

PRIORITIZING 2015-2017 SKAGIT-ISLAND HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee	11/5/2014	Recommendation	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board	11/19/2014	Recommendation	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
Island sub-RTPO Policy Board	11/26/2014	Recommendation	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee and Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board recommend the following prioritization of human services transportation projects for Skagit and Island counties to the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board:

Organization	Project	Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee	Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board
		Recommended Letter Grade	Recommended Letter Grade
Community Action of Skagit County	Utilize Existing Services: Improve Utilization of Existing Transportation Services	A	A
Skagit Transit	Expansion of Fixed Route Services in Sedro-Woolley and Burlington	A	A
Skagit Transit	Mobility Management Specialist	A	A
Island Transit	Five Medium Duty Cutaways and Five 7-8 Passenger Vans	A	B
Island Transit	Specific Operating Assistance to Preserve Existing Service ¹	A	N/A
Skagit Transit	ADA Next Stop Announcement System	B	A
Island Transit	Preserve and Replace Capital Equipment and Bus Communications: 2 Bus Shelters; Paint Oak Harbor Transit Station; 10 Bus Surveillance Systems; 65 Tablets; 11 Rebuilt Engines; Alignment Machine	B	A
Sauk-Suiattle Tribe	Provide New Service Connecting Reservation to Darrington and Concrete ²	N/A	B
Sauk-Suiattle Tribe	Two Light-duty Buses ³	N/A	B

¹ Project was withdrawn by Island Transit on 11/18

² This project was a late submittal by the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe on 11/18 and was not evaluated by the committee

³ This project was a late submittal by the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe on 11/18 and was not evaluated by the committee

The Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board reviewed the recommendation of the committee and did not concur with the method the committee used to recommend letter grades. It was determined by the Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board that their recommendation should align with [project rankings that each project received through the evaluation process](#), with the subtraction of one Island Transit project from consideration because it was withdrawn, and assigning “B’s” to the two projects submitted late by the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe after the call for projects had closed.

DISCUSSION

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) published [letter grades](#) for each region across the state, as they do every two years for consideration in WSDOT’s consolidated grant program. The Skagit-Island region received 5 “A’s”, 5 “B’s”, and 4 “C’s” for the 2015-2017 biennium. Projects receiving an “A” letter grade through the regional process will receive an additional 50 points when they are considered in the statewide competitive process. Projects receiving a “B” letter grade will receive an additional 25 points. The maximum points any project can receive is 150: 100 through the statewide competitive process and 50 through the regional competitive process if receiving an “A”.

The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) issued a call for projects to be considered in the regional prioritization of human services transportation projects in Skagit and Island counties. Seven projects were submitted: Skagit Transit submitted three projects, Island Transit submitted three projects, and Community Action of Skagit County submitted one project. Two projects were submitted by the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe on November 18, 2014 after the call for project had closed. SCOG created [project descriptions](#) of all the projects taken from application materials provided by applicants.

After receiving project applications through the call for projects, SCOG distributed project materials to the Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee so the projects could be evaluated. Committee members scored projects based on the [15 criteria and weights](#) approved by the SIRTPO Policy Board at their October 15, 2014 meeting. If organizations submitted any project(s) for consideration in the regional competitive process, they did not score their own project(s).

The committee reviewed average scores received for each project at their November 5, 2014 meeting. After a presentation of each project and review of average scores received for each project, the committee went project-by-project, coming to a consensus recommendation of letter grade to recommend for each project. The committee did not review the two Sauk-Suiattle projects which were submitted to SCOG on November 18, 2014.

At the committee meeting, Skagit Transit staff volunteered for one of their projects to receive a “B” letter grade (ADA Next Stop Announcement System project, which ranked 5 of 7 in the evaluation) so that two Island Transit projects and two Skagit Transit projects would receive “A” letter grades in the committee recommendation. Island Transit staff indicated that the Specific Operating Assistance to Preserve Existing Service project, which would continue operations of the 411 County Connector express service from Whidbey and Camano islands, is the highest priority of their agency. The Five Medium Duty Cutaways and Five 7-8

Passenger Vans project was indicated by Island Transit staff as their second highest priority project due to the aging of Island Transit's fleet. The committee determined that these two Island Transit projects, along with two Skagit Transit projects and the Community Action project should be recommended for "A" letter grades to the SIRTPO Policy Board.

The committee recommendation that came before the Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board on November 19, 2014 is also before the Island sub-RTPO Policy Board for a recommendation to the SIRTPO Policy Board. A final decision will be made by the SIRTPO Policy Board on December 3, 2014. The SIRTPO-approved projects and letter grades will become an appendix to the Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan as the 2015-2017 prioritized human services transportation projects for the region.

SKAGIT-ISLAND HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN OVERVIEW

Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
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RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee recommends approval of the [Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan](#) (HSTP) to the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board.

The Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board considered the recommendation of the committee and also recommends approval of the HSTP to the SIRTPO Policy Board.

DISCUSSION

The HSTP is a coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan for Skagit and Island counties. It is a plan that focuses on the unique transportation challenges of seniors, persons with disabilities and low-income persons, as well as the transportation services provided to address those challenges. It is updated every four years at a minimum and was last adopted in 2010. Under state law, the development of the HSTP is a duty of the SIRTPO.

To lead the planning process for the 2014 HSTP, the Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee was created by the SIRTPO Policy Board in March 2014. This ad hoc advisory committee has been meeting since July of this year and has been working to develop the plan with staffs from the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG), Island County and Transpo Group – the consulting firm hired to develop the HSTP.

The HSTP includes the following sections:

1. *Introduction* – provides the context for the plan
2. *Project Methodology* – summarizes the key steps taken in developing the HSTP
3. *Existing Transportation Services* – provides an overview of all the public transportation providers in the region, as well as service providers that connect the region to other areas (e.g. shuttles to airports)
4. *Public Engagement* – describes the outreach activities included in the planning process such as listening sessions at events with seniors, persons with disabilities and persons with low income

5. *Needs Assessment* – includes findings from a survey of special needs transportation, common origins-destinations for special needs trips and areas of high need for the region indicated on a needs index map
6. *Emergency Management* – for the first time, the HSTP includes a section on emergency management showing how counties and transit agencies work together when an emergency event occurs
7. *Technology* – shows how the transit agencies are using technology to improve their operations
8. *Strategies and Activities* – includes the regional priorities for human services transportation, including strategies that were used as criteria for evaluating regional human services transportation projects for 2015-2017
9. *WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program* – summarizes Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) consolidated grant program which provides state and federal funds to regional human services transportation projects across Washington state

Appendices for the HSTP include various documents developed over the course of the planning process. Appendix F will become the regional prioritized human services transportation projects for Skagit and Island counties when they are approved by the SIRTPO Policy Board on December 3rd.

The 14-day public comment period for the HSTP began on November 5th and ended on November 18th. No public comments were received on the HSTP during the public comment period. Notice of the public comment period was published in the Skagit Valley Herald, Stanwood/Camano News and Whidbey News-Times. Notice was also posted to the homepage of SCOG's website on November 5th.

The committee recommendation on the HSTP also went to the Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board at their November 19, 2014 meeting. A final decision will be made by the SIRTPO Policy Board on December 3, 2014.