
SKAGIT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
(SMPO)

SKAGIT AND ISLAND SUB-REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
(SIRTPO)

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

State Fiscal Year 2013

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INTRODUCTION

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is federally mandated for the MPO under (23CFR450.308 and 23CFR420.111), and mandated for the RTPO as outlined in (RCW47.80.010 through RCW47.80.070 and WAC468.86) which describes transportation planning efforts and projects to be addressed during the upcoming state fiscal year (tied to the state and federal formula grant funding cycle). Throughout the year, the UPWP serves as a guide for planners, citizens, and elected officials to be aware of transportation planning activities in the region. It also provides local and state agencies within the region with a focal point for interagency coordination on transportation issues and projects. The Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) and the Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) work in partnership with local, state and federal elected officials to plan for, and bring needed transportation investments to Northwestern Washington.

Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG), comprised of elected officials from throughout Skagit County, serves as the lead planning agency for SMPO as enabled by federal law 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 of the Federal Transportation Act. SCOG also serves as the lead planning agency for the Skagit sub-RTPO, as enabled by Washington State law (RCW 47.80). The SCOG Board is the ruling body for SCOG and the SMPO, SIRTPO, and the Skagit and Island Sub-RTPO Boards are their own ruling bodies.

PURPOSE

The SFY 2013 UPWP accounts for the planning activities and federal/state funding expenditures by the SMPO and SIRTPO and coordinating agencies and organizations. The activities of each board are coordinated according to shared regional objectives. While direction and approval of work program activities are independently authorized by the SMPO and Skagit/Island sub-RTPO Boards. The UPWP and the annual budget are unified for the SMPO and SIRTPO Boards and are developed and approved in final form by these boards.

The Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) administers and implements through 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303, of the Federal Transit Act, as amended which requires that a MPO be designated for each urbanized area and that the metropolitan area has a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process that results in plans, programs and policies that consider all transportation modes and supports metropolitan community development and regional goals. The purpose of these plans, programs and policies is to encourage the development and implementation of an integrated, multimodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods.

The Skagit sub-RTPO and the Island sub-RTPO, together being the SIRTPO, shall have the duty to designate a lead planning agency to coordinate preparation of the regional transportation plan and carry out the other responsibilities of the organization. The lead planning agency may be a regional organization, a component county, city, or town agency, or the appropriate Washington state department of transportation district office. The lead planning agency for the Skagit sub-RTPO is SCOG and the lead planning agency for the Island sub-RTPO is Island County.

The Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) planning for a region governed by the Washington Growth Management Act, (RCW 36.70A and WAC 468-86) ensures transportation and land use planning is coordinated across regional subsets of the state. The member agencies of SMPO and SIRTPO recognize the need and desirability to participate in a forum for cooperative transportation planning and decision-making by elected officials.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM 2012 UPWP

The Skagit and Island sub-regions share a long history of strong cooperation that has facilitated various notable accomplishments since the mid 1990's. With the support of local agencies and WSDOT staff, the Skagit MPO and Skagit-Island RTPO were able to fulfill the majority of tasks in the UPWP despite a constrained budget. Accomplishments to note include the following:

SMPO/SIRTPO

- 2011 UPWP annual report.
- 2012 UPWP.
- Development of the 2012 SMTIP and SIRTIP.
- Worked closely with SCOG and TAC committees on completing an online version of the Regional Priority Transportation List.

SMPO

- Title VI Annual report
- Development of an SMPO Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) architecture.
- Completion of the MPO Self Certification process.
- City of Burlington Anacortes Street Pedestrian Safety Intersection Analysis.
- Maintained regional travel demand model and assisted local jurisdictions with transportation modeling and operational analysis.
- No large-scale modeling training was obtained but staff did participate in small scale (i.e. webinars) training at various points through the year.

SKAGIT RTPO

- Update of SCOG web site which houses the SMPO and Skagit sub-RTPO.
- Completion of an updated regional bike map.
- Started work on Skagit Regional Non-Motorized Plan.
- Coordinated the disbursement of STP-Regional funds.
- Q Avenue intersection analysis.
- Anacortes intersection analysis study.
- Various small traffic analysis efforts as needed for Skagit RTPO TAC members.

ISLAND RTPO

- Consultant selection and development of a white paper on Transportation Concurrency requirements for Island County.
- Coordinated with WSDOT and SCOG staff to initiate a level of service corridor study for SR 20 and SR 525 on Whidbey Island.
- Completion of a signage program on South Whidbey Island in coordination with WSDOT, Island County and the City of Langley.
- Development of a new website for the Island Sub-region RTPO.
- Obtained grant funds and implemented a countywide commute trip reduction program through rideshareonline.com.
- Coordinated with WSDOT NW Region and Island Transit Staff on the Race Road to Morris Road SR 20 safety improvements.
- Coordinated with WSDOT Ferries, City of Mukilteo and other agencies on the Mukilteo Multimodal Ferry EIS and joined the "Tank Farm Group" to continue providing input.

- Coordinated the disbursement of STP-Regional and Enhancement funds for projects in all jurisdictions in Island County, including multimodal.
- Introduced “complete streets” concepts to local jurisdictions.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

SKAGIT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (SMPO)

The primary function of the SMPO is to coordinate with the state and local governments and public transportation operators in developing policy, transportation plans, and programs within the MPO Boundaries. This transportation planning process results in policy, plans and programs coordinated with local land use plans. In addition, the plans provide for the development of transportation facilities that are consistent with the M/RTP.

Member Jurisdictions:

City of Burlington
City of Mount Vernon
City of Sedro-Woolley

Port of Skagit
Skagit Transit
Skagit County

WSDOT

Geographic Planning Area: Urbanized area of Skagit County made up of the cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, Sedro-Woolley and their respective Urban Growth Areas, portions of Skagit County and Port of Skagit.

SMPO - TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

Technical advisory committee comprised of professional planning and public works staff from member jurisdictions which prepares and makes recommendations to the SMPO/Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Boards on technical and policy transportation issues.

Member Jurisdictions:

City of Burlington
City of Mount Vernon
City of Sedro-Woolley

Port of Skagit
Skagit Transit
Skagit County

WSDOT

Geographic Planning Area: Urbanized area of Skagit County made up of the cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, Sedro-Woolley and their respective Urban Growth Areas, portions of Skagit County and Port of Skagit.

SKAGIT/ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (SIRTPO)

The Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) is a combination of the Skagit sub-RTPO and the Island sub-RTPO’s, to serve as a forum to identify, study, and discuss regional transportation issues. SCOG is the lead agency for the Skagit sub-RTPO and Island County is the lead agency for the Island sub-RTPO and administers their own program and provides reporting on their own, and in partnership with SCOG. SCOG acts as the lead reporting agency for both sub-RTPO’s when necessary such as with the Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Plan (S/IRTP), Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Improvement Program (S/IRTIP) or the Skagit/Island Human Services Transportation Plan and any other joint ventures.

Skagit Member Jurisdictions:

City of Anacortes
City of Burlington
City of Mount Vernon
City of Sedro-Woolley
Skagit County
Skagit Transit

Port of Anacortes
Port of Skagit County
Swinomish Tribal Community
Samish Indian Nation
Town of Concrete
Town of Hamilton

Town of La Conner
Town of Lyman
Tesoro Refinery
WSDOT
Washington State Ferries

Island Member Jurisdictions:

City of Oak Harbor
Island County
Town of Coupeville

City of Langley
Port Districts (alternate)
Island Transit

Private sector
representatives (appointed by
the Board of Island County)

Geographic Planning Area: All of Skagit and Island Counties.

SKAGIT SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (SKAGIT SUB-RTPO)

The primary function of the Skagit sub-RTPO is to develop regional transportation policies, plans, and programs as well as provide data and analysis to support local and regional decision making. Building community support for regional transportation issues through distribution of information and citizen involvement is an essential component of the Skagit sub-Regional RTPO.

Member Jurisdictions:

City of Anacortes
City of Burlington
City of Mount Vernon
City of Sedro-Woolley
Skagit County
Skagit Transit

Port of Skagit County
Port of Anacortes
Swinomish Tribal Community
Samish Indian Nation
Town of Concrete
Town of Hamilton

Town of La Conner
Town of Lyman
Tesoro Refinery
WSDOT
Washington State Ferries

Geographic Planning Area: All of Skagit County.

SKAGIT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

Technical advisory committee comprised of professional planning and public works staff from member jurisdictions which prepares and makes recommendations to the SMPO/Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Boards on technical and policy transportation issues.

Member Jurisdictions:

City of Anacortes
City of Burlington
City of Mount Vernon
City of Sedro-Woolley
Skagit County
Skagit Transit

Port of Skagit County
Port of Anacortes
Swinomish Tribal Community
Samish Indian Nation
Town of Concrete
Town of Hamilton

Town of La Conner
Town of Lyman
WSDOT
Washington State Ferries

Geographic Planning Area: All of Skagit County.

ACTIVE COMMUNITY TASKFORCE (ACT)

The ACT is a subcommittee of the Skagit sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (Skagit sub-RTPO) and Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) Policy Boards, and works with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), reporting to the Skagit sub-RTPO and SMPO Policy Boards. The ACT mission supports an integrated, effective, and affordable transportation system for Skagit County, emphasizing the system’s non-motorized components.

Membership: Volunteer group of Citizens and public and private sector agency representatives.

Geographic Planning Area: All of Skagit County.

ISLAND SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION. (ISLAND RTPO)

The Island Sub-Regional RTPO serves as a mutual forum to identify, discuss study and bring into focus sub-regional transportation challenges and opportunities. The Sub-regional Policy Board is the county-wide decision making body for the RTPO and is made up of the jurisdictions listed below. The Island RTPO Policy Board meets bi-monthly in Coupeville.

Member Jurisdictions:

Town of Coupeville
Coupeville Port District
Island County

Island Transit
City of Langley
City of Oak Harbor

South Whidbey Port District
WSDOT
Washington State Ferries

Geographic Area: All of Island County.

ISLAND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The Island RTPO TAC is comprised of professional planning and public works staff from member jurisdictions, Island Transit, Port Districts and three citizen representatives. The TAC is responsible for making recommendations to the Island Sub-region RTPO Policy Board on technical and policy transportation issues. The TAC meets on the second Thursday of every month in Coupeville.

Member Jurisdictions:

Town of Coupeville
Coupeville Port District
Island County

Island Transit
City of Langley
City of Oak Harbor

South Whidbey Port District
WSDOT
Washington State Ferries

Geographic Planning Area: All of Island County.

NORTH SOUND CONNECTING COMMUNITIES PROJECT (NSCCP, AKA: FARMHOUSE GANG)

SCOG is the lead agency for this project which is a coalition of elected, agency and citizen representatives from the five North Sound Counties (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, San Juan, and Snohomish). Together they work on regional planning that includes highway, rail/freight, transit, non-motorized transportation and ferry issues. This project is funded through a High Priority Project (HPP) grant and supported by public and private partnerships. The goal of the NSCCP is to study and support ways that transportation systems work together to provide options and access to residents in the region. SCOG will be seeking funding for a second phase of the NSCCP as funding is available.

Member Jurisdictions: Public and private stakeholders within the north five counties of the Puget Sound area

Geographic Planning Area: Whatcom, Skagit, Island, San Juan, and Snohomish Counties

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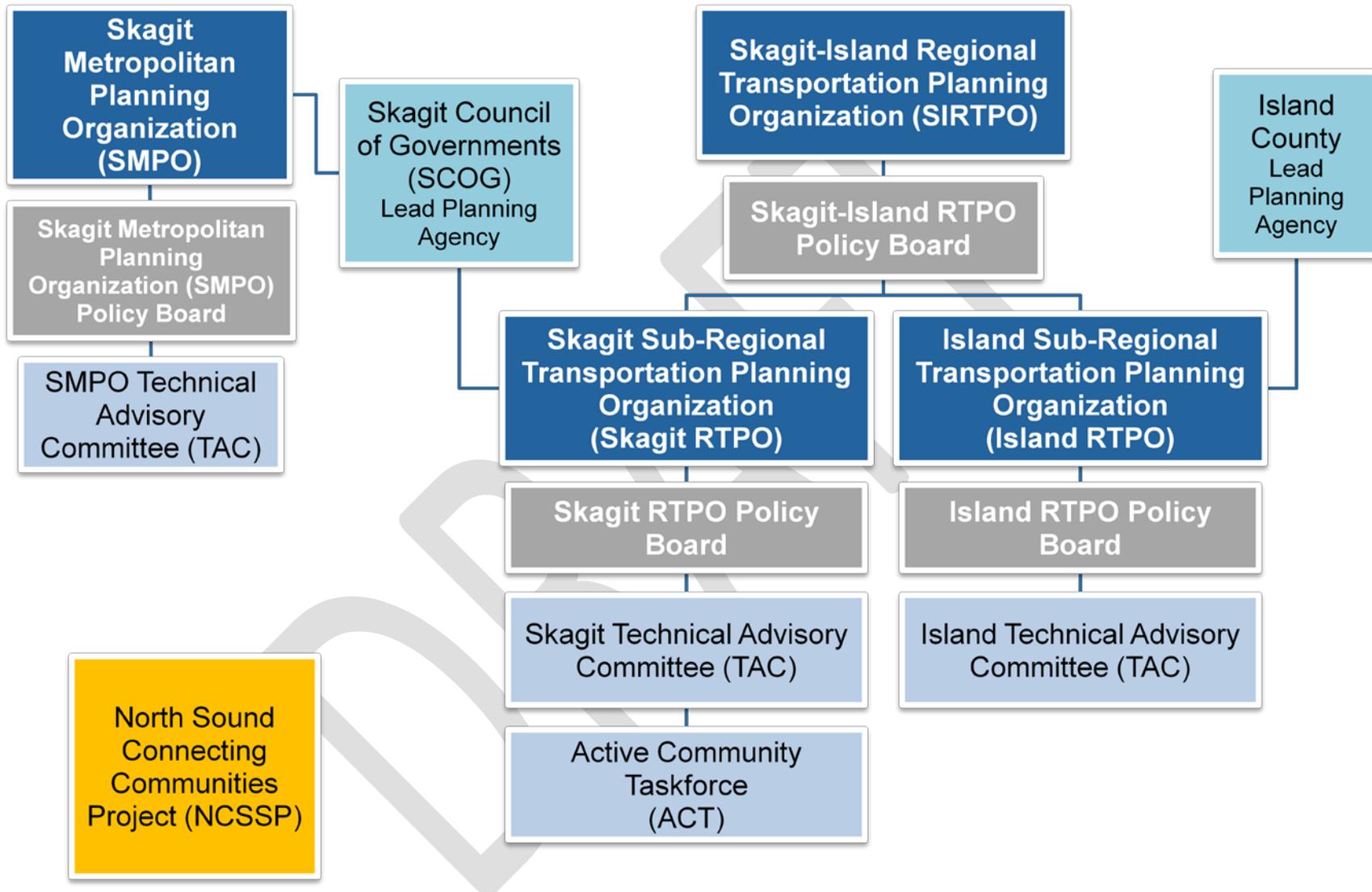


FIGURE 1: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

PRIORITY METROPOLITAN & REGIONAL EMPHASIS AREAS

FEDERAL PLANNING EMPHASIS AREAS (MPO)

Each year the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provide joint guidance to Washington's Metropolitan Planning Organizations on priority work program emphasis areas. This year the 2013 Skagit/Island UPWP sets out the following five emphasis areas

1. Administration
2. Multi - Modal Planning
3. Prioritization & Project Programming
4. Travel Demand Forecasting
5. Data Management

The core work program activities support the ongoing development and update of three fundamental products: The Skagit/Island Unified Planning Work Program (S/IUPWP); the Skagit Metropolitan Transportation Plan (SMTP); and the Skagit Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Programs (MTIP). All other work program activities including corridor studies and other special projects support these three overarching priorities. Additional regionally significant transportation issues arise and change on a continual basis, and are anticipated to the extent possible when the S/IUPWP is prepared. The amendment process enables adjustments to account for new or modified tasks as-needed, which allows the UPWP to continuously provide a clear picture of SMPO activities and funding.

STATE PLANNING EMPHASIS AREAS (RTPO)

WSDOT guidance for the SFY 2013 UPWP focuses on continued implementation of the Regional Transportation Planning Organization duties defined in RCW 47.80. UPWPs describe the work programmed to support and address the six legislative transportation system policy goals identified in RCW 47.04.280: economic vitality, preservation, safety, mobility, environment, and stewardship.

This year MPO's and RTPO's are being asked to pay special attention to the difference in Federal and State regulations and eligible activities for each funding source. WSDOT encourages RTPO's to include all core RTPO requirements specified in Chapter 47.80.020 in UPWP's.

Under the Growth Management Act RTPO's are set up to serve as venues for identifying regional priorities and coordinating efficient multimodal transportation planning measures at all jurisdictional levels with local comprehensive plans. Among the primary RTPO responsibilities is ensuring regional transportation planning is consistent with countywide planning policies, and county, city and town comprehensive plans. Other tasks include, coordinating with local agencies on annual six-year transportation improvement programs an level of service standards, developing level of service standards, and various others. As outlined in RCW 47.04.280 RTPO's should also implement the guidelines and key policy recommendations of the Washington Transportation Plan.

PROGRAM FUNDING

The SFY 2013 UPWP identifies five program elements: Administration; Multimodal Transportation Planning; Prioritization & Project Programming; Travel Demand Forecasting; and Data Management that will address the core functions of the UPWP. These work program elements are funded by federal and state formula grants for metropolitan and regional transportation planning, periodic state and federal discretionary apportionments for special projects, SCOG member contributions and grant matching funds, and in-kind services from member agencies.

ELEMENT 1: ADMINISTRATION

This work element focuses on all aspects of agency and personnel management, policy board support, meeting coordination, budgeting, transportation and land use policy development and review, and annual work program reporting and development (UPWP). It also includes work activities related to carrying out the implementation and coordination role of the SMPO and Skagit/Island sub-RTPO's in securing funds for multimodal transportation improvement projects/services, and involvement in local, state, and federal transportation policy development.

WORK ACTIVITIES

SMPO/SIRTPO

1.1 UPWP Annual Report

Description: Creation of the 2012 UPWP Annual Report per 23 CFR 420.117.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, WSDOT

Outcome: SMPO staff and SIRTPO staff will prepare the 2012 UPWP annual report in July 2012.

1.2 2014 UPWP

Description: Creation of the 2014 Skagit/Island UPWP.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, Skagit TAC, Island TAC, WSDOT

Outcome: SMPO staff and SIRTPO staff will prepare the 2014 UPWP in the spring of 2013.

1.3 Office Management

Description: Staff supervision, personnel activities, office supplies and furniture, etc.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Adequate staff to perform the tasks in this UPWP as well as the office supplies to do so

1.4 Contracts and Agreements

Description: Review and update as needed contracts and agreements.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Miscellaneous grants and agreements reviewed and established throughout the year.

1.5 Clerical Support

Description: Clerical support for general administration and other work program elements.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Throughout the year staff will be available for clerical support.

1.6 Public Participation

Description: Facilitate and document public involvement and outreach efforts in accordance with the Title VI & Environmental Justice related activities (Federal) and Public Participation Policy (State). SMPO staff and SIRTPO staff will review public participation procedures in this fiscal year.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, Skagit TAC, Island TAC

Outcome: Records of communication with the public, elected officials and staff of other organizations. Review of public participation procedures to prepare of update to Public Participation Plan and Title VI plan in SFY 2013.

1.7 Technology Needs

Description: Procurement of software and hardware, and other technologies and devises as needed. (Note: purchases need approval by the WSDOT planning office.)

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Up-to-date computer hardware and software as the need arises.

1.8 Budget

Description: 2013 Budget for the SMPO and SIRTPO Boards.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SMPO, SIRTPO staff, SIRTPO, Skagit TAC, Island TAC

Outcome: In November, staff will prepare 2013 Budget for the SMPO and SIRTPO Boards. The budgets will be adopted prior to calendar year 2013.

1.9 Funding Sources

Description: Identify potential revenue sources and explore new funding strategies for planned improvements to the regional transportation system.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Staff will identify potential funding sources for regional transportation projects and inform local jurisdictions as they arise throughout the year.

1.10 Governance Structure

Description: Review of the SMPO/SIRTPO governance structure.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, SMPO, SIRTPO

Outcome: Starting in July 2012 staff will review the SMPO and SIRTPO governance structures to determine if they are still consistent with FHWA and FTA guidelines. Documentation of the findings of the review will be prepared.

1.11 Websites

Description: Update and maintain SCOG and Island RTPo websites.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Ongoing website updates on board agendas, minutes and project activities, etc. The websites will be further utilized for sharing information with the public.

1.12 Meetings

Description: Attendance at monthly Policy Board meetings and Technical Advisory Committee meetings; Ad-Hoc committee meetings as needed.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Documentation of meeting support: agendas, meeting minutes, staff reports, resolutions and, financial records.

1.13 Regional Coordination

Description: Coordinate and consult with other MPOs and RTPOs on federal, state, and regional transportation issues.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Staff will continue to meet and consult with other MPOs and RTPOs on transportation issues.

1.14 Training

Description: Provide continuing education and training opportunities through webinars, conferences and seminars as appropriate.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Documentation of training received.

1.15 Memorandums of Understanding

Description: Develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) with WSDOT, Skagit Transit and Island Transit per 23CFR450.314.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, WSDOT, Skagit Transit, Island Transit

Outcome: Current Memorandum of Understandings with WSDOT, Skagit Transit, and Island Transit

1.16 Legislator Contact

Description: Develop a report that identifies all anticipated contact with State and Federal legislatures **Note: all expenses in meeting with federal and state elected and administration officials are paid using local funds that are over and above local match percentages.**

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: SMPO and SIRTPO: anticipates staff and/or members initiating contacts with State and Federal elected and administration officials during the next work year as follows:

Federal

- Representative from congressional district 1: Regional project visits in fall 2012 and late spring 2013.
- Representative from congressional district 2: Regional project visits in fall 2012 and late spring 2013.

State

- Periodic contact with state officials during legislative session in Olympia, WA, January through March 2013.

SMPO

1.17 Title VI Annual Report

Description: Report annually on Title VI Plan implementation activities through the Title VI Annual Report.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff

Outcome: Title VI Annual Report.

1.18 MPO Boundaries

Description: Work with WSDOT on reviewing and updating the SMPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundaries with the release of the 2010 census urbanized area data.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SMPO, SMPO TAC, WSDOT

Outcome: At the beginning of SFY 2013 SMPO staff will begin work to incorporate the 2010 urbanized area designations into the new MPO planning area boundaries. The result will be a new MPO planning area map that includes, at the very least, the 2010 urbanized areas, and will likely extend to other jurisdictions that are desirous to be included in the MPO planning process.

Expenditure Allocation

Revenue Source	Federal/State Amount	Local Match	Total
FHWA "PL" Funds (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$72,202	\$11,268	\$83,470
FTA "5303" Funds (Skagit) 20% Match	\$25,121	\$6,280	\$31,401
FTA "5310" Funds (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
RTPO Funds (Skagit)	\$35,678	N/A	\$35,678
STP Regional (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$30,862	\$4,817	\$35,678
RTPO Funds (Island)	\$29,000	N/A	\$29,000
STP Regional (Island) 13.5% Match	\$36,330	\$5,670	\$42,000
NCCCP (Skagit)	\$3,660	N/A	\$3,660
Total	\$232,853	\$28,035	\$260,888

ELEMENT 2: MULTI-MODAL PLANNING

This work program element focuses on the development, ongoing maintenance and update of the Skagit Metropolitan Transportation Plan (SMTP) and Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Plan (S/IRTP) which are updated every five years. The latest SMTP and S/IRTP was approved in August 2010. Additional priority tasks and objectives are identified below ranging from coordinating the development and maintenance of Transportation Elements under GMA to commute trip reduction efforts, transit agency plans, concurrency analysis, and data collection.

WORK ACTIVITIES

SMPO/SIRTPO

2.1 Human Services Transportation Plan

Description: Develop with Skagit/Island Transit agencies and other stakeholders the 2013 Skagit/Island Human Services Plan update.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, Skagit Transit, Island Transit, WSDOT, consultant

Outcome: Begin work on Human Services Transportation Plan update. SMPO and SIRTPO staff will update project list in SFY 2013 and the plan update will likely continue into SFY 2014.

2.2 Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan

Description: The Skagit-Island Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Plan was adopted in the August of 2010 (MTP) and spring of 2011 (RTP). The next scheduled update is not until August 2015. SMPO staff and SIRTPO staff will monitor planning activities and prepare for the next update.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Continued adherence to the adopted M/RTP.

2.3 Washington State Transportation Plan

Description: Participate in the implementation of the 2030 Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) where consistent with SMPO/SIRTPO transportation policy priorities, including:

- a. Coordination with WSDOT staff on investment priorities identified in the 2030 WTP that are of mutual interest.
- b. Coordination with other Washington MPOs/RTPOs on investment priorities identified in the 2030 WTP that are of mutual interest.
- c. Cooperation with WSDOT staff in ongoing efforts to communicate 2030 WTP priorities to elected officials and citizens within the region.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, Skagit TAC, Island TAC, WSDOT

Outcome: Correspondence, data and meeting participation in support of statewide transportation plans and program development as the need arises.

2.4 Traffic Analysis

Description: Provide as-needed modeling, traffic and data analysis to WSDOT and member agencies on studies related to transportation facilities of statewide and/or regional significance.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Provide reports for traffic analyses requested by member jurisdictions. This will be done on an as-needed basis.

2.5 Review of Level of Service Standards

Description: Work with cities, Skagit/Island transit agencies, WSDOT and others to develop and evaluate existing level of service standards and alternate transportation performance measures.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, Skagit TAC, Island TAC

Outcome: Documentation of review of level of service standards and draft alternative transportation measures. This will be completed in the 2nd quarter of SFY 2013.

2.6 Statewide Project Prioritization

Description: Coordinate the update of the Regional Transportation Priority List for the region and the statewide RTPO website.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, Skagit TAC, Island TAC, Puget Sound Regional Council, WSDOT

Outcome: Current list of regional priorities to include on statewide project display website. This will be done continually throughout the year as project status or descriptions change.

SMPO

2.7 Interstate 5 Master Plan

Description: Act on the key recommendations of the I-5 Interstate Master Plan to further define scope, cost, and benefits of improvements. The study will define short-, mid-, and long-term

strategies and improvements. The product will help develop coalitions and identify funding options to address identified corridor problems.

Responsibilities: SMPO Staff, WSDOT, SMPO TAC

Outcome: Technical report with low-cost alternative suggestions for the I-5 corridor. This deliverable will likely be completed in SFY 2014.

SIRTPO

2.8 Intelligent Transportation Systems

Description: Coordinate with WSDOT, transit agencies, and local jurisdictions on the adoption of the Washington State Department of Transportation Statewide ITS Plan for the SIRTPO region.

Responsibilities: SIRTPO Staff, WSDOT

Outcome: Meetings and coordination to more fully integrate the SIRTPO region into the WSDOT ITS plan.

2.9 Transportation Element Consistency

Description: Update policy on reviewing and certifying that the transportation element of city/county comprehensive plans and countywide planning principles that meet the following requirements:

- a. Reflect the transportation guidelines and principles established in the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plans and be consistent with the adopted plans.
- b. Conform to the requirements of RCW 36.70A.070.
- c. Reflect consistency between the countywide and multi-county planning policies adopted under RCW 36.70A.210 and the adopted regional transportation plan.

Responsibilities: SIRTPO staff, Skagit TAC, Island TAC

Outcome: Adoption of policy updates for the review of Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements. This will likely be completed in the first quarter of SFY 2013.

2.10 Other Jurisdictional Activities

Description: Assist local agencies with local planning efforts

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, Island County staff.

Outcome:

- a. Coordinate with the incorporated towns and cities with updates to their Comprehensive Transportation Elements, coordination with local, state and federal agencies.
- b. Coordinate and award remaining STP-R funds set aside for signage projects on eligible roads.
- c. Assist with other local planning coordination efforts as needed.

SMPO/SKAGIT RTPO

2.11 Non-Motorized Planning and Advocacy

Description: Coordinate with the ACT on Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle planning efforts. Programs or studies completed or currently underway by ACT: (SMPO/Skagit sub-RTPO)

- a. Updating and printing of the Skagit Walking Trails Guide.
- b. Completion of a Bike/Pedestrian Plan.
- c. Development of a high priority project list.
- d. Refinement of a map showing corridors connecting County-wide bicycle/pedestrian routes. This endeavor has been a regional effort which when done will also establish connections to other Counties, Whatcom, Island and Snohomish.
- e. Coordination with agencies in a regional effort to provide information and technical expertise on funding opportunities for different Bike/Ped programs available such as Safe Routes to School and other programs that exist or become available.
- f. Conduct extended region trail stakeholders meetings.
- g. Prepare bicycle economic impact study

Responsibilities: Skagit RTPO staff, Skagit RTPO, Skagit TAC, Skagit ACT, consultant

Outcome: Skagit RTPO staff will coordinate with Skagit ACT to prepare an updated Skagit Walking Trails Guide in spring of 2013. Also, in association with the Skagit TAC, Skagit RTPO will adopt a regional non-motorized plan which includes a prioritized project listing and preferred bicycle corridors near the end of SFY 2013. Skagit ACT will work throughout the year to aid the Skagit TAC in applying for non-motorized funding opportunities as they arise.

ISLAND RTPO

2.12 Commute Trip Reduction

Description: Coordinate with Island Transit and local jurisdictions on community wide commute trip reduction efforts.

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, Island Transit, Island TAC

Outcome: Coordinate with local agencies on Community Trip Reduction efforts and programs using rideshareonline.com and promoting special programs such as “bike month” in May. Island RTPO will continue functioning as the Island County Employee Transportation Coordinator implementing the County’s CTR Program

2.13 Concurrency Intersection Analysis

Description: Coordinate with WSDOT and Island County on a Concurrency Intersection Analysis review of identified intersections on Whidbey Island to remain in compliance with RCW 36.70A.070.

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, WSDOT, Island TAC

Outcome: Concurrency “watch-list” and intersection analysis report for Whidbey Island likely completed in December of 2012. Assist local jurisdictions with Concurrency Management updates. Coordinate on the integration of multimodal elements to include transit and other alternative modes of transportation in the analysis when determining priorities and levels of service.

2.14 Transportation Concurrency White Paper

Description: Coordinate the development of a white paper on Transportation Concurrency in Island County.

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, Island TAC, consultant

Outcome: Complete white paper on Transportation Concurrency in Island County. Coordinate with TAC and Policy Board on follow-up strategies

2.15 Freeland Sub-Area Plan

Description: Coordinate with the Island County Public Works Department on the implementation of the Freeland Sub-Area Plan.

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, Island County Public Works

Outcome: Attend meetings, facilitate and coordinate the development of multimodal transportation projects in Freeland consistent with the Freeland Sub-Area Plan, including the Complete Streets Project planned for Harbor Avenue, a new pathway on Myrtle Avenue and the Freeland Trail.

2.16 Mukilteo Multi Modal Ferry Landing

Description: Coordinate with WSDOT Ferries, the City of Mukilteo, and other agencies on the Mukilteo Multi Modal Ferry Landing project.

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, Island TAC, WSDOT Ferries, City of Mukilteo

Outcome: Attend meetings and provide input for the Mukilteo Multimodal Ferry Terminal Project

2.17 Transportation Element Update

Description: Update to the Transportation Element of the County Comprehensive Plan.

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, Island County, consultant

Outcome: Develop scope of work, budget and timeline for the Island County Transportation Element Update. Select consultants following a bid and selection process. Upon consultant selection work closely with the Island County Planning Department, Island County Public Works Department, WSDOT, State agencies and local jurisdictions to obtain updated data including population figures, zoning and land use maps, and other information. Develop and implement a public outreach plan for the Transportation Element Update.

2.18 SR 20 Design Options

Description: Coordinate with WSDOT and the City of Oak Harbor on interim design options for SR 20.

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, WSDOT, City of Oak Harbor

Outcomes: Attend meetings facilitate and coordinate as needed the development of design options for SR 20 in the City of Oak Harbor

2.19 Interisland Ferry Service

Description: Coordinate with local agencies and the private sector on inter-island ferry service opportunities in the region as they arise

Responsibilities: Island RTPO staff, Island TAC, private sector

Outcome: Coordinate with local agencies and the private sector on inter-island ferry service opportunities in the region as they arise.

Expenditure Allocation

Revenue Source	Federal/State Amount	Local Match	Total
FHWA "PL" Funds (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$66,192	\$10,331	\$76,522
FTA "5303" Funds (Skagit) 20% Match	\$22,224	\$5,556	\$27,780
FTA "5310" Funds (Skagit)	\$30,000	N/A	\$30,000
RTPO Funds (Skagit)	\$23,738	N/A	\$23,738
STP Regional (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$20,534	\$3,205	\$23,738
RTPO Funds (Island)	\$0	N/A	\$0
STP Regional (Island) 13.5% Match	\$120,624	\$18,826	\$139,450
NCCCP (Skagit)	\$2,520	N/A	\$2,520
Total	\$285,832	\$37,917	\$323,749

ELEMENT 3: PRIORITIZATION & PROJECT PROGRAMMING

This work program element focuses on the mandated responsibility of the SCOG to develop and manage a programming process to schedule federally-funded and other regionally significant transportation improvement projects over a six year period. The Skagit Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (SMTIP) and the Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Improvement Program (S/IRTIP) undergoes a comprehensive update annually, and is amended on an as-needed basis throughout the year. The MTIP and RTIP is effectively an ongoing process of programming federal funds, state, and local expenditures that implement regional planning priorities: economic vitality, preservation, safety, mobility, environment, and stewardship.

Projects are typically prioritized within the MPO with recommendations from the TAC's to the policy boards and the SIRTPO. Inclusion of projects in the RTIP signifies approval based on a finding of concurrence with the applicable M/RTP. Certain projects, depending on the source of funds, are prioritized and selected by the Skagit MPO and/or Skagit/Island sub-RTPO's Policy Boards.

SCOG is responsible for prioritizing federal Transportation Enhancement projects. Enhancement funds have been fully allocated for the full term of SAFETEA-LU; it is unknown if new funding will become available during FY 2013. SCOG is responsible for allocating an apportionment of federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding through a competitive process.

SCOG is also charged with the responsibility to prepare a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (approved in October 2010), which includes a prioritized list of human services transportation

projects and services from various public and non-profit entities. The plan is required to be updated every four years, but the priority projects list must be updated biennially.

WORK ACTIVITIES

SIRTPO

3.1 Regional Project Prioritization (Core Work Activity)

Description: Develop the annual Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (SMTIP and S/IRTIP); transmit to WSDOT for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) of all Skagit/Island member jurisdictions federally funded and/or regionally significant projects.

As projects change in funding status or description, SIRTPO will prepare amendments to the SMTIP and S/IRTIP and STIP in order to program federal funds that become secured or prioritized throughout the year. Likewise, amendments to the MTP and RTP will be made as status changes occur to projects identified in the plans.

Responsibilities: SIRTPO staff, SMPO, SIRTPO, Skagit TAC, Island TAC, WSDOT

Outcome: SIRTPO staff will produce a comprehensive update of the Skagit Metropolitan and the Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Improvement Program (SMTIP and S/IRTIP) for the 2013 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). This task will be done in November of 2012.

As project status and descriptions change, SIRTPO staff will work with the SMPO and SIRTPO boards to produce amendments to the SMTIP and S/IRTIP as well as the MTP and RTP. This will likely occur throughout the year on an as-needed basis.

3.2 Award Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funding

Description: Prioritize and award federal STP funding to projects through a competitive review and selection process.

Responsibilities: Skagit RTPO, Skagit TAC, Island RTPO, Island TAC

Outcome: Selection of priority projects for expenditure of Surface Transportation Program funding as funds are available.

Expenditure Allocation

Revenue Source	Federal/State Amount	Local Match	Total
FHWA "PL" Funds (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$18,004	\$2,810	\$20,814
FTA "5303" Funds (Skagit) 20% Match	\$4,152	\$1,038	\$5,190
FTA "5310" Funds (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
RTPO Funds (Skagit)	\$6,528	N/A	\$6,528
STP Regional (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$5,646	\$881	\$6,528
RTPO Funds (Island)	\$0	N/A	\$0
STP Regional (Island) 13.5% Match	\$6,920	\$1,080	\$8,000
NSCCP (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
Total	\$41,250	\$5,809	\$47,059

ELEMENT 4: TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING

This element of the work program focuses on travel demand modeling and related micro-simulation analysis, as required to carry out the objectives identified in this Unified Planning Work Program. This includes maintenance, updating and ongoing utilization of the VISUM travel demand forecasting software package and the utilization of a traffic analysis computer software package (Synchro) for intersection operation analysis for long-range planning, concurrency analysis, level-of-service analysis and development impact assessment by member jurisdictions.

WORK ACTIVITIES

SMPO/SIRTPO

4.1 Regional Model Maintenance

Description: Ongoing maintenance of the regional travel demand model and related models for the regional planning area, including consultant management, ongoing research, and data collection.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff

Outcome: SMPO and SIRTPO will maintain a calibrated travel demand model for use in traffic studies and plans. This is an ongoing process.

4.2 Travel Demand Model Update:

Description: In 2013 SIRTPO will begin an update to the travel demand model in preparation for the 2015 M/RTP update and 2016 local comprehensive plan updates. SCOG will likely hire a consultant to assist with the model update.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SIRTPO staff, consultant

Outcome: It is likely that this process will begin toward the end of SFY 2013 and conclude in SFY 2014. The result will be an updated transportation demand model to aid the MTP and RTP in 2015 as well as local jurisdictions in the comprehensive plan updates due in 2016.

Expenditure Allocation

Revenue Source	Federal/State Amount	Local Match	Total
FHWA "PL" Funds (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$24,078	\$3,758	\$27,836
FTA "5303" Funds (Skagit) 20% Match	\$4,442	\$1,110	\$5,552
FTA "5310" Funds (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
RTPO Funds (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
STP Regional (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$14,473	\$2,259	\$16,732
RTPO Funds (Island)	\$8,845	N/A	\$8,845
STP Regional (Island) 13.5% Match	\$0	\$0	\$0
NSCCP (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
Total	\$51,838	\$7,127	\$58,965

ELEMENT 5: DATA MANAGEMENT

This element of the work program focuses on the acquisition and maintenance of data and mapping resources, as required for carrying out the objectives identified in this Unified Planning Work Program. This includes traffic counts, demographic/employment data and other related transportation data that are routinely acquired by SMPO and SIRTPO for the maintenance of the Regional Travel Demand Model. It also includes maintaining a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capability for conducting spatial analysis and producing maps and other visualization tools for planning studies and public information displays.

Other data-related responsibilities of SCOG and the SIRTPO include review and updates to Federal Functional Classification of city and county roads; designation of state highways of "statewide" and "regional" significance; and other categorizations and designations that arise from time to time.

TASKS & OBJECTIVES

SMPO

5.1 Highway Functional Classification

Description: Update, review and process requests for modifications of the federal highway functional classification system within the Skagit Urbanized Area, as required.

Responsibilities: SMPO staff, SMPO TAC

Outcome: Early in SFY 2013, SMPO staff will review the 2012 census designated urbanized areas. We will coordinate requests for modification of highway functional classifications on an as-needed basis.

SIRTPO

5.2 Residence and Employment Data

Description: Maintain an inventory of residence and employment data by TAZ for use with the regional demand model. This data will be kept current to make updating the regional model more efficient when that effort begins.

Responsibilities: SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Updated land use and employment databases for the regional travel demand model. This is an ongoing effort that will carry over into SFY 2014.

5.3 Transportation Data

Description: This task includes a continuation of our annual agreement with Skagit County to perform traffic counting services for jurisdictions within Skagit RTPO. SIRTPO staff will initiate conversations with Island County to make a similar agreement for traffic counts on Whidbey and Camano Islands. SIRTPO staff will maintain inventory of traffic and vehicle classification counts, travel time studies and transit ridership data from all available sources; store data and make available in electronic format.

Responsibilities: SIRTPO staff, WSDOT, Skagit County, Skagit Transit, Island County, Island Transit.

Outcome: Maintain library of current traffic counts for Skagit County. Establish agreement with Island County to provide traffic counts for data analysis and regional model calibration. Counts will be done throughout the year on both a scheduled and as-needed basis. All counts, travel time information, and transit ridership data will be made available and maintained in an electronic library.

5.4 GIS and Mapping

Description: Maintain current demographic, roadway infrastructure and other spatial data for mapping and GIS applications; maintain and acquire appropriate computer, software and printing equipment to support a map preparation and publication capacity.

Responsibilities: SIRTPO staff

Outcome: Provide ongoing GIS support for transportation planning efforts and demographic information for Skagit and Island Counties.

Expenditure Allocation

Revenue Source	Federal/State Amount	Local Match	Total
FHWA "PL" Funds (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$14,575	\$2,275	\$16,850
FTA "5303" Funds (Skagit) 20% Match	\$2,936	\$734	\$3,670
FTA "5310" Funds (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
RTPO Funds (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
STP Regional (Skagit) 13.5% Match	\$16,877	\$2,634	\$19,511
RTPO Funds (Island)	\$5,916	N/A	\$5,916
STP Regional (Island) 13.5% Match	\$0	\$0	\$0
NSSCP (Skagit)	\$0	N/A	\$0
Total	\$40,305	\$5,643	\$45,947

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SUMMARY OF REVENUE/EXPENDITURES BY WORK PROGRAM ELEMENT

	Program Fund Source (match included)	Element 1: Administration	Element 2: Multimodal Planning	Element 3: Project Programming	Element 4: Travel Demand Forecasting	Element 5: Data Management	Total Expenditures	Revenue	Carry Forward from 2012	Carry Forward to 2014
SMPO	(MPO) FHWA PL Federal Funds	\$72,202	\$66,192	\$18,004	\$24,078	\$14,575	\$195,051	\$130,000	\$364,773	\$286,831
	Local Match (13.5%)	\$11,268	\$10,331	\$2,810	\$3,758	\$2,275	\$30,441	\$17,550		
	(MPO) FTA 5303 PL Federal Funds	\$25,121	\$22,224	\$4,152	\$4,442	\$2,936	\$73,593	\$61,000	\$49,447	\$34,335
	Local Match (20%)	\$6,280	\$5,556	\$1,038	\$1,110	\$734	\$14,719	\$12,200		
	(MPO) FTA 5310 PL Federal Funds	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$0
	Total	\$114,871	\$134,303	\$26,004	\$33,388	\$20,520	\$329,085	\$250,750	\$414,220	\$321,166
Skagit RTPO	RTPO Funds	\$35,678	\$23,738	\$6,528	\$0	\$0	\$65,944	\$66,575	\$32,646	\$33,277
	STP-Regional Funds	\$30,862	\$20,534	\$5,646	\$14,473	\$16,877	\$102,187	\$0	\$414,000	\$298,018
	Local Match (13.5%)	\$4,817	\$3,205	\$881	\$2,259	\$2,634	\$13,795	\$0		
	Total	\$71,357	\$47,477	\$13,055	\$16,732	\$19,511	\$168,131	\$66,575	\$446,646	\$331,295
Island RTPO	RTPO Planning Funds	\$29,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,845	\$5,916	\$43,761	\$44,000	\$0	\$239
	STP-Regional Funds	\$36,330	\$120,624	\$6,920	\$0	\$0	\$163,874	\$0	\$69,450	-\$120,000*
	Local Match (13.5%)	\$5,670	\$18,826	\$1,080	\$0	\$0	\$25,576	\$0		
	Total	\$71,000	\$139,450	\$8,000	\$8,845	\$5,916	\$233,211	\$44,000	\$69,450	-\$119,761
Special HPP Projects	North Sound Connecting Communities Project	\$3,660	\$2,520	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,180	\$0	\$27,000	\$20,820
	Skagit/Island Revenue for 2013	\$260,888	\$323,749	\$47,059	\$58,965	\$45,947	\$736,608	\$361,325	\$930,316	\$532,700

*Funds carry over from Island RTPO for UPWP Administration and Implementation, Comprehensive Plan Update (Island County).

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information or to request a copy of this document, please contact:

James Mastin, Transportation Director
Skagit Council of Governments
204 West Montgomery
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
(360) 416-7876
Jamesm@scog.net

Donna Keeler, Transportation Planner
Island sub-Region RTP
P.O. Box 5000
Coupeville, WA 98239
(360) 678-7959
d.keeler@co.island.wa.us

DRAFT

Transportation Concurrency and State Transportation Facilities in Island County, Washington

commissioned by

Island Sub-Regional Transportation Organization

prepared by

Henderson,
Young &
Company

May 16, 2012

Preface

This paper on transportation concurrency and state transportation facilities in Island County was commissioned by the Island Sub-Regional Transportation Organization.

“Transportation concurrency” is a requirement of Washington’s 1990 Growth Management Act. It works like water and sewer requirements that development must be provided safe and healthy facilities at the same time as (“concurrent” with) development.

In transportation concurrency, the adequacy and acceptability of transportation facilities is determined by adopted standards for level of service (LOS), and the standards must be met concurrent with development.

The underlying principle of concurrency is simple: development and infrastructure should be completed concurrently. But implementation of this simple principle has turned out to be remarkably complex.

Specifically, the State laws and regulations, and the local government ordinances that implement transportation concurrency are full of details that are often complicated, sometimes contradictory, and occasionally lead to unintended consequences.

One particular feature of transportation concurrency epitomizes these problems. It is the requirement that counties made up of islands, but no other counties, must use the State’s standards on state highways and the state ferry system as tests for approving or denying local development. This could cause development that is consistent with both the regional growth allocated to Island County and Island County’s comprehensive plan to be disapproved because of the transportation concurrency LOS on State transportation facilities.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the implications and outcome of transportation concurrency requirements and State highways of statewide significance (HSS) and Washington State Ferry (WSF) routes serving Island County.

May 16, 2012
Randy Young
Henderson, Young & Company
8060 – 165th Ave. N.E., Suite 220
Redmond, Washington 98052-3935
phone: (425) 869-1786
e-mail: ryoung@hendersonyoung.com

Executive Summary

The Devil is in the Details

Transportation concurrency is a simple idea: development should be served by adequate levels of transportation facilities and services at the time the development is complete.

Implementation of this simple principle has turned out to be remarkably complex. The State laws and regulations, and the local government ordinances that implement transportation concurrency are full of details that are often complicated, sometimes contradictory, and occasionally lead to unintended consequences.

Concurrency: The Idea and The Reality

Idea of Concurrency: Reasons Transportation Concurrency was Adopted

There are at least 4 reasons that transportation concurrency was adopted:

- Transportation is essential to urban areas and economies, and transportation facilities don't work well when they exceed their design capacity.
- Transportation concurrency is one of the few tools available to governments to plan for, manage and respond to growth.
- Traffic congestion has consequences, such as effects on the environment and time lost while stuck in traffic.
- Transportation concurrency helps protect local governments from unexpected and unplanned development.

Reality of Concurrency: Unexpected Consequences

There are at least 14 unexpected consequences or outcomes of transportation concurrency that were not anticipated or understood when transportation concurrency was adopted:

- Transportation is an open system and governments cannot control use of their transportation network by traffic from outside their jurisdictions.
- Governments lack the money to pay for needed transportation improvements.
- Use of different standards by neighboring jurisdictions allows development from one jurisdiction to use the capacity of transportation built by a neighboring jurisdiction for its own residents and businesses.
- Local governments are subject to level of service decisions by the state, and the state's inability to fund transportation improvements.
- Disapproval of development due to transportation concurrency will not restore the LOS on HSS and WSF because usage by visitors is not affected by disapproval of development.
- Forced disapprovals of development may prevent Island County from fulfilling its regional population and employment allocations and thus

- violate the Growth Management Act.
- Preservation of scenic highway designation, heritage corridor designation and Ebey's Landing preservation requirements may take legal precedence over increased capacity on HSS and/or WSF.
- Capacity LOS adopted by WSDOT is a narrow and incomplete measure of the effect of development on roads, highways and ferries.
- WSDOT's capacity LOS for HSS and WSF promote the inefficient use of state highways and ferries by treating full capacity as "failing" rather than rewarding it as the most efficient use of the transportation network.
- State law requires state agencies to comply with local comprehensive plans, but WSDOT concurrency LOS can cause inconsistencies with Island County's comprehensive plan.
- Transportation concurrency cannot solve existing capacity or congestion problems. Denying future desirable development makes growth bear the consequences of previous failures to invest adequately.
- Many transportation revenues have been reduced or eliminated by court cases or voter initiatives since concurrency was adopted.
- Some concurrency LOS problems cannot be "fixed" because of physical constraints, safety constraints, and environmental constraints,
- Transportation concurrency for state transportation facilities in Island County may be an unfunded mandate on Island County.

Island County is on the verge of having to make choices about what to do if LOS on HSS or WSF would lead to denial of desirable and planned development. A 2012 analysis shows 6 of 10 intersections on SR20 and SR525 will fall below the concurrency LOS standard within 8 years from now (by the year 2020). If that happens, the choices available under current law each have unintended consequences. Faced with this future, the RTPCO commissioned this paper on transportation concurrency and state transportation facilities in Island County

A Brief History of Transportation Concurrency and State Transportation Facilities in Island County

This section of the paper takes just one and a half pages to summarize the origins of transportation concurrency, the addition of state transportation facilities, development of standards by WSDOT, and subsequent reports about state transportation facility performance.

Potential Changes to Transportation Concurrency

This section of the paper identifies 16 potential changes to transportation concurrency involving HSS and/or WSF routes, organized in four groups:

I. No Change to Transportation Concurrency

1. Do not change the requirement to apply state LOS on HSS and WSF to transportation concurrency for counties consisting of islands.

II. Same Transportation Concurrency Rules as Other Counties

This option would treat Island County like all other counties, and let Island County use the same tools of GMA to keep Island County a desirable place to live, work and play.

2. Repeal the requirement to apply state LOS on HSS and WSF to transportation concurrency for counties consisting of islands.

III. Creative Changes to Make Concurrency on State Transportation Facilities an Effective Growth Management Tool

The goal of the creative changes is to make transportation concurrency an effective tool for managing growth in Island County without stopping development that is consistent with Island County's comprehensive plan.

Changes by Agreement between Island County (and/or RTPO) and WSDOT

3. Develop zones for applying concurrency on Whidbey Island, such as a north island zone for the Port Townsend-Coupeville ferry and a south island zone for the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry.
4. Allow developers to "pay and go" by mitigating their impacts, including payments for alternative modes of travel and other trip reduction strategies.
5. Allow constraints such as scenic highway, heritage corridor and/or Ebey's Landing restrictions to supersede the adopted LOS for transportation concurrency for HSS and WSF.

Changes by Rule or Administrative Action by WSDOT

6. Change the levels of service standards to reward maximum efficiency instead of treating it like failure.
7. Change the geography of levels of service to differentiate between urban and rural areas.
8. Change the levels of service metrics to measure more things than just capacity.

Changes by Amendment of State Law and/or Budget by the Legislature

9. Authorize automatic revenues when levels of service reach critical thresholds.
10. Authorize automatic suspension of concurrency if funding is not provided for needed transportation capacity.

11. Build additional capacity at HSS intersections and WSF ferry routes.
12. Change the responsibility for establishing LOS for HSS and WSF so Island County and the RTPO are at least equal partners with WSDOT.
13. Change the time period to achieve concurrency to 10 years, like the recent extension of impact fees.

IV. Alter the Idea of Concurrency

These strategies involve substantial changes, some of which eliminate transportation concurrency as a growth management tool in Island County.

14. State agency compliance with local comprehensive plans has precedence over concurrency on state transportation facilities.
15. Reduce growth allocated to Island County and revise the comprehensive plan for less growth.
16. Revise GMA planning requirements for counties consisting of islands.

Conclusions

The “no change” alternative is fraught with risks of unintended consequences, and the strategies that “alter the idea of concurrency” are akin to throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

The “same transportation concurrency rules as other counties” seems the most reasonable and equitable solution, and if it is adopted Island County would still have all the other growth management tools available to other counties so that Island County can protect itself from unexpected, unplanned development.

Finally, if Island County is not to be treated the same as other counties, the “creative changes” offer the opportunity to make transportation concurrency a useful tool for managing growth in Island County without stopping development that is consistent with Island County’s comprehensive plan.

Concurrency: The Idea and The Reality

The Idea of Concurrency

The roots of “concurrency” for public facilities are the long-standing requirements that there must be adequate water and wastewater service in order to construct and use a building. In 1985, the State of Florida extended the concurrency requirement to include roads, solid waste, surface water and parks in all jurisdictions, and transit in jurisdictions over 50,000 population. In 1990, the State of Washington adopted its Growth Management Act and required concurrency for locally owned transportation facilities. In 1998, Washington extended the concurrency requirement to a specific group of state highways and state ferry routes of “statewide significance” that serve Island County and San Juan County.

The underlying principle of concurrency is simple: development should be served by adequate public facilities at the time the development is complete. In other words, development and infrastructure should be completed concurrently.

Reasons that Transportation Concurrency was Adopted

Transportation concurrency was adopted for several reasons, including the following:

1. Transportation, like water and sewer facilities, are essential to urban areas and economies. And like water and sewer, transportation facilities don’t work well when they exceed their design capacity.
2. The tools available to governments to plan for, manage and respond to growth are limited. Land use planning and zoning deal with the location and type of development, but not the consequences of development’s effect on transportation facilities. Mitigation through SEPA is limited to direct adverse impacts on specific facilities rather than the larger transportation system. GMA impact fees can mitigate impacts on the entire system of roads, but they are limited to proportionate shares and they are prohibited from recapturing 100% of those shares. Transportation concurrency provides a way to meter transportation capacity and development by matching them to each other.
3. Transportation concurrency requires reactions and responses to unacceptable levels of service because congestion has consequences, such as effects on the environment and time lost while stuck in traffic. A variety of responses are possible, not just denial of development:
 - a. Development mitigates (pays to fix, or pays for alternative capacity).
 - b. Governments and developers identify transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development within

six years. The improvements or strategies can include a variety of mitigation and/or alternative transportation solutions.

- c. Government pays for capacity.
 - d. LOS is changed to more realistic levels that acknowledge the efficient (i.e., maximum) use of transportation capacity.
4. Transportation concurrency helps protect local governments from unexpected and unplanned development by providing a tool to deny development applications for which there is not adequate transportation capacity and levels of service.

The goal of transportation concurrency is to ensure that development is served by adequate levels of transportation facilities and services.

Purposes of Transportation Concurrency

Just as there is more than one reason for transportation concurrency, there is more than one purpose of concurrency. The transportation professionals and citizen members of Island County RTPPO Technical Advisory Committee identified the following purposes of transportation concurrency:

1. provide economical (efficient) use of transportation infrastructure
2. coordinate demand for service with provision of service
3. reduce traffic congestion, smooth the flow of traffic
4. provide that growth pays for itself
5. provide adequate transportation in time for development
6. actually plan for growth
7. protect the environment
8. community understanding of the impact and cost of land use decisions
9. community understanding of transportation needs
10. limit population to level that can have adequate mobility and also receive goods and services via transportation

The Reality of Concurrency

The multitude of reasons and purposes for transportation concurrency have contributed to the complexity of implementing this simple principle. Some of the reasons for the complexity and challenge of applying concurrency to transportation facilities, including state transportation facilities, include the following:

1. Transportation, unlike water and sewer, is an open system that must support users from outside the system. Governments cannot control use of

- their transportation network by traffic from outside their jurisdictions.
2. Governments rarely had enough money to pay for needed transportation improvements when the economy was strong. The current weak economy makes this worse.
 3. Local control over levels of service standards for locally owned transportation facilities allows each jurisdiction to determine its own tolerance for congestion and its own ability or willingness to pay for transportation improvements. But use of different standards by neighboring jurisdictions allows development in one jurisdiction to use the capacity of transportation built by a neighboring jurisdiction for its own residents and businesses.
 4. Applying levels of service on state highways and state ferries to local concurrency means that local governments are subject to the level of service decisions by the state, and the state's ability and willingness to fund transportation improvements needed to maintain the level of service standards set by the state.
 5. Disapproval of development by Island County due to transportation concurrency will not restore the LOS on HSS and WSF because significant portions of the usage of HSS and WSF are visitors that are not affected by disapproval of development. Peak season day-trip visitors account for significant amounts of ferry and state highway traffic on Island County, and visitor traffic is not affected by the amount of housing or employment approved for development on Whidbey Island.
 6. Development that is both consistent with regional growth allocated to Island County and consistent with Island County's comprehensive plan may be disapproved because of the transportation concurrency LOS on HSS and/or WSF. Such forced disapprovals may prevent Island County from fulfilling its regional population and employment allocations and thus violate the Growth Management Act.
 7. Preservation of scenic highway designation, heritage corridor designation and Ebey's Landing preservation requirements may take legal precedence over increased capacity on HSS and/or WSF. Keeping HSS on Whidbey Island at 2 lanes avoids forcing "urban" facilities for "urban" LOS in areas that are scenic, heritage, reserve, pristine, and/or rural.
 8. Capacity LOS is a narrow and incomplete measure of the effect of development on roads, highways and ferries. Other equally important metrics include safety, accessibility, quality, and use of alternative modes of travel.
 9. Current capacity LOS for HSS and WSF promote the inefficient use of state highways and ferries because they interpret full capacity as "failing" rather than rewarding it as the most efficient use of the transportation network.
 10. State agencies are required to comply with local comprehensive plans (RCW 36.70A.103). That requirement can cause inconsistencies with the

State's LOS on HSS and WSF.

11. Transportation concurrency does not, and legally cannot, solve existing capacity or congestion problems. Denying future desirable development because of failures to fix pre-existing problems makes growth bear the consequences of previous failures to invest adequately.
12. Many things have changed since transportation concurrency was adopted in 1990, and HSS and WSF were added in 1998. Some of the following changes make transportation concurrency much more difficult to achieve:
 - a. Initiatives repealed or capped significant sources of transportation revenue, including the street utility (court ruling in 1995); motor vehicle excise tax (I-695 in 1999); cap on property taxes (I-747 in 2001); and the cap on vehicle license fees (I-776 in 2002).
 - b. The "Great Recession" economy, slow recovery, and the likelihood of a new normal that reduces resources available for transportation.
13. Some concurrency LOS problems cannot be "fixed" because of a variety of constraints:
 - a. physical constraints: not enough space to add capacity
 - b. safety constraint: turn lanes or signals may cause unsafe conditions
 - c. environmental constraint: damages that cannot be "mitigated"
 - d. policy constraints: scenic highway, heritage corridor, and Ebey's landing restrictions
14. Transportation concurrency for state transportation facilities in Island County may be an unfunded mandate on Island County.

Most of these outcomes and consequences of transportation concurrency were not anticipated when transportation concurrency was enacted in 1990, and the state LOS on HSS and WSF were added in 1998.

Transportation Concurrency and Denial of Development

The 14 complexities and consequences of concurrency listed above have little, if any, real-world consequences as long as the transportation network can maintain level of service standards for current users and for proposed growth. However, when future growth will cause the transportation system to exceed the level of service, the consequences of the concurrency requirement become very real.

Island County is on the verge of having to make choices about what to do if LOS on HSS or WSF would lead to denial of desirable and planned development. Specifically, the level of service standard for the Washington State Ferry route serving Coupeville and Port Townsend would have failed if one ferry boat was transferred to another run, as was proposed, but not implemented. In addition,

two recent development applications would have encountered concurrency problems on state highways in Island County, but the problem was avoided because the applications were withdrawn, likely due to the weak economy.

Although the economy has been weak lately, growth in the County has not stopped, but the number of new people and the percentage rate of growth has gotten smaller every decade since 1970, as shown below.

Island County has experienced substantial growth in the last 40 years, but the rate of growth is slowing. Fewer new people move to Island County each decade, and the growth percentage is less in each decade. The following table summarizes the census data from 1970 through 2010.

Year	Population	Increase Between Censuses	Percent Change Between Censuses
1970	27,011		
1980	44,048	17,027	63.1%
1990	60,195	16,147	36.7%
2000	71,558	11,363	18.9%
2010	78,506	6,948	9.7%

Although the amount and rate of growth in Island County has slowed each decade, the 9.7% rate of growth between 2000 and 2010 occurred despite the Great Recession during the last years of the decade. Furthermore, the rate is strong enough to indicate that Island County cannot assume that current state transportation facilities will continue to meet WSDOT's standards for HSS and WSF.

The Island sub-RTPO is monitoring growth and transportation LOS and recently prepared a Concurrency Intersection Analysis to study the potential effect of future growth on 10 intersections on the two HSS on Whidbey Island: SR 20 and SR525. An analysis presented in January 2012 indicated that 6 of the 10 intersections will fall below the concurrency LOS standard within 8 years from now (by the year 2020).

The easiest solution would be "channelization" which only requires minor changes such as pavement markings. The Island sub-RTPO analysis determined that 3 of the 6 failing intersections cannot be fixed by channelization, therefore Island County and the State will need to consider other choices.

The Island sub-RTPO analysis selected one of the intersections to determine the range of costs for adding capacity to the intersection. Initial estimates of the

cost of fixing just one of the six intersections indicate that a signal would cost \$3.2 million, or a roundabout would cost \$6.4 million. These high costs, coupled with the lack of state or local money because of the current economy, may indicate that Island County and the State will need to find other choices.

The Choices Available When Transportation Levels of Service Won't Meet Concurrency Standards

The next time an application triggers the concurrency requirement (i.e., will cause the level of service to decline below the adopted standard) Island County will have to choose from among the following choices that are available under current law:

1. development applications are disapproved
2. development mitigates (pays to provide needed capacity, or pays for capacity in alternative modes)
3. government pays for needed capacity
4. level of service standards are reduced
5. "strategies" are developed that are alternatives to "improvements" (i.e., transit, carpool, bike/ped, telecommute, staggered work hours, etc.)
6. "financial commitments" are put in place for the strategies and improvements
7. administrative changes are made to concurrency:
 - a. zones are created that match the LOS problem to the area affected by the problem, rather than all of Whidbey Island
 - b. different levels of service are adopted for the peak season than the off-peak time of year
8. population and jobs allocated to Island County by GMA are reduced, then the County's land use map is revised to accommodate less development (and other counties in the region will have to accept the population and jobs that are no longer going to Island County)

The choice will be difficult, and each choice has consequences. For example, should development be denied even if it is otherwise consistent with Island County's comprehensive plan? Should local taxes be raised to pay for improvements needed by growth (even if the improvements are on state highways or state ferry routes)? Should the state lower state standards or pay for improvements to state facilities so that desirable development can proceed?

Faced with these questions, the RTPO commissioned this paper on transportation concurrency and state transportation facilities in Island County.

A Brief History of Transportation Concurrency and State Transportation Facilities in Island County

In 1990, the State of Washington adopted its Growth Management Act (GMA). One of the sections of the law has come to be known as the transportation concurrency requirement. It requires local governments to disapprove applications for development that would cause the level of service on a local transportation facility to decline below the standards adopted by the local government. Local governments could approve the application if transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development are made concurrent with the development. The full text of the transportation concurrency requirement (RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (b)) is included in the Appendix to this paper.

In 1998, the Washington State Legislature added a requirement that the State adopt level of service standards for state transportation facilities of statewide significance, including specific state highways and state ferry system routes. The full text of this requirement (RCW 47.06.140 (2)) is in the Appendix.

The state standards on state facilities are to be used for planning purposes, but not for transportation concurrency, "...except for counties consisting of islands whose only connection to the mainland are state highways or ferry routes. In these island counties, state highways and ferry route capacity must be a factor in meeting the concurrency requirements in (b) of this subsection;..." The full text of this additional transportation concurrency requirement (RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (a) (iii) (C)) for Island County is also included in the Appendix.

In December 1998, Transportation Commission designated the following facilities on or serving Island County as Highways of Statewide Significance, and therefore subject to transportation concurrency for development in Island County:

State Highways	SR 525 - I-5 to SR20 (entire route) SR 20 - SR101 to SR2/Newport (entire route)
State Ferry Routes	525 Mukilteo/Clinton Ferry SR20 Pt. Townsend/Coupeville Ferry

The State adopted standards for these transportation facilities, and then revised the standards in October 2009.

Transportation Facility	Original Standard	2009 Standard		
State Highways	Congestion Index: Rural areas: 10 Urban areas: 12	Highway Capacity Rural intersections: LOS D Urban Intersections: LOS E		
State Ferry Routes	Number of "boat-waits"	Percent of Sailings Full		
Pt. Townsend-Keystone	1 boat-wait	Jan 75%	May 75%	Aug 85%
Mukilteo-Clinton	2 boat-wait	65%	65%	75%

WSDOT also noted the goal in the 2007-2026 Highway System Plan that when travel speeds fall below 70 percent of posted speeds on state highways the highway no longer operates efficiently. WSDOT stated that the 70% goal is for long range system planning, but not for concurrency,

In November 2008, WSDOT provided the first biennial traffic analysis report to the Skagit/Island RTPO. It reported the congestion index values for two specific mile-post locations on SR 20, and two other specific mile-post locations on SR 525. None of the locations exceeded the standard for the congestion index. The report did not address the LOS on WSF.

In November 2010, WSDOT provided the second biennial traffic analysis report to the Skagit/Island RTPO. It reported the travel speeds as a percent of posted speed limits at the same 4 locations as the 2008 biennial traffic analysis. The 2010 report emphasized that the data pertained to the WSDOT measure of highway performance, and that data "... is *not* meant for the purposes of concurrency." The report went on to state that "'Current development impacts' [i.e., concurrency] are measured by Island County local agencies using HCM intersection LOS methodology." The report did not address the LOS on WSF.

As noted earlier, Island County is within 8 years, perhaps less, of denying of desirable and planned development because of transportation concurrency on state transportation facilities. The Island sub-RTPO is concerned about this inconsistency among requirements of the Growth Management Act, and commissioned this paper to examine strategies or changes to transportation concurrency and state transportation facilities in Island County.

Potential Changes to Transportation Concurrency

Island County is concerned that future development that is both consistent with regional growth allocated to Island County and consistent with Island County's comprehensive plan may be disapproved because of the transportation concurrency requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA). In particular, Island County is concerned about the provisions that could disapprove local development because of state adopted levels of service on highways of statewide significance (HSS) and/or Washington state ferry (WSF) routes.

This portion of the policy paper identifies 16 potential strategies, actions, and/or changes that could be made to transportation concurrency involving HSS and/or WSF routes. The strategies or changes to transportation concurrency are numbered 1-16. They are presented in four groups;

- I. No Change (like the "no action" alternative in SEPA analysis) (#1)
- II. Same Transportation Concurrency Rules as Other Counties (#2)
- III. Creative Changes to Make Concurrency on State Transportation Facilities an Effective Growth Management Tool (#3-13)
- IV. Alter the Idea of Concurrency (#14-16)

I. No Change to Transportation Concurrency

1. Do not change the requirement to apply state LOS on HSS and WSF to transportation concurrency for counties consisting of islands.

The "no change" alternative is like a "no action" alternative in SEPA. Current law, regulations, ordinances, and LOS standards would remain unchanged. This alternative does not address the concerns of the Island sub-Regional RTPPO that led to the preparation of this paper. The "no change" alternative is included as a reminder that no action continues the status quo without fixing the complexities, contradictions, inconsistencies, and unintended consequences described above.

II. Same Transportation Concurrency Rules as Other Counties

2. Repeal the requirement to apply state LOS on HSS and WSF to transportation concurrency for counties consisting of islands.

All counties that plan pursuant to the Growth Management Act, including Island County, have a variety of tools to plan for and manage growth so that unplanned or unexpected development does not overrun the county and change its character. Among the growth management tools available to counties, including Island County, are the following:

- Allocation of population and employment growth from state to region to county and to cities and UGAs.
- Land use plans in local comprehensive plans that are consistent with the allocated population and employment.
- Zoning that ensures that each proposed development is consistent with

- the land use plans and other locally developed limits.
- Development regulations that ensure that each proposed development is consistent with other locally developed requirements and prohibitions.
- A financially feasible capital facilities plan that provides adequate infrastructure for the growth that is included in the land use plan.
- The requirement that if the capital facilities plan is not financially feasible, the land use plan must be revisited.
- Funding sources authorized by GMA to help pay for needed infrastructure, including impact fees for transportation, parks, fire protection and schools, and a local real estate excise tax.
- Transportation concurrency.

All counties that plan pursuant to the Growth Management Act, including Island County, are required to adopt transportation concurrency for county roads. Island County has a strong transportation concurrency program for its roads, and Island County's standards are more rigorous (higher) than WSDOT's standards:

- On rural roads and intersections, WSDOT standards accept LOS D , but Island County requires LOS C.
- On urban roads and intersections, WSDOT standards accept LOS E, but Island County requires LOS D.

It is not clear why GMA singled out counties consisting of islands as the only places where transportation concurrency must also include state transportation facilities. If it is a good idea on its merits, it would seem that it should apply equally to all counties that plan under GMA. And if the idea has turned out to have significant unanticipated outcomes and consequences, such as the 14 listed earlier in this paper, it would seem that it might be appropriate to repeal this provision of GMA that applies only to island counties, and let the other tools of GMA keep Island County a desirable place to live, work and play.

The State Legislature could amend state law to repeal the 1998 requirement that State adopted LOS on HSS and WSF apply to transportation concurrency in counties consisting of islands. The following is the full text of RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (a) (iii) (C). The portion that would be repealed is presented in strikethrough format.

For state-owned transportation facilities, level of service standards for highways, as prescribed in chapters 47.06 and 47.80 RCW, to gauge the performance of the system. The purposes of reflecting level of service standards for state highways in the local comprehensive plan are to monitor the performance of the system, to evaluate improvement strategies, and to facilitate coordination between the county's or city's six-year street, road, or transit program and the office of financial management's ten-year investment program. The concurrency requirements of (b) of this subsection do not apply to transportation facilities and services of statewide significance ~~except for counties consisting of islands whose only connection to the mainland are state~~

~~highways or ferry routes. In these island counties, state highways and ferry route capacity must be a factor in meeting the concurrency requirements in (b) of this subsection;~~

III. Creative Changes to Make Concurrency on State Transportation Facilities an Effective Growth Management Tool

The strategies that are listed as “creative changes” address the complexities, contradictions, inconsistencies, and unintended consequences that were described above. The goal and purpose of the creative changes is to make transportation concurrency an effective tool for managing growth in Island County without stopping development that is consistent with Island County’s comprehensive plan.

All of the creative changes are based on the assumption that transportation concurrency in Island County will continue to use LOS on HSS and WSF as a factor in reviewing and approving proposed development. What will change is that transportation concurrency will be thought-out, nuanced, and will not deny development that is consistent with Island County’s comprehensive plan.

The creative changes should be viewed as a checklist of steps to be taken, rather than a menu of ideas from which to choose. The most effective outcome will result from implementation of all or most of the creative changes. If only one or a few of the creative changes are implemented, transportation concurrency will be better than it is now, but some contradictions and inconsistencies will remain. Island County, the RTPO, and WSDOT should pursue as many of the creative changes as possible. If possible, they should be considered simultaneously so that interactions among the changes can be understood and managed.

The creative changes are organized in three groups according to the type or level of authority that is needed to make the changes. The groups are:

- Changes by Agreement between Island County (and/or RTPO) and WSDOT
- Changes by Rule or Administrative Action by WSDOT
- Changes by Amendment of State Law by the Legislature

Changes by Agreement between Island County (and/or RTPO) and WSDOT

3. Develop zones for applying concurrency on Whidbey Island.

Many transportation concurrency systems use zones to determine the geographic area that is affected if the transportation impacts of a proposed development would cause the LOS to be less than the adopted standard. The State LOS on HSS and WSF are silent on the geographical area to be covered by state standards.

For an example of the uncertainty that this creates consider the two ferry routes that serve Whidbey Island. It is not clear whether a LOS problem with the Port

Townsend-Coupeville ferry should apply to development on all of Whidbey Island, or if the island should be divided into zones so that the LOS of the Port Townsend-Coupeville ferry route applies only to the northern portion of Whidbey Island, and the LOS of the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry route applies only to the southern portion of Whidbey Island.

There are a number of ways that zones could be established for transportation concurrency:

- 1) WSF zones could be portions of Island County. For example, a zone for the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry could include only the Clinton Rural of Intense Development, or it could include areas as far north as Langley, or it could extend to cover the southern half of Whidbey Island. Similar options are available for the Port Townsend-Coupeville ferry route.
- 2) HSS zones could be segments, or individual intersections, or other geographic subareas, rather than the whole length of SR 20 and SR 525. The HSS LOS could apply only to properties within the designated zone.
- 3) An alternative to zones with fixed boundaries would be to conduct traffic studies that trace the trips from each proposed development to their points of impact. Wherever the trips' farthest impact is located becomes the "boundary" of that development's "zone" and concurrency LOS would be applied only within those boundaries.

Island County may have the authority under current law to create zones that it would use for transportation concurrency for HSS and WSF. In the spirit of collaboration, and to avoid questions of authority, Island County and WSDOT could prepare a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that acknowledges the County's authority to establish zones, or jointly develops the zones.

4. Allow developers to "pay and go" by mitigating their impacts.

If transportation concurrency LOS would cause denial of a development, one solution is to provide additional transportation facility capacity so that the concurrency LOS standard would be maintained. The cost of such capacity can be very high, such as the \$3-6 million cost for one intersection on SR 525, or the enormous cost of an additional ferry boat. It is unrealistic to expect development of the size that is going to occur on Whidbey Island to be able to afford the cost of that additional capacity. Furthermore, the portion of the costs that are due to existing deficiencies cannot be charged to new development.

However, current law allows development to be approved even if there is a concurrency LOS problem provided that "... transportation improvements or strategies to *accommodate the impacts of development (emphasis added)* are made concurrent with the development. These strategies may include increased public transportation service, ride sharing programs, demand management, and other transportation systems management strategies." (RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (b))

The statute does not explicitly require that the improvements or strategies result in full achievement of the adopted level of service standard. The examples of strategies that are offered by the statute may help indirectly to make progress toward the level of service standard, but there is no requirement in the statute that these strategies must achieve the level of service standard. Clearly the spirit of the law is to encourage investment in other transportation modes as an alternative to more lanes of roads and more ferry boats.

Island County may find it acceptable, perhaps preferable, for development to pay a specified amount of mitigation for other modes of travel in lieu of adding capacity to HSS or WSF. The mitigation could be considered full compliance with the transportation concurrency requirement, hence the phrase “pay and go”.

Current GMA law limits impact fees to “streets and roads” but a voluntary SEPA-based mitigation fee for transit, bike, and pedestrian has been developed for the City of Seattle. Island County could consider a comparable system that provides predictability and fairness to mitigation of concurrency LOS problems through fees for transit, bike, pedestrian, park and ride, rideshare, transportation demand management, telecommuting, staggered work hours, and other strategies.

Island County and WSDOT could prepare a MOU that acknowledges the County’s authority to establish the rates for mitigation, the uses of the mitigation, and that acceptance of the mitigation constitutes compliance with transportation concurrency for HSS or WSF.

5. Allow specific constraints on adding capacity to supersede the adopted LOS for transportation concurrency for HSS and WSF.

There can be circumstances where it is not possible, or completely inappropriate, to build more transportation capacity in order to achieve the adopted concurrency standards. The City of Tallahassee, Florida adopted a provision in their transportation concurrency that specified roads with “canopy trees” would never be widened to add capacity, notwithstanding transportation concurrency LOS. The canopy tree streets are lined with stately trees that are groomed to create a shaded cover over specific thoroughfares. Tallahassee determined that preservation of those trees is more important than congestion on those streets.

In Island County there are scenic highway designations, heritage corridor designations and special review requirements for Ebey’s Landing all of which protect the land and the character of Whidbey Island. Like Tallahassee, Island County could designate preservation areas that supersede concurrency on HSS and WSF. Development that is consistent with Island County’s comprehensive plan *and* the restrictions associated with the scenic/heritage/Ebey areas would be considered in full compliance with the transportation concurrency requirement.

This would allow approval of development that is consistent with the comprehensive plan by accepting the congestion and reduced LOS as preferable to violating the scenic highway, heritage corridor, and/or Ebey's landing restrictions.

Island County and WSDOT could prepare a MOU that acknowledges the County's designations of specific facilities or areas that preserve Whidbey Island constitutes compliance with transportation concurrency for HSS or WSF.

MOUs or Law Changes.

The suggestions that the "changes by agreement" described above can be accomplished by memoranda of understanding are based on a careful reading of the law by the author, an expert in transportation concurrency. However, the author is not an attorney, and is not offering legal advice in making these suggestions. Island County and WSDOT should explore their ability to accomplish these changes through MOUs. If that is not possible, the State Legislature could be asked to consider amending the transportation concurrency law to authorize the creative changes described above.

Changes by Rule or Administrative Action by WSDOT

6. Change the levels of service standards.

The adopted standards for HSS and WSF were listed earlier in this paper. The "metrics" (the things they measure) are the capacity of the transportation facilities to move vehicles and people. The numerical standards adopted for the metrics will stop development before the capacity of the transportation facilities is used fully.

By way of comparison, consider a bottle of fruit juice. We are interested in how many ounces the bottle can hold, but we are also concerned about whether the juice is healthy, safe, and tastes good. And we wait until the bottle is empty before we open another.

The current levels of service for transportation concurrency do not consider safety, access, comfort or anything other than capacity. This is like choosing a bottle of juice based solely on its size. And the standards for transportation concurrency require the construction of more capacity when there is still existing capacity available. This is like opening another bottle when the first is not empty.

WSDOT and Island County could re-think the metrics and standards for levels of service in order to avoid these problems and provide a better measure of service.

First, consider the capacity threshold. When transportation levels of service are expressed as letters A – F most people equate them to grades in school. F is failing, and you wouldn't want to take home a report card with a D or F. This

interpretation of level of service means that when the road is 80% full it gets a D on its report card. At 90% it gets an E. At 99% it is about to fail.

There is another way to interpret capacity level of service. It emphasizes the efficient use of resources. Looked at in this way, 99% is the highly efficient use of very expensive transportation facilities.

Changing the concept would also mean changing the State standards for HSS and WSF to reflect this approach to capacity LOS. Instead of LOS "D" and "E" the standards could be set at 99% or even 100% utilization. The vocabulary needs to change along with the statistical values so that the understanding of the LOS changes with the change in the statistical benchmark.

Another analogy makes this point. A 2-bedroom house with 2 adults and 2 kids at home is 100% occupied if they are home every day, or 96% occupancy if they go away for a 2-week vacation every year. If they have occasional overnight guests they do not buy a bigger house for the few times they are "over-capacity." Instead, they put up with the "congestion" by having someone sleep on the sofa, or the floor, or a tent in the yard. Transportation facilities could be treated the same way: accept congestion some of the time rather than building expensive improvements to reduce congestion during peak periods.

In developing this new approach to standards, the benchmark should be based on the peak season or the peak hour, and ignore the off-peak periods. When the idea of capacity is changed from school grades to full use of capacity, it is not relevant to set standards that are less than full use during the peak period.

7. Change the geography of levels of service.

Different LOS standards could be adopted for different transportation needs and development densities in urban areas as compared to rural areas:

- Urban areas such as city limits or UGAs or joint planning areas could allow much more congestion without triggering concurrency because development is desirable in urban areas, and congestion typically accompanies density.
- Rural areas could be affected by concurrency LOS that allows less congestion because development is less desirable in rural areas. [Note: Island County's existing concurrency takes the opposite approach by exempting from concurrency permitted uses in Rural, Rural Residential, Rural Agriculture, Commercial Agriculture and Rural Forest Zones (unless rural residential density is greater than 3 d.u. per acre).]

Using similar logic, different LOS standards could be established for areas served by transit, park and ride, etc. For example, King County's concurrency zones use different LOS standards that vary by the amount of transit availability (and not transit use).

8. Change the levels of service metrics.

The capacity LOS metric for concurrency could be supplemented or replaced with other metrics that describe more fully the transportation conditions that are of concern to new and existing development. Recall the juice bottle: capacity is only one factor, and other factors, such as health, safety and taste are also important. Here are some alternatives that could be considered for transportation concurrency:

- Multiple metrics could be developed to set standards for quality, safety, accessibility, mode split, travel time or delay, etc., in addition to capacity. These could be considered as a whole rather than pass-fail of each metric. For example, multiple metrics are used by some fire/rescue/EMS providers. They consider response time, call load, service area, staffing levels. No one factor is dominant, and none are “pass/fail”.
- An index or other combined score of multiple metrics.

The LOS metrics for concurrency could also consider other modes of travel and alternatives to travel. Here are some alternatives that could be considered for transportation concurrency:

- Air service.
- Clipper ferry service.
- Telecommuting, broadband capacity.
- Park and ride capacity.
- Vanpool.
- Express bus service to airports

Some of these modes or alternatives already exist and the point is that LOS metrics could take into account their effect on transportation facilities. Some of these modes or alternative do not exist, but if they become available in Island County, they should also be candidates for LOS metrics.

It is also important to note that metrics have not yet been developed for some of the transportation outcomes or modes listed above. The purpose of this creative change is to monitor the development of such metrics when they occur, and/or to encourage the development of some new metrics in Washington state.

WSDOT Authority or Law Changes.

Like the “changes by agreement” the suggestions that WSDOT has the authority to make the LOS changes described above is based on a careful reading of the law by the author, an expert in transportation concurrency. However, the author is not an attorney, and is not offering legal advice in making these suggestions. WSDOT should explore its ability to accomplish these changes through existing legal authority. If that is not possible, the State Legislature could be asked to consider amending the transportation concurrency law to authorize the creative changes to LOS that are described above.

Changes by Amendment of State Law and/or Budget by the Legislature

9. Authorize automatic revenues when levels of service reach critical thresholds.

WSDOT could prepare forecasts of future LOS. When the forecast indicates LOS cannot be maintained for more than 10 years (or other period of time that seems reasonable) a specific funding mechanism would automatically be activated and the revenue would be but in a separate account to be used only for increased capacity of state transportation facilities serving Whidbey Island.

The rationale is that if capacity on state transportation facilities becomes the reason development is restricted, and the State has not funded more capacity, the “automatic funding source” will generate revenue to pay for the additional capacity.

- For WSF: a surcharge on ferry tickets on the WSF route serving Whidbey Island that is forecast to have LOS problems within 10 years.
- For HSS: a gas tax surtax, or vehicle license fee or surcharge when HSS LOS is forecast to have problems within 10 years.

An alternative could provide the state the ability to pay for multi-modal transportation on Whidbey Island as an alternative to the more costly funding of highways and/or ferry boats. This concept is discussed above in creative change strategy #4. For this alternative to work, there would need to be agreement between Island County and WSDOT about the level of funding that would be sufficient, and the ways that the funding could be used by Island County (or by the State on projects that are acceptable to Island County).

10. Authorize automatic suspension of concurrency if funding is not provided for needed transportation capacity.

If the State does not fund transportation capacity needed to maintain state adopted LOS for transportation concurrency in Island County, transportation concurrency should be automatically suspended until funding is provided for enough capacity to avoid stopping development because of failure to fund needed capacity on State systems,

A variation on suspending transportation concurrency could be an automatic reduction of the state adopted concurrency LOS on HSS and WSF until funding of needed capacity is provided.

11. Build additional capacity at HSS intersections and WSF ferry routes.

The State could identify, fund and build improvements on HSS and WSF that are needed to avoid violating state adopted standards for transportation concurrency on HSS and WSF.

The improvements could improve the efficient use of existing capacity. For example, adding walkover ramps for pedestrian ferry riders might add one more run per day from existing ferry boats and terminals.

The improvements need to be sensitive to other considerations, such as the scenic highway, heritage corridor and Ebey's Landing restrictions described in #5 above.

The improvements need to respect state guidelines and standards for improvements, but also find creative and flexible ways to solve problems in practical ways. An example of the conflict between state and local guidelines is intersection signals on masts vs. on wires.

To be effective, this strategy would require the following:

- Annual forecasts of future LOS on HSS and WSF serving Island County,
- Identification of specific improvements needed to maintain the LOS when growth occurs that is consistent with Island County's comprehensive plan,
- Forecast of the effect of each improvement on concurrency LOS,
- Estimated cost of each improvement, and
- Commitment of the amounts and timing of specific funding.

12. Change the responsibility for establishing LOS for HSS and WSF.

Current law authorizes WSDOT to adopt the LOS for HSS and WSF. There is a requirement for consultation with local governments, but the law also specifies that the authority to set the standards rests solely with WSDOT. Several local government staff indicated that the consultation was minimal, and the County had no real ability to affect the LOS standards set by WSDOT.

The law could be revised in either of two ways:

- Alternative A: The State sets the LOS for state operational and capital planning, but the RTPO or Island County would set the LOS for concurrency purposes.
- Alternative B: the LOS would be established by the RTPO or by Island County, in conjunction with the State, and agreement by RTPO/Island County and the State would be required. Guidelines need to be included concerning the process, and specific results and/or consequences if the parties do not agree.

13. Change the time period to achieve concurrency.

Current law allows transportation concurrency to be accomplished within 6 years. The time period to achieve concurrency could be changed to 10 years to make it consistent with the recent extension of the deadline to spend impact fees within 10 years. This strategy would not solve concurrency problems, but it would provide more time to solve them using one or more of the creative strategies described above.

Two Notes about Creative Changes

1. The preceding list of creative changes includes general discussion of who could make the changes, and how they could be made, but does not include details such as revisions to current provisions of the County's concurrency ordinance, comprehensive plan, or State administrative rules or statutes. Those important details can be addressed by Island County, the RTPO, and WSDOT as they explore the implementation of the creative changes.
2. Some of the creative changes presented in this paper for Island County may also be useful in other counties, and/or cities, but this paper is about Island County's situation, so the discussion does not explore the implications for, or applicability to, other counties or cities.

IV. Alter the Idea of Concurrency

The strategies to alter the idea of concurrency could come into play under any of the following circumstances:

- If the creative changes cannot be agreed to by all the parties.
- If the creative changes are agreed to, but do not work as intended.
- If the idea of transportation concurrency is not effective, or relevant, and significant change is desired.

The strategies to alter the idea of concurrency involve substantial changes, some of which eliminate transportation concurrency as a growth management tool in Island County.

14. State agency compliance with local comprehensive plans.

The requirement that state agencies are required to comply with local comprehensive plans (RCW 36.70A.103) could be interpreted as taking precedence over transportation concurrency LOS on HSS and WSF in island counties (36.70A.070 (6) (a) (iii) (C)). Pursuant to this interpretation, Island County would not use state standards for HSS and WSF to review development applications because the 2009 State standards have not been adopted in Island County's code.

There are several ways this strategy could be accomplished:

- WSDOT and the RTPO / Island County could enter into a written agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding that commits the parties to use this interpretation,
- WSDOT could adopt a rule that accepts and sets forth this interpretation,
- the State Legislature could amend State law to include this interpretation, in RCW
- the Growth Management Hearings Board or the courts could rule on a challenge or litigation regarding this interpretation

15. Reduce growth allocated to Island County.

Pursuant to GMA, growth (population and employment) are estimated on a statewide basis, then the state allocates portions to regions. The counties and cities that make up a region develop a distribution (allocation) of the population and employment to each county, and then to cities and unincorporated areas. The population and employment allocations are the basis for local comprehensive plans.

This strategy to alter concurrency would require the region to revisit the population and employment allocations to Island County and reduce them to the levels that could be served by existing state transportation facilities at WSDOT standards for LOS. The other counties and cities would need to absorb the population and employment that is no longer allocated to Island County. Lastly, Island County would need to amend its comprehensive plan to reflect the reduced population and jobs. This would likely involve reductions of urban growth areas and/or densities.

16. Revise GMA planning requirements for counties consisting of islands.

The most fundamental alteration of concurrency could involve a major change to GMA planning requirements for island counties. This paper does not suggest the specific changes to be made, but this strategy asks if there are things about island counties that are so different than other counties that island counties should use a different approach to GMA. The changes could involve subjects in addition to transportation concurrency, such as population and employment allocations and/or urban versus rural densities and development patterns.

The following are ways that such changes could be accomplished.

- Prepare different rules (WAC),
- Amend RCW to create different requirements, or
- Exempt island counties from GMA

Conclusions

This paper provides 16 ideas how to deal with transportation concurrency and state transportation facilities in Island County. It seems to the author that the “no change” alternative is fraught with risks of unintended consequences, and the strategies that “alter the idea of concurrency” are akin to throwing the baby out with the bathwater. The “same transportation concurrency rules as other counties” seems the most reasonable and equitable solution, and if it is adopted Island County would still have all the other growth management tools available to other counties so that Island County can protect itself from unexpected, unplanned development. Finally, if Island County is not to be treated the same as other counties, the “creative changes” offer the opportunity to make transportation concurrency a useful tool for managing growth in Island County without stopping development that is consistent with Island County’s comprehensive plan.

Appendix: Specific Washington Laws About Transportation Concurrency

Concurrency is Required for Local Transportation Facilities

After adoption of the comprehensive plan by jurisdictions required to plan or who choose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040, local jurisdictions must adopt and enforce ordinances which prohibit development approval if the development causes the level of service on a locally owned transportation facility to decline below the standards adopted in the transportation element of the comprehensive plan, unless transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development are made concurrent with the development. These strategies may include increased public transportation service, ride sharing programs, demand management, and other transportation systems management strategies. For the purposes of this subsection (6), "concurrent with the development" means that improvements or strategies are in place at the time of development, or that a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvements or strategies within six years. RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (b)

WSDOT Sets the Standards for State Transportation Facilities

The department of transportation, in consultation with local governments, shall set level of service standards for state highways and state ferry routes of statewide significance. Although the department shall consult with local governments when setting level of service standards, the department retains authority to make final decisions regarding level of service standards for state highways and state ferry routes of statewide significance. In establishing level of service standards for state highways and state ferry routes of statewide significance, the department shall consider the necessary balance between providing for the free interjurisdictional movement of people and goods and the needs of local communities using these facilities. When setting the level of service standards under this section for state ferry routes, the department may allow for a standard that is adjustable for seasonality. RCW 47.06.140 (2)

Concurrency is Required for State Transportation Facilities, But Only in Island Counties

For state-owned transportation facilities, level of service standards for highways, as prescribed in chapters 47.06 and 47.80 RCW, to gauge the performance of the system. The purposes of reflecting level of service standards for state highways in the local comprehensive plan are to monitor the performance of the system, to evaluate improvement strategies, and to facilitate coordination between the county's or city's six-year street, road, or transit program and the office of financial management's ten-year investment program. The concurrency requirements of (b) of this subsection do not apply to

transportation facilities and services of statewide significance except for counties consisting of islands whose only connection to the mainland are state highways or ferry routes. In these island counties, state highways and ferry route capacity must be a factor in meeting the concurrency requirements in (b) of this subsection; RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (a) (iii) (C)



**SKAGIT/ISLAND REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**



*P.O. Box 5000
Coupeville, Wa 98239-5000
(360) 678-7959*

May 23, 2012

Terry Klein, Executive Director
SRI Foundation
333 Rio Rancho Dr. NE
Suite 103
Rio Ranch, NM 871245

RE: Support of SRI Foundation-Surface Transportation Enhancement Application

Dear Mr. Klein:

The Island Sub-Region Transportation Policy Board offers full and enthusiastic support of SRI Foundation's submittal of a Transportation Enhancement Grant request to develop a historic roads historic context for the Skagit/Island RTPO. The proposal compliments past and current efforts to document thousands of historic homes, commercial structures and barns in the region and in our opinion is the logical "next step" to completing the historic picture in Island and Skagit Counties.

Local jurisdictions, the Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve Office and the Island County Historic Museum and Society have offered their support and willingness to assist the SRI Foundation with maps, documents and other resources. The Island RTPO Transportation Planner is also available to assist and coordinate on this project.

We thank you for selecting our region as one of the RTPO's in your application and wish you all the best in your grant submittal. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Donna Keeler.

Sincerely,

Kelly Emerson
Chair, Island Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization, SIRTPO

Cc: Charlie Howard, PSRC
James Mastin, SCOG

SRI FOUNDATION

Advancing historic preservation through education, training, and research

May 8, 2012

Island Sub-Region RTPO
P.O. Box 5000
Coupeville, WA 98239

Dear Island Sub-Region RTPO Members:

The SRI Foundation is submitting a grant proposal to the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and invites the Island and Skagit Sub-Region RTPO's to participate in a project that we believe will benefit your organization and the local governments you represent. The DAHP grant requires that historic preservation services be provided to the state benefiting at least two Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs). Our proposal will be to develop a historic roads historic context for the Skagit/Island Region, and the Puget Sound Regional Council encompassing, Island, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, and Kitsap counties. We are writing to introduce the Island Sub-region RTPO to the project and to request a letter of support that we will submit with our grant proposal, which is due at the end of May.

The SRI Foundation is a non-profit historic preservation organization located in Rio Rancho, New Mexico that is dedicated to advancing historic preservation through education, training, and research (See <http://www.srifoundation.org/>). We provide professional services to government and industry clients nationwide to help them meet their research, education, planning and regulatory compliance needs. The SRI Foundation specializes in historic preservation within a transportation context. We have worked closely with DAHP and the Washington Department of Transportation on a number of transportation projects in the Seattle area, including the SR 520 project and the Alaska Way Viaduct project.

Our grant proposal is for approximately \$200,000. There will be no direct cost to the RTPO's or your constituent local governments. Some staff time will be required, however, to participate in the initial planning workshops and follow-up consultations as the project progresses.

We propose to undertake the following tasks:

- Consult with the RTPOs and their local governments.
- Consult with the Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve Office.
- Identify and record state roads in each RTPO through field inventory.
- Conduct archival research on the history of the identified roads.
- Assess the NRHP eligibility of the roads by applying the criteria for listing to the NRHP.
- Prepare detailed plans for managing the NRHP historic roads that can be used to streamline compliance with state and federal historic preservation requirements.

- Produce a public outreach product for history education and heritage tourism, such as a webpage, pod cast, or cell phone application, to inform the traveling public about the role roads have played in the history of their communities.

Deliverables under the grant proposal will include:

- Two workshops, one for each RTPO, involving the RTPOs, local governments, and the state to identify historic roads management issues and preservation needs. The results will guide subsequent development of the historic contexts and management plans.
- A historic roads historic context for each RTPO that is based on archival research and field inventory and includes preparation of a historic roads GIS data layer.
- Management plans for the NRHP eligible roads identified in the historic contexts.
- The public outreach and education product.

Should the SRI Foundation be awarded the grant, we will hire a qualified in-state cultural resources management (CRM) firm to form the project team. The firm selection will occur after grant award and follow a competitive process mandated by the state under the terms of the grant. The project team will conduct the necessary tasks and prepare the project deliverables. The SRI Foundation will oversee and direct all phases of the project and ensure that all deliverables are prepared and submitted to DAHP, the RTPOs and the local governments.

This grant proposal was submitted to DAHP last year and received a very favorable rating, but was not awarded because DAHP wanted to see evidence of RTPO support. DAHP recommended that we resubmit and include letters of support from the RTPOs. Should the Island Sub-Region RTPO be interested in participating in this project, we request that you provide us with a letter expressing your interest in the historic roads historic context project and support for our grant proposal. We have also requested a letter of support from the Skagit Council of Governments.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



David Cushman, MA, RPA
Program Manger
SRI Foundation
333 Rio Rancho Dr., NE
Suite 103
Rio Rancho, NM 87124
505 892-5587
dcushman@srifoundation.org



SKAGIT/ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION



P.O. Box 5000
Coupeville, Wa 98239-5000
(360) 678-7959

DATE: May 23, 2012

TO: Island Sub-Region RTPO Board

FM: Island Sub-Region Technical Advisory Committee

RE: Transportation Concurrency Paper and Recommendation

It is with pleasure that we submit to you a draft technical white paper on transportation concurrency and state transportation facilities in Island County. The paper was commissioned by the Island RTPO Policy Board and prepared by Randy Young of Henderson Young & Company.

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the implications and outcomes of transportation concurrency requirements and State highways of statewide significance (HSS) and Washington State Ferry routes serving Island County. The paper further identifies a list of potential changes or strategies developed over a four month period with the TAC and from meetings with the Island RTPO Policy Board, Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, Island Transit, WSDOT Staff, and the Island County Public Works Department.

TAC Recommendation

Following lengthy discussions on potential strategies identified in the Transportation Concurrency White Paper, the TAC respectfully submits the following statement to the Island RTPO Sub-Region Policy Board for consideration:

The TAC supports the underlying principle of concurrency and believes it is a critical component of GMA. However, the regulations adopted in 1998 extending concurrency requirements to a specific group of state highways and ferry routes of "statewide significance" that serve Island and San Juan Counties; have created a very difficult situation for Island County. Such regulations have shown to be ineffective for managing growth or solving existing capacity or congestion problems and at the same time have placed an unfair and extremely expensive burden on the local jurisdictions in Island County.

Island County should be treated the same as other counties and be required to follow the same transportation concurrency rules as the rest of the state. Therefore, the Island RTPO Technical Advisory Committee recommends approaching the State Legislature to repeal the requirement to apply state LOS on Highways of Statewide Significant and Washington State Ferries to transportation concurrency for counties consisting of islands.