



# Meeting Summary

## Regional Transportation Technical Advisory Group [TTAG]

Thursday, June 22, 2017 10:00 – 12:00

Whatcom Council of Governments  
314 E Champion St, Bellingham, WA

### Attendees:

Rollin Harper	Everson, Nooksack, Sumas
Hugh Conroy	WCOG
Lethal Coe	WCOG
Bill Bullock	City of Blaine
Chris Comeau	City of Bellingham Public Works
John Shambaugh	Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]
Rick Nicholson	Whatcom Transportation Authority [WTA]
Ron Cubellis	WCOG
Kevin Renz	City of Ferndale
Jim Karcher	Whatcom County Public Works
Bob Wilson	WCOG
Sylvia Goodwin	Port of Bellingham
Mehrdad Moini	Washington State Department of Transportation
Chad Schulhauser	City of Bellingham

### Federal Funds Obligation Update

Lethal Coe reviewed current status of regional progress towards meeting the annual federal funds obligation target. (Summary spread sheet attached). While WCOG will likely miss the July 31 deadline, because the state-wide target for STBG Regional funds will likely be met by July 31, the state will hopefully be willing to count several project obligations that our region expects to be in place during August – still in time for the state to have them count towards the federal deadline in September.

### Review of future STBG & TA project funding relative to year-of-obligation

Ron Cubellis distributed a summary table of this year’s funding proposals for FFY 2021-22 STBG & TA funding (attached) showing each project’s proposed start date (mo/yr) and resulting obligation date (per the certifications affirmed in project proposals). Ron reminded everyone that, as discussed before this year’s call for projects, federal policies requiring more timely obligation have flowed down to local

jurisdictions via states. WSDOT has dramatically reduced its (state-wide) backlog of un-obligated funds from previous years' allocations. In past years, WSDOT has typically had several years of unobligated STP (STBG) funding to use if a local project was ready to start in earlier years than the FFY its funding award was associated with. This is no longer the case. The result is that projects funded with STBG & TA will need to have start dates that align with the actual FFY STBG cash flow coming into the state.

Since some of the projects submitted for this year's allocation of FFYs 2021-22 STBG funds proposed start dates in 2018 and 2019, WCOG needs to make sure that the proponents are accepting of a later start date (2021 or 2020 if able to use advance construction) and able to revise the application form accordingly.

Continued discussion was informative and everyone seemed to understand the new parameters. Discussion covered the possibility of swapping out-year funds (e.g 2021-22) with STBG funds planned for obligation sooner (e.g. 2018). Ron confirmed that this was possible.

### Review of Scores for 2021-2022 STBG & TA Funding and recommendation to the Policy Board

Hugh Conroy thanked the TTAG members for reviewing and scoring all of the project proposals and then passed around a table (shown below) of the compiled scores.

#### STBG - All

	Project	Jurisdiction	Request	Total Points	Rank
U	Telegraph mulitmodal	Bellingham	\$1,650,000	876	1
R	E Smith & Hannegan	Whatcom Co.	\$1,000,000	860	2
R	Kwina/Marine/Lummi Shore	Lummi Nation	\$850,000	845	3
U	Boblett Channelization	Blaine	\$545,305	782	4
U	Marine Dr. (McAlpine-Alderwood)	Whatcom Co	\$1,650,000	758	5
U	Thornton St	Ferndale	\$1,095,100	754	6
U	7th St Reconstruction	Lynden	\$736,695	691	7
			\$7,527,100	5,566	

#### TA - All

	Project	Jurisdiction	Request	Total Points	Rank
R	SR544 Everson Sidewalk	Everson	\$365,000	103	1
U	Birch Bay Dr Park Crosswalk	Whatcom Co	\$280,000	82	2
			\$645,000	185	

Hugh Conroy went through the above tables in a spreadsheet (similar to below) to review how funding categories (*urban, rural, and any-area*) lined up with project rankings and project costs & requests. Discussion resulted in approval of two motions by the group.

Rollin Harper made a **motion**: To recommend to the Policy Board that the \$205,000 [estimated to be] available from the urban portion of TA Program be applied to the Marine Drive (McAlpine-Alderwood ) project. Chris Comeau **seconded** the motion. The **motion passed** unanimously.

Chris Comeau made a **motion**: To recommend to the Policy Board that the \$200,000 remaining in the STBG Any Area category after fully funding the top two STBG projects be awarded to the Marine Drive project. Bill Bullock **seconded** the motion. The **motion passed** unanimously.

Hugh Conoy entered dollar amounts in the spreadsheet on screen (shown below) to reflect the consensus and motions discussed above.

Hugh Conroy requested a motion to capture TTAG’s consensus on funding allocations as its overall recommendation to the Policy Board.

Chris Comeau made a **motion**: To recommend to the Policy Board that it approve the funding allocation shown on screen (shown below). Rollin Harper **seconded** the motion. The **motion passed** unanimously.

STBG - All						STBG Funds Available			TTAG Note
U/R	Project	Request	Total Points	Rank	Rec. Award	Rural	Urban	Any area	
						\$350,000	\$3,300,000	\$850,000	
U	Telegraph multmodal	\$1,650,000	876	1	\$1,650,000		\$1,650,000		1
R	E Smith & Hannegan	\$1,000,000	860	2	\$1,000,000	\$350,000		\$650,000	2
R	Kwina/Marine/Lummi Shore	\$850,000	845	3	\$0				3
U	Boblett Channelization	\$545,305	782	4	\$545,305		\$545,305		1
U	Marine Dr. (McAlpine-Alderwood)	\$1,650,000	758	5	\$1,304,695		\$1,104,695	\$200,000	4
U	Thornton St	\$1,095,100	754	6	\$0				
U	7th St Reconstruction	\$736,695	691	7	\$0				

TA - All						TA Funds Available			TTAG Note
U/R	Project	Request	Total Points	Rank	Rec. Award	Rural	Urban	Any area	
						\$85,000	\$205,000	\$280,000	
R	SR544 Everson Sidewalk	\$365,000	103	1	\$365,000	\$85,000		\$280,000	5
U	Marine Dr. (McAlpine-Alderwood)	applied to above STBG listing			\$205,000		\$205,000		6

**TTAG Notes:**

1. Full amount available from Urban
2. Fund from remainder of Rural and partial Any Area
3. Only \$200,000 remains in Any Area. TTAG recommends applying to Marine Dr. which has more funding available to it from the Urban allocation. (corresponding motion)
4. Fund with remainder of Urban and remainder of Any Area
5. Fund with all of Rural and all of Any Area.
6. Noting that TA funds are likely eligible for the Marine Dr. project, TTAG recommends moving this \$205,000 to the Marine Drive project. (corresponding motion)

**Current event updates**

Bill Bullock: City of Blaine reported that bids on Phase I of the Hughes Ave. project have been coming in under engineer’s estimates.

John Shambaugh reported that the Bakerview IJR is now being passed around for final signatures.

Sylvia Goodwin reported on the June 3 trail ride on routes that correspond with a trail concept around the airport. Follow-up meetings are exploring how to advance a permanent trail route.

Chad Schulhauser gave updates on James/Woodstock, Horton Ph. I, and Mahogany.

Jim Karcher gave updates on the project management review for the Potter Rd- Nooksack bridge project, recent personnel changes in the Whatcom Co. Engineering Dept., and a recent meeting with WSDOT that covered topics including likely increases in construction prices and requests for Highway Safety Improvement Program funds that are greatly in excess of funds available from that program.

Hugh Conroy and Lethal Coe reviewed the Policy Board's recent approval of an STBG allocation of \$255,175 for updates to the regional travel demand model in 2018. The main portion of this work will be on a household travel survey. The last survey was conducted in 2008 and needs to be updated.

Following up on previous TTAG discussions on this topic, it was reiterated that:

- The survey should take great care to ensure that enlistment of the sample population is random and free of biases that can correspond to such things as overreliance on contact by land-line phones, etc.
- Opportunities should be explored to gather additional information from the sample population that can support expanded modeling applications and other regional transportation planning objectives e.g. observed preferences, reported recent changes in transportation behavior, etc.

Lethal Coe said that, for those who might be especially interested in collaborating on a scope of work and the RFQ/RFP process, he would like to form a TTAG subgroup. Chris Comeau and Rick Nicholson noted that they would like to participate on a subgroup. WCOG will continue to involve TTAG in the development of this work.

Hugh Conroy updated the group on continuing efforts to secure three years of program funding for WCOG's International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program (IMTC). Recent announcements of future funding have come in from the Vancouver Airport Authority (YVR) for \$30,000 and from FHWA's Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP) for \$80,000. Combined with previous commitments from WSDOT and the WCOG Policy Board, we are much closer to the three-year target. WCOG is also working via the U.S.-Canada Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG) to encourage consideration of establishing/re-establishing federal funding programs, both U.S. Canadian, to support regional border planning and cross-border transportation in general.

Bill Bullock updated the group on Blaine's plans to complete their ADA transition plan.

Bob Wilson reminded the group of the recent line item veto of Connecting Washington funds for the Exit 274 project. Discussions on a strategy to restore funding for that project are underway between Blaine and WSDOT.

Hugh Conroy reported that the Policy Board adopted *Whatcom Mobility 2040* (the regional & metropolitan plan update) at its special June 14 meeting.

Mehrdad Moini noted that Secretary of Transportation Millar recently did some reorganizing of the higher levels of WSDOT HQ. Mehrdad will forward a document that summarizes the changes.

Rolland Harper asked if WCOG could do a comparison to show the extent to which the STBG & TA scoring was affected by the criteria weights that were applied to the first seven criteria. Hugh Conroy said he would provide that.