



WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD  
AGENDA  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016  
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM  
Gordon W. Rogers Conference Room  
314 E. Champion Street  
Bellingham, WA

PAGE

- A. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS
  - B. PUBLIC COMMENT  
During this period of time, citizens may speak informally to the Board on subjects not scheduled for public hearing. EACH SPEAKER IS ALLOWED A MAXIMUM OF THREE MINUTES
  - C. AGENDA APPROVAL – **ACTION ITEM**
  - D. MINUTES  
D.1 Minutes from January 20, 2016 – **ACTION ITEM**
  - E. PUBLIC HEARING  
E.1 Amend the 2016 Whatcom Transportation Improvement Program– **ACTION ITEM**  
Staff Presentation  
Public Hearing Open – During this period of time, citizens may speak to the Board on the subject scheduled for public hearing. EACH SPEAKER IS ALLOWED A MAXIMUM OF THREE MINUTES  
Public Hearing Close  
Board Discussion & Action
  - F. OLD BUSINESS
  - G. NEW BUSINESS  
G.1 Comprehensive Plan Certification Review Guidelines – **ACTION ITEM**
  - H. REPORTS – **INFORMATION ITEM**  
H.1 Planning Director’s Report  
H.2 Whatcom Mobility 2040  
H.3 Legislative Report
  - I. Correspondence  
I. 1 Thoughts for Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Transportation Section – **INFORMATION ITEM**
  - J. BOARD OPEN FORUM
  - K. ADJOURN
- 1 – 3
- 4 – 5
- 6 – 11
- 12 – 14

Persons with disabilities needing special accommodation for this meeting, please contact the WCOG office at (360) 676-6974, 314 East Champion Street, Bellingham, 98225, at least six (6) days prior to this meeting to receive assistance. Para asistencia en español, por favor llame al (360) 676-6974.



WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION  
POLICY BOARD  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 20, 2016

ATTENDANCE

BOARD MEMBERS: Bob Bromley, Tom Jones, Harry Robinson, Rud Browne, Kathy Berg, Terry Bornemann, Kelli Linville, Michael McAuley, Jon Mutchler, Shasta Cano-Martin

GUESTS: Pete Stark, Matt Jensen, Tyler Schroeder, Jon Hutchings, Satpal Sidhu, Bruce Ford, Tom Stacy

STAFF: Bob Wilson, Ron Cubellis, Hugh Conroy, Lethal Coe III, Leslye O'Shaughnessy

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm and introductions were made.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

None received.

C. AGENDA APPROVAL

**MOTION:** Robinson moved, Jones seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

**MOTION PASSED**

D. MINUTES

**MOTION:** Jones moved, Robinson seconded, to approve the minutes from October 14, 2015.

**MOTION PASSED (Browne Abstained)**

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E. OLD BUSINESS

None reported.

F. NEW BUSINESS

None reported.

G. PUBLIC HEARING

Coe stated that the Public Hearing is being held to amend the 2016 Whatcom Transportation Improvement Program to include the following changes:

1. Add WSDOT's Stormwater Pipe Replacement project funded by the Connecting Washington Account. Project will replace several deteriorating pipes along the I-5 / Lake Samish vicinity. Project phases to begin in 2016.
2. Add Whatcom Transit Authority project to replace approximately six paratransit vehicles in 2016

**PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 3:10 pm**

No public comment received.

**MOTION:** Bornemann moved, Jones seconded, to close the Public Hearing.

**MOTION PASSED**

**PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 3:11**

**MOTION:** Linville moved, McAuley seconded, to approve amendment #1 (1601) to the Whatcom Council of Governments' 2016 Transportation Improvement Program.

**MOTION PASSED**

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H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:12 pm.

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Robert Bromley  
Chair

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Robert H. Wilson, AICP  
Executive Director



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## Memorandum

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board  
From: Lethal Coe, Senior Planner  
Date: February 29, 2016  
Subject: WCOG 2016 TIP Amendments and Administrative Modifications

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**Amendment #2 (1603)** of the 2016 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes the following change:

1. Remove City of Bellingham's Bloedel Avenue, Phase 2 project.
2. Amend City of Bellingham's Granary Avenue and Bloedel Avenue project name, description, funding and termini. The project's updated name is Granary Avenue and Laurel Street. The project incorporates the locally funded previous Bloedel Avenue, Phase 2, with additional local funds, into this current federally funded project. The federal Demonstration funds remain unchanged.
3. Amend City of Lynden's Jim Kaemingk Sr. Trail Extension to add awarded State Grant funds of \$291,000. In addition, project phases have been adjusted to match the updated Local Agency Agreement supplement with no changes to original total funding of Transportation Alternative Program and Safe Routes to School.
4. Remove WSDOT project SR 9/Van Zandt – Railroad Crossing Improvements. Construction was obligated in 2015.

Formal TIP Amendments require review and resolution from the Policy Board to amend the current TIP and make federal funding accessible. Administrative Modifications are less substantial project changes than amendments and are administered by WCOG staff.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Approve **Amendment #2 (1603)** to the Whatcom Council of Governments 2016 Transportation Improvement Program

Whatcom Council of Governments  
2016 Transportation Improvement Program

**Amendment 1603 Table**

#	Agency	Project Name	Amended Action	Added Funds \$	Total Costs \$	Fed Source
1	COB	Bloedel Avenue, Phase 2	Remove project	-	1,650,000	(Local)
2	COB	Granary Avenue and Bloedel Avenue	Change project name, description, termini, and adjust costs with additional local funds	-	10,346,400	DEMO
3	Lynden	Jim Kaemingk Sr. Trail Extension	Add State Grant funds and adjust phase allocation	291,000	920,607	SRTS and TAP
4	WSDOT	SR 9/Van Zandt – Railroad Crossing Improvements	Remove project	-	293,561	HSIP

**Current Administrative Modifications - 1603**

Agency	Project	Modification Administered	Total Costs	Federal Source
WSDOT	SR 9/Tawes Creek – Fish Passage	Remove ROW phase obligated in 2015	1,846,524	State - CWA



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## Memo

**To:** Whatcom MPO/RTPO Transportation Policy Board (WTPB)  
**Date:** March 1, 2016  
**From:** Hugh Conroy, Director of Planning *HC*  
**Subject:** Consideration for adoption - WCOG's guidelines and principles document to be used for certification of jurisdictions' comprehensive plan transportation elements.

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### Background

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.

As part of this requirement, state law ([RCW 47.80.026](#)) requires the adoption of "guidelines and principles... that provide specific direction for the development and evaluation of the transportation elements of comprehensive plans." Further, the resulting document is to be developed "with cooperation from component cities, towns, and counties."

In fulfillment of these duties, WCOG staff, with involvement of the Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG), has drafted the attached *Development and Evaluation Process for Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements*.

### Recommendation

At its February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting the Whatcom TTAG voted unanimously to recommend that the Policy Board adopt the WCOG *Development and Evaluation Process for Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements* as drafted (attached).

### Suggested motion

"...that the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board adopts the *Development and Evaluation Process for Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements* as presented in today's meeting packet.



# Whatcom Council of Governments Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO)

## Development and Evaluation Process for Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements

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### Introduction

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.

As part of this requirement, state law ([RCW 47.80.026](#)) requires this document to be developed “with cooperation from component cities, towns, and counties,” to “establish guidelines and principles... that provide specific direction for the development and evaluation of the transportation elements of comprehensive plans.”

In fulfillment of these duties, this *Development and Evaluation Process for Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements* was adopted by the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board on \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

### ***Development of comprehensive plan transportation elements***

Whatcom County and its cities planning under GMA will update transportation elements of their comprehensive plans in accordance with [RCW 36.70A.070](#) (Comprehensive plans – Mandatory elements) Section 6 (Transportation element). As such, plans should be consistent with the adopted RTPO plan and include assessments of consistency with the transportation systems and strategies of adjacent governments and jurisdictions per geography (e.g. Lummi Nation, Nooksack Tribe, Skagit County, and the province of British Columbia).

### ***Evaluation of comprehensive plan transportation elements***

This section introduces the process and checklist that WCOG uses to evaluate and certify that comprehensive plan transportation elements conform with state requirements and are consistent with the currently adopted regional transportation plan.

**Process & timeline**

WCOG will complete its certification review in the following sequence.

Review and certification steps	2016 target dates
<p>1) <b>Staff review:</b> WCOG requests that jurisdictions provide a draft of updated comprehensive plans (at least the transportation element, the land-use element, and associated appendices such as project lists and financial data) 60 days prior to the anticipated adoption date or sooner. Using the transportation element checklist (following section), WCOG staff will complete a preliminary review of each jurisdiction’s transportation element. Any issues will be noted on the checklist form and be reported back to individual jurisdictions for clarification and possible changes.</p>	<p>Jurisdictions provide draft plans to WCOG <b>April 8</b> or sooner.</p>
<p>2) <b>Staff report and TTAG review:</b> Following any changes to preliminary reviews or to transportation elements, WCOG staff will compile a summary report, noting any continuing needs for coordinated attention. This preliminary report will be submitted to the Whatcom Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) for its review, possible modification, and approval. With a finalized report, TTAG will make a recommendation to the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board (WTPB) regarding certification of regional transportation elements.</p>	<p>WCOG drafts report for <b>May 26</b> TTAG meeting. Finalize at <b>June 23</b> TTAG meeting</p>
<p>3) <b>Jurisdictions adopt updated comprehensive plans:</b> If, during the process of adoption, any jurisdictions make substantive changes to the previously reviewed versions, WCOG staff will update the summary report and re-finalize the document with the TTAG. This would likely push out the date of plan certifications by the policy board.</p>	<p>Jurisdictions adopt comprehensive plans by <b>June 30</b>.</p>
<p>4) <b>Whatcom Transportation Policy Board (WTPB) review and action on certification:</b> Following adoption of comprehensive plans by jurisdictions and having received the report and recommendation from TTAG &amp; WCOG staff, the WTPB will consider and take action regarding certification of the individual transportation elements.</p>	<p>Report provided to WTBP for action at its <b>July 13</b> meeting.</p>
<p>5) <b>Certification letters:</b> Following action by the WTPB, a confirmation letter will be sent to each jurisdiction.</p>	<p><b>July.</b></p>

**Findings of nonconformity or inconsistency**

If the WTBP finds that a jurisdiction’s transportation element is nonconforming with state requirements or inconsistent with the regional transportation plan, the WTPB will, at the jurisdiction’s written request, undertake discussions amongst itself or an appointed WTPB subcommittee to resolve the subject issues in a manner that will allow the transportation element to be certified.

### Certification of amendments

Transportation elements will require re-certification if they are substantively amended and when they are next updated.

### Certification checklist

The checklists below will be used to conduct and document the certification of the two, overarching objectives of certification: conformity with the GMA transportation element content requirements and consistency with the adopted regional transportation plan. All checklist items are followed by a notes section for recording things like page citations and short explanations of conclusions.

### Conformity items

1.  The comprehensive plan's transportation element is consistent with the land use element.

Item 1 notes:

2.  Land use assumptions are used to estimate future travel

Item 2 notes:

3.  The transportation element estimates future traffic impacts to state-owned facilities.

Item 3 notes:

4.  The transportation element identifies future facility and services needs.
  - a.  Includes an inventory of existing capital facilities and travel levels as a basis for planning including:
    - i.  Air (including general aviation airport facilities)
    - ii.  Marine
    - iii.  Ground transportation (including transit)
    - iv.  State-owned transportation facilities within the subject jurisdictional boundaries.

Item 4a notes:

- b.  Includes level-of-service standards for all locally owned arterials and transit routes that serve as a system-performance gauge and are regionally coordinated.

Item 4b notes:

- c.  Includes WSDOT's level-of-service standards for highways of statewide significance located in the area covered by the plan.

Item 4c notes:

- d.  Includes actions and requirements for bringing locally owned transportation facilities or services into compliance with an established level-of-service standard.

Item 4d notes:

- e.  Includes forecasts of traffic for at least ten years to provide information on the location, timing, and capacity needs of future growth.

Item 4e notes:

- f.  Identifies state and local system needs to meet current and future demand.
  - i.  Identified needs on state owned facilities are consistent with the statewide multimodal transportation plan.

Item 4f notes:

5. Finance

- a.  Includes an analysis of the capability to fund identified needs.
- b.  Includes a multiyear financing plan that is coordinated and consistent with the ten year investment program developed by the office of financial management.
  - i.  (If expected funding is less than the estimated cost of needed investments) A discussion of how revenue will be increased or land use assumptions will be reassessed to ensure meeting level-of-service standards.

Item 5 notes:

- 6.  (Intergovernmental coordination) Includes an assessment of how the transportation plan and land use assumptions impact transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions.

Item 6 notes:

- 7.  Includes a discussion of demand management strategies.

Item 7 notes:

- 8.  Includes a pedestrian and bicycle component that includes collaborative efforts to identify and designate planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors that address and encourage enhanced community access and promote healthy lifestyles.

Item 8 notes:

**Consistency items**

This checklist will be used to assess consistency between each jurisdiction's transportation element and the adopted regional (RTPO) transportation plan.

1.  Consistent land use assumptions

Notes:

2.  Consistent portrayal of transportation system components (facilities, modes, and services that are part of the identified regional system/network).

Notes:

3.  Consistent level-of-service measures for both local arterials and state-owned facilities.

Notes:

4.  Consistent travel demand forecasts for jurisdiction's portion of the regionally significant system.

Notes:

5.  Consistency with regional travel demand strategies.

Notes:

6.  Consistent portrayal of funding capabilities for regionally significant projects.

Notes:

7.  Consistent identification of future projects.

Notes:

**Bob Wilson**

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**From:** Bob Wilson  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 11, 2016 2:38 PM  
**To:** 'Satpal Sidhu'; 'Rud Browne'; 'Barry Buchanan'  
**Cc:** Hugh Conroy  
**Subject:** RE: thoughts for the Comprehensive Plan's transportation section

Hi Satpal:

Thanks for sharing this. As we move into the development of the planning strategies we'll be sure to consider Mike's concerns and recommendations (FYI, I know him).

Have a good night.

Bob

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**From:** Satpal Sidhu [mailto:SSidhu@co.whatcom.wa.us]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 08, 2016 6:42 PM  
**To:** bob@wcog.org; Rud Browne; Barry Buchanan  
**Subject:** Fw: thoughts for the Comprehensive Plan's transportation section

Dear Bob

Here is a letter from a concerned citizen about the traffic conditions in the eastern part of the County. Please share with the Chairman and the rest of the Board members.

We had a brief discussion on the same topic in our last meeting

Thanks,

Satpal Singh Sidhu P.Eng., MBA Fulbright Scholar  
Member Whatcom County Council  
Office 360 676 6690  
Mobile: 360 305 4948



**NOTICE: All emails and attachments sent to and from Whatcom County are public records and may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56)**

**From:** Council

**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2016 3:14 PM

**To:** Barbara Brenner; Barry Buchanan; Carl Weimer; Forrest Longman; Ken Mann; Rud Browne; Satpal Sidhu; Todd Donovan

**Subject:** FW: thoughts for the Comprehensive Plan's transportation section

**From:** Mike Brennan [<mailto:brennancollc@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, February 08, 2016 2:40 PM

**To:** Council; Sam (Jeanne) Ryan

**Subject:** thoughts for the Comprehensive Plan's transportation section

Greetings;

The deadly wreck on the Mt. Baker Highway recently should be yet another "wake up call" for a more serious review of the transportation challenges that exist in the eastern county. While many of us choose to live in the county, I doubt that any of us knew we were on an international truck route. Some thoughts for consideration:

- 15 years ago most of the kids drove a old pick up and they were used to county roads and a variety of traffic types.
- Today, with the cost of housing in Bellingham, a large number of professionals and higher income families live outside of Bellingham and the kids drive BMWs and other fast cars. As a former school board member, we saw this some 10 to 12 years ago as the parents demanded and expected a better school and broader curriculum.
- So, today we see a broad mix of traffic with a true rush hour+ that begins around 5:30 AM as people travel to I-5 and down the road to their employment. Then the 7:00 AM to almost 9:00 AM group heads to Bellingham and Skagit County, and in both cases the traffic is almost bumper to bumper.
- Add to this the agriculture machinery and LTI's milk delivery and pick up requirements.
- The gravel haulers too.
- The add the school busses, the kids and the parents every morning and afternoon.
- Then add the joggers, bikers and the more residential uses that are growing and using the shoulders.
- Now, add in an incredible number of international trucks who are coming across at Sumas and Lynden.
  - They don't like to use the Guide because of the turn arounds
  - They travel Highway 9 and either turn down Everson Goshen or continue down Highway 9 so that they miss the inspection station at Bow Hill. If they stay in Everson Goshen they have to turn on Mt. Baker and then hit I-5 at Sunset. No wonder there is a traffic mess in Bellingham. Drive out and watch the trucks drive straight over the turn around at Everson Goshen and Smith Roads.
  - We live on Everson Goshen and the trucks will start going south at 4:00 AM and run til mid morning. Then they come back starting around 5:00 PM and run until around 11:00 PM.
  - Imagine getting you mail with a truck and 53' trailer going 55 mph about 1.5" from you. I can tell you it will blow you off the road.
  - The trucks carry almost everything from bulk loads, live stock, tankers (with volatile liquids), auto carriers, flat beds, and believe it or not now DOT allows oversized loads. I doubt that any of you feel that our road are designed for that.
  - Imagine the day that the County is required to do a major hazmat clean up in the Dickey Fill.

Rather than complain further may I make some recommendations?

- **My thoughts are not in any way to cause an issue for local business. They have been here as long as anyone else and are part of the local economy.**
- Request that Whatcom COG look at both the issues and offer a set of potential solutions as part of the 2016 work plan.

- Place these issues on the "lobby list" as a priority for presentation to the State DOT.
- Add the issue to the County 6 year road plan with a set of immediate solutions such as:
  - Assign law enforcement to monitor these transportation corridors for both speed and weight issues
  - Reduce the speed on Everson Goshen, Pole, and Highway 9 especially considering that Meridian Schools have significant investments and lots of kids on these roads
- Add these issues on the US DOT list and present the issues to our Senators and Representative. The southern border crossings have historically been granted loads of funds for their issues, and yet here we sit at the top of the west coast's major highway and always seem to be ignored.
- Join with Skagit County and take a larger look at this as well as the other modes of transportation - air, water, roads, and rail.

After all its more than just coal trains. Its our physical location and economic reality of that location that we can not ignore or think we need not be a part of that scope.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Brennan  
6035 Everson-Goshen Road  
Bellingham 98226  
360.319.6527

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Mike Brennan  
360.319.6527