



# SKAGIT-ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## SIRTPO POLICY BOARD MEETING

Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

1:30 PM to 3:00 PM

[Anacortes Public Library](#)

1220 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Anacortes, WA 98221

## AGENDA

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### 1. Welcome and Introductions

### 2. Public Comments

### 3. SIRTPO Update – *Kevin Murphy, SCOG*

### 4. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of [December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 SIRTPO Policy Board Meeting Minutes](#)

### 5. Action Items

- a. [Transportation Alternatives Program Project Selection](#) – *Gabe Philips, SCOG*
- b. [Scope of Work for Regional Transportation Plan Update](#) – *Mark Hamilton, SCOG*
- c. [2015 Meeting Schedule](#) – *Gabe Philips, SCOG*

### 6. Discussion Items

- a. [Public Involvement for Regional Transportation Plan Update](#) – *Mark Hamilton, SCOG*
- b. [Implementation of Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan](#) – *Mark Hamilton, SCOG*
- c. Deception Pass Bridge Paving Update - *Todd Carlson, WSDOT*

### 7. New Business

### 8. Next Meeting: April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, Anacortes Public Library

### 9. Adjourn

#### Information

- [Draft February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees Joint Meeting Minutes](#)

[Printer-friendly version of meeting materials](#)



MINUTES FROM THE SKAGIT-ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (SIRTPO) POLICY BOARD MEETING

DECEMBER 3, 2014
ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HEARING ROOM
COUPEVILLE, WA

POLICY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

- Mayor Jill Boudreau (Co-Chair) ... City of Mount Vernon
Commissioner Jill Johnson (Co-Chair) ... Island County
Commissioner Marshall Bronson ... Port of Coupeville
Councilman Bob Clay ... Town of Coupeville
Mayor Nancy Conard ... Town of Coupeville
Mayor Joan Cromley (entered meeting at 2:59 PM) ... Town of Hamilton
Commissioner Sharon Dillon ... Skagit County
Mayor Laurie Gere ... City of Anacortes
Todd Harrison ... WSDOT
Commissioner Helen Price Johnson ... Island County
Mayor Fred McCarthy ... City of Langley
Mayor Steve Sexton ... City of Burlington
Commissioner Ron Wesen ... Skagit County

SUB-RTPO MEMBERS PRESENT

- Todd Carlson ... WSDOT
Sami Postma ... Island County Economic Development Council
John Pope ... Business Representative

STAFF PRESENT

- Doug Cox ... Island County
Mark Hamilton ... SCOG
Kevin Murphy ... SCOG
Gabe Philips ... SCOG

AGENDA ITEMS

The December 3rd, 2014 Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization Policy Board meeting was called to order by Commissioner Johnson at 2:42 PM.

- 1. INTRODUCTIONS: Roll was taken with a quorum present.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.



### 3. ACTION ITEMS:

- a. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2014 MEETING MINUTES: Commissioner Price Johnson moved to approve the October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014 SIRTPO Policy Board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dillon. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. APPROVAL OF REGIONAL HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PROJECT LIST: Mark Hamilton gave a brief overview the recommendations made by Skagit and Island sub-RTPOs regarding the prioritization of the Human Services Transportation Project List. The Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) was allocated fourteen letter grades (five "As," five "Bs," and four "Cs") by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to assign regional projects submitted to the statewide selection process. Mark gave a brief description of the projects that were submitted and explained the scores and rankings that each received through an evaluation by the Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee. It was noted that Island Transit's project requesting operating assistance for the Tri-County Connector was removed from consideration at the request of Island Transit staff.

Commissioner Price Johnson said that funding the Tri-County Connector is a top priority for Island Transit, but the matching funds are not available at this time. She asked if the project prioritization can be amended once it has been approved. Mark explained that WSDOT has not provided an amendment process for changing the project list, but the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) can be amended. The next time a regional human services transportation project list would be created for Skagit and Island counties is 2016.

Mayor Cromley entered the meeting at this point.

Todd Carlson said that just because there is not a documented amendment process for changing the project prioritization, it does not necessarily mean whatever action taken by the Policy Board today cannot be changed at a future date. Mayor Boudreau said she appreciates the footnote provided in the proposed project prioritization that late submittals will not be considered in future calls for projects.

Mayor Gere moved to approve [Resolution 2014-01](#) to prioritize Skagit-Island human services transportation projects for the 2015-2017 state biennium as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Boudreau.

- c. APPROVAL OF REGIONAL HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN: Mark Hamilton reviewed the process to develop the HSTP. Public engagement was a major component of the update process. Mark also reviewed the strategies and activities identified in the plan that informed the human services transportation project selection. Commissioner Price Johnson said she would like future updates to investigate Snohomish County travel data to supplement the needs assessment done in the plan.

Commissioner Price Johnson moved to approve [Resolution 2014-02](#) to approve the Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bronson. The motion carried unanimously.

### 4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE: Gabe Philips gave a brief overview of the chronology of previous versions of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). According to



federal guidelines, a new RTP must be updated by April 2016. Staff recommends that the next update only be a minor update due to requirements of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) likely being implemented after the upcoming plan update. The subsequent update will incorporate the new guidelines and will be a more comprehensive update. Some of the things that will be addressed in the upcoming plan update include: Regional transportation strategy, identification of regional facilities, project list, and the financial plan.

Commissioner Wesen asked who determines what is defined as “regional.” Todd Carlson said that regional facilities at a minimum include state routes, but can include other major transportation facilities that the Policy Board feels have a regional impact.

It was proposed by staff that the development of the RTP update be done by the SIRTPO Policy Board and a Skagit-Island Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) rather than being developed independently by the sub-regions. Mayor Sexton asked if it will be an issue if non-Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) agencies are included in the decision making for the MPO’s plan. Kevin Murphy explained that the update is driven by MPO requirements. By federal law, the MPO cannot include Island County. Kevin said that there is some degree of risk by having the RTP approved by governing bodies with different boundaries. Mayor Gere asked why this is a risk now compared to previous iterations of the RTP. Kevin said that the law has not changed, but in preparing for the update, staff has identified that risks may be present, especially with the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration. Commissioner Johnson suggested that a separate action to adopt the plan occur by each governing body of the SIRTPO and MPO.

Mayor Sexton said that the current SIRTPO agreement is 20 years old and needs to be updated. Commissioner Johnson reminded the Policy Board that action was taken at the previous meeting to direct staff to continue operating as SIRTPO and update the interlocal agreement to be consistent with the current methods of operation. Kevin said that staff is moving forward with the RTP but if certain members of SIRTPO are not happy with the agreement, something should be done so that everybody is satisfied. The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) Transportation Policy Board (TPB) has SIRTPO governance as an action item on the agenda for their next meeting. Mayor Conard recommended that staff move forward based on the current understandings and adjust accordingly if the TPB meeting suggests a different outcome.

- b. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS: Gabe Philips gave a presentation on the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project selection process, including the projects that were selected at the last call for projects. Gabe outlined some points for the Policy Board to consider as they prepare for another call for projects. The Policy Board may decide to limit what types of projects can be considered, such as allowing only regional trails or projects that address significant safety concerns. They may also decide to emphasize projects that address some regional goals over others. The criteria used for project evaluation can be more objective to eliminate subjectivity in the ranking process.

Staff recommends that a TAP project selection committee be formed to guide the development of the selection criteria as well as overseeing the ranking of the projects. This committee would make its recommendation to the Policy Board rather than the recommendation coming from the sub-RTPO Policy Boards and TACs. Gabe also suggested that enhanced public engagement occur at the outset of the project selection process to gauge the public’s preferences on what these funds should be used for.



Mayor McCarthy asked what the original intended purpose of the TAP funds was. Kevin said that it was a federal decision to set aside a certain percentage of federal funds for non-motorized transportation improvements. Mayor Sexton said that he prefers to have all subjectivity removed from advisory committees and is in favor of developing objective criteria. Councilman Clay said that if the criteria become too objective, it limits the value of input by the advisory committee. Commissioner Johnson asked if previous projects could be used to test the new criteria. Gabe said that is a good way to gauge the effectiveness of the new criteria and that SCOG has done this type of criteria testing in the past. Commissioner Wesen said that based on the relatively small amount of funding available, the Policy Board should keep the process somewhat simple. Gabe said that prior to the next SIRTPO Policy Board meeting staff can distribute a weighting exercise to the Policy Board to help determine what the priorities are. Staff can also begin public engagement to identify public preference to inform the Policy Board.

- c. MEETING FREQUENCY AND LOCATION: It was determined that the next meeting would be in Anacortes and meetings would generally be bimonthly as the RTP is being updated. The next meeting will be scheduled for February 2015.
- d. DECEPTION PASS BRIDGE PAVING: Todd Harrison informed the Policy Board about WSDOT's upcoming project to repave SR 20 from Frostad Road to Sharpes Corner, including the Deception Pass Bridge. They are planning on closing the bridge for five nights for the repaving. Commissioner Johnson said that WSDOT should ensure that the ferry system will be working properly when the bridge is closed.

5. NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business.

6. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:36 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Jill Johnson, Island County  
Chair, Island Sub-RTPO

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Jill Boudreau, City of Mount Vernon  
Chair, Skagit Sub-RTPO

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ACTION ITEM 5.A. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM PROJECT SELECTION

### Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTACs	02-12-2015	Discussion	<a href="#">Gabe Philips</a>	360-416-6678
SIRTPO Policy Board	02-26-2015	Action	<a href="#">Gabe Philips</a>	360-416-6678

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs) and staff recommend focusing Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project selection on the following areas:

- Safety
- Connectivity
- Demand
- Preservation
- Economic Vitality

The SIRTACs and staff also recommend the creation of an ad hoc TAP project selection committee consisting of:

- Connie Bowers..... Island County
- Mike Love.....Mount Vernon
- Arnie Peterschmidt.....Oak Harbor
- Eric Shjarback.....Anacortes

## DISCUSSION

### TAP PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) is allocated around \$240,000 in TAP funding annually to distribute to alternative transportation projects within the region. In 2014, SIRTPO [allocated around six years' worth of TAP funding](#) to non-motorized transportation projects in Skagit and Island counties.

SIRTPO has approximately \$688,000 of available funding to program for alternative transportation projects. The projects selected to receive this funding will be included in the two-year illustrative list of projects in the 2016-2021 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

As SIRTPO prepares to develop selection criteria and issue a call for projects, the Policy Board may consider the following issues.

### PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

According to the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) guidelines, a wide variety of alternative transportation projects are eligible for TAP funding, including:

- Scenic pullouts and overlooks
- Multi-use trails



- Community improvement activities
- Environmental mitigation activities
- Recreational trails
- Safe routes to school projects
- Traffic calming techniques
- Lighting and safety related infrastructure

Based on current regional priorities, the SIRTPO Policy Board may consider limiting the types of projects that are eligible for this round of TAP funding. If there is a sense amongst the Policy Board that certain types of projects should not be considered, it can be addressed through limiting project eligibility. A benefit of limiting eligibility is that it will be easier to develop project selection criteria that fairly and accurately rates projects. The tradeoff of limiting project eligibility is some potential projects will be eliminated from consideration and there may be a smaller pool of projects to select from.

The SIRTACs did not recommend limiting project eligibility. The Policy Board may still consider limiting TAP funding to only certain types of projects. It should be noted that whatever decision is made applies only to this round of TAP funding. The Policy Board can reassess project eligibility at future calls for projects.

#### **FOCUS AREAS**

The Skagit and Island Counties Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan identifies six priority areas used to guide regional transportation investments:

- Economic vitality
- Preservation
- Safety
- Mobility
- Environment
- Stewardship

In the previous call for TAP projects, the above priorities were equally weighted in the project selection process. The Policy Board may determine to focus TAP investments in this round of funding on all of the focus areas listed above, a subset of the focus areas, or identify additional focus areas, such as public input, equity and regional impact, to base project selection on.

The Policy Board may choose to base project selection on all of the focus areas equally. Another option is to weight the focus areas so some have a stronger effect on project selection than others. A benefit in limiting the number of focus areas is that it will be easier to identify criteria that address the selected focus areas. A downside to this approach is projects that address focus areas that are not used in this call for projects will likely score poorly in the selection process.

The SIRTACs recommended that the following focus areas be used to develop the TAP project selection criteria:

- Safety
- Connectivity
- Demand
- Preservation
- Economic Vitality



It should be noted that whatever decision is made regarding the focus areas applies only to this round of TAP funding. The Policy Board can reassess the focus areas at future calls for projects.

### **SURVEY**

At the December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 SIRTPO Policy Board meeting, staff was given direction to issue a survey regarding the regional TAP funds. The survey can assist the Policy Board in determining whether project eligibility should be refined and what factors should be the strongest determinants in selecting projects for funding. The survey was issued to three groups: the Policy Board, the SIRTACs, and the public. It should be noted that this survey was not designed to be statistically significant. It will only be used as information to aid the Policy Board's decision making process.

SIRTPO received eight responses from the Policy Board, 15 responses from the SIRTACs, and 173 responses from the public. A brief summary of some of the survey results has been included as an attachment. The Policy Board will be given a more detailed summary of the results at the Policy Board meeting.

The survey allowed the public to submit comments regarding the TAP selection process. SIRTPO received 34 comments from the public. The two predominant themes relevant to the TAP project selection process were that multi-use trails are preferred to other types of improvements and that TAP funds should not be used for non-motorized transportation. All of the comments received have been included as an attachment.

### **TAP SELECTION COMMITTEE**

Staff and the SIRTACs propose that an ad hoc TAP selection committee be established to oversee the criteria development and project scoring and ranking processes. The committee will have two main roles:

- Work with staff to develop selection criteria to be used in the TAP project selection process.
- Oversee project scoring process. The committee will review staff's scoring of any objectively based selection criteria. If subjective scoring criteria are used, the selection committee will perform the scoring for these measures. The committee will also review any appeals to the scoring process.

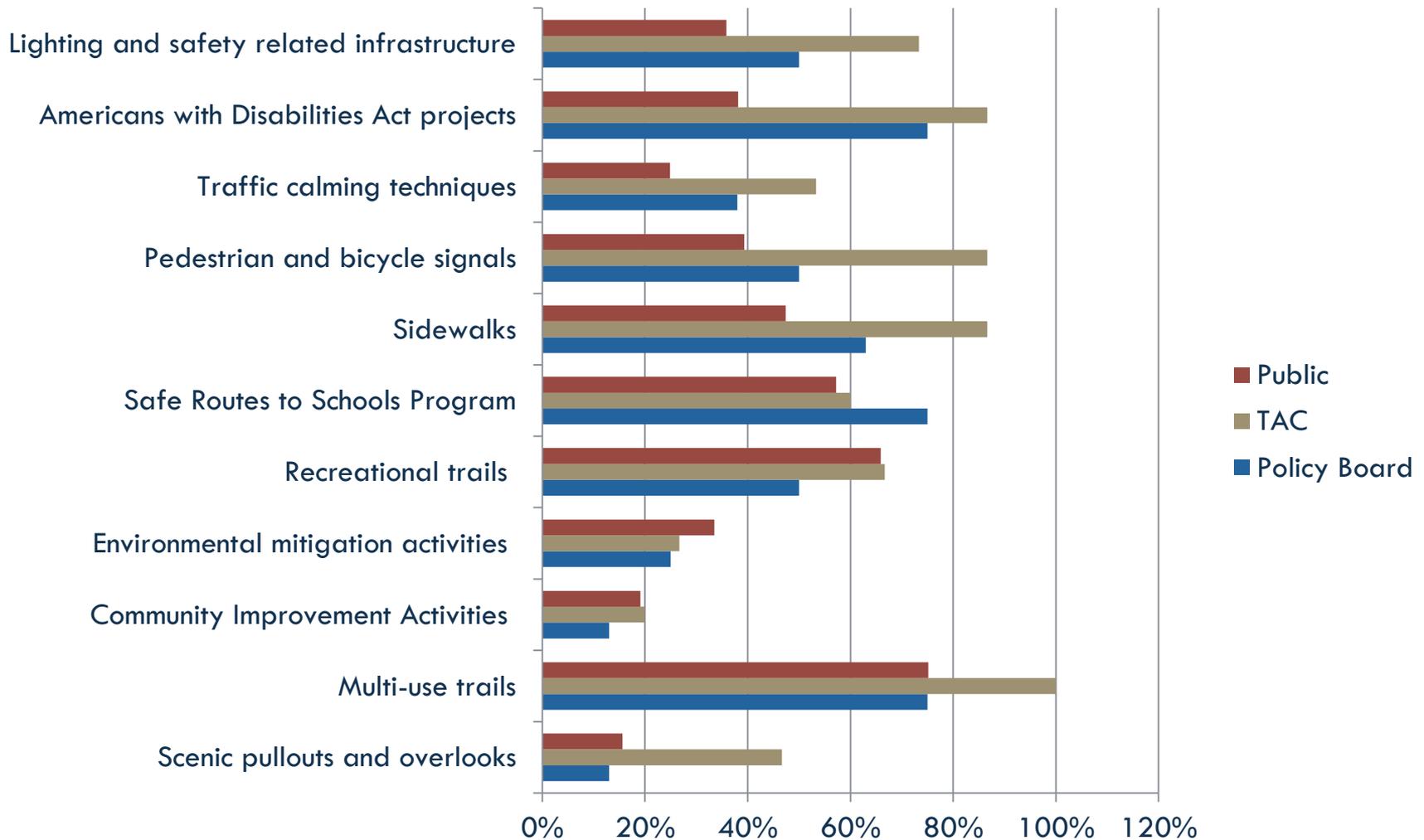
All work that the selection committee performs will be recommended for review by the SIRTACs. A recommendation would then be made to the SIRTPO Policy Board. The Policy Board will review the recommendation of the SIRTACs, consider any additional public input, and make a final decision regarding the selection criteria.

At the February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting, the SIRTACs recommended that the TAP Selection Committee consist of:

- Connie Bowers..... Island County
- Mike Love.....Mount Vernon
- Arnie Peterschmidt.....Oak Harbor
- Eric Shjarback..... Anacortes

# Survey Results

## Which projects should be eligible?

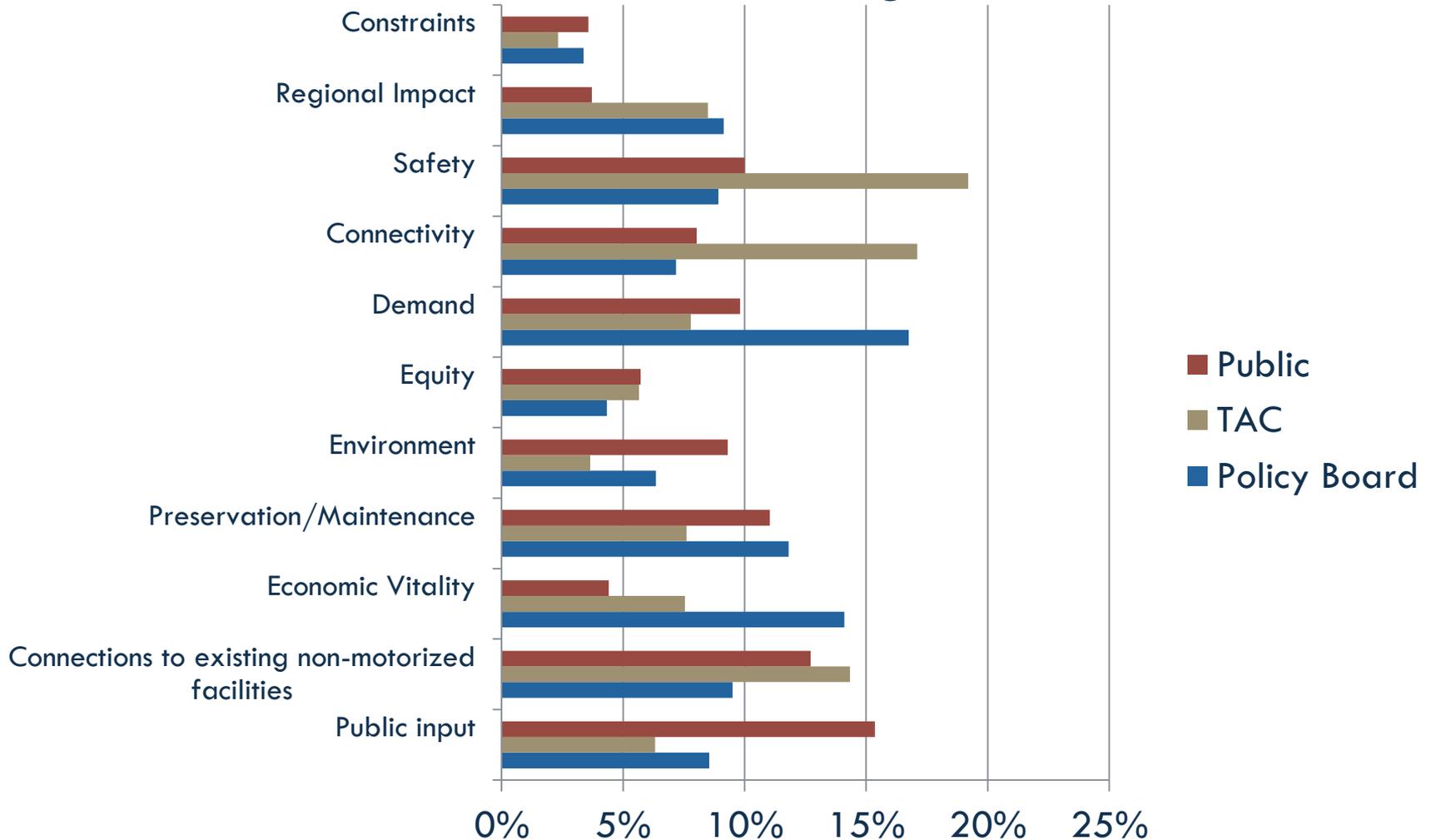


# Survey Results

	Policy Board	TAC	Public	Total
Scenic pullouts and overlooks	13%	47%	16%	25%
Multi-use trails (examples: Guemes Channel Trail; Cascade Trail; Kettle Trail)	75%	100%	81%	83%
Community Improvement Activities (historic preservation; vegetation management; archaeological activities; etc.)	13%	20%	19%	17%
Environmental mitigation activities (stormwater management; wildlife roadway mortality prevention; etc.)	25%	27%	33%	28%
Recreational trails (hiking; snowmobile; mountain biking; etc.)	50%	67%	69%	61%
Safe Routes to Schools Program	75%	60%	58%	64%
Sidewalks	63%	87%	46%	66%
Pedestrian and bicycle signals	50%	87%	39%	59%
Traffic calming techniques	38%	53%	23%	39%
Americans with Disabilities Act projects (sidewalk curb ramps; audible crosswalk beacons; etc.)	75%	87%	36%	67%
Lighting and safety related infrastructure	50%	73%	33%	53%

# Survey Results

## Selection Factor Weights



# Survey Results

	Policy Board	TAC	Public	Total
Public input	9%	6%	15%	10%
Connections to existing non-motorized facilities	10%	14%	14%	12%
Economic Vitality	14%	7%	4%	9%
Preservation/Maintenance	12%	8%	11%	10%
Environment	6%	3%	9%	6%
Equity	4%	5%	5%	5%
Demand	17%	8%	9%	11%
Connectivity	7%	18%	8%	11%
Safety	9%	20%	10%	13%
Regional Impact	9%	9%	4%	7%
Constraints	3%	2%	3%	3%

**Public Comments from the TAP Project Selection Survey**

Achieving a balance between economic vibrancy, minimum regulation that thwarts responsible use of existing infrastructure and minimum bureaucracy allowing the area to maintain jobs, create incentives for economic enhancement and freedom of responsible private action are essential in protecting the common weal so that the impact is balanced and not targeted toward a special interest advocacy group. This need to be directed by local input not outside initiatives.

As a tax-paying citizen, I would appreciate more tax monies spent on highway and road maintenance rather than having my hard-earned dollars spent on trails and bicycle paths.

As projects make it through the selection process, allow newspaper articles (+pictures) to show how we will notice the benefits.

Example: The Kulshan Trail is perfect for families with young children, teaching a child how to ride a bike, or take a quiet walk away from busy roads.

Consider bicycle lanes on heavily trafficked streets in the county.

Count in the savings of reduction in green house gasses the project would be projected to produce in evaluating the cost of the project. Take into consideration climate warming elements when evaluating projects' future benefits to the community.

Give high priority to opening access to walking on dikes and levees along the Skagit River and coastal areas, as has been done at Padilla Bay.

I appreciate all of the work SCOG and its subcommittees do. Thank you.

I would like to see a TAP study of SKAT. What is the cost per mile to move people. Carbon imprint, per passenger mile vs. that of private vehicles. Empty buses moving around Skagit County on regular schedules seems to be a huge waste of resources. Mass Transit works only when you have masses that need to be transported. In rural areas they are nothing more than a waste of resources.

I'm all in favor of non-motorized trails.

Island County should worry about Island County and leave the Skagit-Sub RTPPO recommendations unmolested.

It seems incongruous to include "public input" as one of several factors to consider in the selection process. While not necessarily outside this list, the input of the community seems to be a major consideration to be included without impacting the priorities of the other criteria on the list.

I've always thought that any time a road is being built or worked on, that people planning the work should ask, "How will a cyclist or pedestrian get through this?"

Make it simpler by devoting the funds to separated multi-use paths.

No need to get too fancy, hard packed gravel trails are great. I'd much rather have 10 miles of basic trail than 1 mile of paved trail with all the amenities (picnic tables, kiosks, art, shelters etc...)

Non-motorized transportation is a very important topic. Not only does it save resources and help the environment, but it helps keep our citizens healthy.

People should have more ways to interact with government programs. Programs should pay more attention to people.

Perhaps a similar survey once project proposals are received? Public input is important - but to get valid input, the majority of the public has to know you're seeking it.

Public comment may not favor trails, but, if you build it, they will come.

Question -- What are "traffic calming techniques" as shown in one of the survey questions?

Safety concerns for non-motorized users can be reduced if more multi-use trails and paths are constructed.

Spending target projects should be especially respectful of property rights.

Taking action to diversify our transportation options and encourage our residents to consider alternatives to car travel will bring long term benefits to our community. The health of our residents will improve along with our economy as more people come to visit our great biking and walking trails.

TAP is a waste of tax payers and should be eliminated altogether

Thank you for asking the public to comment.

thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Thank you!

Thanks for putting this important work into perspective. It is appreciated!

Thanks for your efforts in the improvement of the Skagit County.

The degradation of natural habitat in rural areas caused by invasive, clueless, urban and regional special interest tourists and recreators is pathetic. Manage where you provide access to this disturbance. Return the funds to the Treasury and give taxpayers a break.

To get a good interconnected system of non motorized trails and paths will ultimately serve the health and safety of citizens in this beautiful area of ours!!

Transportation tax dollars should be used for motorized transportation, the primary mode of transportation method for over 90% of Skagit County residents.

Try to connect with the Centennial Trail in Snohomish and extend the Cascade Trail into S.-W. from the west.

We need more trails that connect. The Centennial Trail should have priority

Yes. ALL TAP funding (which is an issue unto itself) should be used only for repair, maintenance, and new construction of county roads. Not one penny should be used for "non-motorized" transportation.



## ACTION ITEM 5.B. – SCOPE OF WORK FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

### Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTPO Policy Board	10/15/2014	Discussion (postponed)	<a href="#">Gabe Philips</a>	360-416-6678
SIRTPO Policy Board	12/3/2014	Discussion	<a href="#">Gabe Philips</a>	360-416-6678
SIRTACs	2/12/2015	Recommendation	<a href="#">Mark Hamilton</a>	360-416-7876
SIRTPO Policy Board	2/26/2015	Action	<a href="#">Mark Hamilton</a>	360-416-7876

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve the [scope of work](#) for the Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan (Regional Transportation Plan or RTP) update.

## DISCUSSION

Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) staff has developed a proposed scope of work to guide the Regional Transportation Plan update process. This scoping document addresses a combination of state and federal transportation planning requirements that apply to Skagit and Island counties.

An initial discussion of the RTP update was planned for the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board in October 2014, but was postponed due to the length of meeting. That first discussion was had at the December 2014 meeting of the SIRTPO Policy Board instead. Since the December meeting, the draft schedule for the RTP update has been refined and incorporated within a scope of work to guide the planning process.

The Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs) unanimously recommended approval of the scope of work at their meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015. A suggestion was made at the SIRTACs meeting to include references to applicable state and federal regulations in the scope of work. An addition was made to the document on Page 1 citing relevant laws relating to development and content of the RTP. A footnote was also added to Page 5 indicating a change in the proposed RTP update schedule from what the SIRTACs reviewed and recommended earlier this month.

A final RTP must be adopted by April 20, 2016 to ensure that SCOG maintains a federally compliant metropolitan transportation plan.



## 2015 – 2016 UPDATE TO THE SKAGIT-ISLAND COUNTIES METROPOLITAN & REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### SCOPE OF WORK

Revised February 19, 2015

This scope of work, also referred to as a “regional transportation strategy” for consistency with state Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) requirements, encompasses the 2015 – 2016 update to the [Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan](#) (Regional Transportation Plan or RTP). The requirement to have a regional transportation strategy is included in the state law for RTPOs, specifically [RCW 47.80.023 \(1\)](#). This strategy acts as guide in how the region updates the Regional Transportation Plan.

The most recent update to the Regional Transportation Plan was in April 2011, approved by the Skagit sub-RTPO & Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on April 20 and the Island sub-RTPO on April 27. The “effective date” of the plan, for federal metropolitan transportation planning purposes, is April 20, 2011. Federal requirements direct the MPO to revise the RTP at least every five years from the effective date. Therefore, the update to the RTP must occur by April 20, 2016. State RTPO requirements for the RTP do not include a timeframe for updating.

New requirements are now being developed for MPOs to include performance measures, target setting and reporting as part of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act – the federal transportation law. Rulemaking is now underway for these new regulations and it is anticipated by Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) staff that a major revision to the RTP will be required in 2018 to include what will be likely be expansive changes that will be necessary to address the [new performance-based approach](#). Because of this major update expected soon, the 2015 – 2016 update to the RTP will be relatively minor, amending the plan to reflect necessary changes without undertaking a substantial update.

Federal requirements for updating the RTP can be found at [23 CFR 450.322](#)<sup>1</sup>. State requirements for updating the RTP can be found at [RCW 47.80.030](#)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> A hyperlink to 23 CFR 450.322 was added after a suggestion from the Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 to reference which regulations are guiding the RTP update.

<sup>2</sup> A hyperlink to RCW 47.80.030 was added after a suggestion from the Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 to reference which regulations are guiding the RTP update.

## *GENERAL ANTICIPATED COMPONENTS*

General anticipated components of the RTP update are as follows:

- The planning horizon for the RTP must be at least 20 years so it will be extended to 2040 to ensure this requirement is met. The current RTP has a planning horizon of 2035. Forecasts and other elements used in the plan will be updated to the new horizon year.
- Revisit the proper name of the plan and potentially change from “Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan” to “2040 Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Plan”, or similar, to reflect the planning horizon year and simplify the name.
- Develop a public involvement plan (PIP) unique to the RTP update for public outreach during the planning process. A consultant, EnviroIssues, Inc. has already been retained to assist with outreach during 2015. The PIP should be finalized in April 2015.
- The plan will address alternative transportation modes and transportation demand management in regional corridors.
- The plan will utilize local comprehensive plans, including current updates to plans and results from local public engagement processes, to inform the RTP update process.
- The plan will include updated transportation goals and policies to assist with implementation of adopted growth strategies of local governments.
- Consistency reviews will ensure consistency between the RTP and countywide planning policies in Skagit and Island counties, as well as consistency with the state transportation plan.
- The plan update will include a review of applicable level of service standards with revisions as necessary, to be conducted jointly with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
- The plan update will standardize the RTP planning process as much as practicable between Skagit and Island counties, ensuring both state and federal requirements are met through a uniform approach. One result of this may be more stringent requirements in Island County than would otherwise be the case due to federal MPO requirements applicable in Skagit County.

## ANTICIPATED CHANGES TO RTP SECTIONS

Anticipated changes to RTP sections through the update are as follows:

- The *Executive Summary* section provides an overview of the RTP and will be updated accordingly to reflect changes within the plan in 2015 – 2016. This section will be translated into Spanish to meet SCOG's Title VI Plan responsibilities and increase access to SCOG for persons with limited English proficiency.
- The *Guiding the Plan* section will be updated as necessary. Most changes in this chapter are anticipated to be in the public participation section which describes how the public was involved with the RTP update.
- The plan will include an updated *Relationship to Other Plans* section which includes growth forecasts for population and employment growth, among other elements.
- The plan update will revise the *Transportation Framework & Policies* section which includes regional goals and policies for transportation. Existing goals and policies should be evaluated to see if they still seem reasonable for the region and determine if any should be removed, added or reworded.
- The plan will include updated definitions, data and maps for Regional Transportation Facilities including: regional transit routes, park-and-rides and stations; regional non-motorized facilities; regional air transportation facilities; state and county ferry systems; strategic freight facilities; National Highway System and Strategic Highway Network; state routes; and other regional roadways. These are in the *Transportation Improvements & Programs* section.
- The plan will include updated regional transportation projects, which are also in the *Transportation Improvements & Programs* section. It is envisioned that several projects will drop off the list of projects due to completion or changing priorities, and that new projects will be added.
- The plan will include an updated *Environmental Constraints* section.
- The plan will include an updated *Financial Constraints* section including new revenue forecasts out to 2040, and updated funding assumptions for reasonably expected funding of transportation projects. Estimates of funding available must be developed cooperatively with WSDOT and Skagit Transit.
- Also within the *Financial Constraints* section will be an updated fiscally constrained section, which lists the projects which can reasonably be expected to be funded out to 2040, and an illustrative list of projects which may be funded if additional, unanticipated funding becomes available.

## **DELIVERABLES**

The following deliverables are documents anticipated for the RTP update process for approval/adoption by the SIRTPO Policy Board:

- Public involvement plan in April 2015
- Draft RTP in January 2016
- Final RTP in March 2016<sup>3</sup>

## **STAFFING**

As the lead agency for the SIRTPO, SCOG staff will lead the RTP update process and devote staff time as necessary. This will be supplemented with assistance from Island County staff, specifically for the Island sub-region. Various staffs from the member jurisdictions of the SIRTPO are also anticipated to assist as well through the technical advisory committees.

The consulting firm Envirolssues will assist with development of the public involvement plan and conduct identified outreach during 2015 as part of the RTP update.

## **MEETINGS**

Meetings of the SIRTPO Policy Board will be held every two months, or as necessary, until RTP adoption in 2016. Joints meetings of the technical advisory committees for the Skagit sub-RTPO and Island sub-RTPO are also anticipated every two months, or as necessary, with recommendations made by the committees to the SIRTPO Policy Board throughout the planning process.

The bylaws for the SIRTPO Policy Board indicate that meetings must be held in alternating locations between Skagit and Island counties.

## **SCHEDULE**

The proposed schedule for the 2015 – 2016 update to the Regional Transportation Plan follows on the next page.

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<sup>3</sup> The final RTP must be adopted by April 20, 2016 to ensure that the Skagit Council of Governments, as the metropolitan planning organization in Skagit County, maintains a federally compliant metropolitan transportation plan.

# SCHEDULE FOR 2015 – 2016 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Tasks	2015												2016			
	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	
Scope of work	Approve															
Public involvement	Discuss		Approve													
Data and modeling																
Regional transportation system <sup>4</sup>			Review													
Priorities, policies and goals			Discuss		Revise											
Call for projects					Review											
Financial plan					Discuss		Revise									
Project prioritization							Discuss		Revise							
Environmental constraints									Discuss							
Draft plan												Release				
Public comment period																
Final plan														Adopt		
Submit plan															Submit	

Note: dates and anticipated actions are subject to change

Legend	
	= Months of Task
Discuss, Approve, Review, Revise, Release, Adopt, Submit	= Anticipated SIRTPO Policy Board Action

<sup>4</sup> A review for this task is proposed for April 2015. The first draft of this schedule had discussion for this task in February 2015.



## ACTION ITEM 5.c. 2015 SIRTPO POLICY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTPO Policy Board	02-26-2015	Action	<a href="#">Gabe Philips</a>	360-416-6678

### RECOMMENDED ACTION

Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) staff recommends that the Policy Board suspend the bylaw requirement to alternate meeting locations between Island and Skagit counties and adopt the meeting schedule for 2015. The proposed meeting dates are as follows:

- February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015..... 1:30 PM
- April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015..... 1:30 PM
- June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015 ..... 1:30 PM
- August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 ..... 1:30 PM
- October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015..... 1:30 PM
- December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015..... 1:30 PM

It is recommended that all of the meetings occur at the Anacortes Public Library.

### DISCUSSION

The SIRTPO bylaws direct the Policy Board to meet at least semiannually in locations alternating between Island and Skagit counties. As SIRTPO prepares to issue a call for projects to utilize Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds as well as update the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), it is recommended that the Policy Board meet more frequently to help guide these processes.

The meetings are generally scheduled for the fourth Thursday of every other month at 1:30. A discussion about meeting consistently in a central location occurred at the December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 SIRTPO Policy Board meeting. The Policy Board may decide to suspend the bylaws requirement to alternate meetings between the two counties for the more centrally-located Anacortes Public Library.

The SIRTPO Policy Board may cancel or reschedule meetings as necessary.



## DISCUSSION ITEM 6.A. – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

### Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTACs	2/12/2015	Discussion	<a href="#">Mark Hamilton</a>	360-416-7876
SIRTPO Policy Board	2/26/2015	Discussion	<a href="#">Mark Hamilton</a>	360-416-7876

## DISCUSSION

The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) has retained a consultant, Envirolssues, Inc. to assist with public participation for several planning processes that SCOG is leading. As part of the contract, Envirolssues will help with public outreach for the Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan (Regional Transportation Plan or RTP) update.

Envirolssues will assist with the development of a public involvement plan (PIP) for the RTP and with implementing the PIP in 2015. The PIP will include the approach to engaging the public throughout the planning process from April 2015 through the public comment period next year. The total budget for Envirolssues contract tasks associated with the RTP is approximately \$9,000.

SCOG staff will bring the PIP to the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board in April for review and approval. If there are any suggestions at this time from members of the SIRTPO Policy Board into what to consider in developing the PIP, or any general expectations for outreach, staff would like to use this input to inform the development of the PIP.

The Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs) discussed RTP public involvement at their meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015. No suggestions for RTP public involvement were made at that time.



## DISCUSSION ITEM 6.B. – IMPLEMENTATION OF SKAGIT-ISLAND HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTPO Policy Board	2/26/2015	Discussion	<a href="#">Mark Hamilton</a>	360-416-7876

## DISCUSSION

The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) has retained a consultant, EnviroIssues, Inc. to assist with public participation for several planning processes that SCOG is leading. As part of the contract, EnviroIssues will help with implementation of the [Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan \(HSTP\)](#).

The HSTP [was approved](#) by the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 concluding the planning process that began in March 2014. A number of implementation options are identified within the plan to continue coordination and outreach after plan adoption. These options are:

- An online forum which could provide an avenue for [former Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee] members to keep abreast of ongoing efforts, coordinate and provide input
- Mobility Managers – which other counties use as a way to improve communication between organizations on an ongoing basis
- Monthly group meeting – which other counties utilize to coordinate on issues
- Designate a north Puget Sound mobility manager, rather than a county level mobility manager, which would be valuable in helping address cross-county coordination challenges
- Hold an annual transportation forum, which could provide updates on progress and reconvene the advisory committee organizations

SCOG intends to hold an annual transportation forum, the last bullet on the above list, in April/May 2015 with assistance from EnviroIssues. If there are any suggestions from the SIRTPO Policy Board regarding ongoing implementation of the HSTP, there is an opportunity to amend the EnviroIssues contract to ensure that the appropriate regional steps are being taken to implement the plan. There is approximately \$5,000 budgeted in the EnviroIssues contract to assist with HSTP implementation.

The HSTP includes a [list of prioritized human services transportation projects](#) for the region which can also act to implement the plan. The project list was submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation in December 2014 and projects are now being considered for funding through a statewide competitive process. A new list of prioritized projects for the region will be developed in 2016 and a major plan update will occur in 2018.



## RESOLUTION 2014-02

IN THE MATTER OF ADOPTION OF THE SKAGIT-ISLAND HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN, THE COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE SKAGIT-ISLAND REGION

**WHEREAS**, the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization is the designated regional transportation planning organization for Skagit and Island counties and includes member jurisdictions from the region; and

**WHEREAS**, it is a duty of the SIRTPO pursuant to RCW 47.80.023 (10) to update the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan every four years; and

**WHEREAS**, the SIRTPO Policy Board has considered the attached Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan as the 2014 update to the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SKAGIT-ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION:**

The Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan, as attached herein, is approved.

Adopted: December 3, 2014

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jill Johnson".

Commissioner Jill Johnson, Island County  
Island sub-RTPO Policy Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sharon Dillon".

Commissioner Sharon Dillon, Skagit County  
Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board Vice-Chair



## RESOLUTION 2014-01

### IN THE MATTER OF PRIORITIZING SKAGIT-ISLAND HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS FOR THE 2015-2017 STATE BIENNIUM

**WHEREAS**, the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization is the designated regional transportation planning organization for Skagit and Island counties and includes member jurisdictions from the region; and

**WHEREAS**, it is a duty of the SIRTPO pursuant to RCW 47.80.023 (10) to prioritize regional human services transportation projects every two years; and

**WHEREAS**, the SIRTPO Policy Board has considered the attached Skagit-Island human services transportation projects as the 2014 update to the regional priority list of human services transportation projects for the 2015-2017 state biennium; and

**WHEREAS**, human services transportation projects that are designated an "A" letter grade receive 50 regional points through the statewide competitive process and projects that receive a "B" letter grade receive 25 regional points; and

### **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SKAGIT-ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION:**

The regional human services transportation projects for Skagit and Island counties, attached herein as Attachment A, is approved for the 2015-2017 state biennium and incorporated into the Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan as an appendix.

Adopted: December 3, 2014

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jill Johnson".

Commissioner Jill Johnson, Island County  
Island sub-RTPO Policy Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sharon Dillon".

Commissioner Sharon Dillon, Skagit County  
Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board Vice-Chair



## ATTACHMENT A

### PROJECT PRIORITIZATION LIST OF HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS FOR SKAGIT AND ISLAND COUNTIES FOR THE 2015-2017 WSDOT CONSOLIDATED GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING CYCLE

12/3/2014

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

<sup>1</sup> These projects were submitted after the regional project evaluation process was conducted but are given a "B" letter grade by the SIRTPO Policy Board. It is anticipated by the SIRTPO Policy Board that future late project submittals will not be considered in regional competitive project selection processes.



# SKAGIT-ISLAND REGIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES JOINT MEETING MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Anacortes Public Library  
Anacortes, WA

## REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

- Anacortes ..... Eric Shjarback
- Concrete ..... Cody Hart
- Island Transit ..... Nick Pinch, Pete Schrum
- Island County ..... Connie Bowers
- Island County Citizens ..... Don Meehan, Bob Monize
- Mount Vernon ..... Mike Love
- Langley ..... Stan Berryman
- Oak Harbor ..... Cac Kamak, Arnie Peterschmidt
- Port of Anacortes ..... Jenkins Dossen
- Sedro-Woolley ..... Mark Freiburger
- Skagit County ..... Paul Randall-Grutter
- Skagit Transit ..... Carolyn Chase
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community ..... Tara Satushek
- WSDOT ..... John Shambaugh

## STAFF PRESENT

- Kevin Murphy ..... SCOG, Executive Director
- Doug Cox ..... Island County, Transportation Planner
- Mark Hamilton ..... SCOG, Transportation Planner
- Gabe Philips ..... SCOG, Transportation Planner

## MINUTES

The meeting began at 10:05 AM.

1. Welcome and introductions.
2. SIRTPO Report: Kevin Murphy reported that he presented to the Senate Transportation Committee regarding the role of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs).
3. Transportation Alternatives project Selection: Gabe Philips gave a brief presentation regarding the history of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project selection by the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO). He then explained that the SIRTPO Policy Board may consider limiting project eligibility and emphasizing certain focus areas when selecting projects to receive the regional funding. Staff had distributed a survey to the Policy Board, the Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs), and the public. The survey was not intended to be statistically significant, just to assist the Policy Board when making decisions about the TAP project selection process.

Cac Kamak asked for more detail about the amount of funding that will be available. Gabe responded that approximately \$688,000 will be available for program years 2020 and 2021. Kevin Murphy said that the



selection criteria were primarily subjective in the last call for projects. This call for projects can include more objective criteria. Bob Monize asked if the funds could just be split equally between the two counties. Gabe responded that the funds cannot be suballocated and they must be distributed on a competitive basis.

The SIRTACs discussed whether or not certain types of projects should be eligible for this call for projects. Mike Love asked if the survey results can be further refined to show the split between Island and Skagit counties. He said the priorities may be different between the two counties. Gabe responded that he intends to present the survey results by county to the Policy Board but they are not currently available. Mike also said that federal requirements require projects to meet certain criteria. For example, all projects must be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, so he suggested removing ADA-specific projects from the criteria. Eric Shjarback said that once the criteria are established, certain types of projects will rise to the top, effectively limiting project eligibility. Cody Hart said he would rather establish selection criteria that address the region's needs than limit project eligibility. John Shambaugh said that he is in favor of limiting project eligibility because there are other funding sources that can fund some of the project types. Doug Cox said the selection process should be as simple as possible and suggested limiting project eligibility to regional multi-use trails. Cody said that some agencies will not have any interest in the process if project eligibility is limited. Cac said it is difficult to define what is regionally significant for TAP funds. Cac then suggested that the SIRTACs identify what the priorities are without limiting project eligibility. He added that all projects still go to the Policy Board for approval and they can select the projects they think are most appropriate for the funds. The SIRTACs then reviewed the survey results to determine which priorities could be the basis of the selection criteria.

Bob Monize moved to recommend that the selection criteria be based on safety, connectivity, demand, preservation, and economic vitality. The motion was seconded by Arnie Peterschmidt. The motion carried unanimously.

The SIRTACs then discussed establishing a selection committee to develop the selection criteria and oversee the implementation of the criteria. Bob Monize moved to recommend that Connie Bowers, Mike Love, Arnie Peterschmidt, and Eric Shjarback be on the TAP Selection Committee. The motion was seconded by Paul Randall-Grutter. The motion carried unanimously.

#### 4. Regional Transportation Plan Update:

- a. Scope of Work: Mark Hamilton explained that the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) must be updated by April of 2016. Staff has prepared a scope of work for the RTP update. It is proposed that this be a minor update because the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act requirements will likely necessitate a major update in a few years. Some of the items to be addressed in the 2016 update are the transportation forecast, goals and policies, and the regional transportation network. The RTP update will have its own public involvement plan and will be utilizing much of the work being done for local agencies' comprehensive plan updates. It is expected that a draft of the RTP update will be available for public review in December 2015 with adoption anticipated in April 2016.

Mike Love asked if all of the work tasks identified in the scope of work are required by state or federal regulations. Mark responded that the items identified in the scope are driven by requirements that the SIRTPO and Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) must follow. Mike suggested referencing state and federal law in the scope of work so it is clear what the requirements are for the RTP update. John Shambaugh asked if the update will include more direction for non-motorized planning. Mark said that it will draw from the Skagit Regional Non-Motorized Plan and the non-motorized component of the Island County Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element. Doug Cox added that Island County may be developing a non-motorized plan as well in the near future.

Mark Freiburger moved to recommend the draft scope of work to the SIRTPO Policy Board for approval. Mike Love seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.



- b. Public Involvement Plan: Mark Hamilton explained that SCOG is currently contracting with EnviroIssues to develop a public involvement plan for the RTP update and assist with outreach during the planning process. There is approximately \$10,000 available for this task. Mark said that a draft of the public involvement plan will be presented to the SIRTACs in April. Mark then described the public participation processes that were used in earlier versions of regional and metropolitan transportation plans.
  
- c. Regional Transportation Facilities: Gabe Philips explained that the current Skagit and Island Counties Regional and Metropolitan Transportation Plan only identifies regional facilities on the roadway network. He suggested that the RTP update include identification of regional facilities for other modes of travel, including, but not limited to, non-motorized, rail, and transit. These designations can be used to assist future project selection processes and determine which projects are identified in the RTP. Gabe said staff will prepare a recommended regional transportation network for the April meeting. Mike Love suggested that existing users of the transportation facility be a consideration when determining whether or not it should be included in the regional network.

The next SIRTAC meeting will be at 1:30 PM on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The meeting will be held in the Anacortes Public Library.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gabe Philips,  
Skagit Council of Governments

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Doug Cox,  
Island County

Date \_\_\_\_\_