

ISLAND SUB-REGIONAL RTPO POLICY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

November 26, 2014

Policy Board Members in Attendance:

Bob Clay, Vice Chair / Public Transit Benefit Area
Fred McCarthy, Mayor, City of Langley
Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Jennifer Meyer, NAS Whidbey
Jill Johnson, RTPO Chair / Island County Commissioner
Marshall Bronson, Port of Coupeville
Nancy Conard, Mayor, Town of Coupeville
Ron Nelson, Economic Development Council
Scott Dudley, Mayor, City of Oak Harbor
Todd Carlson, WSDOT

Members Absent:

Aubrey Vaughan, Island County Commissioner
Ray Deardorf, Washington State Ferries
Todd Harrison, WSDOT

Also in Attendance:

Bill Oakes, Island County Public Works
Connie Bowers, Island County Public Works
Doug Cox, RTPO Staff
Mark Hamilton, Skagit Council of Governments

The Island sub-RTPO Policy Board met in the Island County Commissioners Hearing Room on November 26, 2014. The meeting was called to order at 11:01 AM by Chair Johnson.

Note: To listen to the audio recording of this meeting, go to the Island RTPO web page at: <http://www.islandcounty.net/publicworks/SkagitIslandRTPO.asp>. Click on "meeting recordings."

Approval of the October 22, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Bob Clay made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2014 meeting. Marshall Bronson seconded. The motion passed without discussion.

New Items

Doug asked to discuss new items before delving into the Human Services Transportation agenda items. He explained that there had been an error with the STP work plan that the board approved at the October meeting, which meant that Langley's First Avenue resurfacing project is not eligible for STP funds. He provided a revised work plan with a replacement project for Langley and asked for a motion to approve the revision. After a short discussion, Commissioner

Price Johnson made a motion to approve it, which was seconded by Marshall Bronson. The motion passed with all in favor.

Commissioner Price Johnson talked about the recently-approved golf cart ordinance in Island County, which provides the framework for creating designated golf cart zones. She also let the group know that Ferry Advisory Committee members Dean Enell and Ralph Young have been designated to serve in the Puget Sound Tariff Group. Shari Jennings was the previous representative. The Tariff Group provides citizen oversight regarding ferry fares.

Prioritizing Human Services Transportation Projects

Mark Hamilton presented information about the human service transportation projects that were submitted for consideration in WSDOT's consolidated grant program. He explained that there was a late withdrawal of an Island Transit project, and a late submittal for two projects from the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe. Chair Johnson questioned why one of the Island Transit projects included painting the Oak Harbor Transit Station, the scope of which not being what she would expect for Human Services funding. This sparked a discussion among the group as to why there was not a strong emphasis on paratransit services in the pool of applications, and how to encourage more applications for paratransit service in the future. The board was asked to vote on the rankings, and ultimately agreed with the Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board's recommendations which were taken before that board the previous week. Commissioner Price Johnson made the motion, with Marshall Bronson seconding. The final ranking will be determined by the Skagit-Island RTPO Policy Board meeting on December 3rd.

Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan

Mark continued with a presentation on the draft Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) document. He explained a bit about the various sections of the plan and how it was developed, including the public outreach activities that were conducted such as ride-alongs and listening sessions. The public comment period for the HSTP began on November 5th and ended on November 18th; no comments were received. Commissioner Price Johnson made a motion to recommend the plan as presented, with Mayor McCarthy seconding. The plan will be taken to the Skagit-Island RTPO Policy Board meeting on December 3rd for final adoption.

The meeting adjourned at 12:09 PM.

NEXT MEETING: SIRTPO, December 3, 2014 2:30 PM

Agenda item 3:
Skagit – Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization
Structure Effects Discussion

Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) recently restructured its governance agreement and bylaws. The governance agreement has a relationship to the agreement between SCOG and Island County to administer the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO). The current SIRTPO agreement and bylaws were adopted in 2003 and 1999 respectively and should be updated. A review of the current agreement and structure is being conducted as part of the update process.

During the last few months there have been a number of discussions and directions provided by the various Boards involved in the SIRTPO:

- The Skagit Transportation Policy Board (TPB) discussed the SIRTPO agreement and structure at its September meeting, with the general sentiment of the majority of Board members to work towards Skagit moving towards a stand-alone RTPO.
- At the SIRTPO Board meeting in October, staffs were advised to work towards retaining the current SIRTPO structure with a revised agreement.
- At the TPB Meeting in November, a motion was approved to include on the December TPB agenda an action item to separate from the SIRTPO.
- At the TPB Meeting in December, members agreed to form a committee comprised of representatives from the Skagit and Island Policy Boards, to be tasked with identifying alternative frameworks to the current SIRTPO structure.

The following two pages provide an outline of the major aspects that should be considered in the decision regarding the future of the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

Federal Funds

- All Federal funds are authorized by MAP-21
 - Two programs, Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Only TAP funds are allocated at the SIRTPO level
 - Annual TAP allocation is ~\$220,000
 - TAP funds must be awarded based on competitive project selection process
 - Not allowed to just split funds between Skagit and Island
 - Understanding is that if Island was not part of RTPO, Island would get a portion of the \$220,000 (determined by population– approximately 40%) effectively splitting the funds
 - SCOG is accountable for ensuring TAP funds are obligated for Island projects
- STP funds are allocated at County level
 - Annual STP allocation is ~\$1 Million for Island
 - No change to STP funds and project selection process if Island is not part of RTPO
 - Currently set-aside \$86,000 each year to help fund the Transportation Planner position

Key point: There would be minimal impact on federal funds. The frustration is with TAP. Per WSDOT, we are required to share the TAP funds. If the organization disbands, we expect the funds would not be shared, with each county receiving a proportional allocation of the total.

State Funds

- SCOG (as lead agency for SIRTPO) currently receives \$109,000 annually to help fund staff
 - \$32,600 of these funds are allocated to Island to help fund Transportation Planner position
 - Funds are used in part to develop state-required annual Unified Planning and Work Program (UPWP)

Key point: There would not be any impact to the amount of state funds each agency receives. If the organization disbands, Island would receive their funds directly from WSDOT (via a new agreement) instead of from SCOG. However, Island may be subject to increased levels of administration by WSDOT in order to receive these funds, and may be required to develop its own UPWP.

(continued on next page)

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) + Travel Demand Model

- SCOG currently leads RTP update for Skagit-Island and provides travel demand modeling services for Island
- Without an RTPO, there is no requirement to develop a RTP
- Island County and the jurisdictions within it would still update their GMA Comp. Plan Transportation Elements, but there would no longer be an overarching regional plan to ensure consistency and to set broader regional goals
- Island would likely rely on consultants for travel demand modeling

Key point: If the organization disbands, there would be no formal mechanism for coordination with Skagit on issues that affect travel between the two islands.

Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP)

- Recently-adopted Skagit-Island HSTP is current through 2018 and project list is current through 2016
- Based on the current WSDOT process, projects for the HSTP grant funding after 2016 would be identified and scored by each county independently of each other but consistent with the recently adopted HSTP. The total "Letter" grades for the SIRTPO were 5 A, 5 B, and 4 C. If Skagit and Island were separate, each County would have received 3 A, 3 B, and 3 C grades increasing the total number of A and B projects from 10 to 12.
- If the SIRTPO disbands the plan would be done for each county separately. There could still be a joint plan (with or without separate project lists).

Overarching point: Disbanding the organization may result in increased levels of administration for Island, but with less coordination at the regional level and less representation at the state level. Each County would determine its own HSTP project priorities.

Administration and Governance

- SIRTPO has three governing bodies, a regional two-county Board and one Sub-Board for each County
- Each Sub-Board has a technical advisory committee (TAC)
- SCOG is the lead agency for the SIRTPO and Skagit Sub-Board, Island County is the lead agency for the Island Sub-board
- SCOG is responsible for the overall administration and compliance with the RTPO requirements
- Skagit County is a metropolitan planning organization with similar responsibilities in federal law as the RTPO and has overlapping duties between the two

Overarching point: The structure is confusing and complex. It is unclear for many decisions at what level (Regional or Sub-Region) they should be made and who makes the metropolitan decisions if there is an SIRTPO Board.