



SKAGIT-ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

SIRTPO POLICY BOARD MEETING

Thursday, April 23rd, 2015

1:30 PM

[Oak Harbor Public Library](#)

1000 SE Regatta Drive, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Public Comments

3. SIRTPO Update – *Kevin Murphy, SCOG*

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of [December 3rd, 2014 SIRTPO Policy Board Meeting Minutes](#) and [February 26th, 2015 SIRTPO Policy Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- b. [Scope of Work for Regional Transportation Plan Update](#)
- c. [2015 Meeting Schedule](#)

5. Action Items

- a. [Transportation Alternatives Program Project Selection](#) – *Gabe Philips, SCOG*
- b. [Public Involvement for Regional Transportation Plan Update](#) – *Mark Hamilton, SCOG*

6. Discussion Items

- a. [Regional Transportation Plan Framework](#) – *Mark Hamilton, SCOG*
- b. [Regional Transportation System](#) – *Gabe Philips, SCOG*
- c. [Proposal for Regional Coordination and Collaboration](#) – *Kevin Murphy, SCOG*

7. New Business

8. Next Meeting: June 25th, 2015, Port of Anacortes

9. Adjourn

Information

- [Draft April 8th, 2015 Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees Meeting Minutes](#)

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

Title VI Notice: SCOG fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Compliant Form, visit SCOG's website at <http://scog.net/about/nondiscrimination/>.



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 15TH, 2014 MEETING MINUTES: Commissioner Price Johnson moved to approve the October 15th, 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 21st 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: _____



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

FEBRUARY 26, 2015
ANACORTES PUBLIC LIBRARY
ANACORTES, WA

Note: After the conclusion of this meeting it was determined that a quorum was not present because there was no city or town representative from Island County. Any actions taken at this meeting are considered advisory and not binding.

POLICY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Jill Boudreau (Co-Chair) City of Mount Vernon
Commissioner Jill Johnson (Co-Chair)..... Island County
Mayor Laurie Gere (entered meeting at 1:39 PM)..... City of Anacortes
Commissioner Rick Hannold..... Island County
Todd Harrison..... WSDOT
Commissioner Helen Price Johnson Island County
Treasurer Katie Jungquist..... Skagit County
Commissioner Ray Niver Port of Anacortes
Sheriff Will Reichardt Skagit County
Mayor Steve Sexton (entered meeting at 1:36 PM) City of Burlington
Auditor Jeanne Youngquist..... Skagit County

SUB-RTPO MEMBERS PRESENT

Todd Carlson..... WSDOT

STAFF PRESENT

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

AGENDA ITEMS

The February 26th, 2015 Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization Policy Board meeting was called to order by Mayor Boudreau at 1:33 PM.

1. INTRODUCTIONS: Roll was taken.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT: [Randy Good](#) said that SCOG should have a citizen advisory committee that accepts public comment. He also said SCOG needs to improve its public involvement process.



La Conner Councilman Dan O'Donnell requested that the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board consider funding a gravel walkway on top of a dike in La Conner.

3. SIRTPO UPDATE: Kevin Murphy reported to the SIRTPO Policy Board that the Washington State Senate transportation package does not include any projects in Skagit or Island counties.

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 3RD, 2015 SIRTPO POLICY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the February 26th, 2015 Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Price Johnson. The motion carried unanimously.

5. ACTION ITEMS:

- a. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECT SELECTION: Gabe Philips gave a presentation regarding previous allocations of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding as well as a summary of the amount of funds available for the next call for projects. Gabe said that the Policy Board may consider limiting the types of projects that can be eligible for funding in this round of funding as well as what factors to focus on when making project selections. A survey was issued to the Policy Board, the Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs), and the public regarding project eligibility and focus areas. Gabe presented the results to the Policy Board. Gabe also reported that the SIRTACs made a recommendation not to limit project eligibility but to focus project selection on projects that address safety, connectivity, demand, preservation, and economic vitality.

Commissioner Niver said that the Policy Board needs to know the definition of the proposed focus areas to make an objective decision. Gabe said that the SIRTACs recommended establishing a selection committee to define the focus areas and develop criteria that address them. Commissioner Johnson asked why the SIRTACs rated economic vitality ahead of public input. Gabe responded that the SIRTACs felt that public input is addressed through the members of the Policy Board, most of which are elected by the public to make these decisions. Mayor Boudreau then asked the Policy Board if project eligibility should be limited in this call for projects. Commissioner Price Johnson moved to not limit project eligibility in this call for projects. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Price Johnson asked if preservation meant the maintenance and repair of existing non-motorized facilities. Kevin Murphy responded that preservation does include that kind of maintenance and repair. Commissioner Johnson asked what the difference is between connectivity and regional impact. Gabe said that connectivity could represent how well a proposed project expands the existing non-motorized network and that regional impact could represent projects that affect large areas, rather than projects that have more localized impacts. Commissioner Price Johnson said that measuring the economic vitality of alternative transportation projects can be quite difficult and she recommended removing that as a focus area. Mayor Boudreau said that the selection committee will make a recommendation on what the criteria will be and the Policy Board can make changes if necessary. Mayor Sexton moved to establish the focus areas for the upcoming TAP call for projects as safety, connectivity, demand, preservation and economic vitality. The motion was seconded by Mayor Gere. Commissioner Price Johnson moved to make a friendly amendment to include equity as a focus



area. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Mayor Boudreau then asked for the Policy Board to vote on the amended motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Gabe then presented the SIRTACs members who were nominated by the SIRTACs to serve on the TAP Selection Committee. Mayor Gere moved to include Connie Bowers, Mike Love, Arnie Peterschmidt and Eric Shjarback on the TAP Selection Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Boudreau left the meeting at this time.

- b. SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN: Mark Hamilton explained that the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is scheduled to be updated by April of 2016. He presented a proposed scope of work for the RTP update. Mark said that this update will be a minor update because requirements associated with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) will necessitate a more thorough update a few years after the upcoming update. Commissioner Price Johnson asked if the requirements will be the same when a new federal transportation bill is passed. Kevin Murphy said that there is a possibility that the requirements will be different but they will likely be retained in the next transportation bill.

Commissioner Niver said that private businesses in the shipping industry have a large impact on the transportation system. He asked if the RTP Update will perform any new analysis regarding freight. Kevin responded that the proposed scope of the RTP update will minimize any new analysis that will be done. Commissioner Johnson asked if staffing resources or the MAP-21 requirements were the driving force behind doing a limited update. Kevin said that they are both factors and he added that he has not heard from any of the Policy Board members that the existing plan is inadequate. Mark said that the Policy Board can reassess the strategies and priorities of the RTP and other parts of the Plan will be updated, however, the SIRTACs recommendation is not to undertake a major plan update and instead keep the scope of the update relatively narrow.

Commissioner Hannold moved to approve the proposed scope of work as presented. Commissioner Price Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- c. APPROVAL OF 2015 MEETING SCHEDULE: Gabe Philips reviewed the direction given at the December 3rd, 2014 SIRTPO Policy Board meeting to meet more regularly as the Policy Board prepares to make a TAP call for projects and update the RTP. Additional direction from the previous Policy Board meeting was to hold meetings in Anacortes due to its central location for the region. The SIRTPO bylaws state that Policy Board meetings shall alternate between Skagit and Island counties. Commissioner Price Johnson moved to suspend the bylaw requirement to alternate meeting locations. Mayor Gere seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gere moved to hold a SIRTPO Policy Board meeting on the fourth Thursday of every other month for the remainder of 2015. The December meeting will be held on the third Thursday. The motion was seconded by commissioner Niver. The motion carried unanimously.

Sheriff Reichardt, Treasurer Jungquist, and Auditor Youngquist left the meeting at this time.



6. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE: Mark Hamilton explained to the Policy Board that a Public Involvement Plan will be developed for the RTP update. As staff prepares to develop the Public Involvement Plan, Mark asked if there are any general expectations of the outreach for the plan.

Commissioner Johnson said that outreach should occur in both counties. Todd Carlson said that staff should understand who will be affected by the plan and focus outreach on them. Commissioner Price Johnson recommended targeted outreach on Camano Island and South Whidbey, particularly through the senior centers and ferry advisory committees. The Navy base should also be a primary consideration for public outreach. Commissioner Johnson added that groups affected by transit connectivity should also be focused on. Commissioner Price Johnson said that Island County school districts should be contacted for input.

- b. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SKAGIT-ISLAND HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN: Mark Hamilton explained that a consultant has been contracted to assist in the implementation of the Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP). The most likely outcome will be an annual regional special needs transportation forum to be held this spring. This will allow stakeholders to convene and provide continuous coordination and keep a pulse on the changing needs of the region, aiding the development of the next update to the HSTP in 2018 and prioritization of regional human services transportation projects in 2016.

- c. DECEPTION PASS BRIDGE PAVING: Todd Carlson said that the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has had fifteen meetings with stakeholders regarding the upcoming paving of the Deception Pass Bridge. WSDOT is trying to prevent the project from becoming so restrictive that companies do not bid on the project. Commissioner Johnson pointed out that if finding a way to have a weeklong nighttime closure is this difficult it is a good sign that the region has a single point issue getting from Whidbey Island to Fidalgo Island.

7. NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business.

8. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:15 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: _____



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)	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTPO Policy Board	12/3/2014	Discussion	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTACs	2/12/2015	Recommendation	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
SIRTPO Policy Board	2/26/2015	Advisory	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
SIRTPO Policy Board	4/23/2015	Action	Mark Hamilton	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 12th, 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 21st 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](#)¹. State requirements for updating the RTP can be found at [RCW 47.80.030](#)².

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

² A hyperlink to RCW 47.80.030 was added after a suggestion from the Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees on February 12th, 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 2016³

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.

³ 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 ⁴			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

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



2015 SIRTPO POLICY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTPO Policy Board	02-26-2015	Advisory	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTPO Policy Board	04-23-2015	Action	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) staff recommends that the Policy Board adopt the meeting schedule for 2015. The proposed meeting dates are as follows:

- April 23rd, 2015..... 1:30 PM
- June 25th, 2015 1:30 PM
- August 27th, 2015..... 1:30 PM
- October 22nd, 2015..... 1:30 PM
- December 17th, 2015..... 1:30 PM

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



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

Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTACs	02-12-2015	Discussion	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTPO Policy Board	02-26-2015	Guidance	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTACs	04-08-2015	Discussion	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTPO Policy Board	04-23-2015	Action	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff and the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Advisory Committees recommend approving the enclosed [Transportation Alternatives Program \(TAP\) project selection criteria](#).

FISCAL IMPACT

This action would allow Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) to issue a call for TAP projects and remain fiscally constrained through the life of the 2016-2021 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

PUBLIC INPUT

SIRTPO staff [opened a public comment period](#) on April 8th, 2015 which lasted until April 16th, 2015. One written comment was received.

- [Documentation of the written public comment received](#).

DISCUSSION

At the February 26th, 2015 SIRTPO Policy Board meeting, staff was given direction to develop TAP project selection criteria that focuses on safety, connectivity, demand, preservation, economic vitality, and equity. Staff met with representatives from the Skagit and Island Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) to develop the criteria.

- [Draft 2020-2021 TAP Project Selection Criteria](#)

POINTS TO CONSIDER

The goal of this call for projects has been to develop objective selection criteria. Much of the draft criteria is based on TAP criteria used by other Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPOs). When reviewing the draft project selection criteria, please consider the following issues:

- Do the criteria reflect the regional priorities for this type of funding?
- Are the criteria appropriately weighted?
- Are there additional criteria that should be considered?



TIMELINE

In order to have a fully programmed six-year RTIP, the final TAP project selection should occur by July, 2015. Below is a draft timeline for the TAP project selection process.

- Selection criteria considered for approval..... April 23, 2015
- Call for projects April 24, 2015
- Projects submitted..... May 29, 2015
- Final selection June 2015

2020-2021 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM PROJECT APPLICATION

Project Title:

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Agency or Organization:

Contact Person:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Location:

Please submit project location in GIS format. Contact SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO if project sponsor does not have GIS capabilities.

Beginning Termini:

Ending Termini:

Project Length (in miles):

Is the project sponsor requesting urban or rural TAP funds? Urban Rural

Project Description

Include the project scope, purpose, and brief comparison of existing and proposed conditions.

Has the project been submitted to SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO in the web-based STIP software? STIP ID:

Is project included in local comprehensive plan? Link to plan and page number of reference:

Is this project included in a local Transportation Improvement Program or has the project description been approved by the sponsor agency's governing body (please include documentation in project application)?

PROPOSED TIMELINE

	PE	RW	CN	Other
Earliest possible obligation date (mm/dd/yy)				
Estimated completion date (mm/dd/yy)				

ATTACHMENTS

Project sponsor has included:

- Vicinity Map
- GIS Shapefile/geodatabase (SIRTPO staff can assist project sponsors without access to GIS)
- Planning-level cost estimate
- Signed [Project Endorsement Form](#)
- Written Concurrence (if project is within right of way of another agency)
- Written acknowledgment from Skagit Transit and/or Island Transit (If project is located on fixed route transit route)
- Documentation that proposed project has been approved by governing body and public review has occurred
- One hour count of existing non-motorized traffic
- Pictures of project site (optional)

COST SUMMARY

A. Previous obligations (all fund sources, all phases)	\$	TAP funding are requested for the following phases (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Engineering/Design <input type="checkbox"/> Right-of-way <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Other (planning, etc.)
B. Requested TAP funds	\$	
C. Other secured federal funds. Source:	\$	
D. Other secured state funds. Source:	\$	
E. Secured local funds (minimum 13.5%). Source:	\$	
F. Secured private funds. Source:	\$	
G. Amount of remaining unfunded portion	\$	
H. Total estimated project cost (all phases). Sum of A through G.	\$	

Cost summary notes (optional):

Describe the commitment of secured matching funds and the status of obtaining any unsecured funds. (Note: Matching funds must be available at the time of fund obligation)

Skagit-Island RTPO receives around \$234,000 in TAP funding. Of this allocation, approximately \$92,000 must be used in urban areas, approximately \$59,000 must be used in rural areas, and approximately \$83,000 can be used in either area. In order to meet fiscal constraint in its programming, SIRTPO limits project awards to no more than twice the annual allocation of applicable TAP funds. The maximum amount of TAP Urban funds an agency can apply for is **\$349,592** (urban allocation plus flex allocation). The maximum amount of TAP Rural funds an agency can ask for is **\$284,152** (rural allocation plus flex allocation). The minimum local match for TAP funds is 13.5%

Total amount of TAP funds requested by your agency/organization in this call for projects (all applications): \$

DEMAND **20 MAXIMUM**

CURRENT USE OF FACILITY **10**

Please provide a one-hour non-motorized count of the proposed project vicinity (sliding scale)

POTENTIAL FUTURE USE OF FACILITY (SIRTPO STAFF WILL PERFORM THIS ANALYSIS) **12**

- Is project within area of significant relative population density? Up to 3
(Block level population density. Proportional score relative to projects submitted.)
- Is project within area of significant relative alternative transportation mode share? Up to 3
(Tract level mode split [non-SOV]. Proportional score relative to projects submitted.)
- Is project within 1 mile of a school? 1
If yes, is project within ¼ mile of school? 2
- Is project within ¼ mile of a park? 3
- Is project within ¼ mile of a transit stop? 3

OTHER DEMAND GENERATOR **2**

Is project near an additional demand generator not described above? Explain:

ECONOMIC VITALITY

20 MAXIMUM

TOURISM

8

Will this project advance the development of the [US Bike Route System](#)? (staff will perform analysis) 8

Will this project boost tourism potential or are the primary anticipated users of the project visitors? 8

Explain:

PRIVATE PARTNER FUNDS

4

Have private partners pledged funding to this project? If so, how much? \$ (1 point per 2% of total amount of TAP funds requested.) Note: this does not include traffic impact fees and/or any funds identified as local match.

To receive points in this category, project sponsor must include signed pledge sheet from private partner(s) with pledged funding level.

EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

10

Is the proposed project located in an area of significant existing employment (SIRTPO staff will calculate) Up to 10 (TAZ level employment density. Proportional score relative to projects submitted.)

Does the proposed project improve access to retail establishments (all or part is within 1000' of Central Business District, strip mall, town center, etc.)? 2

Explain:

CONNECTIVITY

15 MAXIMUM

CONNECTIONS TO OTHER TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES

15

Does the proposed project connect to (check and identify all that apply):

Existing separated trail 5

Explain:

Existing bicycle lane 5

Explain:

Existing signed non-motorized transportation route 5

Explain:

- Transit center 5
Explain:
- Existing sidewalk 3
Explain:
- Existing hiking/mountain biking trail 3
Explain:
- Planned transportation alternatives facility 2
Explain and include reference to planned facility:

PRESERVATION/MAINTENANCE 10 MAXIMUM

- Is this project addressing a preservation/maintenance issue? 10
Explain:
- Is this project preserving a historic transportation facility? 10
Explain:

SAFETY 15 MAXIMUM

COLLISION HISTORY 5

- Collisions within project limits during study period (Sliding Scale) Up to 5
 - SIRTPO staff will make available the [most recent 5-year WSDOT Transportation Data & GIS Office collisions data](#) (Under 23 United States Code - Section 409. This data cannot be used in discovery or as evidence at trial in any action for damages against the WSDOT, the State of Washington, or any jurisdictions involved in the data). [An online map of the collisions involving pedestrians and bicyclists](#) is also available. Project applicant must provide location and details collisions on the proposed project facility.
 - Fill out a separate row for each collision. Provide information on the location, collision type, severity, and primary countermeasure to eliminate or mitigate collision (must be consistent with project scope)
 - SIRTPO staff will score projects on a sliding scale.

- 10,000+ ADT 3
 - 6,000 – 9,999 ADT..... 2
 - 1,500 – 5,999 ADT..... 1
 - < 1500 ADT or not applicable 0
- (Please provide traffic count to verify traffic volumes)

Does the proposed project help clarify who has the right-of-way?

- New/improved pedestrian/bicycle signal 1
- New marked crosswalk..... 1
- Warning signs..... 1
- Rapid flash beacon..... 1
- Other: 1

Does the proposed project shorten the distance/time a vulnerable road user is exposed to traffic?

- Curb bulbouts 1
- Signal countdown 1
- Median islands..... 1
- Crosswalk relocation..... 1
- Other: 1

EQUITY **5 MAXIMUM**

- Is project within 100 feet of high disability census tract? (Staff will perform analysis) 1
- Is project within 100 feet of high elderly population tract? (Staff will perform analysis) 1
- Is project within 100 feet of census tract with low vehicle ownership? (Staff will perform analysis) 1

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (STAFF WILL PERFORM THIS ANALYSIS) **2**

- Is project within 100 feet of low income census tract? 1
- Is project within 100 feet of minority census block? 1

PROJECT FUNDING

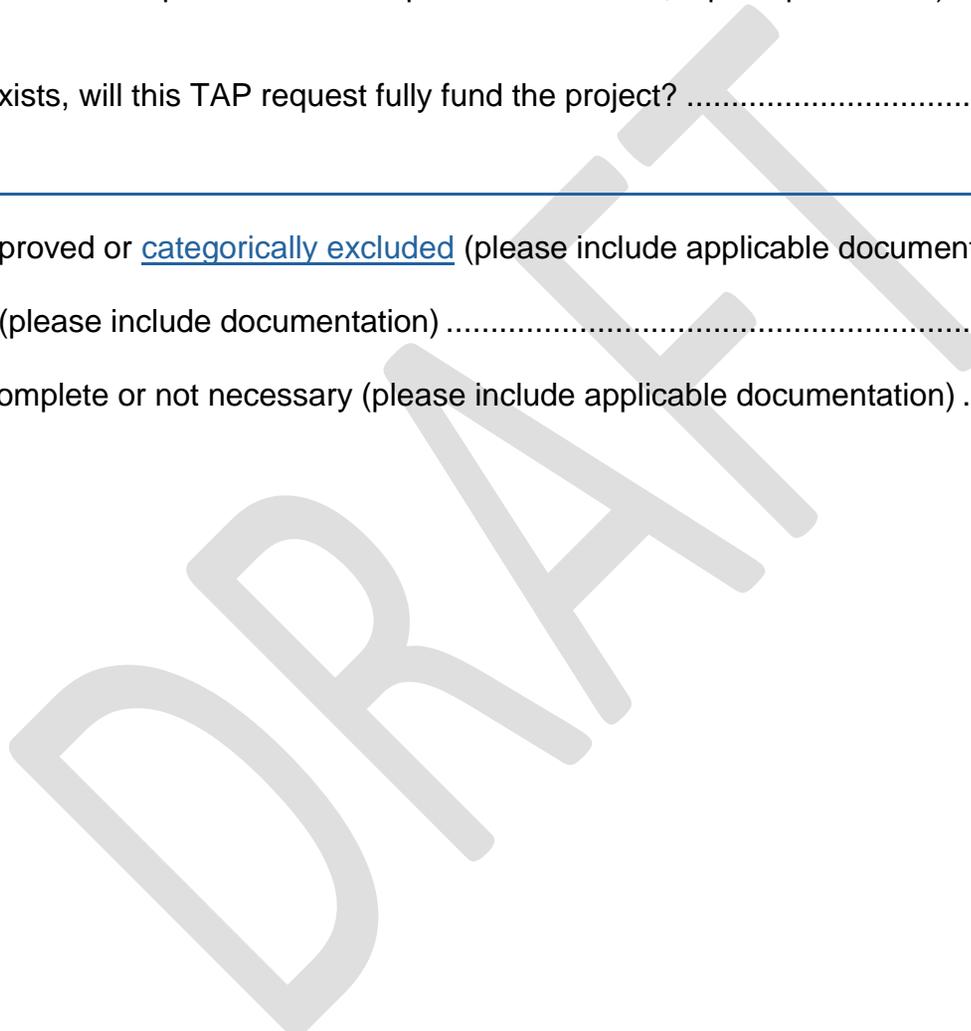
5

- Other secured funding (other than required match and private investment, 1 point per source) 0-3
Explain:
- If other secured funding exists, will this TAP request fully fund the project? 2

PROJECT READINESS

10

- Environmental permits approved or [categorically excluded](#) (please include applicable documentation) 5
- PS&E package complete (please include documentation) 5
- Right of way acquisition complete or not necessary (please include applicable documentation) 5



PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING THE 2020-2021 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

[One written public comment was received.](#)

	Commenter	Comment	Staff Response	Suggestion
1	Randy and Aileen Good	<p>Public input and dialogue was absent in this draft of TAP scoring criteria developed by SCOG staff. Staff failed to meet federal requirements of early and continuous public involvement from conceptual planning through decision planning. WAC-468-86-090.</p> <p>Formation of a citizens advisory committee would have prevented this violation.</p>	<p>Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) issued a survey requesting public input regarding project eligibility and focus areas. 173 responses were received from the public. A public comment period regarding the proposed TAP criteria was posted on April 8th, 2015 and closed on April 16th, 2015.</p> <p>WAC-468-86-090 is a state guideline regarding public involvement in the development of the Regional Transportation Plan</p>	
2	Randy and Aileen Good	<p>Most projects proposed to be listed on county and cities 6year TIP's are not vetted at local levels according to city council members and county citizens. Projects need to go through proper public processes with public involvement and input before being listed on 6yr.TIP to meet federal requirements. Again the citizens advisory committee would have been beneficial to make sure public input is achieved.</p>	<p>SIRTPO does not control public review process of local TIPs. SIRTPO requires that projects have formal approval by sponsor agency's governing body through a public process to be eligible to apply for TAP funds.</p>	
3	Randy and Aileen Good	<p>SCOG staff has prepared this draft TAP scoring criteria without public input with 50% of the points to be determined by SCOG staff. It is obvious the public is being left out of this process.</p>	<p>The SIRTPO Policy Board used information gained from the public survey to guide staff in the development of selection criteria.</p> <p>Portions of the criteria will be scored by staff because it is based on objective analysis using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software.</p>	

	Commenter	Comment	Staff Response	Suggestion
4	Randy and Aileen Good	The TAP draft scoring criteria is weighted to promote regional bike projects and completely eliminates much needed sidewalk safety projects and safe routes to schools. Safe routes to schools projects are encouraged for TAP funding. SCOG staff has a list of many projects within urban areas, close to schools, businesses and other services that deserve consideration for TAP funding once approved through the public process. Why have the Safe Routes to Schools been eliminated in the criteria draft? Again a advisory committee may consider school children's safety a much higher priority.	Sidewalk safety and safe routes to schools projects are eligible for TAP funding. Proximity to schools and the existence of nearby sidewalks are examples of proposed criteria that address this issue.	The Policy Board may consider additional criteria that address school children's safety
5	Randy and Aileen Good	We question staff's scoring criteria placing more emphasis on recreational linear bike routes and lanes instead of higher usage sidewalks for walkers. Sidewalks rank as the number 1 use, not bike lanes. Ten times the number of people are on sidewalks walking compared to bicycle use. Shouldn't scoring criteria be geared toward the biggest users? The walkers. These TAP funds do not qualify for recreational projects.	<p>The GIS-based criteria tend to favor projects that are longer in nature, but smaller sidewalk projects can still compete. The Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Advisory Committees (SIRTACs) discussed this issue and concluded the proposed criteria are the best way to prioritize all of the eligible project types.</p> <p>While sidewalks are vital transportation facilities, they are primarily used for local transportation needs. For this reason, more emphasis was given to projects that are likely to have a regional impact.</p> <p>The amount of existing use of a non-motorized transportation facility is a consideration in the selection criteria.</p> <p>Recreational trails are eligible for TAP funds.</p>	<p>The Policy Board may consider increasing emphasis on sidewalk projects</p> <p>The Policy Board may consider increasing the weight placed on existing use.</p>
6	Randy and Aileen Good	We see no points for projects to improve the mandated ADA requirements. TAP funds can be used to meet ADA requirements.	All projects using TAP funds must be ADA compliant. Because of this, the TAC did not recommend having separate ADA-specific criteria	
7	Randy and Aileen Good	Why has safety factors been dropped to 15% of scoring criteria? SCOG staff should address safety with higher points realizing safety in the scoring criteria is one of the reasons these monies are available?	The SIRTACs said that there are other funding sources available for safety issues and therefore safety should not be as strongly weighted.	The Policy Board may consider changing the weights of the focus areas (Safety, demand, economic vitality, etc.) to increase the relative importance of safety.

SIRTPO
Gabe Phillips SCOG

April 15, 2015

RE; Comments on 2020-2021 Draft Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Project Application Scoring criteria;

1. Public input and dialogue was absent in this draft of TAP scoring criteria developed by SCOG staff. Staff failed to meet federal requirements of early and continuous public involvement from conceptual planning through decision planning. WAC-468-86-090.
Formation of a citizens advisory committee would have prevented this violation.
2. Most projects proposed to be listed on county and cities 6year TIP's are not vetted at local levels according to city council members and county citizens. Projects need to go through proper public processes with public involvement and input before being listed on 6yr.TIP to meet federal requirements. Again the citizens advisory committee would have been beneficial to make sure public input is achieved.
3. SCOG staff has prepared this draft TAP scoring criteria without public input with 50% of the points to be determined by SCOG staff. It is obvious the public is being left out of this process.
4. The TAP draft scoring criteria is weighted to promote regional bike projects and completely eliminates much needed sidewalk safety projects and safe routes to schools. Safe routes to schools projects are encouraged for TAP funding. SCOG staff has a list of many projects within urban areas, close to schools, businesses and other services that deserve consideration for TAP funding once approved through the public process. Why have the Safe Routes to Schools been eliminated in the criteria draft? Again a advisory committee may consider school children's safety a much higher priority.
5. We question staff's scoring criteria placing more emphasis on recreational linear bike routes and lanes instead of higher usage sidewalks for walkers. Sidewalks rank as the number 1 use, not bike lanes. Ten times the number of people are on sidewalks walking compared to bicycle use. Shouldn't scoring criteria be geared toward the biggest users? The walkers. These TAP funds do not qualify for recreational projects.
6. We see no points for projects to improve the mandated ADA requirements. TAP

funds can be used to meet ADA requirements.

7. Why has safety factors been dropped to 15% of scoring criteria? SCOG staff should address safety with higher points realizing safety in the scoring criteria is one of the reasons these monies are available?

Thank you for opportunity to comment.

Randy Good and Aileen Good
35482 SR 20
Sedro Woolley, Wa. 98284
360-856-1199



ACTION ITEM 5.B. – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTACs	2/12/2015	Discussion	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
SIRTPO Policy Board	2/26/2015	Discussion	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
SIRTACs	4/8/2015	Recommendation	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
SIRTPO Policy Board	4/23/2015	Action	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve the [public involvement plan](#) for the 2015 – 2016 Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan (Regional Transportation Plan or RTP) update.

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 public outreach for the RTP update.

To guide outreach for the planning process, EnviroIssues and SCOG staffs have developed a public involvement plan (PIP) for the RTP, which is informed by input received to-date by the Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs) and the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board. The PIP includes multiple methods to engage the public throughout the planning process from April 2015 through the public comment period next year.

Proposed outreach activities include: briefings to organizations about the planning process; information booths to provide information about the RTP update and facilitate one-on-one conversations between the public and project team members; notification of upcoming outreach opportunities; consultation with Indian tribes, federal and state agencies; open public meetings of governing and advisory bodies of the SIRTPO; and a public comment period before adoption. A number of outreach materials are identified in the PIP as well.

The SIRTACs recommended approval of the PIP at their April 8th, 2015 meeting with the following changes: 1) clearly distinguish between a major update and a minor update to the RTP on the first page of the PIP and describe why this is a minor amendment; 2) avoid the use of terms such as SIRTPO member and non-member as it could create confusion with the public about what it means to be a member; and 3) add planning commissions and private transportation providers to the briefing efforts. These changes have been incorporated into a revised draft PIP for consideration by the SIRTPO Policy Board.



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

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

April 16, 2015

1.0 Overview

Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) were authorized in 1990 as part of the state Growth Management Act to ensure local and regional coordination of transportation plans, among other duties. The RTPO for Skagit and Island counties is the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO). The SIRTPO is a forum for cooperative decision-making and consists of local and tribal governments from Skagit and Island counties and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) is a voluntary organization of local and tribal governments that works to foster collaboration and cooperation in Skagit County. SCOG is the “lead planning agency” for the SIRTPO, meaning SCOG provides administration and coordination for the organization.

As the RTPO for Skagit and Island counties, the SIRTPO is charged with developing and maintaining the Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan (Regional Transportation Plan or RTP). The RTP is a long-range plan for meeting existing and future transportation needs within the region, and also provides a collaborative process for identifying transportation projects for funding and implementation over the next 20+ years.

SCOPE OF PLAN UPDATE

Because of new federal transportation planning requirements, SCOG anticipates doing a major update of the Regional Transportation Plan in 2018. Therefore, the scope of this 2015 – 2016 RTP update is relatively minor, anticipating that extensive changes will need to occur to the plan in the near future to meet the new national performance-based approach, the rules for which are now under development.

The current RTP was adopted in 2011 following extensive coordination with the public, jurisdictions and key stakeholder organizations. Federal requirements that relate to the RTP ensure that it must be updated every five years, at a minimum. In 2014, SCOG, along with representatives from Island County, began leading the process to update the RTP – starting with updating the employment and population forecasts and travel demand model that will be used for the RTP update. The updated RTP is scheduled to be adopted in early 2016, following a public comment period.

1.1 Project Timeline

A project timeline, or “project schedule”, has been developed for the 2015 – 2016 RTP update. The following is a condensed version of the schedule:

- 2014: RTP update process began with data collection, population and employment forecasting, and travel demand modeling
- April – June 2015: Revising regional priorities, policies and goals
- June – Oct. 2015: Updating financing and transportation project prioritization
- Early 2016: Releasing draft RTP and beginning public comment period

(See Appendix A for the full project schedule with tasks, dates and anticipated actions throughout 2015 and into 2016)

2.0 Purpose

This public involvement plan provides a detailed description of anticipated public outreach activities and methods for engaging members of the community and other interested parties as part of the process to update the RTP.

2.1 Primary Outcomes for Public Involvement

Guiding the development of the public involvement plan are several primary outcomes that are sought to inform, consult and involve the public in the RTP update planning process. There primary outcomes are as follows:

- Generate broad public understanding of the RTP, including:
 - The purpose of the RTP and what it includes
 - Why the RTP is important
 - Why the RTP needs to be updated
 - The process to update the RTP, including how transportation projects are identified and selected
 - What the scope of the updated RTP will include

- Ensure public awareness of the various ways to obtain information about the RTP update, and clearly explain the topic areas for which public feedback is requested
- Provide numerous opportunities for meaningful public feedback and input on key topic areas, such as the list of priority transportation projects
- Clearly communicate information about the planning process in all materials prepared for the RTP update

2.2 Messages to Communicate

The messages below are intended to provide general information about the Regional Transportation Plan, and the process to update it. These messages are presented as answers to general questions, and can be used to inform the development of project outreach materials, including, but not limited to, web content, fact sheets, display materials and talking points. The messages are presented as the following questions and answers:

- **“What is the Regional Transportation Plan?”**
 - The RTP is a long-term plan that helps identify and prioritize future transportation needs in the Skagit-Island region
 - The RTP addresses roads and highways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit, freight and more
 - The RTP includes a list of regional transportation projects as well as analysis of potential funding options and potential environmental impacts of projects
 - The RTP leads to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods
 - The current RTP looks out to the year 2035; the update will look out five years further, to 2040
- **“What Is the Process to Update the Regional Transportation Plan?”**
 - In accordance with state and federal requirements, the RTP must be updated every five years
 - The process to update the current RTP update began in 2014 and must be completed by April 2016
 - A draft of the updated RTP will be published in early 2016, and will be available for public review and comment before adoption

- The Skagit Council of Governments is coordinating with Island County, as well as local, state, tribal and federal jurisdictions to review and update the current RTP
- **“What Regional Transportation Projects Are Included?”**
 - The RTP will estimate revenues and expenses for the regional transportation network out to 2040, including costs to maintain the existing infrastructure, indicating how much funding will likely be available for future transportation projects
 - A project prioritization methodology will be developed to prioritize projects for estimated available funding
 - Limited funding will require tradeoffs and some projects may be unaffordable, based on future financial estimates
- **“How Do I Provide Input?”**
 - The public will have numerous opportunities to provide input as part of the process to update the RTP
 - A variety of methods will be employed to gather input and reach out to those who may not otherwise be involved in helping to plan the region’s transportation future
 - Input can be provided at any time by contacting key project team members in Appendix B, either by phone or email

3.0 Interested Parties

The SIRTPO seeks to provide meaningful, continuous involvement to the entire public, including every interested party, as the RTP is updated. Methods employed to engage different participants will be tailored to unique venues and formats. A number of targeted parties have been identified for outreach, due to varying identified roles and interests in the regional transportation system. Information will be provided to those Spanish speakers with limited English proficiency, as appropriate, to facilitate an inclusive planning process.

3.1 Interested Parties for Public Involvement

The SIRTPO will target the general public for outreach, utilizing methods in the Activities section (Section 4) as appropriate. Through the planning process, reasonable opportunities to participate will be provided to: limited English proficiency speakers; representatives of public transportation users and employees; freight shippers and those offering freight transportation services; representatives of persons with disabilities; non-motorized representatives; and other interested parties. Engaging members of the general public will occur most often by attending events that the public will be attending for other purposes.

3.2 Interested Parties for Consultation

Additional outreach will be done to specific parties to meet federal consultation requirements, especially parties with identified interests in environmental activities included with the RTP and overall development of the plan. These parties include federally recognized Indian tribes, and federal, state and local agencies with responsibilities in land management, wildlife, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, historic preservation and regulation.

Federally recognized Indian tribes that will be consulted include: (1) the Samish Indian Nation; (2) the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community; (3) the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe; and (4) the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe. Additional federally recognized Indian tribes may be consulted as appropriate.

Federal agencies that will be consulted include the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service. Both the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service manage federal public lands in eastern Skagit County. Additional federal agencies may be consulted as appropriate.

State and local agencies will be consulted that have responsibilities for growth planning, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations and freight movements. Additional state and local agencies may be consulted as appropriate.

3.2 Limited English Proficiency and Environmental Justice

Through a previous demographic analysis of Skagit County, SCOG has identified a significant number of Spanish-speaking residents with limited English proficiency. Thus, public outreach materials can be made available in Spanish, and Spanish interpretation services will be provided as requested. Minority and low-income populations are also present in the region and will be targeted for outreach as appropriate.

4.0 Activities

The following activities will be undertaken to share information and receive input on the RTP update. Alternate and/or additional outreach events and activities may be implemented, as appropriate, to be responsive to the needs of the planning process. Utilizing these activities will ensure that participation can occur in a variety of ways and that efforts to engage will be leveraged by attending already-planned annual events, regular meetings and other venues.

4.1 Briefings

Briefings will allow the project team to delve into the details of the RTP update with small groups. Briefing materials will include a presentation, fact sheet, and comment form, and will provide information about the RTP update process. Planning commissioners of counties, cities and towns will be targeted for

briefings. Attendees will be able to provide feedback by talking to the project team, and/or by completing a comment form.

For maximum benefit, briefings should begin in the early stages of the RTP update to build awareness of the RTP update process, and upcoming opportunities for the public to provide feedback, and continue throughout the RTP update process, with an emphasis on when updated information is available, and/or when feedback is sought to help inform key decision points in the process.

Examples of organizations identified for briefings include: the Island County Ferry Advisory Committee; the Skagit Transit Citizens Advisory Committee; the Economic Development Association of Skagit County; the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island; and the Center for Independence North Sound. Organizations will be contacted during the planning process to see if they would be interested in receiving a briefing. Private providers of transportation services will be contacted as well.

To request a briefing, see Appendix B for key project team members that will be working on the RTP update and their contact information. Any of the SIRTPO contacts may be called or emailed. As staffing permits, all reasonable requests for briefings will be met.

4.2 Information Booths

Information booths at existing local public events provide the opportunity to reach the public in an informal setting that does not require attendees to change their schedule in order to receive information. Attendees will be able to provide feedback by talking to the project team, or by completing a comment form. Information booths provide easily accessible opportunities for project staff to meet one-on-one with those interested in the RTP update process and to answer questions and receive feedback.

Materials at information booths will include a display board(s), fact sheet, and comment form. Information presented will focus on what the RTP is, why it needs to be updated, and the proposed updates. For optimal impact, information booths should be held when specific feedback is sought to inform the RTP update process, such as determining which transportation projects can be funded given the estimated available revenues out to 2040.

SCOG staff tested an information booth for the RTP update at the open house Skagit County held as part of their comprehensive plan transportation element update process. Initial input was gathered at the event and several participants were interested in being involved in the planning process going forward.

4.3 Notification

Notification of upcoming outreach opportunities, or key milestones in the RTP update process will occur through a variety of methods, and could include:

emails to key project contacts, information posted on SCOG's website, and announcements in local newspapers.

4.4 Consultation

Federally recognized Indian tribes, Federal agencies, and State agencies will be consulted during the RTP update process. Consultation will involve a discussion of potential environmental mitigation in relation to the RTP and the broader development of the RTP. The views of these parties will be considered prior to taking any formal action updating the RTP. Key decision points for consultation will follow the approved schedule for the RTP update and ample time will be provided to conduct effective consultation.

The *Briefings* (4.1), *Information Booths* (4.2), and *Notification* (4.3) will be utilized in the consultation process, as appropriate.

4.5 Meetings of Governing and Advisory Bodies

All meetings of the SIRTPO Policy Board and joint meetings of the Skagit-Island Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs) are open to the public. This level of public access ensures that the decision-making process is open and transparent. The SIRTACs provide advice to the SIRTPO Policy Board, the governing body of the SIRTPO.

Additionally, opportunities for public comment will be provided at all SIRTPO Policy Board meetings. Comments can be provided by the public – verbally, in writing, or both – that are incorporated as part of the official meetings minutes of the SIRTPO Policy Board.

4.5 Public Comment Period

After a draft of the updated RTP is completed, it will be released for public comment. The public comment period will be not less than 14 calendar days. Notice of the public comment period will be posted in newspapers of record in Skagit and Island counties and on SCOG's website. Final action on the updated RTP will be preceded by a public comment period. An additional opportunity for public comment may be provided as well, if necessary.

5.0 Materials

A variety of materials will be developed to assist with providing the public with information about the planning process and to solicit input that will inform the RTP update. Examples of materials expected to be produced are visual display boards, a project fact sheet, a PowerPoint presentation(s), a comment form and a memo summarizing public involvement throughout the planning process.

5.1 Visual Display Boards

Informational visual display boards will be produced for use at the public involvement activities outlined in Section 4. The boards will utilize visualization techniques, as appropriate, and include the following:

- An introduction to the RTP
- Information on the RTP update process
- Information on the project selection process
- Key project contact information

(See Appendix B for key project team members that will be working on the RTP update and their contact information)

5.2 Project Fact Sheet

A fact sheet will be produced and distributed at public involvement events. The fact sheet will contain general information about the RTP update including information on the purpose of, and need to update, the RTP; the process to update the RTP; and how priority projects are identified. The fact sheet will also include key contact information.

5.3 PowerPoint Presentation

A presentation(s) will be produced for use at briefings. Presentation subjects to highlight could include:

- What is the RTP and why is it important?
- Why does the RTP need to be updated?
- What is the process and schedule for updating the RTP?
- What is included in the updated RTP?
- How are transportation projects selected?
- How does funding affect the RTP update process?
- How can the public get involved?

5.4 Comment Form

A public comment form will be developed to easily receive feedback from the public and ensure that opportunities to submit written comments will be available prior to the public comment period(s). The comment form can be used at information booths, briefings and consultations, as appropriate, and will allow for general feedback to be considered during the planning process.

5.5 Public Involvement Summary Memo

The public involvement summary memo will provide an overview of all public involvement activities conducted throughout the course of the RTP update

process. The summary memo will note issues identified through the public outreach process, discuss the key themes of public feedback received, and note how public input was considered in the updated RTP.

In addition to the items listed above, additional informational materials may be developed, as appropriate.

DRAFT

Appendix A: 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 system¹			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

¹ A review for this task is proposed for April 2015. The first draft of this schedule had discussion for this task in February 2015. Note: dates and anticipated actions for the schedule are subject to change.

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

Appendix B: Key Project Team Members

Name	Organization	Role	Contact Information
Mark Hamilton	SIRTPO-SCOG	Skagit-Island Staff <i>(public involvement lead)</i>	(360) 416-7876 markh@scog.net
Kevin Murphy	SIRTPO-SCOG	Skagit-Island Staff	(360) 416-7871 kevinm@scog.net
Gabe Philips	SIRTPO-SCOG	Skagit-Island Staff	(360) 416-6678 gabep@scog.net
Doug Cox	SIRTPO-Island County	Island Staff	360-678-7959 d.cox@co.island.wa.us
Justin McCaffree	EnviroIssues	Skagit-Island Public Outreach	(206) 269-5041 jmccaffree@enviroissues.com
Erin Taylor	EnviroIssues	Skagit-Island Public Outreach	(206) 269-5041 etaylor@enviroissues.com
Sophie Cottle	EnviroIssues	Skagit-Island Public Outreach	(206) 269-5041 scottle@enviroissues.com



DISCUSSION ITEM 6.A. – TRANSPORTATION FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTACs	4/8/2015	Discussion	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876
SIRTPO Policy Board	4/23/2015	Discussion	Mark Hamilton	360-416-7876

DISCUSSION

Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) staff has completed an initial assessment of [Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies](#) (Section 4), a chapter of the *Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan* (Regional Transportation Plan or RTP). This initial assessment follows.

Priorities

The RTP identifies six regional priorities: Economic Vitality; Preservation; Safety; Mobility; Environment; and Stewardship. These priorities are similar, though not identical, to the “transportation system policy goals” in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 47.04.280). The priorities themselves are not prioritized, that is, they are given equal weight within the plan. Following each priority is a paragraph providing some context for how the priority relates to the regional transportation system in Skagit and Island counties.

There has been some discussion at the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board, and at the sub-RTPOs for Skagit and Island County about the ambiguousness of some of these priorities and the unclear linkage between what the priorities are, and how they are used to select transportation projects through regional and countywide selection processes, such as the Surface Transportation Program and Transportation Alternatives Program. For example, while it has generally been agreed that Economic Vitality is an important priority for the region, it is unclear how to measure Economic Vitality as it relates to specific transportation projects that apply for funding consideration through competitive processes. Proximity to existing employment has been used as a measure of Economic Vitality, but the question of how a project would improve Economic Vitality directly is difficult to answer. Applying evaluation measures to the six priorities in the RTP has proven challenging as the SIRTPO has moved toward using objective measures to evaluate transportation projects.

Without substantially changing the regional priorities, the RTP could provide a clear explanation of how it will be used to evaluate projects for competitive project selection processes. It may be beneficial to leave some flexibility in project evaluation to meet changing needs and be responsive to new data becoming available that are better gauges of project impacts.

Policies

There are six policies in the RTP, appearing in bold type on Pages 41-43 of the chapter. An initial review of these policies does not indicate that any policies should be removed or significantly changed at this time, with the exception of Policy 6 which ties into countywide planning policies (CPPs) for Skagit and Island counties. This policy, along with the associated goals and strategies are for Skagit County



only (i.e. the goals and strategies are Skagit County countywide planning policies and do not include Island County's). Policy 6 is on Page 43-44.

SCOG staff recommends striping CPPs out of the RTP. CPPs for each county and the RTP must still be consistent, but the CPPs need not be in the plan.

Goals and Strategies

There are 35 goals and strategies in the RTP. Goals and strategies underlie each of the six policies. Typically, goals are ideal future conditions of a region. The goals and strategies identified in the RTP are much more similar to what would commonly be referred to as policies. For example, it is a policy statement to "Support Skagit Transit and Island Transit in acquiring funding from outside sources to help implement strategies identified in the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan", which is goal/strategy 1.4 in the RTP (Page 41). The recommended framework for goals, objectives and policies should be:

- Goal – Desired future condition in the region
Example: Regional transit is adequately funded by outside sources.
- Objective – A measure of how a goal will be met
Example: By 2040, Skagit Transit and Island Transit receive 100% of the funding identified from outside sources for regional transit projects identified in the RTP.
- Policy – Action judged to be necessary to achieve goal
Example: Support Skagit Transit and Island Transit in acquiring funding from outside sources to help implement strategies identified in the RTP.

Due to the anticipated minor scope of the RTP update, it is not recommended by staff at this time to totally restructure the goals and strategies. This issue should be addressed, however, in the major update to the RTP in 2018. Should the SIRTPO Policy Board desire, staff can begin a more substantial restructuring of the policies, goals and strategies, but it would likely push revisions of this section out to August (the current schedule shows revisions to Section 4 in June).

Framework for the Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan

There is a subsection within Section 4 that includes the results of model runs for various scenarios and geographies within the region. These results are presented on Page 36-40. Narrative descriptions are presented for vehicle miles traveled, vehicle hours of delay, lane miles and lane miles of congestion within each of the geographies. This subsection cannot adequately be updated until the regional travel demand model is updated, which should be completed in April.

In the current RTP, the "Full Build" of 134 regional transportation projects and "No Build", where no projects would be completed, resulted in very minute differences in vehicle miles traveled and lane miles across the geographies. The biggest difference in model results between these two scenarios was in the reduction in vehicle hours of delay, which are increases in travel time due to traffic congestion, with most noticeable differences in Island County. Model results indicate the Full Build scenario would reduce vehicle hours of delay by 32% in Island County by 2036.



Other Considerations

Once the financial plan is complete for the RTP update, it may be beneficial to revisit Section 4. The last RTP financial plan indicated that only approximately \$133 million would be available for capital project funding, but totaling up the costs of the 134 projects in the Full Build scenario indicated over \$3 billion in total project costs in “year of expenditure” dollars. Assuming that the financial results will not be vastly different in this RTP update, most of the future estimated revenues will be necessary to maintain the existing transportation network and little may be available for capital projects. The results of the financial plan may warrant a revisiting of the priorities, policies, goals and strategies in the plan to ensure that they are not only still current, but they are adequately addressing the transportation funding challenges the region faces.

Next Steps

SCOG staff will continue to work on review of Section 4 and will make recommendations on suggested revisions to the SIRTPO Policy Board at the June 2015 meeting.

A horizontal banner with a topographic map background. The map shows contour lines, a river, and various geographical features. The text is overlaid on the map.

Section 4
Transportation Framework & Policies

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

The Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan (M/RTP) is used to guide regional transportation investments over the next 25 years. It represents the efforts of government agencies serving the region to coordinate the planning of diverse transportation systems to support the region's anticipated growth and meet its priorities and goals. The M/RTP was developed through a cooperative process that involved the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG), as lead agency for the MPO and RTPO, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Northwest Region, the public, and ongoing transportation planning efforts of Skagit and Island Counties, including cities, ports, transit agencies and other service providers in the two-county region.

A wide range of transportation improvements and strategies have been identified by the region. These programs and improvements create a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system to serve the region for the next 20 or more years. The total costs of these improvements and programs will outstrip the likely available future funding. Because not all projects and programs can be funded over the next 20 years,



Anacortes Roundabout

the region established priorities for its transportation improvements. The priorities were used in the technical evaluation to establish a framework for the M/RTP. The framework essentially identifies the core transportation needs which other regional improvements will tie into. The framework was defined to help guide the development of a financially-constrained M/RTP.

Regional Priorities

The M/RTP is used to guide regional transportation investments over the next 20 years. It represents the efforts of government agencies serving the region to coordinate the planning of diverse transportation systems to support the region's anticipated growth and meet its priorities and goals. The M/RTP was developed through a cooperative process that involved SCOG, WSDOT Northwest Region, Island & Skagit RTPOs, and the public, as well as ongoing transportation planning efforts of Skagit and Island Counties which includes 28 cities, five ports, two transit agencies, non-profit transit providers and tribal governments that constitute the two-county RTPO area. Through the public participation process, priorities were developed that focused on a systems approach to moving people, freight, and goods.

The priorities set for the regional transportation system are consistent with those established in the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The highest priorities for the Skagit-Island RTPO, in no particular order of priority, are economic vitality, preservation, safety, mobility, environment, and stewardship as key priorities.

Economic Vitality: *To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.*

The movement of freight and goods and supporting economic sectors that rely on the transportation system is a priority for the region. Freight movement plays an important role in the regional economy by transporting various raw materials and finished products to and from the region via rail, air, truck, and ship. The efficient movement of freight is, therefore, important for the regional transportation system. These elements are also necessary for providing access to business and good jobs in the region. Of equal importance is the improvement

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

of multimodal transportation networks for serving retail, service and tourism in our communities.

Preservation: *To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services.*

The region understands the importance of preserving the existing rail, bridge, pavement, transit, river, ferry and airport facilities and considers each a critical economic asset. However, revenues to the local governments that are directed toward transportation maintenance are inadequate. Governments at all levels find it difficult to transfer general revenues to maintenance when those funds are needed elsewhere. Consequently, long-term maintenance, such as pavement management, is being deferred.

Safety: *To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customer; and the transportation system.*

The safety and security of all individuals who use the transportation network are of high importance in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the transportation system. Improvements made to the transportation network that aim to reduce fatalities and injuries also lead to improved collision rates and improve traffic congestion. While efforts to improve safety should be taken across all modes of transportation, there is greater emphasis on improving roadway safety for auto drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians given the greater rates of fatalities in these modes.

Mobility: *To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout the region.*

Six Highest Regional Priorities

Economic Vitality

Preservation

Safety

Mobility

Environment

Stewardship

Improving regional connections to facilitate the movement of people and goods in an effort to contribute to a strong economy and a better quality of life for citizens is crucial for continued growth. Attaining greater mobility for our communities involves balancing a multimodal network that integrates all modes and is able to contribute to an efficient network of services meeting varied user needs. Included in this is an emphasis on maximizing the operational aspects of existing facilities.

Environment: *To enhance regional quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.*

Improving the environmental quality of our neighborhoods and communities will lead to a sustainable transportation system and economic vitality. This includes finding ways to reduce environmental impacts that could potentially result from the expansion or creation of a project, as well as promoting environmentally efficient modes of transportation such as transit, vanpooling, car-sharing, bicycling, and walking.

Stewardship: *To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.*



Freeland Main Street

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

The integration of land use and transportation policies to protect and preserve essential public transportation facilities, while working to better manage the transportation system will provide for optimum efficiency and effective movement of people and goods.

While these are the six highest priorities, the M/RTP also considers a range of other factors in the selection of transportation improvement projects and programs. These factors include:

- Regional connections;
- Land use plans;
- Pedestrian & bicycle transportation;
- Transit, ridesharing, & other alternatives;
- Security & emergency response; and
- Costs.

These factors greatly influence the priority of a project or program for the region. The region will strive to ensure that the recommended

transportation projects and programs provide the best value for the least cost, consistent with least-cost planning practices.



Coupeville Pedestrian Overpass

Framework for the Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Plan

A framework for the M/RTP was prepared based on the regional priorities. The framework establishes the key improvement projects and programs for the region. Other regional projects and programs were then added to the framework to complete the financially constrained M/RTP.

Evaluation of Roadway Improvements

The evaluation of future roadway improvements was based on 2035 land use forecasts and resulting travel demands. The Skagit-Island regional travel demand model was used to forecast levels of congestion on the transportation system in 2035. The regional model is a PM peak hour model and automobile based (does not account for non-motorized or transit modes). The lane miles of highway and arterial links were evaluated as either approaching or exceeding their planning level capacity.

Travel demand models are limited in how they represent human travel tendencies and choices. These models provide a tool for estimating likely outcomes, not definite scenarios. For this reason, some areas in the 2035 model may have higher congestion problems than will actually be experienced. Likewise, congestion in other areas may be underrepresented.

Due to significant residential growth on Camano Island and the single access point to the mainland, the regional model forecasts high volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratios and high vehicle hours of delay (VHD). This forecast traffic congestion distorts the overall county-wide performance measures as the Camano Island roadway network is separate from the rest of the regional system. As a result, Camano

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

Island was excluded from the performance measure charts in order to better represent the future performance of the county-wide roadway network.

While travel demand models are not crystal balls, they are effective for assessing the relative impacts of growth. Further analysis and professional judgment should be used when determining the future travel behaviors in specific locations to ensure the volumes predicted by the model are reasonable.

Performance measures provide policy makers and the public a framework for evaluating progress towards implementing regional transportation policies. The following performance measures were identified to assess the relative impacts of land use growth and the benefits of the M/RTP system improvements. It is recommended that performance measures be monitored over time to assess the regional investment strategy. The region should fully develop multimodal transportation system performance measures that address the region’s transportation policies.

The following charts show the relative change in some key transportation performance measures for the metropolitan planning area (MPO area), Skagit County (non-MPO), Island County, and the combined Skagit-Island RTPO area. The charts show results for three different model periods or scenarios: (1) 2008 “Existing” conditions, (2) 2035 “No Build” that assumes future land use on the existing transportation network, and (3) 2035 “Full Build” that assumes the completion of the M/RTP project improvements.

Skagit Metropolitan Planning Area (MPO)

Lane Miles

The number of lane miles for Existing and No Build conditions are the same because the transportation networks are assumed the same. In the MPO area, 18.5 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions. This includes additional lanes on Interstate 5, widened Skagit River Bridges, and new roadway connections in Sedro-Woolley. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects would not be reflected in this metric.

Exhibit 4-1
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Lane miles

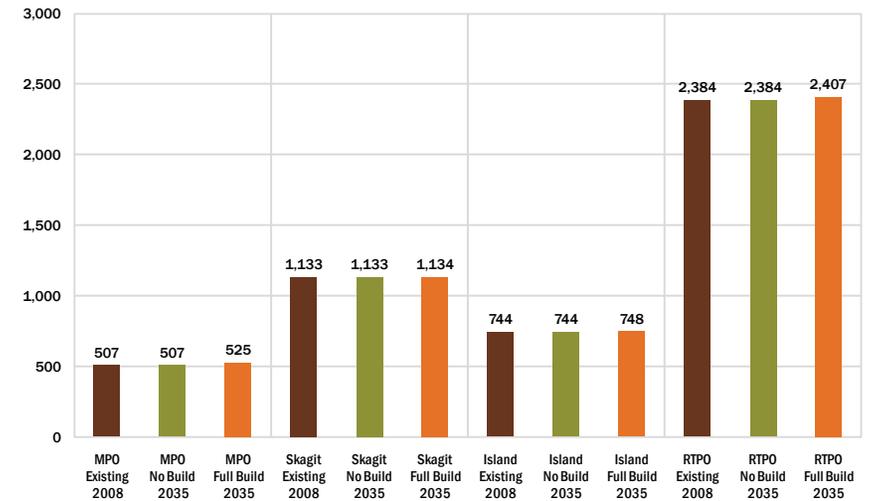
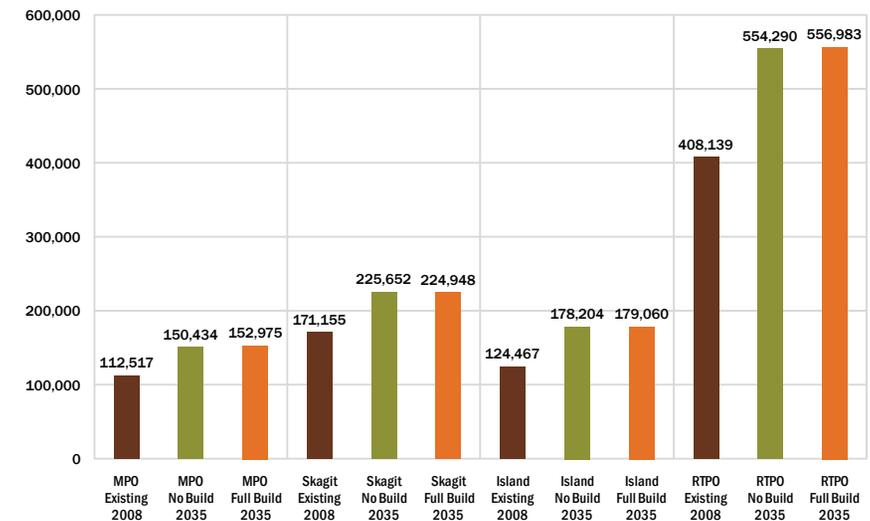


Exhibit 4-2
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Vehicle Miles Traveled



*Note: Camano Island not included in Island County Data.

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

Exhibit 4-3
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Vehicle Hours of Delay

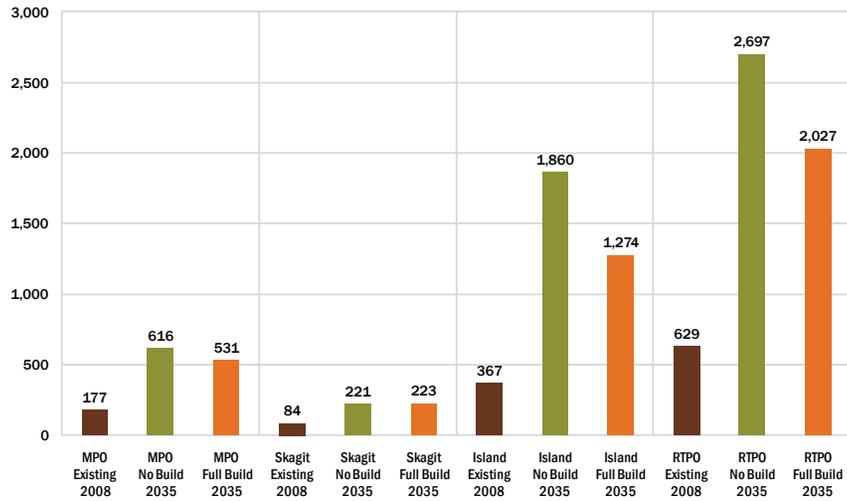
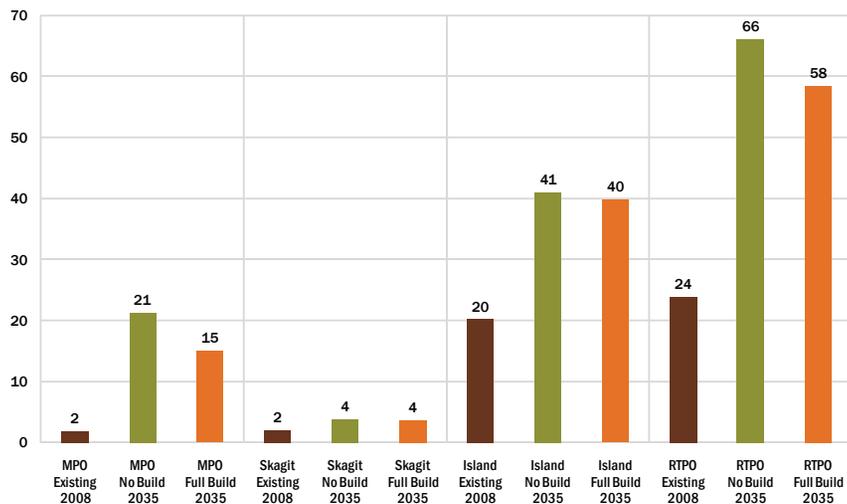


Exhibit 4-4
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Lane Miles of Congestion



Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 34 percent more vehicle miles within the MPO area traveled compared to Existing conditions, or an annual growth rate of 1.1 percent. There is a slight increase in VMT between future No Build and Full Build conditions, which reflects the increased ability to travel farther in less time due to planned roadway improvements.

Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in the MPO area, there would be approximately 616 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The projects included in the Full Build scenario would reduce total VHD in the MPO area by 14 percent.

Lane Miles of Congestion

Lane miles of congestion represents those roadways that have traffic approaching or exceeding capacity in the model. For the MPO area, congested lane miles increase from 2 in Existing conditions to 21 in future No Build conditions. This includes sections of Interstate 5, SR 20, Division Street, and other arterial corridors. With Full Build project improvements, the congested lane miles drop to 15, which represents a 29 percent decrease in congestion.

Skagit County

Lane Miles

The number of lane miles for Existing and No Build conditions are the same because the transportation networks are assumed the same. In the county non-MPO area, less than 1.0 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions. This includes improvements to the Cook Road I-5 Interchange area and Reservation Road. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects are not reflected in this metric.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 32 percent more vehicle miles traveled within the county non-MPO area compared to Existing conditions, or an

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

annual growth rate of 1.0 percent. There is a slight decrease in VMT between future No Build and Full Build conditions, which reflect some rural circuitous routes becoming less attractive given improved traffic conditions on the more direct urban routes.

Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in the county non-MPO area, there would be approximately 221 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The projects included in the Full Build scenario would not substantively change the total VHD in the county non-MPO area.

Lane Miles of Congestion

Lane miles of congestion represents those roadways that have traffic approaching or exceeding capacity in the model. For the county non-MPO area, congested lane miles increase from 2 in Existing conditions to 4 in future No Build and Build conditions. In other words, lane miles of congestion in the county non-MPO area is relatively minor under No Build conditions. The Build project improvements in the county would improve spot congestion or make safety upgrades.

Island County

Lane Miles

The number of lane miles for Existing and No Build conditions are the same because the transportation networks are assumed the same. On Island County, approximately 3 to 4 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions. This includes improvements to SR 20 in Oak Harbor and new county road connections. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects are not reflected in this metric.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 43 percent more vehicle miles traveled in Island County compared to Existing conditions, or an annual growth rate of 1.3 percent. There is virtually no change in VMT between future No Build and Full Build conditions.

Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in Island County, there would be approximately 1,860 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The bulk of this delay is on the heavily used SR 20 corridor. The projects included in the Full Build scenario would reduce total VHD in Island County by 32 percent, which reflects the impact even a few projects may have on overall system performance.

Lane Miles of Congestion

Lane miles of congestion represents those roadways that have traffic approaching or exceeding capacity in the model. For Island County, congested lane miles increase from 20 in Existing conditions to 41 in future No Build conditions. Most of these miles are along SR 20 south of Oak Harbor. With Full Build project improvements, the lane miles drop to 40, which represents a 2 percent decrease. While overall delay has improved, the roadways with congestion remained about the same.

Skagit-Island RTPO

Lane Miles

In the RTPO area, approximately 22 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions.



Double Bluff Rd.

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The bulk of these additional lane miles are with the Skagit MPO area. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects are not reflected in this metric.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 36 percent more vehicle miles traveled compared to Existing conditions, or an annual growth rate of 1.1 percent.

Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in the RTPO area, there would be approximately 2,700 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The projects included in the Full Build scenario would reduce total VHD in the RTPO area by 25 percent.

Lane Miles of Congestion

For the MPO area, congested lane miles increase from 24 in existing conditions to 66 in future No Build conditions. With Full Build project improvements, the lane miles drop to 58, which represents a 12 percent decrease in congestion.

Efficiency Strategies

Improvements to corridors that address existing and forecast safety and operational issues are high priorities in the plan. Also included are projects that widen and reconstruct existing arterials to current standards to better handle forecast traffic volumes and improve non-motorized facilities. These improvements focus on effectively reducing safety and operational issues along existing arterials. They also support a range of travel modes, as automobiles, trucks, transit, pedestrians, and bicycles use these key regional intersections and roadway links.

Transportation system management including signal timing upgrades, ITS, and access management strategies will also be incorporated in the existing corridors.

Transit and Transportation Demand Management

The M/RTP framework includes strategies for increasing transit mode share and capacity to meet the future travel demands throughout the

Skagit/Island region. Strategies to reduce peak period travel demands also are included. The transit and transportation demand management (TDM) strategies include:

- Improving transportation services for people with special needs;
- Expanding fixed-route service coverage in the metropolitan area;
- Extending service hours;
- Targeting service to larger employers; and
- Enhancing service to regional destinations.

Other Projects

The M/RTP provides a transition between the local agency transportation plans and the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The M/RTP is a financially-constrained plan which must set priorities since available funding will not cover all identified needs during the 25-year time horizon. The M/RTP acknowledges that there are a range of needed improvements (both regional and local) that are desirable to meet the overall, transportation needs of the region. These projects are referenced in the M/RTP to help ensure that the total system needs are acknowledged and to support increases in future funding to help implement these projects.

Key Corridors

In addition to the baseline improvements and efficiency strategies, the M/RTP framework identifies the need for improvements to existing corridors to address future transportation demands of the region.

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

Transportation Plan Policies

The priorities framework for the M/RTP provides the general guidance to help direct available funding for regional transportation improvements. Policies were defined to help guide the region in implementing the Plan and focus on the six regional priorities, as well as coordination and implementation of projects and programs. The priorities and policies lead to overall improvement strategies, which are summarized in this section.

Policies

The existing goals and policies were reviewed and checked for consistency with the input collected from the public outreach effort and the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards' member agencies during the plan development process. As the project progressed and technical analyses was completed, these policies and goals were revised and consolidated to eliminate redundancy, address inconsistencies with technical findings and reflect the regional nature and purpose of the document. The policies should continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are reflecting the most current vision and direction of the region and metropolitan area. These policies, goals and strategies will guide and direct the regional transportation planning process for the next 20 years.

1. Identify, encourage, and implement strategies and projects that will maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the metropolitan and rural transportation systems through a cooperative effort with MPO member agencies, the Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, the public sector, and State and Federal agencies;

Goals and strategies for Policy 1 include:

1.1 Select and build the most efficient mix of modes and facilities based on the need to balance accessibility and demand;

1.2 Ensure that modes are interconnected in a manner that best serves the users by identifying missing links and connections and proposing projects that will provide needed linkages;

1.3 Consider strategies that recognize the future densification of urban areas as they grow and mature, while transitioning and connecting seamlessly with rural areas;

1.4 Support Skagit Transit and Island Transit in acquiring funding from outside sources to help implement strategies identified in the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan;

1.5 Provide a level of service across modes that meet the needs of the user while recognizing the uniqueness of the level of service standards for each mode;

1.6 Provide for the safety and security of the users on all modes, by participating in state and Federal programs to increase safety and security and placing an emphasis on projects that incorporate safety and security;

1.7 Provide accessibility to the transportation system through user friendly connections by ensuring that intermodal facilities are not designed and constructed in isolation. In particular, ensure that the urban area has interconnected opportunities for safe and convenient non-motorized modes;



Multi-Use Trail near Coupeville

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

1.8 Ensure transportation concurrency requirements are met in areas designated under GMA.

1.9 Provide accessibility to the transportation system through timely information by developing a regional ITS architecture that includes traveler information as a major component; and

1.10 Provide access to the transportation system in a manner that balances user convenience with safety and preservation of capacity. This includes developing and implementing access management plans where access issues are or are likely to become impediments to the safe and efficient operation of roadways for all vehicles and non-motorized users, within the context of a growing urbanized area.

2. Provide a Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan that identifies significant transportation facilities and services that support local comprehensive plans and ensures ongoing evaluation necessary to keep current with local, regional, inter-regional, State, Federal, and public needs and requirements while recognizing the

inter-relationships within the contiguous urban area and areas immediately adjacent to it;

Goals and strategies for Policy 2:

2.1 Provide a Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan that is up-to-date;

2.2 Develop a regional growth strategy that incorporates and expresses the growth management plans of the

individual jurisdictions. Consider the growth strategy when identifying and funding projects and programs;

2.3 Establish a plan amendment process that will accommodate changes in local, regional, state, federal, private sector, and public needs between plan updates.

3. Protect the integrity of the investment in the existing transportation system by encouraging and prioritizing timely maintenance of the system;

Goals and strategies for Policy 3:

3.1 Monitor the condition of existing transportation facilities by working with the Sub-RTPO's to identify critical facilities, develop metrics, and establish a data collection program;

3.2 Time replacement and rehabilitation of facilities to minimize investment by working with the Sub-RTPO's to develop a regional pavement management system. Require agencies to evaluate the timing of replacement and rehabilitation needs when proposing capacity improvement projects for the Transportation Improvement Program; and

3.3 Ensure that the operation, appearance, and functionality of the infrastructure meet the users' needs by ensuring that these elements are included in the scope of projects proposed for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program.

4. Facilitate cooperation and information exchange amongst stakeholders in the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards.

Goals and strategies for Policy 4:

4.1 Provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss and coordinate their transportation projects, programs, and plans with each other. Consider strategies that recognize the future densification of urban



Maintenance during snow

Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

areas as they grow and mature;

4.2 Facilitate the involvement of the private sector in transportation planning issues by adding one or more non-agency positions to the technical advisory committees. Invite private representation on study review teams when relevant to the study; and

4.3 Identify sources of funding for transportation planning, programs, and projects that will implement the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan and assist in acquiring those funds as needed.

5. Maintain and execute an ongoing public participation program and plan to ensure the early, meaningful, and continuous participation of the citizens of Skagit and Island Counties in the planning process.

Goals and strategies for Policy 5:

5.1 Develop and implement a public participation plan during the updating of the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan and ensure that the public has an opportunity to review and comment on proposed amendments;

5.2 Ensure a two-way communication process in the public participation process by presenting information in a number and variety of media and incorporating an appropriate number and variety of feedback methods;

5.3 Time public participation interfaces to provide public input into decisions before they are made and provide decision makers with an accurate assessment of public input;

5.4 Make the public participation process meaningful by considering public comments when making decisions; and

5.5 Maintain an on-going public participation process.

6. Consistent with Skagit and Island Countywide Planning Policies, encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.

Background: As noted in Chapter 3 of this document, each county planning under the Growth Management Act is required to develop a set of countywide planning policies. The policies are intended to help the jurisdictions within the county coordinate their GMA planning efforts. These policies provide an umbrella for all other planning in the county. The countywide planning policies for transportation are:

6.1 Multi-purpose transportation routes and facilities shall be designed to accommodate present and future traffic volumes.

6.2 Primary arterial access points shall be designed to ensure maximum safety while minimizing traffic flow disruptions.

6.3 The development of new transportation routes and improvements to existing routes shall minimize adverse social, economic and environmental impacts and costs.

6.4 Comprehensive Plan provisions for the location and improvement of existing and future transportation networks and public transportation shall be made in a manner consistent with the goals, policies and land use map of the Comprehensive Plan.



Roundabout Construction

Section 4: **Transportation Framework & Policies**

6.5 The development of a recreational transportation network shall be encouraged and coordinated between state and local governments and private enterprises.

6.6 The Senior Citizen and Handicapped transportation system shall be provided with an adequate budget to provide for those who, through age and/or disability, are unable to transport themselves.

6.7 Multimodal Level of Service (LOS) standards and safety standards shall be established that coordinate and link with the urban growth and urban areas to optimize land use and traffic compatibility over the long term. New development shall mitigate transportation impacts concurrently with the development and occupancy of the project.

6.8 An all-weather arterial road system shall be coordinated with industrial and commercial areas.

6.9 Cost effectiveness shall be a consideration in transportation expenditure decisions and balanced for both safety and service improvements.

6.10 An integrated regional transportation system shall be designed to minimize air pollution by promoting the use of alternative transportation modes, reducing vehicular traffic, maintaining acceptable traffic flow, and siting of facilities.

6.11 All new and expanded transportation facilities shall be sited, constructed, and maintained to minimize noise levels.

Consistency between the County Wide Planning Policies and the Regional and Metropolitan Policies and Goals is an important aspect of this plan.



DISCUSSION ITEM 6.B. – REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTACs	02/12/2015	Discussion	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTACs	04/08/2015	Discussion	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678
SIRTPO Policy Board	04/23/2015	Discussion	Gabe Philips	360-416-6678

DISCUSSION

[State](#) and [federal](#) law require the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to identify existing or planned transportation facilities that have a regional impact. The 2011 RTP identifies a regional network primarily consisting of roadways. To be included in the regional network, roadways had to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- State routes and ferry system
- Principal arterials
- Other arterials that serve a “regional” function
- Regional transit routes
- Strategic freight routes (T-1 and T-2)
- National Highway System

[Map of current regional transportation network](#)

These criteria capture the major roadways that have regional significance. However, the existing plan does not identify regional transportation facilities for other modes of travel. For the 2016 update to the RTP, staff has begun work to identify transportation facilities from all modes of travel to include in the regional transportation system.

UPDATE TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The following transportation facilities and services are proposed to be included in the 2016 update to the regional transportation system.

ROADWAYS

Review the existing regional roadway system to identify necessary changes. Special consideration should be given to intermodal connectors that connect the roadway system to the regional facilities and services listed below.

TRANSIT

It is recommended that the regional transit facilities listed below be included in the regional transportation system:

- Transit centers
- Park & Rides (80+ stalls)
- Maintenance Facilities



NON-MOTORIZED

The regional non-motorized network consists primarily of major trails or routes that connect non-motorized travelers throughout the region. While conditions on the regional non-motorized system may not be ideal for pedestrians and bicyclists today, a major consideration in identifying the regional non-motorized routes is the long-term vision for non-motorized travel in the region. The primary considerations in identifying the regional non-motorized transportation system are as follows:

- State Routes
- Major trails
- Other major non-motorized facilities

FREIGHT/INTERMODAL FACILITIES

Freight and intermodal facilities are an important component in the regional transportation system. It is recommended that the following facilities be considered as part of the regional transportation system:

- Major railroads
- Major ports
- Major airports

[Click here for a map of the proposed regional transportation system with all of its components.](#)

WHAT IS THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM USED FOR?

The regional transportation system will serve as a planning tool used to identify regional transportation problems and develop strategic and appropriate solutions. All scales of transportation facilities are important to moving people and goods throughout the region but the regional transportation system will help identify the facilities and potential improvements that have a regional impact. The regional transportation system will help prioritize the projects that will be included in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTP. It also can be used in future Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project selection processes to ensure regional funds are being used on projects with a regional impact. Also, because of their regional significance, any project that is in the regional transportation system (regardless of whether or not it is utilizing federal funds) must be included in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

DISCUSSION ITEM 6.C. – PROPOSAL FOR REGIONAL COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN ISLAND AND SKAGIT COUNTIES

Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
SIRTPO Policy Board	4/23/2015	Discussion	Kevin Murphy	360-416-7871

DISCUSSION

Since last summer various [discussions](#) have taken place regarding how to update, adjust or dissolve the current agreement and how to move forward regarding Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization. Early in 2015 a number of items were generally agreed upon that the members of the SIRTPO wanted to continue doing together and some that were identified not to continue. A [summary of the issues and a comparison to agreement options](#) is included.

During the last couple months there has been a growing request for a proposal to be put forth before any members considered action to withdraw from the current SIRTPO agreement. Skagit Council of Governments staff has worked with legal counsel to draft a proposed agreement to be considered.

Attached is a summary of the major components of the agreement. Staff will present this for discussion and information to the SIRTPO Board.

Proposal for Regional Transportation Coordination and Collaboration between Island and Skagit Counties

Summary. Establishes a new regional agency, referred to as the Northwest Washington Regional Coordinating Council (NWRCC), formed under RCW 36.64.080. The **mission** of the agency is to promote intergovernmental cooperation on issues of broad concern regarding regional transportation, and to assist in coordination and consistency in transportation planning by county, city and town governments. The suggested organization is based on counties similar to RTPOs.

Purpose. The purposes are suggested including the following:

1. To coordinate and facilitate consistency in regional transportation planning across county boundaries;
2. To cooperatively develop and facilitate Human Services Transportation Planning activities between the counties and members therein;
3. To provide a forum for cooperation and discussion of regional transportation activities;
4. To study regional transportation and/or governmental problems of mutual interest as agreed to by the NWRCC Board consistent with those set forth in Ch. 36.64.080 RCW, as currently adopted or amended.

Functions and authority. Based on what has been discussed over the last few months the functions and authorities suggested include:

1. Promote intergovernmental coordination between Counties who are members of the NWRCC, and those members of the NWPCC.
2. Provide a forum to promote cooperation among and/or between jurisdictions with respect to regional transportation planning or other governmental problems of mutual interest.
3. Provide educational forums on regional issues.
4. Make recommendations to federal, state, and regional agencies on plans, legislation, and other related matters.

Authority NOT included. Shall not supersede nor exercise authority of a Regional Transportation Planning Organization created pursuant to RCW 47.80 or of a Metropolitan Planning Organization created pursuant to Title 23 United States Code 134.

Structure. The NWRCC be organized into a General Assembly and a Board and other such task forces and committees as established by the General Assembly or the Board. The General Assembly would consist of all elected officials and chief executive of the member cities, towns, and counties. They would meet annually to provide a regional forum for coordination, collaboration, and advocacy. The Board would be the governing body of the organization, meeting as needed.

Membership. NWRCC is proposed to be based upon counties, referred to as member county, and includes an initial organization to be Island and Skagit Counties. The proposal suggests the organization could be expanded to included San Juan, Snohomish and Whatcom counties. City and towns within a member county can join once the county is a member. Membership is also open to other agencies located in a member county that is interested in regional transportation planning such as, transit agencies, ports, tribes, federal agencies, state agencies, MPO/RTPOs, and other special purpose districts.

Administration. The proposal indicates the Board would identify and contract with another agency, initially be SCOG, for administrative and financial support and would not hire its own staff. The organization would establish a work program, budget and dues structure as needed. This authority is given to the Board.

Timeline of discussions relating to the agreement for the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) and related structure issues.

Meeting	Date	Comments
Island Sub-Regional Transportation Policy Board (RTPO)	July 23, 2014	On Agenda - SIRTPO Organization
Island Sub-RTPO Board	August 27, 2014	On Agenda - SIRTPO Organization – agreement and structure
Island Sub-RTPO Board	September 24, 2014	On Agenda - SIRTPO Organization
Skagit Transportation Policy Board (TPB)	September 17, 2014	On Agenda -SIRTPO Organization – agreement and structure
SIRTPO Policy Board	October 15, 2014	On Agenda - SIRTPO Organization – agreement and structure. Direction to update agreement to be consistent with current methods of operation.
Skagit TPB	November 19, 2014	Discussed, added to December meeting as action item
Jill Boudreau, Steve Sexton, Kevin Murphy, Doug Cox meetings with Island County Commissioners Jill Johnson and Helen Price Johnson	November 24, 2014	Discussed issues with SIRTPO, that have come up at Skagit TPB
SIRTPO Policy Board	December 3, 2014	Not on agenda brought up during other items.
Skagit TPB	December 17, 2014	Action Item. Discussed issues with SIRTPO. Action to create working group to discuss moving forward between Island and Skagit County city/town and county members.
Island Sub-RTPO Board	January 28, 2015	SIRTPO Structure. Information from Skagit TPB December meeting and identify members to working group with Skagit
Skagit and Island Working Group	February 13, 2015	Work group/governance subcommittee meeting of representatives (Ron Wesen, Jill Boudreau, Laurie Gere, Joan Cromley, and Helen Price Johnson) and staff (Kevin Murphy, Doug Cox) to discuss items supported and not supported to frame basis of moving ahead. Representatives from Oak Harbor and towns in Island County did not attend.
Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board	February 25, 2015	On Agenda – SIRTPO Governance Subcommittee update. Not discussed due to time and attendance.
SIRTPO Policy Board	February 26, 2015	Not on agenda. Brought up under new business to give and update on the work group/governance subcommittee. Not discussed due to Skagit County Commissioners not in attendance and Island City/Towns. Discussed next steps of possible workgroup getting together after Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board in March.
Skagit TPB	March 18, 2015	Request from Mayor Sexton to put on April TPB meeting vote on whether to disband SIRTPO or not.
Island-sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization Letter	April 14, 2015	Island Sub-Board requesting Skagit TPB refrain from voting on dissolving the SIRTPO

Summary of Objectives/Outcomes of Regional Coordination between Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization Members

Discussion Area/Topic/Issue/Outcome	Current/Revised with Sub-Boards RCW 47.80	New Agreement	
		RTPO RCW 47.80	Regional Conference RCW 36.64.080
Do Together/Support - Can we (Island and Skagit County) do the following			
Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transportation Forum and Advocacy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Planning for Regional Facilities and Services (directly affects each County)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Members Do Not Want to Do Together or Do Not Support . Does the option eliminate doing the following together?			
Project -level decisions (plan, Transportation Improvement Program, grant award)	No	No	Yes
"rubber stamping"/redundant decision making/RTPO potentially making MPO decisions	No	Unlikely	Yes
Other Concerns/Issues. Does the option address the following other concerns?			
Follow the other RTPO Requirements (Level of Service, Certification of County Wide Planning Policies and Transportation Elements of local plans)	Required	Required	Not Required
Allow the County Commissioners meet outside of County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Result in a Loss of Planning funds to Island County	No	No	None in short term (two years). Likely in long term (WSDOT decision) _/1
Result in a Loss of Project Funds in either County	No	No	No
Transportation Alternative Program issues resolved (Obligation Authority targets, grant awards)	No	No	Yes
Apply MPO requirements indirectly on Island County	Likely	Likely	No
Allow other Counties to Participate	Not as RTPO member	Not as RTPO member	Yes
Anticipate revisions to current SCOG agreement	Likely	Likely	No
Increase the Isolation of Island County	No	No	Not Sure
Reduce the perception or lose stature with WSDOT/Legislature	No	No	Not Sure

_/1 WSDOT has indicated that RTPO funds can be used for coordination efforts with Counties that are not included in an RTPO. The proposed Conference may be eligible to receive RTPO funds once formed.



SKAGIT-ISLAND REGIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES JOINT MEETING MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 8th, 2015
Anacortes Public Library
Anacortes, WA

REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

- Anacortes Eric Shjarback
- Island Transit..... Pete Schrum
- Island County Bill Oakes
- Island County Citizens Bob Monize, Brian Wood
- Mount Vernon..... Mike Love
- Langley..... Stan Berryman
- Oak Harbor..... Cac Kamak
- Port of South Whidbey Commissioner Curt Gordon
- Sedro-Woolley..... Mark Freiberger
- Skagit County Paul Randall-Grutter
- WSDOT John Shambaugh

STAFF PRESENT

- Doug Cox Island County, Transportation Planner
- Mark Hamilton SCOG, Transportation Planner
- Gabe Philips..... SCOG, Transportation Planner

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1:30 PM.

1. Welcome and Introductions: meeting participants introduced themselves.
2. SIRTPO Report: Gabe Philips reported that in last year's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project selection it was assumed that Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) toll credits would be available to cover local match requirements. The Highways and Local Programs office recently informed Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) that the credits may not be available for projects programmed in later years of the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). Gabe asked member agencies to contact him if this change will be an issue.
3. Approval of the February 12th, 2015 Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committee meeting minutes: Eric Shjarback moved to approve the February 12th, 2015 Skagit-Island Regional Technical Advisory Committees (SIRTACs) meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Bob Monize. The motion carried unanimously.
4. Transportation Alternatives Project Selection Criteria: Gabe Philips described the development of the TAP project selection process so far. Representatives of both Skagit and Island Technical Advisory Committees met to develop the draft selection criteria. One of the major discussion points was giving more emphasis to projects in rural areas. The preferred recommendation was to proportionally allocate the TAP funds that can be utilized in either urban or rural areas based on population.



There was also discussion regarding the potential use of connectivity software to measure directness of transportation alternative routes. Because staff does not have all of the baseline data available at this time, it was recommended by the SIRTACs that this criterion be removed.

To ensure that selected projects can be programmed in accordance with state and federal programming requirements, it is recommended that urban project sponsors can request no more than \$349,592 and rural project sponsors can request no more than \$284,152 in the upcoming call for projects.

Mark Freiberger moved to recommend the TAP Project Evaluation Process, as amended by the SIRTACs, to the SIRTPO Policy Board for approval. Cac Kamak seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Regional Transportation Plan Update:

- a. Public Involvement Plan: Mark Hamilton described the public participation processes that were used in earlier versions of regional and metropolitan transportation plans. Mark then presented the draft Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update. The SIRTACs recommended clearly distinguishing between a major update and a minor update to the RTP on the first page of the PIP, avoiding the use of terms such as member and non-member, and adding planning commissions and private transportation providers to the briefing efforts. John Shambaugh moved to recommend approval of the PIP to the SIRTPO Policy Board for approval, as amended by the SIRTACs. Mark Freiberger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. Transportation Framework and Policies: Mark Hamilton gave an overview of the update to the framework and policies of the RTP. He highlighted the RTP's priorities, policies and several of the goals and strategies. Mark noted that there are countywide planning policies in the RTP, but they are for Skagit County only, and suggested to remove these policies from the RTP. The SIRTACs were encouraged to review the framework section of the existing RTP and provide input to staff.
- c. Regional Transportation System: Gabe Philips presented the draft update to the regional transportation system. The updated regional transportation system will include transit, rail, non-motorized, and intermodal facilities in addition to the regional roadways. The regional transportation system will be used to identify projects that will be included in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTP. Future calls for projects for regionally managed funds may limit eligibility to projects included in the regional transportation system. Gabe and Doug Cox will continue working to update the regional transportation system and keep the SIRTACs informed throughout the development of the RTP.

The next SIRTACs meeting will be at 1:30 PM on June 10th, 2015. The meeting will be in the Anacortes Library.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 PM.

Attest:

Gabe Philips,
Skagit Council of Governments

Date _____

Doug Cox,
Island County

Date _____