



Meeting of the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board

Wednesday, March 13, 2024, **3:00 p.m.** (starts 30 min. earlier than usual)

Gordon W. Rogers Conference Room

314 East Champion Street, Bellingham, Washington

Join using **Zoom** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86920031112>

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)
- 2-3 D. **Approval of the Minutes** -- Meeting of January 17, 2024*
- E. **Old Business** (if any)
- 4-5 F. **Public Hearing: Amendment #2 (24-03)** of the WCOG 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
 - 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*
- G. **New Business** (if any other)
- H. **Obligation Status Update** – Lethal Coe
- I. **Director’s Report** – Hugh Conroy
- J. **Correspondence** (if any)
- K. **Board Open Forum** * Action item
- L. **Adjourn**

3:30 – 5:30 PM: Review of WCOG’s Organization and Work Plan (optional)

Staff overview and board-member discussion. This is intended as an introduction for new board members of WCOG’s roles and responsibilities, a refresher and review of 2024 priorities for all board members, and a chance for members to consider new strategies to advance shared, regional goals. **Attendance in person is strongly encouraged for this session.** Snacks and refreshments will be provided.

Persons with disabilities needing a special accommodation for this meeting should contact the WCOG office at (360) 676-6974, at least six (6) days prior to the meeting to receive assistance. Para asistencia en español, por favor enviar un correo electrónico a espanol@wco.org.

DRAFT Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
Minutes
January 17, 2024

In Attendance (In-person or via Zoom)

Members *Voting:* **Bellingham:** Kim Lund, Edwin “Skip” Williams; **Everson:** John Perry;
Ferndale: Greg Hansen (2nd Vice Chair); **Lummi Nation:** Jim Washington; **Lynden:**
Scott Korthuis (Chair); **Nooksack:** Kevin Hester; **Sumas:** Bruce Bosch; **Whatcom**
County: Satpal Sidhu, Kaylee Galloway. **WSDOT:** Chris Damitio, Justin Resnick;

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

Others **Lummi Nation:** Kirk Vinish; **McBride Public Affairs:** Tom McBride, Intisar Benge;
Whatcom Transportation Authority, Les Reardanz; **WSDOT:** John Schambaugh

A. **Call to Order**

Hugh Conroy determined that there was a quorum, and Chair Korthuis called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

B. **Public Comment**

None

C. **Agenda Additions**

None

D. **Approval of Minutes of** October 11, 2023

Motion: Mr. May moved, second by Mr. Sidhu, to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 11, 2023, as presented. **Motion passed.** Ms. Lund abstained.

E. **Old Business**

None

F. **Public Hearing: Amendment #1 (24-01) of the WCOG 2024 Transportation Improvement Program.**

Mr. Coe presented the requested amendments to the TIP.

Mr. Korthuis opened the public hearing at 3:47. No members of the public being present, the public hearing was closed at 3:47.

Pertaining to the TIP amendment requested for the project, “Elevate Slater Road,” Mr. Sidhu asked to pose a question to Mr. Vinish. Mr. Sidhu noted that Whatcom County has long been concerned that the elevation of Slater Road should not be independently evaluated/designed within the larger, hydrologically connected area and the roadways (e.g. Marine Drive) and public infrastructure (e.g. future jail) within that area. Mr. Sidhu asked for a meeting between Lummi Nation, Whatcom County, and City of Ferndale to discuss the needs and strategy for a holistic evaluation.

Mr. Vinish responded that he agreed completely with the value of this kind of meeting. Also, the need for a bridge replacement and the shared concerns about Marine Drive further support the need for this broader discussion. Mr. Vinish noted that legal counsel for Lummi Nation and Whatcom County have already been working on an agreement (or MoU?) to facilitate this. Kirk noted that he would share Mr. Sidhu’s concerns with the Lummi Nation Chair.

Mr. Sidhu concluded by noting the availability of federal funds for many of these related needs and how requesting these funds in partnership between the county, Ferndale, and Lummi Nation could be good for everyone.

Motion: Mr. Hansen seconded by Mr. Sidhu. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

G. **New Business**

1. Consideration of adopting state-wide roadway safety targets.

Mr. Conroy presented the background of the requirement to annually affirm alignment with the state's adopted roadway safety performance targets. Several questions and suggestions were discussed including an interest in seeing regional fatal crashes broken out by cause(s) (Ms. Lund), interest in better understanding what's been causing worrisome increases in fatal crashes over the last several years (Mr. Sidhu), and ideas about conferring with Canadian transportation agencies to understand why other countries' trends have not been similar (Mr. Scanlon). Mr. Damitio explained WSDOT and others' implementation of a safe-systems approach (in line with USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy).

Motion: Mr. Hansen seconded by Mr. Bosch motioned to approve the resolution aligning with the state's 2024 safety targets and committing to planning and programming of projects so that they contribute to the accomplishment of the targets. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

2. Consideration of amending WCOG's 2024 UPWP

Mr. Conroy presented a brief background on WCOG's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), what circumstances require its amendment, and the recent funding provided to WCOG by WSDOT to conduct work to improve measurement, forecasting, and target setting for vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Mr. Conroy then reviewed the new section proposed for addition to the current UPWP to be considered by the board as an amendment.

Motion: Mr. Hansen seconded by Mr. Sidhu motioned to approve the amendment to the UPWP as presented. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

I. **Obligation Status Update**

Mr. Coe presented the current federal funds obligation status for programmed projects.

J. **Director's Report**

Mr. Conroy noted that, as discussed over the last several months, WCOG is hiring an entry level planner. Fifteen applications were received and strong candidates are in the mix. Staff is proceeding with five interviews over the next week.

K. **Correspondence**

None

L. **Board Open Forum**

None

Hugh Conroy
Secretary

Approved January 17, 2023



Memorandum

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
From: Lethal Coe, Principal Planner
Date: March 7, 2024
Subject: WCOG 2024 TIP Amendment

Amendment #2 (24-03) of the WCOG 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes the following:

1. Amend WSDOT project *SR 539/Baker Creek – Fish Passage* to edit begin and end mileposts, add right-of-way (RW) phase, and add federal National Highway Performance Program funds to the construction (CN) phase. Construction is planned to begin in 2024.
2. Amend WSDOT project *I-5/Baker Creek & Spring Creek – Fish Passage* project to update begin and end mileposts, add right-of-way phase, and add federal National Highway Performance Program funds to the construction phase. Construction is planned to begin in 2024.
3. Amend WTA program (#136) for the replacement of fixed route buses. WTA was awarded federal 5339 funds through the "Low-No Program" for 2023. The 5339 funds will replace a portion of the 5307 funds. The hybrid bus replacements cost increased from \$11.3 million to \$14.6 million.
4. [pending WSDOT review] Amend City of Bellingham project *Meridian-Birchwood Roundabout Phase 1* to move regional Surface Transportation Block Grant funds from the construction phase that is currently outside of the four-year fiscal constrained program, to the preliminary engineering phase up to \$900,000. The total amount of funds for preliminary engineering is \$1.05 million.

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 #2 of the Whatcom Council of Governments 2024 Transportation Improvement Program.

WCOG TIP Amendment #2 (24-03) Table

#	Agency	Project Title	Amended TIP Action	Added Funds	Total Cost	Source
1	WSDOT	<i>SR 539/Baker Creek - Fish Passage</i>	Add federal funds and modify CN phase cost, add RW phase, adjust termini	-1,701,535	20,431,485	NHPP, MVA, MAW
2	WSDOT	<i>I-5/Baker Creek & Spring Creek - Fish Passage</i>	Add federal funds and modify CN phase cost, add RW phase, adjust termini	-3,020,929	34,371,018	NHPP, MVA, MAW
3	WTA	<i>Replace Fixed Route Buses</i>	Add 5339 funds to replace portion of 5307 funds and increase cost	3,241,566	14,588,466	5307, 5339
4	Bellingham	<i>Meridian-Birchwood Roundabout Phase 1</i>	Add STBG funds to PE phase.	1,050,000	7,000,000	STBG, CRP

Recent or Upcoming Administrative Modifications - Administrative modifications are less substantial project changes and are administered by WCOG staff. [No Policy Board Actions are required.](#)

Agency	Project	Modification Administered	Total Costs	Source