

SKAGIT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 3rd, 2014
SCOG, Room C
Mount Vernon, WA

AGENCIES REPRESENTED

- Anacortes Fred Buckenmeyer (left at 2:50 PM)
- Burlington Brian Dempsey
- Concrete Cody Hart
- Mount Vernon Esco Bell
- Sedro-Woolley Mark Freiberger
- Skagit County Forrest Jones
- Skagit Transit Carolyn Chase
- Swinomish Tribal Community Tara Satushek
- WSDOT Tom Stacey (arrived at 1:55 PM)

STAFF PRESENT

- Kevin Murphy Executive Director
- Mark Hamilton Transportation Planner
- Gabe Philips Transportation Planner

MINUTES

1. The meeting began at 1:30 PM. Roll was taken with a quorum present.
2. SCOG Report: Kevin Murphy reported that the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization Policy Board met in March to approve the final project selection for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) projects. The final selection was similar to the list recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) except the Cook Road realignment project had been withdrawn and the Centennial Trail project was awarded funding in its place.
3. Approval of the March 6th, 2014 TAC meeting minutes. Esco Bell made a motion to approve the March 6th, 2014 TAC meeting minutes as they were presented. Brian Dempsey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
4. Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program Amendments: There were no formal amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). However, projects that are under consideration to receive Surface Transportation Program funds will be incorporated into the TIP once they are selected.
5. Draft Unified Planning Work Program: The TAC was presented with a draft version of the 2015 Skagit-Island Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Gabe requested that they submit any questions regarding the UPWP to him by the next meeting.
6. Technical Advisory Committee Procedures: Gabe Philips shared with the TAC a recent concern voiced to staff regarding the ability for consultants to represent agencies on the TAC. One of the concerns was that the consultant representing an agency could potentially be voting on a project that would benefit the consultant's firm.

Cody Hart reminded the TAC that agencies do not score their own projects in the TAP and Surface Transportation Program (STP) scoring processes. One reason for this is to remove potential conflict of interest issues. Also, the TAC is not a decision-making body. All action items performed by the TAC are recommendations to the MPO/RTPO Policy Board, not final decisions. Cody also informed the TAC that there are stringent contract selection policies that all jurisdictions must adhere to prior to awarding the contract to specific firms. Conflict of interest issues are addressed in these policies. The TAC advised its membership that consultant representatives should recuse themselves when recommendations to award additional funding to projects that are currently under contract with their firms are being made by the TAC.

Gabe also recommended that the number of agencies required to be present to constitute a quorum be reduced due to the traditional participation of some of the agencies on the TAC. He will provide a new draft of the bylaws to the TAC at the next meeting.

7. Transportation Benefit District Discussion: Kevin Murphy explained that some of the agencies in the county are considering implementing a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) to support road maintenance and other transportation costs. Kevin mentioned that state law allows for a TBD across jurisdictions through an interlocal agreement. Administrative costs could be reduced if this is pursued.

Esco Bell made a motion to recommend that the MPO/RTPO Policy Board provide guidance on whether or not they would be interested in pursuing a regional TBD. Fred Buckenmeyer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan Discussion: Mark Freiburger recently attended training in which the requirement to have an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan was addressed. The Department of Justice has been issuing consent decrees for jurisdictions to come into compliance with the ADA plan requirement. It is essentially a two-step process: 1) jurisdictions are to make a self-assessment of their ADA deficiencies, and 2) if the jurisdiction has 50 or more employees, they must develop a plan and budget that addresses the deficiencies.

Mark wondered if it might make sense to use regional funds to pay for these plans. He also asked if there was interest in the region collectively contracting with a consultant to develop common standards and then customize the plans to meet the needs of jurisdictions. It was determined that the TAC would consider these options and discuss them at a future meeting.

9. Non-Motorized Plan Project Ranking: Gabe Philips presented a weighting exercise to determine the weights for the Regional Non-Motorized Plan project selection criteria. Gabe will compile the results and share them with the TAC at the next meeting.
10. Surface Transportation Program Project Selection: At its last meeting, the TAC made a recommendation on STP project selection to the MPO/RTPO Policy Board. After the meeting, some TAC members noted that the construction funds issued to the Guemes Channel Trail project were for a phase that was not included in the project application. Staff determined to wait until the next TAC meeting before presenting the recommendation to the Policy Board. The general consensus of the TAC was that if they knew that the STP funds awarded to the Guemes Channel Trail were for a different phase it would have changed the discussion. It was determined that the TAC should reassess the project selection.

The construction bonus was removed from all projects except for the Skagit Transit project (it is the only project that can obligate construction funds prior to the July 31st deadline), and the project rankings were recomputed. The second-ranked and third-ranked projects (SR 538 @ I-5, and the SR 20 Safe Access Improvements) were skipped over because they cannot obligate funds by the July 31st deadline. The George Hopper Interchange Improvement project was the next highest-ranking project. Brian Dempsey was asked if Burlington would be able to obligate preliminary engineering funds prior to the deadline and he was not sure. The Burlington Northern Overpass project was also skipped over because it cannot obligate funds by the July deadline.

Esco Bell made a motion to fund the following projects:

- Skagit Transit – Passenger Information Systems \$56,000, Design, Construction
- Burlington – Fairhaven Intersection.....\$86,500, Design
- Sedro-Woolley – Jameson Arterial Extension\$225,000, Design
- Concrete – Secondary Access\$80,000, Design
- Anacortes – Guemes Channel Trail\$181,650, Design
- Skagit County – Josh Wilson Road\$285,450, Design

The motion was seconded by Cody Hart. The motion carried unanimously.

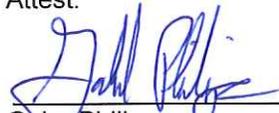
This recommendation programs \$914,600 toward Skagit MPO's 2014 obligation target of \$1,254,191. Earlier this fiscal year, \$112,000 was obligated for the Concrete Secondary Access project. Also, the \$173,785 TAP funds will count the 2014 target. If any additional funds will need to be obligated to meet our target, SCOG will obligate the difference from the 10% set-aside.

11. Surface Transportation Program Scoring Criteria: Gabe will send around a weighting exercise for the regional criteria, similar to what was done for the Regional Non-Motorized Plan project selection at today's meeting. Once the results from the survey come back, Gabe will prepare an initial set of project selection criteria to be discussed at the next TAC meeting.
12. Roundtable Projects Discussion: Brian Dempsey shared with the TAC that Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad will be applying for a Tiger VI grant for the Skagit River Bridge. They will likely be looking for support letters and support funding pledges from local jurisdictions to include in the application.

The next TAC meeting will be at 1:30 PM on May 1st, 2014. The meeting will be held in SCOG conference room C.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 PM.

Attest:



Gabe Philips,
Skagit Council of Governments

Date 5/2/2014