administered by WCOG staff. [No Policy Board Action Required for the following Administrative Modifications](#)

Agency	Project	Modification Administered	Total Costs	Source
Whatcom	<i>North Lake Samish Drive Bridge No. 107 Replacement</i>	Add \$2.56 million of Bridge funding and reduce local funds by \$258k	\$13.5 mil	Federal Bridge
Everson	<i>Blair Dr Improvements</i>	Add \$58,459 to PE phase	\$2.08 mil	STBG