



WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 3:30 p.m.

Gordon W. Rogers Conference Room
314 East Champion Street
Bellingham, Washington

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. AGENDA APPROVAL*
- 3-6 D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES*
Meeting of January 22, 2020
- E. OLD BUSINESS (if any)
- 7-10 F. PUBLIC HEARING
Amendment No. 2003 to the 2020 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program
 1. Staff Presentation – Lethal Coe
 2. Open Public Hearing – Citizens may address the Board on the subject of the hearing *for a maximum of three minutes.*
 3. Close Public Hearing*
 4. Board Discussion and Vote*
- 11 G. NEW BUSINESS
 1. Allocation of Funds to Ensure 2020 Obligation Target Delivery – Mr. Coe*
 - 12-13 2. Anticipated Amendments to Whatcom Mobility 2040 – Hugh Conroy
 3. Legislative Update – Tom Parker, Tom McBride and Intisar Suror
 4. Other new business (if any)
- H. OBLIGATION STATUS UPDATE – Mr. Coe
- I. PLANNING DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Mr. Conroy
- 14 J. CORRESPONDENCE
- K. BOARD OPEN FORUM
- L. ADJOURN

* Action item



Notice to the Public Regarding Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

WCOG hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the agency to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, Executive Order 13166 on Limited English Proficiency, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which WCOG receives federal financial assistance.

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with WCOG. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with the WCOG Title VI Coordinator within one-hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. Title VI Discrimination Complaint Forms may be obtained from the WCOG at no cost and are available on WCOG's website.

Aviso al Público Sobre Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964

Por medio de la presente, el WCOG notifica de manera pública que la política del organismo es garantizar el pleno cumplimiento del Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, la Ley de Recuperación de Derechos Civiles de 1987, el Decreto Presidencial 12898 sobre Justicia Ambiental, el Decreto Presidencial 13166 sobre Dominio Limitado del Idioma Inglés, así como los estatutos y reglamentos relacionados en todos los programas y actividades. De acuerdo con lo estipulado en el Título VI, ningún individuo de los Estados Unidos de América deberá, con fundamento en su raza, color, sexo o nacionalidad, ser excluido de participar en, que se le nieguen los beneficios de, o ser víctima de discriminación en virtud de cualquier programa o actividad por el cual el WCOG reciba fondos federales.

Toda persona que se considere agraviada por una práctica discriminatoria e ilícita en virtud del Título VI tiene derecho a presentar una denuncia formal ante el WCOG. Cualquier denuncia de este tipo debe presentarse por escrito ante el coordinador del Título VI del WCOG en un periodo de 180 días naturales a partir de la fecha de la presunta discriminación. El WCOG pone a disposición del público los formularios de denuncia del Título VI de manera gratuita en su página web.

WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
MINUTES – DRAFT
JANUARY 22, 2020

IN ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS VOTING: Scott Korthuis (Chairman), Kathy Kershner (1st Vice-Chairwoman) and Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County; Seth Fleetwood (2nd Vice-Chairman) and Pinky Vargas, Bellingham; Bonnie Onyon, Blaine; Greg Hansen, Ferndale; Tom Jones, Nooksack; Todd Carlson (for Jay Drye), WSDOT; Michael Lilliquist, WTA; EX-OFFICIO: None

GUESTS Hollie Huthman, Bellingham City Council; Guy Occhiogrosso, Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce; Jon Hutchings, Whatcom County; Pete Stark, WTA

STAFF Bob Wilson (Secretary), Rob Cubellis, Hugh Conroy, Lethal Coe

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Korthuis called the meeting to order at 3:39 p.m. with a quorum present.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

C. AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION: Mr. Lilliquist moved, Mr. Fleetwood seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION PASSED

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 9, 2019

MOTION: Mr. Sidhu moved, Mr. Hansen seconded, to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 9, 2019.

MOTION PASSED (Ms. Kershner and Ms. Vargas abstained)

E. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

F. PUBLIC HEARING

Amending the 2020 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Coe directed the representatives' attention to the memo contained in the meeting packet, and then described the proposed amendments to the 2020 TIP:

1. Add Whatcom County project *Horizontal Alignment Advisory Speed Review*, which is funded by the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) to evaluate curve advisory speeds throughout the region. Project cost is \$110,800 and will begin in 2020.
2. Add Blaine project *ADA Transition Plan Development* that will determine how and where to create ADA-compliant pedestrian access throughout the City. This project is funded by the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) in the amount of \$100,000 and will begin in 2020.
3. Add Blaine project *Peace Portal Community Trail, Phase 3* to continue the multi-modal path along Peace Portal Drive³ from Hughes Avenue to Bell Road. This project is funded through TAP in the amount of \$356,351 and will begin in 2020.
4. Remove Port of Bellingham project *Harris Avenue Crossing*. Funding has been obligated and the project is underway.
5. Remove WSDOT project *NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19, Phase 2*. WSDOT has re-prioritized where breakaway cable terminals should be installed, with top priority now interstate highways. Whatcom County locations not on Interstate 5 will be addressed in the future.
6. Remove WSDOT project *NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19, Phase 2*. This project will be replaced by Project No. 7 (below), which will complete the Phase 2 construction with new locations and contracts.
7. Add WSDOT project *NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19, Phase 2*, that includes Phase 2 construction. Construction is funded with \$18,207 of HSIP funds and will begin in 2020.

Mr. Coe then answered questions posed by the representatives.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 3:53 P.M.

No public comment was received.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 3:53 P.M. BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOTION: Mr. Lilliquist moved, Ms. Kershner seconded, to approve Amendment No. 2001 to the 2020 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program.

MOTION PASSED

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. Citizens' Transportation Advisory Group Appointment

MOTION: Ms. Onyon moved, Mr. Jones seconded, to appoint Ted Morris to the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Group as an at-large member.

MOTION PASSED

2. WCOG Alignment with WSDOT 2020 Safety Targets

Mr. Conroy explained the need for the Policy Board to adopt the State's transportation safety targets annually. He then answered questions posed by the representatives.

MOTION: Ms. Kershner moved, Mr. Sidhu seconded, to adopt Whatcom Transportation Policy Board Resolution No. 2020-01, "Adopting Statewide Safety Performance Targets," and agreeing to plan and program projects that will contribute to the accomplishment of Washington's Highway Safety Improvement Program, known as Target Zero.

MOTION PASSED

3. Adopt 2020 Cost Allocation Plan

MOTION: Mr. Lilliquist moved, Ms. Kershner seconded, to approve the Whatcom Council of Governments' 2020 Cost Allocation Plan, as presented.

MOTION PASSED

4. WSDOT Presentation: Fish Passage

Mr. Carlson made a presentation explaining the challenges faced by WSDOT as a result of the Supreme Court decision mandating the removal of fish passage barriers. He then answered questions posed by the representatives.

H. OBLIGATION STATUS UPDATE

Mr. Coe briefed the Board on the region's current obligation status of federal transportation funds.

I. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Conroy briefed the Board on current and upcoming transportation planning activities.

J. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

K. BOARD OPEN FORUM

No comments were offered.

L. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Robert H. Wilson, AICP
Secretary

DRAFT



MEMORANDUM

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
From: Lethal Coe, Senior Planner
Date: March 4, 2020
Subject: WCOG 2020 TIP Amendments and Administrative Modifications

Amendment #2 (20-03) of the 2018 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes the following:

1. Amend Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) project *Replace Fixed Route Diesel Buses* that reduces the replacement of buses from 14 to 8 buses for a total updated cost of \$4.8 million.
2. Remove Bellingham project *West Horton Road, Phase 1* construction that was obligated in 2019.
3. Remove Whatcom County's *Lummi Island Breakwater Replacement and Lummi Island Terminal Preservation Project*. Projects obligated in 2019.
4. Add Bellingham project *James Street/Whatcom Creek Bridge* that has been awarded through federal Bridge program. The total cost is \$4.52 million and anticipates obligation in early 2022.
5. Add Bellingham project *Meador Avenue/Whatcom Creek Bridge* that has been awarded through federal Bridge program. The total cost is \$4.52 million and anticipates obligation in early 2022.
6. Add Whatcom County project *North Lake Samish Drive Bridge No. 107 Replacement* that has been awarded through the federal Bridge program. The total cost is \$8.99 million and construction will begin in 2021.
7. Add Whatcom County project *Goshen Road / Anderson Creek Bridge No. 248 Replacement* project that has also been awarded through the federal Bridge program. The total cost is \$4.07 million and construction will begin in 2022.

The following four projects pending Policy Board STBG allocation approval

1. Add past projects; Everson *Lincoln St Improvements Phase 1 & 2* to program additional \$100 thousand of regional Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds.
2. Add past project; Lynden *Riverview Rd Gap Elimination* to program additional \$92 thousand of regional STBG funds.
3. Add past project; Blaine *Hughes Ave Reconstruction* to program additional \$279 thousand of regional STBG funds.
4. Add past project; Whatcom *Birch Bay Dr & Pedestrian Facility* to program additional \$279 thousand of regional STBG funds.

From January 22nd WTPB Amendment #1 (20-01). The following projects did not receive public notice through the Bellingham Herald.

1. Add Whatcom County project *Horizontal Alignment Advisory Speed Review* that will utilize recently awarded federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funds to evaluate curve advisory speeds throughout Whatcom County. The project cost is \$110,800 and will begin 2020.
2. Add Blaine project *ADA Transition Plan Development* that will determine how and where to create ADA compliant pedestrian access throughout Blaine. This project is funded through federal Transportation Alternatives program with a cost of \$100,000 and will begin in 2020.
3. Add Blaine project *Peace Portal Community Trail Phase 3* to continue the multi-modal path connection along Peace Portal Dr from Hughes Ave to the Bell Rd intersection. This project is funded through federal Transportation Alternatives program with a cost of \$356,351 and will begin in 2020.
4. Remove Port of Bellingham *Harris Ave Crossing*. Project funds obligated and is underway.
5. Remove WSDOT project *NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement – Non-Interstate 17-19 (phase 2)*. The breakaway cable terminals have been reprioritized with the interstates receiving top priority. The non-interstate, Whatcom County locations, will be addressed at a future date currently unspecified.
6. Remove WSDOT project *NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19 (Phase 2)*. This project will be replaced by project (7.) that will complete the phase 2 construction with new locations and contract.
7. Add WSDOT project *NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19 (Phase 2)* that includes phase 2 construction. Construction is funded through Highway Safety Improvement Program funds with a cost of \$18,207 and will begin 2020.

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

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve Amendment #2 for the Whatcom Council of Governments 2020 Transportation Improvement Program.

Whatcom Council of Governments
2020 Transportation Improvement Program

Amendment #2 (20-03) Table

#	Agency	Project Title	Amended Action	Added Funds \$	Total Costs \$	Fed Source
1	WTA	<i>Replace Fixed Route Diesel Buses</i>	Reduce funding	-3,320,000	4,800,000	FTA 5307
2	Bellingham	<i>West Horton Road, Phase 1</i>	Remove Project	-4,333,000	5,412,000	STBG(US)
3	Whatcom	<i>Lummi Island Breakwater Replacement and Lummi Island Terminal Preservation Project</i>	Remove projects	-920,000	920,000	Bridge
4	Bellingham	<i>James Street/Whatcom Creek Bridge</i>	Add new project	4,522,152	4,522,152	Bridge
5	Bellingham	<i>Meador Avenue/Whatcom Creek Bridge</i>	Add new project	4,522,152	4,522,152	Bridge
6	Whatcom	<i>North Lake Samish Drive Bridge No. 107 Replacement</i>	Add new project	8,997,310	8,997,310	Bridge
7	Whatcom	<i>Goshen Road / Anderson Creek Bridge No. 248 Replacement</i>	Add new project	4,069,960	4,069,960	Bridge

Pending Policy Board STBG allocation approval

#	Agency	Project Title	Amended Action	Added Funds \$	Total Costs \$	Fed Source
1	Everson	<i>Lincoln St Improvements Ph 1 & 2</i>	Add Project	115,607	3,849,746	STBG (R)
2	Lynden	<i>Riverview Rd Gap Elimination</i>	Add Project	106,000	3,001,577	STBG (US)
3	Blaine	<i>Hughes Ave Reconstruction</i>	Add Project	322,543	2,119,337	STBG (US)
4	Whatcom	<i>Birch Bay Dr & Pedestrian Facility</i>	Add Project	322,543	8,243,000	STBG (US)

From January 22nd WTPB Amendment:

#	Agency	Project Title	Amended Action	Added Funds \$	Total Costs \$	Fed Source
1	Whatcom	<i>Horizontal Alignment Advisory Speed Review</i>	Add new project	110,800	110,800	HSIP
2	Blaine	<i>ADA Transition Plan Development</i>	Add project	100,000	100,000	TA

3	Blaine	<i>Peace Portal Community Trail Phase 3</i>	Add project	356,351	356,351	TA
4	Port of Bellingham	<i>Harris Ave Crossing</i>	Remove project	-614,946	762,029	HSIP
5	WSDOT	<i>NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19 (Phase 2)</i>	Remove project	-13,356	13,356	HSIP
6	WSDOT	<i>NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19 (Phase 2)</i>	Remove project	-28,478	28,478	HSIP
7	WSDOT	<i>NWR Breakaway Cable Terminal Replacement 17-19 (Phase 2)</i>	Add new project	18,207	18,207	HSIP

No Policy Board Action Required for Administrative Modifications

Recent Administrative Modifications - administrative modifications are less substantial project changes and are administered by WCOG staff.

Agency	Project	Modification Administered	Total Costs	Federal Source
WTA	<i>Replace Full-size Diesel Buses</i>	Funds and buses replaced reduced	5,761,000	5307
WTA	<i>Replace Paratransit Mini Buses</i>	Funds and buses replaced reduced	1,194,000	5307



MEMO

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
From: Lethal Coe, Senior Planner
Date: March 4, 2020
Subject: Request to allocate funds to ensure 2020 obligation target delivery

Current Obligation Short-fall Status

Each year the Whatcom region is assigned by WSDOT an obligations target to ensure regionally funded projects are delivered in a timely fashion. The annual obligations target is calculated to equal the region's annual allocation of federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds and accounts for obligations over/under delivery from the previous year. After a couple of successful years exceeding our obligations target, our region is currently projected to obligate short of our 2020 target by nearly \$750,000. A major reason for this is the de-obligation of Bellingham's *Mahogany Ave* project of nearly \$710,000 that came sooner than expected.

Beyond 2020 our region is well positioned to obligate projects at or well above our anticipated annual targets. Ensuring our region continues to deliver our annual obligation targets consistently has the following benefits:

- a. Qualifies for the opportunity to receive redistributed funds (from other states who missed their statewide obligation targets)
- b. Qualifies for the opportunity to receive reallocated funds (from other regions who missed their obligation targets)
- c. Avoids sanctioned STBG funds and retains qualifications for both a. and b.

TTAG Recommendation

On February 27th the WCOG Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) discussed and has recommended to the Policy Board the allocation of \$750,000 to recent TIP/STIP programmed projects funded through the regional STBG program that can quickly obligate funds by this year's August 1st deadline. The following projects have been identified with amounts agreed to assist their completion:

Jurisdiction	Project	STBG Amount
Everson	<i>Lincoln St Improvements Phase 1 & 2</i>	\$100,000
Lynden	<i>Riverview Rd Gap Elimination</i>	\$92,000
Blaine	<i>Hughes Ave Reconstruction</i>	\$279,000
Whatcom	<i>Birch Bay Dr & Ped Facility</i>	\$279,000

Suggested Policy Board Action

Approve the allocation of \$750,000 of regional STBG funds necessary to deliver the 2020 obligation target to the selected projects identified through TTAG and the amounts as shown.



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Memo

To: Whatcom MPO/RTPO Transportation Policy Board (WTPB)
Date: March 4, 2020
From: Hugh Conroy, Director of Planning *HC*
Subject: Considering amendments to the regional/metropolitan transportation plan (R/MTP),
Whatcom Mobility 2040 – for possible action in May, 2020.

Introduction

The Whatcom planning area's regional/metropolitan transportation plan (R/MTP), [Whatcom Mobility 2040](#), was last updated and approved by the Policy Board in 2017. In 2019, the Policy Board approved amendments (additions and deletions) to the plan's 20-year list of regional projects.

In response to recent regional planning as well as continuing state and local policy discussions, WCOG staff is recommending that two types of R/MTP amendments be considered by the Policy Board for possible action at the next Policy Board meeting in May – 1) additions to the regional project list and 2) re-ordering and clarification of the Whatcom planning area's transportation goals.

Additions to the regional project list

Like the 2019 amendments, the impetus for considering an amendment now is to align the regional-plan project list (approved by WCOG's MPO *Policy Board*) with project-funding needs recently submitted to the state legislature by WCOG's *Council Board*. As part of this process, WCOG staff would work with the TTAG to compile a list of desired additions (or other project list changes) for Policy Board consideration. Currently, project funding requests approved by the Council Board that are not in the current R/MTP include:

- State Route 547 Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Trail (Whatcom County, WSDOT)
- Duffner Ditch Culvert Replacement (Lynden)
- Slater Road & Bridge raising (Lummi Nation, Whatcom County)
- Operating funds for Intercounty Connector transit service (Whatcom Transportation Authority)

Reordering and clarification of the Whatcom planning area's regional transportation goals

The regional goals for WCOG's Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) were listed in 2017 as part of the five-year update of the R/MTP. Seven goals were identified and prioritized by reviewing the local transportation goals listed by WCOG's member jurisdictions in the transportation elements of their comprehensive plans. This produced a list of *regionally shared* goals sorted by frequency of adoption (table below).

While local comprehensive plans cite public involvement such as community visioning workshops when discussing how goals were identified, most of these events took place over 20 years ago. While the seven goals, individually, are likely still reflective of the high-level outcomes our region wants from investments in transportation, recent policy and community discussions at the state and local level indicate current emphases that may not match the current *priority order* of WCOG's regional goals.

Two of WCOG's regional transportation goals that illustrate the appropriateness of a review at this time are **preservation** (keeping key elements of the transportation system in a state of good repair) and **environmental quality** (especially to the extent that climate change continues to be elevated as a cause for action).

Over the last decade (at least) the state of existing transportation infrastructure has been an ever-growing concern with a growing backlog of needed investments. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has also been recently urging regional partners to consider how they might support the state's increasing focus on addressing system preservation – one of Washington's legislative transportation policy goals.

The urgency of addressing climate change continues to grow in public discourse but has also been increasingly addressed in policy and action at the local level in Whatcom County. Multiple bills in the state legislature also propose to more clearly link climate action goals to transportation investment choices.

WCOG’s goals as currently listed and an example of reprioritization and clarification.

The three tables below illustrate the type of modification that WCOG staff is recommending the Policy Board consider and possibly formulate for a R/MTP amendment in May. The three illustrative tables were reviewed with the TTAG in February and include feedback from that discussion.

Current Whatcom Region R/MTP Goals		→	Reordered & straight rank		→	Naming clarity	
1	Safety		1	Safety		1	Safety
2	Efficiency, Effectiveness, & System Sustainability		2	Environmental Quality <i>(inclusive of climate change)</i>		2	Climate (GHG reduction) & Environmental Quality
	Environmental Quality		3	Maintenance & Preservation		3	Preservation <i>(inclusive of sustainability)</i>
	A Multimodal Transportation System		?	Efficiency, Effectiveness, & System Sustainability		?	Mobility <i>(all modes & emphasis on trip capacity)</i>
3	Access & Convenience		?	A Multimodal Transportation System		?	Multimodal System
4	Maintenance & Preservation		?	Access & Convenience		?	Access
	Freight Transportation		?	Freight Transportation		?	Freight Transportation

The current goals are ranked in four bands – in descending order of how many local comprehensive plans identified the goal.

The above **reordering** example

- Changes to a straight ranking of all seven goals,
- Moves environmental quality to a clear second,
- Moves preservation from the fourth band to a clear third.

Possible **clarifications** could include

- Including climate action in the name of the goal,
- Renaming “Efficiency, Effectiveness and System Sustainability” to Mobility (pertaining to all modes and focused on trip capacity rather than vehicle capacity),
- The “System Sustainability” component is covered as part of preservation.

Next steps

WCOG staff seeks direction from the Policy Board regarding the above R/MTP amendment topics.

1. Should staff proceed with developing a list of project-list amendments for consideration for action in May?
2. Should staff proceed with development of a proposal for an amendment to the regional transportation policy goals?



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March 3, 2020

Mr. Victor Waldron
Federal Transit Administration
Office of Program Management
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Waldron:

I am writing to express the Whatcom Council of Governments' support for the Whatcom Transportation Authority's (WTA's) request to purchase three electric buses and electric charging facilities through FTA's Low or No Emission Bus Program.

Transit service provided by WTA is a critical component of Whatcom County's multi-modal transportation network. In addition to providing affordable mobility to thousands of our region's residents, WTA transit contributes significantly in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the region. The addition of more electric buses to WTA's fleet – which is included in the project list of *Whatcom Mobility 2040*, the region's adopted long-range transportation plan – will further enhance the environmental benefit of WTA's service.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer WCOG's support for this important funding request.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert H. Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert H. Wilson, AICP
Executive Director

Copies: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
Whatcom Transportation Authority