



CTAG

citizens' transportation advisory group

It matters how we get there

Meeting Summary
January 15, 20194

Attendees:

Terri Hansen	The Arc of Whatcom County
Izaac Post	Bellingham
Bob Hendricks	Bellingham / WTA Gold Card holder
Mathew Santos	Bellingham Technical College
Myron Wlaznak	Silver Beach
Hugh Conroy	WCOG staff
Jaymes McClain	WCOG staff
Bob Wilson	WCOG staff
Rick Nicholson	WTA staff
Maureen McCarthy	WTA staff
Jillian Trinkaus	WWU / Columbia Neighborhood (Bellingham)

Citizens' Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG)

Summary of feedback from November CTAG/CAP questionnaire

Hugh Conroy: A questionnaire was sent out to gather feedback from members about the structure of CTAG/CAP and how many times per year members feel are appropriate to meet. Mr. Conroy reviewed some of the open-ended question responses.

Discussion of proposed CTAG/CAP organizational modifications

Hugh Conroy: CTAG and CAP currently meet 5 times per year, one day before each Whatcom Policy Board meeting. The proposed change to schedule is to consolidate the March and May meetings into one meeting in April. WCOG and WTA staff will also try to better prepare members for upcoming board meetings – one day is not enough time to consider the board agenda items. There would be more email correspondence in-between meetings.

Bruce Prior: The July meeting could be moved to another time. Summer is a busy time for everyone and there could be low attendance.



Hugh Conroy: Because of shared membership and overlapping topic focuses, there is a proposal to combine CTAG and CAP into one group.

CTAG members agreed with the proposed changes.

New CTAG Meeting Schedule for 2019:

- March 19
- May 21
- October 8
- January 14, 2020

Policy Board Update

Hugh Conroy: At the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board meeting, there will be an amendment to Transportation Improvements Program (TIP). This will update the 2019 status of cash flows to projects that have already been approved. Everson's Lincoln Street Improvements Phases 1 and 2 are being removed from the TIP (obligation already occurred in 2018). The Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) planned construction of a weigh-in-motion (WIM) device on SR 9 is changing location (they plan to construct the WIM near Van Zandt with a truck inspection station in Acme). WSDOT's SR542/I-5 to Hannegan Road ADA Improvements are being removed from the TIP (construction authorized in December). Two WTA projects (replace diesel buses and purchase electric buses and infrastructure) funded by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants will be added to the TIP.

Update: The Policy Board motioned to pass the amendment to the TIP.

WCOG staff will suggest to the board to amend WCOG's long-range regional transportation plan (Whatcom Mobility 2040) later in the year. The plan contains a list of projects and programs in the region for the next 20 years that are federally funded and/or regionally significant. It is anticipated that more projects will be added to the plan (requiring amendment). There is interest in including federal border-area projects into the regional project list.

Bruce Prior: Are crashes reported in detail in public records (similar to climber accident reporting)?

Hugh Conroy: Yes, the Washington State Patrol maintains a database of crashes that the public can access through a WSDOT data portal. One can view a map of crash sites and filter by attributes, such as cause of crash, severity, etc.

Hugh Conroy: In July there will be a call for surface transportation projects from local jurisdictions. This process will run through the Technical Transportation Advisory Group (TTAG).

WCOG is also working with WSDOT and WTA on a study of I-5 through Bellingham.



WCOG MPO RTPO Overview

Hugh Conroy: [The Every Place Counts Leadership Academy transportation toolkit](#) is an easy to read toolkit explaining the transportation planning process. It was developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). The toolkit includes a reviews of WCOG's function as a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), where it fits in the planning process, how an MPO's long range transportation plan connects to local jurisdictions' comprehensive plans, and other information.

WTA CAP

June 2019 Service changes

Rick Nicholson: On Thursday the WTA Board will be considering the approval of service changes for June 16th, 2019. The service changes will address priority concerns by the Board and staff. There will be no proposed changes to paratransit.

Priority 1: Improve on-time performance and mitigate the growing food desert issues in Whatcom County with better service to grocery destinations.

Priority 2: Address failing routes and continue to pursue pilot projects. The East County Connector pilot project is being proposed to be replaced by a North County Connector pilot route, which would connect Maple Falls, Kendall, Everson, and Lynden with 3-day a week service (4 roundtrips a day).

For the first time in over 2 decades WTA is expanding service (Route 3) to Bellingham International Airport.

Update: The WTA Board approved the service changes.

Bus Rapid Transit

Rick Nicholson: WTA is looking at the feasibility of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). BRT improves ridership by improving capacity and reliability. This can be achieved through dedicated bus lanes, transit priority through intersections, raised platform boarding, fare payment at the stop, limited stops, higher frequency service, and longer articulated buses (typically with two entry and exit doors + room inside the bus for bicycles).

Mr. Nicholson observed BRT is Eugene, OR.

The cost of BRT elements is a concern. The average cost is \$10M per mile.



Bellingham Climate Change Task Force

Rick Nicholson: The City of Bellingham's Climate Protection Action Plan is a guide for Bellingham to meet environmental goals. A task force was developed to help the City meet greenhouse gas reduction targets set for 2020, 2030, and 2050. There are six strategies the City has put forward to address greenhouse gas reduction:

- Transportation
- Renewable Energy
- Green Building
- Waste Reduction
- Land Use
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation

Criteria for basing greenhouse gas reduction strategies include social, financial, technological, environmental considerations. The City has the aspirational goal of reducing single occupancy car use from 67 percent in 2016 to 50 percent in 2036.

Izaak Post: There seemed to be a number of sidewalk improvements in Bellingham last year. Can we expect more improvements to infrastructure connecting to transit in the future?

Rick Nicholson: Bellingham's Transportation Benefit District is about to expire, but hopefully there is a similar funding source for such improvements in the future.