



WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION POLICY
BOARD **Wednesday, July 8, 2020, 3:30 p.m.**

[Call-in: +1 \(571\) 317-3116](tel:+15713173116)

Access Code: 829-828-373

AGENDA

PAGES

- | | | |
|------|----|---|
| | A. | CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL – Chairman Korthuis |
| | B. | AGENDA APPROVAL* |
| | C. | APPROVAL OF MINUTES* |
| 3-5 | | Meeting of May 13, 2020 |
| | D. | NEW BUSINESS |
| 6 | | 1. Request for Redistributed Obligation Authority Funding – Lethal Coe* |
| 7-8 | | 2. Amending the Goals of Whatcom Mobility 2040 – Hugh Conroy |
| | | 3. I-5 Operations and Transportation Demand Management Analysis – Todd Carlson, WSDOT |
| | | 4. Other new business (if any) |
| | E. | PUBLIC HEARING |
| 9-10 | | Transportation Improvement Program Amendment No. 20-07 |
| | | 1. Staff Presentation – Mr. Coe |
| | | 2. Recitation of Public Comment – Citizens have been provided the opportunity to submit comments in advance of the meeting, and instructions for doing so were included in the public notice. Any comments received prior to the Call to Order will be read into the record by the Secretary and included in the meeting minutes. |
| | | 3. Board Discussion and Vote* |
| | G. | PLANNING DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Mr. Conroy |
| | H. | 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
MAY 13, 2020

IN ATTENDANCE (VIA GOTOMEETING):

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

GUESTS Hollie Huthman, Bellingham City Council; Michael Jones, Blaine; Kirk Vinish, Lummi Nation; Tom McBride, McBride Public Affairs; Carol Frazey, Jon Hutchings and Tyler Schroeder, Whatcom County; Pete Stark, WTA

STAFF Bob Wilson, Ron Cubellis, Hugh Conroy, Melissa Fanucci, Lethal Coe

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Korthuis called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. with a quorum present, and he asked Mr. Wilson to perform a roll call.

B. AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION: Ms. Vargas moved, Mr. Lilliquist seconded, to approve the agenda.

MOTION PASSED

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2020

MOTION: Mr. Lilliquist moved, Mr. Sidhu seconded, to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 11, 2020.

MOTION PASSED

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Reallocation of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Funds

Mr. Coe explained that Everson – which had been awarded \$100,000 of STBG funds at the March 11, 2020 Policy Board meeting – had recently informed him that the City would be unable to obligate \$47,786 of those funds before the statewide obligation deadline of August 1, 2020. However, Whatcom County expressed to him that it could obligate that amount on its Birch Bay Drive and Pedestrian Facility project before the deadline.

MOTION: Mr. Sidhu moved, Ms. Vargas seconded, to reallocate \$47,786 from Everson’s Lincoln Street Improvements project, Phases I and II, to Whatcom County’s Birch Bay Drive and Pedestrian Facility project.

MOTION PASSED

2. WCOG-WSDOT-WTA Section 314 Agreement

Mr. Conroy explained the requirement to update the “314 Agreement,” which defines each party’s responsibilities for metropolitan transportation planning. The current agreement must be renewed before it expires on May 28, 2020.

MOTION: Ms. Onyon moved, Ms. Kershner seconded, to authorize the Executive Director to sign the 2020 update to the “Agreement Relating to Mutual Responsibilities in Carrying Out the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process in the Whatcom Council of Governments Metropolitan Planning Area,” as presented, allowing for any subsequent technical corrections by WCOG or other signatory agencies.

MOTION PASSED

3. State Fiscal Year 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Conroy presented the proposed 2021 UPWP to the Policy Board.

MOTION: Mr. Lilliquist moved, Mr. Hansen seconded, to approve the State Fiscal Year 2021 Unified Planning Work Program for the Whatcom Metropolitan Planning Area, as presented.

MOTION PASSED

E. PUBLIC HEARING

Amending the 2020 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Coe described the proposed amendments to the 2020 TIP:

1. Add Whatcom Council of Governments’ annually allocated *Unified Planning Work Program activities* (State Fiscal Year 2021) with \$216,371 of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds.
2. Amend City of Everson project *Lincoln Street Improvements, Phase I* to reduce the recently awarded STBG funding from \$100,000 to 41,371 to complete the construction phase.
3. Add recently awarded STBG funding of \$10,843 to City of Everson project *Lincoln Street Improvements, Phase II* to complete the construction phase.

Because of the current public health crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor ordered all meetings of governmental bodies to be conducted online. For

this reason, the public was informed in the Notice of Public Hearing published in *The Bellingham Herald* on May 10, 2020, that comments pertaining to TIP Amendment No. 20-05 must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Policy Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Wilson informed the Board that no public comment had been received.

MOTION: Mr. Lilliquist moved, Ms. Vargas seconded, to approve Amendment No. 20-05 to the 2020 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program.

MOTION PASSED

F. PUBLIC HEARING

Amendments to Whatcom Mobility 2040

Mr. Conroy described the proposed amendment to Whatcom Mobility 2040, which comprises 17 projects submitted by the Policy Board's member jurisdictions for inclusion in the plan's project list.

Because of the current public health crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor ordered all meetings of governmental bodies to be conducted online. For this reason, the public was informed in the Notice of Public Hearing published in *The Bellingham Herald* on May 10, 2020, that comments pertaining to the proposed amendments to Whatcom Mobility 2040 must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Policy Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Wilson informed the Board that no public comment had been received.

MOTION: Ms. Kershner moved, Mr. Sidhu seconded, to amend Whatcom Mobility 2040 to add the 17 projects submitted by the member jurisdictions to the plan's project list, as presented.

MOTION PASSED

G. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Conroy briefed the Board on recent transportation planning activities.

H. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Robert H. Wilson, AICP
Secretary



MEMORANDUM

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
From: Lethal Coe, Senior Planner
Date: June 30, 2020
Subject: Request project funding allocation and submittal for nationally redistributed obligation authority

Redistributed obligation authority (OA) is essentially federal funding taken back from other states that missed their obligation delivery target. In years that OA is reclaimed from states, it is made available to states that have successfully met or exceeded their obligation delivery targets. According to WSDOT's Local Agency Federal OA Policy (updated in February 2020), if redistributed OA is made available, it will apply first to advanced construction projects and then to additional projects within MPOs that have met their annual obligation delivery target early -- by **July 31st**.

In 2019, WCOG region was successful in exceeding our obligation delivery target and was one of only four regions that qualified for redistributed OA. We received \$52,839 that was applied as an increase to our FFY 2020 allocation (no longer the application method according to the OA Policy update).

Request to submit list of eligible projects to WSDOT

Although we are awaiting several projects to obligate between now and July 31st, our region currently remains on track to meet our target. According to the OA Policy, the remaining requirement for WCOG to possibly receive redistributed OA, if any is made available from FHWA, is to submit a list of eligible STIP program projects with funding amounts by **August 10th**. If redistributed OA is awarded to a project, the OA must be obligated by the end of the current federal fiscal year, **September 30**. Awards of redistributed OA would not impact WCOG's annual STBG allocation from FHWA.

In order to maximize our opportunity to receive any redistributed OA (should any be available), TTAG and WCOG staff recommend to the Whatcom Transportation Policy Board to submit Whatcom County's *Birch Bay Dr & Pedestrian Facility* to WSDOT for the amount of **\$500,000** of STBG funds. This is currently the only regional project capable of obligating OA in the required time frame.

Subsequently, any portion of the \$500,000 project amount that is not awarded redistributed OA in 2020 will be removed from WCOG's TIP as part of the October TIP amendment.

Suggested Policy Board Action

Approve the allocation of \$500,000 in STBG funds to Whatcom County's *Birch Bay Dr & Pedestrian Facility* and submit project to WSDOT to receive available redistributed federal funds for 2020.



whatcom council of governments

Memo

To: Whatcom MPO/RTPO Transportation Policy Board (WTPB)
Date: June 29, 2020
From: Hugh Conroy, Director of Planning *HC*
Subject: Continued discussion – developing a proposed amendment to the Whatcom planning area’s regional transportation goals for consideration for adoption in October 2020.

Background

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 and in 2020, the Policy Board approved amendments to the plan’s 20-year list of regional projects.

In response to current local and state-wide policy discussions, WCOG staff has, over the last few months, had initial discussion with both the Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) and the Policy Board to recommend consideration of incremental adjustments to the regional transportation goals listed in our R/MTP.

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.

Specifically, two of WCOG’s regional transportation goals seem to merit review at this time:

- Preservation** – keeping key elements of the transportation system in a state of good repair and
- Environmental quality** – especially relative to climate change’s continued elevation as a cause for action.

Over the last decade (at least) the state of existing transportation infrastructure has been in rapid decline with a growing backlog of needed investments. This year the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has been 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 Whatcom County and City of Bellingham both have climate protection plans and climate related advisory committees. Multiple bills in the state legislature also propose to more clearly link climate action goals to transportation investment choices.

Proposed scope for 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 October. The tables were reviewed with the TTAG in February and include feedback from that discussion.

Proposed scope of modification to the regional transportation goals

Current Whatcom Region R/MTP Goals 4 Priority Bands		Proposed first change: Reordered & straight, 1-7 ranking		Proposed second change: 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>
3	A Multimodal Transportation System	4	Efficiency, Effectiveness, & System Sustainability	4	Mobility <i>(all modes & emphasis on trip capacity)</i>
	Access & Convenience	5	A Multimodal Transportation System	5	A Multimodal Transportation System
4	Maintenance & Preservation	6	Access & Convenience	6	Access
	Freight Transportation	7	Freight Transportation	7	Freight Transportation

Currently, the goals are ranked in four bands – in descending order of how many local comprehensive plans identify the goal.

Reordering could:

- Change to a straight ranking of all seven goals.
- Move environmental quality from a 2nd band to a distinct 2nd rank.
- Moves preservation from the 4th band to a 3rd rank.

Naming clarifications could include:

- Including climate in the name of goal 2.
- Renaming goal 4 to Mobility (pertaining to all modes and focused on trip capacity rather than vehicle capacity).

Practical implications

STBG funding proposal scoring: Beyond ensuring that regional goals are best aligned with with current community perspectives, the most practical implication an amendment would have for WCOG business is on the scoring weights that are applied to project proposals submitted for our region’s Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds. Currently, 7 of the 11 scoring criteria (worth 10 points each) are given an additional score weighting from 1.3 (band 1) to 1.05 (band 4). If the prioritization array changes from 4 bands to a 1-7 straight rank, WCOG staff would work with TTAG to adjust the weights accordingly.

TIP: The discussion in our region’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that explains how WCOG applies its transportation system goals to its transportation programming decisions would be updated accordingly.

Regional transportation system performance reporting: WCOG’s documentation of regional system performance indicators, currently organized around the region’s goals as written could be improved by clearer naming of the goals.

Next steps

If the Policy Board is generally supportive of considering an amendment to the regional goals at its next meeting (October 14), WCOG staff can continue to refine the above example amendment with input from Policy Board and TTAG members with the objective of having a final draft amendment complete by September 15. This will provide sufficient time publish a public notice and make the proposed amendment available for review for more than the required two-weeks.



MEMORANDUM

To: Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
From: Lethal Coe, Senior Planner
Date: June 30, 2020
Subject: WCOG 2020 TIP Amendments and Administrative Modifications

Amendment #4 (20-07) of the 2020 WCOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes the following:

1. Add WTA *Integrated Mobility Innovation Project* that was recently awarded Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds to provide “Vans on Demand” service to improve access to public transportation for seniors, school-aged children, people with disabilities, and lower income households. The project will include the purchase of three wheel-chair accessible vans, hire van drivers and operate for at least 12 months, develop and implement marketing strategies, and gather data and conduct research. This project total cost is \$899,235 and is funded through FTA Public Transportation Innovation 5312 program.
2. (pending Policy Board action) Amend Whatcom County *Birch Bay Drive & Pedestrian Facility* project to add \$500,000 of STBG funds to meet the OA Policy’s August 10th project submittal deadline and enables the opportunity to receive Redistributed federal funds (if available).

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 #4 for the Whatcom Council of Governments 2020 Transportation Improvement Program.

Whatcom Council of Governments
2020 Transportation Improvement Program

Amendment #4 (20-07) Table

#	Agency	Project Title	Amended Action	Added Funds	Total Cost	Fed Source
1	WTA	<i>Integrated Mobility Innovation Project</i>	Add new project	\$899,235	\$899,235	FTA 5312
2	Whatcom	<i>Birch Bay Drive & Pedestrian Facility</i>	Add funds	\$578,034	\$11,715,801	STBG (US)

No Policy Board Action Required for Administrative Modifications

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

(Pending Policy Board Action)

Agency	Project	Modification Administered	Total Costs	Federal Source
Whatcom	<i>Goshen Road/Anderson Creek Bridge No. 248 Replacement</i>	Adjust funding for PE and CN to 100% federal	5,074,950	STP (BR)