

SKAGIT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 6th, 2014
SCOG, Room C
Mount Vernon, WA

AGENCIES REPRESENTED

- Anacortes Eric Shjarback
- Burlington Brian Dempsey
- Concrete Cody Hart
- Mount Vernon Mike Love
- Sedro-Woolley David Lee
- Skagit County Paul Randall-Grutter
- Skagit Transit Carolyn Chase
- WSDOT John Shambaugh

STAFF PRESENT

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

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1:35 PM. Roll was taken with a quorum present.

1. SCOG Report: Kevin Murphy reported that the 2015-2020 Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) was adopted by the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) Policy Board on October 15, 2014.
2. Approval of the October 2nd, 2014 TAC meeting minutes. Paul Randall-Grutter made a motion to approve the October 2nd, 2014 TAC meeting minutes as they were presented. Brian Dempsey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
3. Summary of Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts: Gabe Philips gave a summary of the bicycle and pedestrian counts that occurred in late September and early October. Between 40 and 50 volunteers signed up to count during 58 time slots at 29 locations. Gabe has prepared an online map to illustrate the results, which is on the non-motorized plan's project website. The methodology used was consistent with other counts done around the state during so comparisons can be made across regions. These counts can also provide a baseline of non-motorized travel statistics in the county. SCOG plans to enhance its non-motorized transportation data collection with permanent pedestrian and bicycle counters.
4. WSDOT Obligation Authority Policy: Gabe reported that SCOG reached its obligation target for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014. The final FFY 2014 allocation of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds of \$1,483,592 was \$42,955 less than the estimate SCOG was using for programming purposes. The final FFY 2014 allocation of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds of \$227,587 was \$999 less than the estimate SCOG used for programming purposes. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) will be issuing FFY 2015 estimates for TAP and STP funds shortly.

Gabe also explained the changes to the state's obligation authority policy. All MPOs in the state will be limited to obligating only two years' worth of obligation authority. Beyond that, projects will be obligated using

advance construction funds. A potential issue that could arise is projects that are programmed in the third and fourth years of the RTIP could obligate projects ahead of those in the first and second years. Cody Hart said that the Town of Concrete would not be able to move projects forward using advance construction funds. The general consensus was that agencies would obligate projects in the years in which they are programmed. SCOG will provide quarterly obligation status reports to monitor the regional STP and TAP obligations.

Cody also said that the Town of Concrete would be able to save \$30,000 in federal funding if their TAP and STP-funded projects can be obligated at the same time. He requested that the committee consider reprogramming the Town of Concrete's projects to be scheduled for obligation at the same time.

5. Project Priorities for Legislative Forum: Kevin reported that SIRTPO will be hosting a legislative forum on December 3, 2014 in the Island County Commissioners' Hearing Room. In preparation for that meeting, SCOG is preparing to report the transportation priorities of the region. Last year SCOG prepared a letter stating the need for additional funding for maintenance and preservation of the local road system. Kevin said that state legislators may want a listing of individual projects to consider for a potential transportation package.

Mike Love said that projects in this region are not generally funded through the legislative process. Rather, the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) is a much more vital funding source for the region. He recommended that the regional emphasis should be to preserve TIB.

The general consensus was that the TAC would not recommend new projects to be legislative priorities. Emphasis should be placed on preservation and maintenance funding, preserving TIB, and the Sharpe's Corner project.

6. Regional Non-Motorized Plan: Gabe presented an updated regional non-motorized priority map. This map represents a long-range vision of the non-motorized network and can be used to identify regional priorities for funding. The TAC recommended that it should be called the "Regional Non-Motorized Network." Gabe also shared comments received regarding including Josh Wilson Road and Helmick Road in the regional network. It was determined that neither was appropriate to be considered a regional route.

Gabe also presented on how he has reduced the size of the project list. First, projects were determined to be regional, community or local in scale. Local projects will not be included in the Regional Non-Motorized Plan because they do not have regional impact. Projects were then filtered by the focus of their implementation. Non-motorized projects that are small portions of larger roadway projects, such as including sidewalks on a new bridge at the George Hopper Road interchange, were suggested to be removed from consideration. Gabe asked that the TAC representatives review the classifications he made on projects to verify their accuracy. The TAC also discussed adding a project to the list to implement bike signage for United States Bike Route 10.

Gabe said he would distribute the methodology used in the project prioritization process to the TAC. He asked that they return any comments they have to him within two weeks. At that time, Gabe will post the methodology on the project website for public review.

Gabe also reported that he attended the Boneshaker Bike Ride in La Conner to gather input for the Regional Non-Motorized Plan. When asked which factors would lead to increased non-motorized transportation use the most popular input by the respondents was better maintenance of non-motorized transportation facilities and more trails.

Liz McNett Crowl reported on the efforts of the Active Community Taskforce (ACT) to develop a bike route signage plan. ACT had recently met with WSDOT to discuss possible applications. One suggestion was using roadway delineators with bike route stickers rather than metals signs with signposts. The ACT will work closely with local jurisdictions to develop a bike route sign prioritization.

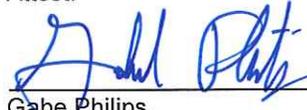


7. Roundtable Projects Discussion: This item was skipped due to lack of time.

The next TAC meeting will be at 1:30 PM on December 4th, 2014. The meeting will be held in SCOG conference room C.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM.

Attest:



Gabe Philips,
Skagit Council of Governments

Date 1/9/15 _____