

# PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA AND WEIGHTS FOR REGIONAL HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

## Document History

MEETING	DATE	TYPE OF ITEM	STAFF CONTACT	PHONE
Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board	09/17/2014	Action	<a href="#">Mark Hamilton</a>	360-416-7876
Island sub-RTPO Policy Board	09/24/2014	Action	<a href="#">Mark Hamilton</a>	360-416-7876

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee (Committee) recommends approval of implementation strategies and weights to be used for evaluating regional human services transportation projects.

The Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board reviewed the recommendation of the Committee and approved implementation strategies and weights to be used for evaluating regional human services transportation projects.

The recommendation of the Committee and approval of the TPB are included in the attached table.

## FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

## DISCUSSION

The Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee (Committee) was formed by the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) at their regular meeting on March 20, 2014. The 11-member ad hoc Committee was created for calendar year 2014 only, and was tasked with two primary duties:

### 1. Coordinate the Development of the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP)

The HSTP is a regional plan for special needs transportation that is updated every four years. The final plan must be completed by the end of calendar year 2014. The Committee is leading the development of the HSTP and is advisory to the Skagit sub-RTPO, Island sub-RTPO and SIRTPO. A first draft of the HSTP will be prepared for Committee review in early October. A final HSTP must be approved by the SIRTPO Policy Board by the end of calendar year 2014 and submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The development of the HSTP for Skagit and Island counties is a duty of the SIRTPO under state law (RCW 47.80.023(10)).

## **2. Prioritize Regional Human Services Transportation Projects In Skagit and Island Counties**

The Committee is also assisting with prioritization of regional human services transportation projects in Island and Skagit counties for consideration of WSDOT grant funding in the 2015 – 2017 biennium. The funding is made available through federal and state programs targeted at the elderly and persons with disabilities, persons with low-income and others considered to have special needs. A final list of prioritized human services transportation projects must be approved by the SIRTPO Policy Board by the end of calendar year 2014 and submitted to WSDOT. This prioritization of regional human services projects is a duty of the SIRTPO under state law (RCW 47.80.023(10)).

SCOG anticipates issuing a regional Call for Projects for human services transportation projects in late September. The Committee will be charged with ranking projects submitted, without ranking their own project(s), and recommending a final prioritized list of projects to the SIRTPO.

The Committee is recommending project evaluation criteria, referred to as “implementation strategies” for consistency with HSTP requirements, and weights, to both sub-RTPO policy boards for consideration. The Skagit sub-RTPO Policy Board considered the same recommendation at their September 17, 2014 meeting.

Grant applicants will use the forms created by WSDOT on their project submittals and be asked to submit projects to SCOG for inclusion in the regional ranking process. Applicants will later need to submit project applications directly to WSDOT to be considered for funding through the statewide process. The Committee will begin evaluating projects submitted through the Call for Projects once it closes, using the final approved criteria and weights of the sub-RTPO policy boards. If the approvals on criteria and weights differ between the sub-RTPO policy boards, a final decision may be necessary reconciling the different approvals at the October 15, 2014 SIRTPO Policy Board meeting.

A final list of prioritized projects will be submitted to WSDOT in December, after approval by the SIRTPO.

Recommended & Approved Implementation Strategies	Skagit-Island Special Needs Transportation Committee:	Skagit sub- RTPO Policy Board:
	Recommended Priority Weights	Approved Priority Weights
<b>Preserve Existing Services:</b> maintain or restore existing service levels and vehicle fleet	20	15
<b>Expand Services:</b> increase service levels	15	15
<b>Increase User Knowledge:</b> increase knowledge of available transportation options to target users	10	10
<b>Address High Need Area:</b> provide service to area scoring high in human services transportation need index	10	15
<b>Improve Existing Service Timeliness:</b> improve quality of timeliness of service	5	5
<b>Utilize Existing Services:</b> improve utilization of existing transportation services	5	5
<b>Improve Regional Connections:</b> improve cross-regional connections	5	5
<b>Expand Driver Training:</b> promote driver training to encourage “compassionate professionalism”	5	5
<b>Improve Provider-User Coordination:</b> improve coordination between transit service providers, human services providers and users	5	5
<b>Utilize Technology:</b> utilize technology to provide improved efficiency and user access to mobility options	5	5
<b>Inform Users of Mobility Options:</b> assist human service providers in guiding users to the most efficient mobility options	5	5
<b>Improve Provider Regional Coordination:</b> improve coordination between transit service providers, human service providers and users	5	5
<b>Promote Innovation:</b> promote innovative programs, processes and tools that improve efficiency and reduce cost	5	5
<b>Promote Environmental Sustainability:</b> promote environmentally sustainable practices into state coordinated transportation planning and services	5	5
<b>Leverage Funding:</b> further leverage available funding	5	5

Note: priority weights in red indicate a modification from the recommendation

**Total**                      **110**                      **110**

# 2015-2018 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (RTIP)

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Island Technical Advisory Committee recommends that the Island sub-RTPO Policy Board recommend the Draft 2015-2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) for approval to the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization

## FISCAL IMPACT

The Draft 2015-2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program includes a fiscally constrained four-year program of projects as required by federal law.

## DISCUSSION

According to the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization's (SIRTPO) bylaws, the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) must be approved by the combined SIRTPO Policy Board. It is recommended that the individual Policy Boards review and recommend the [Draft 2015-2020 RTIP](#) to the SIRTPO Transportation Policy Board for approval.

The joint meeting of the SIRTPO Transportation Policy Board is scheduled to take place at 2:30 PM October 15, 2014, at the Anacortes City Council Chambers. The SIRTPO Policy Board will review the 2015-2020 TIP for approval at that time.

Amendments can be made to the 2014-2017 TIP starting in January, 2014.

## KEY UPDATES

### POLICIES

SCOG has previously adopted TIP Policies that applied to Skagit projects included in the Regional TIP. For administrative clarity, staff recommends that the policies be updated and applicable to the entire administration of the RTIP, not just the Skagit portion. The [recommended policies](#) are similar to the previously approved Skagit-only policies. A couple of changes have been identified, including:

- To be included in the RTIP, the project must first be included in the sponsor agency's local TIP or Capital Improvement Plan. This will ensure that public review of the project will occur at the local level as well as the regional level.
- If a project is programmed to obligate regionally managed funds in the upcoming fiscal year and is unable to do so, the project will be reprogrammed to the following fiscal year. If the project is

still unable to obligate its funds by the end of the new fiscal year, the funds can be removed from the project by the SCOG TPB (in the case of Surface Transportation Program funds) or the SIRTPO Policy Board (in the case of Transportation Alternatives Program funds).

Because these proposed policies apply to SIRTPO, they will be approved by the SIRTPO Policy Board through the adoption of the RTIP.

### **PROJECT SELECTION**

In order to clearly articulate the selection process for projects that will utilize regionally managed funds, it is proposed that the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) selection processes be formalized as part of the RTIP.

SCOG Staff recommends slight changes to the previously agreed upon SIRTPO TAP project selection process. [The proposed TAP selection process](#) eliminates the need for Skagit and Island Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) to score Skagit County and Island County projects separately (though they may still choose to do so). It is proposed that objective project selection criteria be developed to eliminate the fear of subregional biases in project scoring. The project scoring will be performed by staff with the oversight of a TAP selection committee consisting of Skagit TAC and Island TAC members. The final project selection will be done by the SIRTPO Policy Board.

### **PROJECT LIST**

The [project list](#) in the RTIP identifies projects that are federally funded or regionally significant and have secured funding for the years 2015-2018. These projects will also be included in the Statewide TIP. In order for a project to obligate its funding, it must be included in the RTIP and Statewide TIP, even if the funds have already been awarded. The proposed projects in the first four years of the RTIP are fiscally constrained.

### **ILLUSTRATIVE LIST**

In the most recent TAP project selections, SIRTPO selected six years' worth of projects. The additional two years outside of the fiscally constrained portion of the TIP (years 2019 and 2020) serve as an [illustrative list of project priorities](#). These projects cannot be included in the STIP but act as a contingency list of projects to be included in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP if additional funding becomes available.



# REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM POLICIES

Adopted by the SIRTPO Policy Board on XXXXX, 2014

## INTRODUCTION

In order to demonstrate compliance with federal and state transportation planning requirements, and to ensure that state and local agencies have access to federal transportation funding for roadways, bridges, transit, and facilities for non-motorized modes, the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) must include all projects that are funded wholly or partially with federal funds, or are determined to be regionally significant. Though the RTIP is developed in its entirety annually, routine maintenance is required to accurately reflect anticipated federal expenditures, and to provide transparency to the public interested in short term transportation improvements in the area.

SIRTPO has identified the following policies to provide guidance for the development and maintenance of the RTIP and to assist in the effective administration of regionally managed federal grant funds. Currently, SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO manage federal grant funding appropriated by the U.S. Congress through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to local government and agencies within Skagit County. Specifically, SCOG manages grant funds from the FHWA Surface Transportation Program (STP) for Skagit County and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for Skagit and Island Counties. Island Sub-RTPO manages STP funds for Island County. From time to time, SIRTPO may receive an allocation of revenues from other funding sources (e.g., Economic Recovery, etc.) for which spending discretion is also provided.

## Policy 1 COMPLIANCE WITH THE REGIONAL PLAN

For a project to be eligible for the RTIP, it first must be included in, or consistent with, the adopted [Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Plan](#). Regionally significant capital projects, roadway capacity, and/or general purpose roadway projects must be individually listed or clearly part of a larger project included in the fiscally-constrained component of the plan. Certain projects seeking to improve safety, increase multi-modal opportunities, or enhance the existing transportation system may be programmed in the RTIP without individual identification in the regional plan, so long as they are consistent with the established goals and objectives of the plan and are funded with revenue identified by the plan.

The proposed project must also be listed in a local TIP or CIP to be eligible for regionally managed grant funds.

## Policy 2 FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

SIRTPO will program funds to projects eligible for TAP funds to match the expected four year allocation based on estimates provided by WSDOT. SIRTPO may determine it beneficial to program more than the four-year expected allocation. This decision will be made by the SIRTPO Policy Board.



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The SCOG Transportation Policy Board (TPB) will program funds to Skagit County projects eligible for STP funds to match the expected four-year allocation based on estimates provided by WSDOT. SCOG may determine it beneficial to program more than the four-year expected allocation. This decision will be made by the SCOG TPB.

The Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board will program funds to Island County projects eligible for STP funds to match the expected four-year allocation based on estimates provided by WSDOT. The Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board may determine it beneficial to program more than the four-year expected allocation. This decision will be made by the Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board.

### **Policy 3 ILLUSTRATIVE PRIORITIES**

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Upon adoption of the RTIP, SIRTPO shall endorse or reaffirm its commitment to seeking resources for regional priority projects not funded within the four-year financial feasibility table included in the RTIP. The endorsed list of priorities shall be used to identify projects to be funded in the event that additional funding becomes available to SIRTPO, SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO, either through higher than expected appropriations or new federal grant programs, or from funding that is returned to the region from any project not able to use its award.

### **Policy 4 UNANTICIPATED FUNDS**

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When SIRTPO, SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO receive unanticipated funds (e.g. deobligations, project closeouts, additional grant allocations), the Transportation Policy Board can program a project from the appropriate list of illustrative priorities. If SCOG and/or Island Sub-RTPO have already met the obligation target for the fiscal year that the unanticipated funds are received, they may be carried forward to be distributed at a future call for projects.

### **Policy 5 ELIGIBILITY FOR REGIONALLY MANAGED FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS**

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At minimum, any proposed project to improve the safety, capacity, operations, or physical condition of roadways identified on SIRTPO's adopted regionally significant network are eligible for regionally managed federal grant funds. In addition, projects that improve safety or multi-modal opportunities on routes not identified on the regionally significant network (e.g., sidewalks on local roads, greenways, etc.) also are eligible as long as they meet all applicable federal codes and regulations. Certain regionally managed federal grant funds may require additional conditions to be met in order to be considered eligible.

Regionally managed federal grant funds will be awarded to projects that are in locations contained within the geographic area of the associated grant program (e.g., STP Urban Small, STP Rural). Only the SIRTPO Policy Board has the authority to distribute TAP funds. The SCOG TPB has the authority to distribute STP funds in Skagit County and the Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board has the authority to distribute STP funds in Island County.

### **Policy 6 MPO AND RTPO COMMITMENT TO PROJECTS**

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With the adoption of the RTIP, or its subsequent amendments, SIRTPO, SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO formally commit to ensuring that regionally managed federal grant funds identified for a project are



provided as programmed unless such funding is not available due to changes in law or federal regulations, or if funding is not appropriated at anticipated levels, or is lost to the periodic rescission of unobligated balances. Should regionally managed federal grant funding be removed from a project as a result of a decrease in funding levels, that project shall remain a top priority for funding once revenues are identified or restored.

Any project programmed in the RTIP with regionally managed federal grant funds, which continues to meet all eligibility requirements while maintaining the proper support of the project sponsor, shall continue to be a priority for SIRTPO, SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO as the region develops a new RTIP. Programmed projects with federal funding already obligated shall automatically have unobligated programmed funds carried forward to the new RTIP, unless that project is proven to have a fatal flaw, loses the support from the project sponsor, or is estimated to cost more than 25% beyond previous total project cost estimates provided to SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO (see Policy 9).

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## Policy 7 PROJECT SPONSOR COMMITMENT TO PROJECTS

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Project sponsors are responsible for ensuring that their project information contained in the RTIP is correct, that it accurately represents the scope of work being performed, and the amount of funding being requested. The sponsor is responsible for providing to SIRTPO, SCOG and/or Island Sub-RTPO an honest accounting of project details including costs, implementation schedules, and local matching fund sources at the time of the application for federal funds and anytime such details change, or at the request of SIRTPO, SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO.

Three months prior to the beginning of the federal fiscal year, the Skagit and Island Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) will review the projects programmed for the upcoming year. If it is determined that the scheduled projects are not ready to move forward, SCOG and/or Island Sub-RTPO will reprogram projects that are ready to move forward for the upcoming fiscal year.

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## Policy 8 DORMANT OR INACTIVE PROJECTS

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**Project sponsors with projects scheduled for obligation in the upcoming fiscal year are given a one-year grace period to obligate regionally managed funding.** In the event that the project sponsor does not obligate regionally managed funding within the one year grace period, the SCOG TPB, Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board or SIRTPO Policy Board will determine if the funds will be returned to the region and potentially be reprogrammed to the next highest eligible priority, including projects identified in the SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO list of illustrative priorities (see Policy 3).

Project phases which have been obligated, and appear on WSDOT's inactive project list, may be subject to deobligation and grant funds returned to the region. This determination is made by WSDOT and FHWA.

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## Policy 9 COST INCREASES/COST OVERRUNS

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The responsibility for any cost overrun on a project already under contract shall be determined by the prevailing contractual agreement between WSDOT and the project sponsor. Such contractual agreement shall not bind SIRTPO, SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO to pay for cost overruns with regionally managed federal grant funds. In cases where a project that is awarded regionally managed federal grant funds does not have sufficient funding to fulfill the scope of the project as originally programmed, the project sponsor may be granted the flexibility to shift funding across phases and/or years (pending

the availability of funding) to cover increased cost estimates for the affected phase. Should additional funding be required to implement the phase, the project sponsor will be responsible for securing that additional funding from an alternative source of revenue or compete for additional funds at the next available call for projects.

## Policy 10 CHANGES IN THE SCOPE OF WORK

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All changes to the scope of work for projects programmed in the RTIP with regionally managed federal grant funds must be approved by the SCOG TPB or Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board through the amendment process. Projects are evaluated and selected based on the merits of the projects proposed at the time the RTIP is developed. Any changes that significantly depart from the original scope may be removed from the RTIP. If the project is removed from the RTIP, it can compete for regionally managed grant funds in future calls for projects.

## Policy 11 PROJECT TRACKING

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In order to facilitate the implementation of the RTIP policies, SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO will work with WSDOT and project sponsors to present to member agencies, at least quarterly, a full accounting of the funds obligated for each project and any changes in the status of those projects.

Project sponsors should inform SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO of any underutilization of regionally managed funds as soon as possible.

## Policy 12 RTIP AMENDMENT CYCLES

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SIRTPO adopts the full RTIP in October of each year. SIRTPO grants authority to the SCOG TPB and the Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board to manage the RTIP through amendments for projects that are located in their planning areas.

SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO will consider amendments to the RTIP on a monthly basis. The annual schedule of amendment cycles will be established by SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO prior to the beginning of each federal fiscal year (October 1).

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# 2015-2020 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (RTIP)

Adopted by the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization Policy Board on  
October XX, 2014

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 ABOUT SCOG AND SKAGIT-ISLAND RTPO

Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) is a federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), consisting of Skagit County, all cities and towns within Skagit County, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Samish Indian Nation, Skagit Transit, Skagit PUD, and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). SCOG leads the development of the region's long-range (20-year) transportation plan and short-range (6-year) Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) in cooperation with local agencies. These efforts are coordinated with the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), WSDOT, local elected leadership, local transportation planners and engineers, the business community and citizens in the planning area.

Through Washington State legislation, Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) were authorized as part of the 1990 Growth Management Act. Skagit-Island RTPO (SIRTPO) involves cities, counties, transit agencies, ports, private employers throughout Skagit and Island counties, and WSDOT to prepare a Regional Transportation Plan, certify that countywide planning policies and local transportation elements are consistent with Regional Transportation Plan and maintain a six-year Regional Transportation Improvement Program. SCOG is the lead planning agency for the Skagit Sub-RTPO and Island County is the lead planning agency for Island Sub-RTPO.



## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE RTIP

SCOG is required by federal and state regulations to develop a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) for both SCOG and Skagit-Island RTPO which spans at least four years and is updated at least every two years. The RTIP is a compilation of projects from the various federal, state, and local funding programs for all transportation agencies in Skagit and Island counties. Projects included in the program will implement the long range transportation and transit plans for the region, help meet the short-range needs of the area, and provide for the maintenance of the existing transportation system.

The primary purpose of the RTIP is to identify and document federally funded and/or regionally significant projects to be included in the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Projects cannot obligate<sup>1</sup> federal funds—even though the funds have been awarded—unless they are included in the RTIP and the STIP. Once the project funds have been obligated, the obligated funds will not be included in the next update to the RTIP, even if all of the funds have not been spent. SCOG produces an [Annual Listing of Federal Obligations](#) that documents all of the federal fund obligations that have occurred within the SCOG planning area in the previous calendar year.

<sup>1</sup> Obligation occurs when the project sponsor has established a formal agreement with WSDOT and the funds have been designated, or "obligated," for that particular project.

The RTIP also demonstrates the financial feasibility of the included projects. Essentially, the RTIP demonstrates that the projects that are programmed<sup>2</sup> in the next four years will not cost more than the amount of funding the region expects to receive. Section 3 includes detailed financial tables for the projects programmed in the fiscally constrained<sup>3</sup> portion of the RTIP.

The projects listed in the RTIP, along with the associated financial tables, are listed separately for SCOG and Island sub-RTPO.

## 2 RTIP DEVELOPMENT

Development of the RTIP is coordinated with the development of capital improvement plans and local TIPs of the member jurisdictions and operating agencies. When developing their local TIPs, agencies evaluate their transportation needs for the ensuing six-year period based on local priorities and the expected funding levels they will have available to meet those needs. Because the need for transportation improvements is generally greater than the amount of funding available, the local agencies prioritize their transportation needs to identify a six-year list of projects that they feel is most important to pursue. Drafts of these local TIPs are available for the public, other agencies, and internal departments to review. Based on this review, the local agency makes any revisions deemed necessary before adopting its local TIP, which includes both programmed and planned projects.

Local agencies, WSDOT Northwest Region, and WSDOT Marine then submit their programmed projects to SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO. The RTIP is a compilation of the projects with

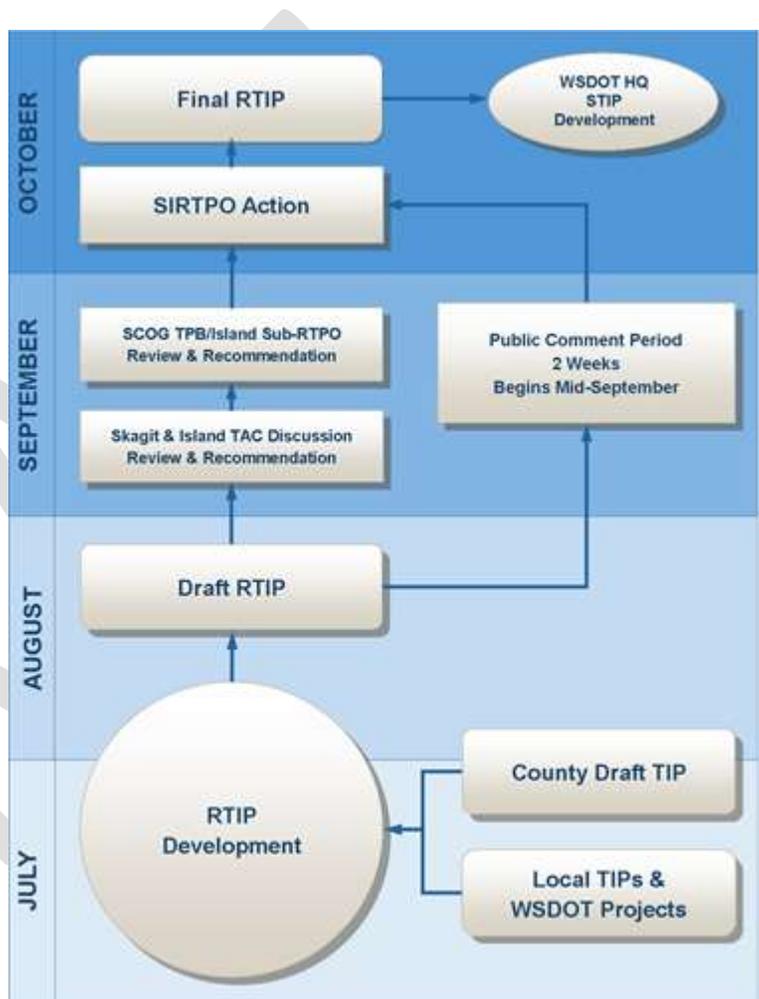


FIGURE 1: RTIP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

<sup>2</sup> “Programmed” means that the funding for the project is scheduled to be obligated (see footnote 1) in a particular Federal Fiscal Year (October 1 through September 30) identified in the RTIP.

<sup>3</sup> The fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP includes the first four years of the RTIP that are also included in the STIP. The RTIP may include projects programmed to receive regionally managed funding in years five and six—such as Surface Transportation Program or Transportation Alternatives Program funds—but may not be fiscally constrained.

secured federal funding or regionally significant projects with other secured funding. The project lists for SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO are included in section 5. From these projects, an assessment of region-wide financial feasibility is estimated in section 3.

## 2.1 RTIP REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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The Draft RTIP is presented to both the Skagit and Island Technical Advisory Committees (TACs)<sup>4</sup>, the SCOG Transportation Policy Board (TPB) and the Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board for their review and comment in September. The TACs make a recommendation that the SCOG TPB and Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board consider the Draft RTIP. The SCOG TPB and Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board then make a recommendation on the adoption of the Draft RTIP to the SIRTPO Policy Board. Based upon its review of the draft document, any public comments received, and the recommendations of the SCOG TPB and the Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board, the SIRTPO Policy Board makes a decision on adoption at its meeting in October. The adopted RTIP is then submitted to WSDOT, which will include the projects identified in section 5.1 into the STIP as appropriate.

## 2.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

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The RTIP is developed from the local TIPs compiled and adopted annually by each agency. As required by law, each local agency conducts a public involvement process in the development and review of their local TIP. These processes vary by jurisdiction, but all culminate in a formal public hearing prior to adoption by the local governing boards.

While the individual local TIPs have been reviewed prior to their adoption, a public review of the RTIP is conducted because it is the only document that contains programmed projects from every agency throughout the region. This allows the public to review and comment on the short

range transportation projects intended to implement the long range transportation goals identified in the [Regional Transportation Plan](#).

SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO post notifications in the local newspapers when the Draft RTIP is available for public review. Notice is also posted on the SCOG and Island County websites where the document is available to view or download. Printed copies of the entire Draft RTIP are available from SCOG on request.

Submit comments on the Draft 2015-2020 RTIP to:

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<sup>4</sup> The TACs are committees consisting of transportation professionals who provide technical advice and recommendations to the SCOG Transportation Policy Board and Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board.

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The deadline for submitted comments is the close of business on Friday, October 10, 2014. The final draft of the RTIP includes a compilation of submitted public comments below and will be presented to the SIRTPO Policy Board prior to any action taken regarding the adoption of the RTIP.

- Public Comments on the 2015-2020 Regional RTIP

The public involvement activities and time established for review and comments on the RTIP development process satisfy the FTA's Program of Projects that Skagit Transit is required to adhere to.

## 2.3 PROGRAMMING POLICIES

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SIRTPO has developed policies to aid in the development and maintenance of the RTIP and to assist in the effective administration of regionally managed federal grant funds.

- [SIRTPO RTIP Policies](#)

## 2.4 PROJECT SELECTION & PRIORITIZATION

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SCOG is responsible for selecting projects for the federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) in Skagit County. Island Sub-RTPO is responsible for selecting projects to receive STP funds in Island County. SIRTPO is responsible for selecting projects to utilize Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds in Skagit and Island counties. These project selections are incorporated into the RTIP along with other federally funded or regionally significant projects (see section 5).



### **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM**

Surface Transportation Program funds are distributed at the county level. SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO receive grants that are awarded and tracked separately. STP projects are selected by the SCOG Transportation Policy Board and Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board using a competitive process guided by evaluation criteria designed to ensure that projects are prioritized consistently with the Regional Transportation Plan.

### **SCOG**

Consistent with federal and state guidelines, SCOG intends to program six years' worth of STP projects. Years five and six of the project selection serve as an illustrative list of projects that can be included in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP if funding becomes available (see section 5.2). SCOG is committed to ensuring that STP projects are competitively selected to receive funding based on their ability to address priorities identified in the Regional Transportation Plan. A formal STP selection process has been developed to provide clarity on how projects will be regionally prioritized for funding.

- [SCOG Surface Transportation Program Selection Process](#)

#### ISLAND SUB-RTPO

Similar to SCOG, the Island Sub-RTPO aims to program six years' worth of STP projects, the last two serving as an illustrative list of potential future projects. The Island Sub-RTPO will make a call for projects to award STP funds as needed. The submissions will be screened to ensure eligibility and then scored by the Island Sub-RTPO TAC using the [project selection criteria](#). The projects will be ranked according to their scores, timelines, and funding requirements, with the Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board ultimately making the final determination of the STP awards. The projects selected in this process will be added to the RTIP at its next scheduled update or through a formal amendment.

#### TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

TAP funds are distributed at the RTPO level. Funding decisions regarding TAP funds are made by the SIRTPO Policy Board. The projects are selected using a competitive process developed jointly by SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO. The criteria are designed to ensure that projects are prioritized consistently with the Regional Transportation Plan.

- [SIRTPO Transportation Alternatives Program Selection Process](#)

## 3 FINANCIAL PLAN

### 3.1 FISCAL CONSTRAINT

The RTIP is required to include a financial plan that demonstrates how the program of projects can be implemented. The detailed financial tables located in section 3.2 include the estimated amount of available funds, programmed funds, and the remaining funds by fund type for each program year. WSDOT, local jurisdictions, transit operators, and other agencies with projects in the RTIP have indicated that they have the financial resources available to provide the necessary matching funds to complete their projects. The tables show that programmed expenditures are within reasonable balance of expected fund allocations. In accordance with the requirements of MAP-21, the RTIP is "fiscally constrained."

#### FINANCIAL PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

##### ACCOUNTING FOR INFLATION

The project costs reported in the RTIP include an adjustment to account for the annual inflation of prices. The Skagit-Island RTP accounts for the effect of inflation scheduled in the mid and long-range horizons. However, the process used to account for inflation on RTIP projects was left to the judgment of the sponsoring agency, as they have a better grasp on the short-term inflationary pressures.

##### REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Revenue projections for WSDOT-managed federal funds (e.g. NHS, HSIP, etc.) generally equal the amount programmed in the RTIP. MPO/RTPO-managed federal funds, such as STP and TAP, are generally assumed to be the same as the 2014 appropriations.

### 3.2 FINANCIAL TABLES

- [2015-2018 SCOG RTIP Financial Summary & Feasibility](#)
- [2015-2018 Island Sub-RTPO RTIP Financial Summary & Feasibility](#)

## 4 AMENDMENT & MODIFICATION PROCESS

Transportation priorities and funding strategies change over time. It is likely that the project list identified in the RTIP will need to be altered at some point prior to the development of the 2016-2021 RTIP. Federal requirements stipulate that a jurisdiction cannot utilize federal funds on a project until it is programmed in the STIP, even though the jurisdiction has been *awarded* money for that project. SCOG has developed RTIP amendment and modification procedures to ensure that new projects and changes to existing projects can be included in the RTIP efficiently.

- [SCOG RTIP Amendment and Modification Procedures](#)

The Island sub-RTPO uses the formal amendment and modification process developed by WSDOT, as specified in [WSDOT's 2013-2016 Statewide TIP Document](#).

### 4.1 RTIP AMENDMENT CYCLE

Local agencies are generally anxious to obligate federal funds soon after they are awarded. In order to ensure that sufficient time is available for decision makers and the public to review the proposed amendment prior to policy board action being taken, project sponsors should adhere to the deadlines listed in Table 1 or Table 2.

SUBMIT REQUEST TO SCOG*	SKAGIT TAC REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION	SCOG TPB ACTION	WSDOT REVIEW	FHWA/FTA REVIEW**	AMENDMENT INCLUDED IN STIP
<b>12/29/2014</b>	1/8/2015	1/21/2015	1/16/2015†	1/30/2015	<b>2/13/2015</b>
<b>1/26/2015</b>	2/5/2015	2/18/2015	2/20/2015	3/6/2015	<b>3/20/2015</b>
<b>2/23/2015</b>	3/5/2015	3/18/2015	3/20/2015	4/3/2015	<b>4/17/2015</b>
<b>3/23/2015</b>	4/2/2015	4/15/2015	4/17/2015	5/1/2015	<b>5/15/2015</b>
<b>4/27/2015</b>	5/7/2015	5/20/2015	5/22/2015	6/5/2015	<b>6/19/2015</b>
<b>5/25/2015</b>	6/4/2015	6/17/2015	6/19/2015	7/3/2015	<b>7/17/2015</b>
<b>6/22/2015</b>	7/2/2015	7/15/2015	7/17/2015	7/31/2015	<b>8/14/2015</b>
<b>7/27/2015</b>	8/6/2015	8/19/2015	8/21/2015	9/4/2015	<b>9/18/2015</b>
<b>8/24/2015</b>	9/3/2015	9/16/2015	9/18/2015	10/2/2015	<b>10/16/2015</b>
<b>9/21/2015</b>	10/1/2015	10/21/2015	10/16/2015†	10/30/2015	<b>11/13/2015</b>

Note: Meeting dates and request deadlines are subject to change

\*Request must include documentation of funding award and proof that project is included in local TIP.

\*\*Administrative modifications do not require FHWA/FTA approval. Administrative modifications will be included in STIP at this date.

†If WSDOT review deadline occurs before SCOG TPB action, SCOG will verify to WSDOT that action occurred after request is submitted.

**TABLE 1: SCOG RTIP AMENDMENT DEADLINES**

SUBMIT REQUEST TO ISLAND SUB-RTPO*	ISLAND TAC REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION	ISLAND SUB-RTPO POLICY BOARD ACTION	WSDOT REVIEW	FHWA/FTA REVIEW**	AMENDMENT INCLUDED IN STIP
<b>12/29/2014</b>	1/8/2015	1/28/2015	1/16/2015†	1/30/2015	<b>2/13/2015</b>
<b>2/2/2015</b>	2/12/2015	2/25/2015	2/20/2015†	3/6/2015	<b>3/20/2015</b>
<b>3/2/2015</b>	3/12/2015	3/25/2015	3/20/2015†	4/3/2015	<b>4/17/2015</b>
<b>3/30/2015</b>	4/9/2015	4/22/2015	4/17/2015†	5/1/2015	<b>5/15/2015</b>
<b>4/4/2015</b>	5/14/2015	5/27/2015	5/22/2015†	6/5/2015	<b>6/19/2015</b>
<b>6/1/2015</b>	6/11/2015	6/24/2015	6/19/2015†	7/3/2015	<b>7/17/2015</b>
<b>6/29/2015</b>	7/9/2015	7/22/2015	7/17/2015†	7/31/2015	<b>8/14/2015</b>
<b>8/3/2015</b>	8/13/2015	8/26/2015	8/21/2015†	9/4/2015	<b>9/18/2015</b>
<b>8/31/2015</b>	9/10/2015	9/23/2015	9/18/2015†	10/2/2015	<b>10/16/2015</b>
<b>9/28/2015</b>	10/8/2015	10/28/2015	10/16/2015†	10/30/2015	<b>11/13/2015</b>

Note: Meeting dates and request deadlines are subject to change

\*Request must include documentation of funding award and proof that project is included in local TIP.

\*\*Administrative modifications do not require FHWA/FTA approval. Administrative modifications will be included in STIP at this date.

†If WSDOT review deadline occurs before Island Sub-RTPO Policy Board action, Island Sub-RTPO will verify to WSDOT that action occurred after request is submitted.

**TABLE 2: ISLAND SUB-RTPO AMENDMENT DEADLINES**

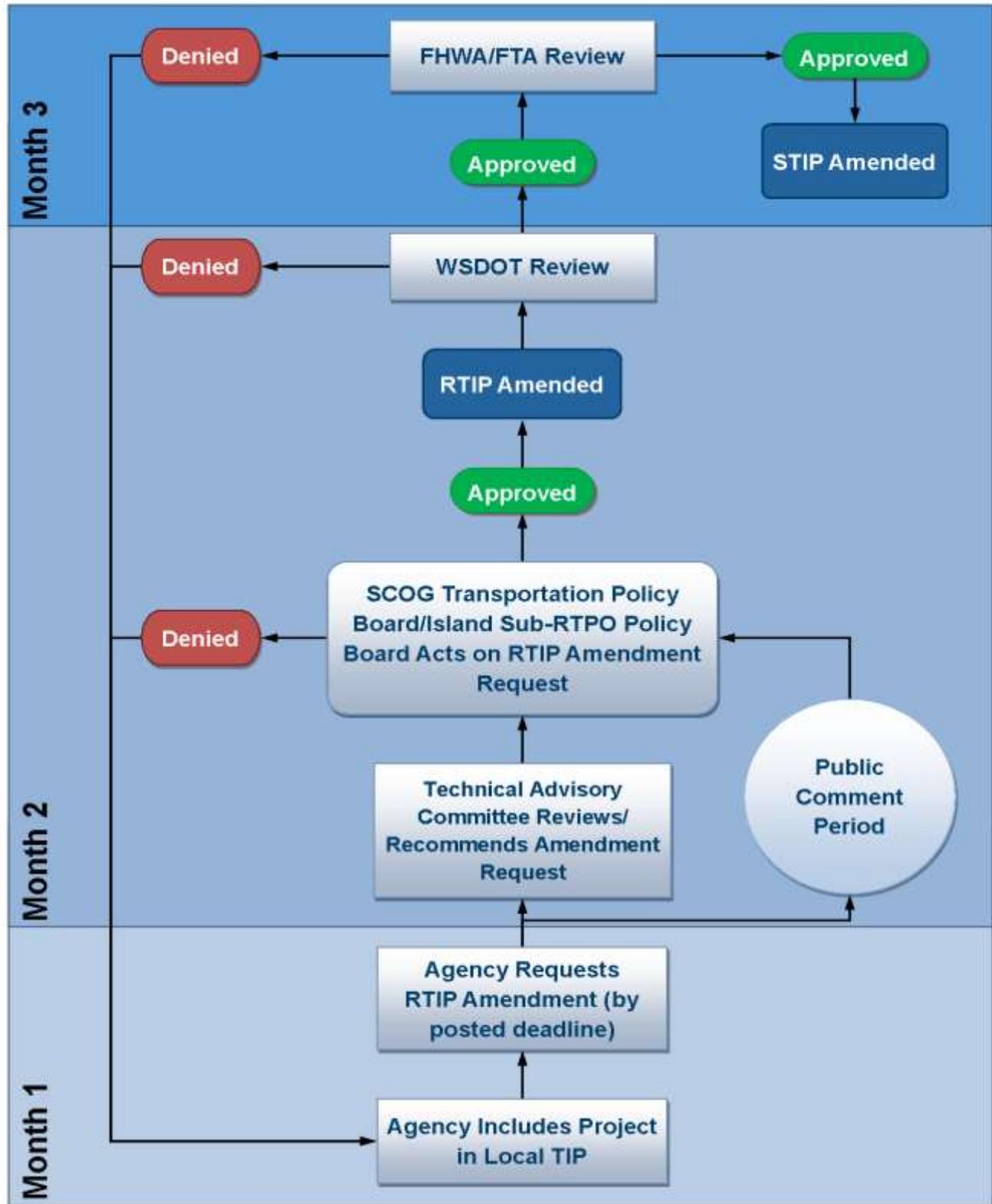


FIGURE 2: RTIP AMENDMENT CYCLE

## 5 RTIP PROJECTS

### 5.1 FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PROJECTS

The following lists include projects that have secured federal funding or have secured state or local funding and are regionally significant. These project lists will be kept current as amendments are made to the RTIP. Projects included in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP are also included in the STIP. Only four years' worth of projects can be included in the STIP. Section 5.2 includes projects that have been selected to receive regionally managed STP and TAP funds in years five and six of the RTIP.

- [2015-2018 Fiscally Constrained SCOG RTIP Projects](#)
- [2015-2018 Fiscally Constrained Island Sub-RTPO RTIP Projects](#)

### 5.2 ILLUSTRATIVE PRIORITIES

To ensure that SCOG has a fully-programmed four-year RTIP, when a call for projects is issued SCOG and Island Sub-RTPO will generally select enough projects to ensure that six years' worth of STP and TAP funding is programmed. The first four years in the RTIP are fiscally constrained and included in the STIP. The additional two years will function as an illustrative list of projects that can move into the fiscally-constrained portion of the RTIP if additional funding becomes available. Examples of ways that funds can become available include:

- A project currently in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP is unable to proceed and the agency returns the funds to SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO
- A project which previously obligated STP or TAP funds deobligates its funds
- A project closes out using fewer funds than what was awarded. The excess is returned to SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO
- Allocations of STP or TAP funds are higher than anticipated at the time of RTIP adoption

If additional funds are obtained by SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO, the projects can be moved to the fiscally-constrained portion of the RTIP in the next RTIP update or through the amendment process. Additional considerations (e.g. lower costs, project readiness, etc.) may be used in the determination of projects that will be added to the fiscally-constrained portion of the RTIP from the illustrative list.

- [2018-2019 SCOG Illustrative Projects](#)
- [2018-2019 Island sub-RTPO Illustrative Projects](#)



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# TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM SELECTION PROCESS

Adopted by the SIRTPO Policy Board on \_\_\_\_\_, 2014

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) distributes Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds to each state for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. Washington State Department of Transportation then suballocates these funds to Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO's) across the state.

Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) has the responsibility of distributing TAP funds to projects within the region that are selected on a competitive basis. This document is designed to identify the process that SIRTPO will use to rank and prioritize projects within the RTPO.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

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With the guidance of both the Skagit and Island Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) and the SIRTPO Transportation Policy Board, SIRTPO staff will prepare selection criteria to award TAP funding. The criteria will be based on identified priorities in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or directives given by the Transportation Policy Board. The selection criteria will be reviewed by the TACs to ensure they meet the priorities of the Region. The TACs will then recommend the approval of the selection criteria to the SIRTPO Policy Board. The SIRTPO Policy Board will then discuss and approve the final selection criteria.

- Current SIRTPO TAP Selection Criteria

## CALL FOR PROJECTS

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As TAP funding becomes available SIRTPO will issue a call for projects to be considered to utilize the funds. SIRTPO member agencies and eligible applicants will then have 4-6 weeks to submit applications to SIRTPO for consideration to be funded.

The amount of funding available in the call for projects will be at least enough to achieve a fully-programmed and fiscally-constrained four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). SIRTPO intends to program an additional two years' worth of projects outside the fiscally-constrained portion of the TIP. The projects selected for the unconstrained portion of the TIP (years five and six) will serve as an illustrative list of projects until they can be moved into the fiscally-constrained portion of the TIP.

Proposed projects must be included in the project sponsor's local TIP or CIP at time of submittal.

## PROJECT REVIEW AND PRIORITIZATION

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Project applications will receive an initial screening by SIRTPO staff to ensure they meet TAP eligibility requirements. SIRTPO staff will also score the projects based on any objective measures identified in the



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selection criteria. A selection committee composed of TAC representatives or other designees from both Island and Skagit Counties will be nominated by Island Sub-RTPO and SCOG and appointed by the SIRTPO Policy Board. The committee will review the objective measure scores by staff and, if necessary, will score any subjective measures for the projects. The committee will then preliminarily rank the projects based on the approved criteria or other committee recommendations. The preliminary rankings of projects will be distributed to both the Island and Skagit TACs for review and recommendation to Island Sub-RTPO and SCOG. Island Sub-RTPO and SCOG can then recommend the projects to be selected for funding to the SIRTPO Policy Board.

If the Selection Committee is unable to come to a consensus, the project selection will be done by the SIRTPO Policy Board.

## **PUBLIC REVIEW**

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In accordance with SCOG's [Public Participation Plan](#), the public will have an opportunity to view the selection committee's project ranking recommendation prior to the SIRTPO Policy Board meeting in which action will be taken. The public can submit written comments to SCOG or Island Sub-RTPO staff prior to the meeting or give verbal comments at the SIRTPO Policy Board meeting itself.

## **SIRTPO POLICY BOARD**

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The SIRTPO Policy Board will then consider the project prioritization proposed by the selection committee. The prioritized list will serve as a guide for the final selection. The SIRTPO Policy Board has the freedom to reprioritize the list as they see fit.

## **INCLUSION INTO THE TIP**

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If a project is selected to be funded with TAP funds within the four year funding window, it will be included in the next TIP update or it may be included into the current TIP by amendment. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to submit accurate project information to SCOG using the WSDOT STIP web-based software, regardless of which of the four years it is programmed to be funded in.