

2024 – 2029

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



Adopted by the
Transportation Policy Board on
October 18, 2023

SCOG
Skagit Council of Governments

RESOLUTION 2023-07
TO APPROVE 2024-2029
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Skagit Council of Governments, under its designation as the metropolitan planning organization and the regional transportation planning organization for the Skagit region, has the responsibility for preparing and adopting a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP);

WHEREAS, transportation improvement projects must be included in the RTIP to be eligible for federal assistance under most Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration funding programs;

WHEREAS, the Skagit Council of Governments certifies that the requirements of 23 USC, Section 134 are met – certification is determined jointly by the Skagit Council of Governments and the Washington State Department of Transportation, and is included in the approved RTIP;

WHEREAS, the Skagit Council of Governments selects and prioritizes projects to receive certain Federal Highway Administration funds in the Skagit region, and programs these projects in the RTIP;

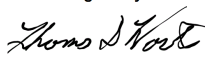
WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Improvement Program includes regional performance targets and descriptions of anticipated effects of RTIP investment priorities toward achieving targets; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Improvement Program Policies, Amendment and Modification Procedures, Obligation Authority Procedures and Determinations of Significance are adopted by reference as part of the RTIP.

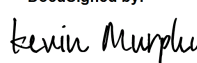
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SKAGIT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS:

The 2024-2029 Regional Transportation Improvement Program and its associated supporting policy and procedure documents are hereby approved.

Adopted: October 18, 2023

DocuSigned by:

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Chairman Tom Wooten, Samish Indian Nation
Transportation Policy Board Chair

DocuSigned by:

711DD13472BE409...

Kevin Murphy
Executive Director

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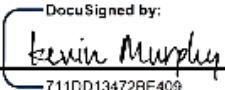
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METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION SELF-CERTIFICATION FOR THE FOLLOWING METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

In accordance with 23 CFR Part 450, §450.336, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Skagit Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), hereby certify that the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements including:

1. 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450, Subpart C;
2. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, sections 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506 (c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93;
3. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
4. 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
5. 23 U.S.C 101 note and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in DOT funded projects;
6. 23 CFR Part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts;
7. The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and 49 CFR parts 27, 37, and 38;
8. The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
9. Section 324 of title 23 U.S.C. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender;
10. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 49 CFR part 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities; and
11. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR part 200).
12. The MPO uses at least 2.5% of its PL funds on planning activities to increase safe and accessible options for multiple travel modes for people of all ages and abilities.

MPO

DocuSigned by:

 Signature 711DD13472BE409...

Kevin Murphy

Printed Name

Executive Director

Title

9/19/2023

Date

WSDOT


 Signature

Ryan Clemens

Printed Name

WSDOT Regional Coordinator

Title

9-19-23

Date

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABOUT SCOG

The Skagit Council of Governments is a federally designated metropolitan planning organization consisting of Skagit County, all cities and towns within Skagit County, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Samish Indian Nation, Skagit Transit, Skagit PUD, the Port of Anacortes, the Port of Skagit, and Washington State Department of Transportation. SCOG leads the development of the long-range [Skagit 2045 Regional Transportation Plan](#) (Skagit 2045) and a medium-range regional transportation improvement program. These efforts are coordinated with the public, United States Department of Transportation, WSDOT, local elected leadership, local planners and engineers.

In addition to being a metropolitan planning organization, SCOG is also a regional transportation planning organization, as designated through Washington state’s Growth Management Act. As a regional transportation planning organization, SCOG includes cities, towns, Skagit County, Skagit Transit, ports, tribes, private employer representatives and WSDOT in its planning activities. This includes preparation of a regional transportation plan, certification that countywide planning policies and local transportation elements are consistent with the plan, and development and maintenance of the six-year regional transportation improvement program.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

SCOG is required by federal and state regulations to develop a regional transportation improvement program (RTIP) which spans at least four years and is updated at least every two years. SCOG generally updates the RTIP annually and allows amendments to the RTIP on a monthly basis.

The RTIP is a compilation of projects from various federal, state and local funding programs for all transportation agencies in the Skagit region. Projects included in the program implement the long-range transportation and transit plans for the region, help meet the short-range needs of the area, and provide for ongoing maintenance and preservation of the existing transportation system.

A primary purpose of the RTIP is to identify and document federally funded and/or regionally significant projects to be included in the Washington Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Projects cannot obligate¹ certain 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. For this reason, the RTIP should be viewed as a document that identifies programs and projects from the regional transportation plan and prioritizes them for implementation within the constraints of a reasonable financial forecast – not a listing of federal, state and local transportation spending. SCOG



CONCEPTUAL IMAGE OF NEW GUEMES ELECTRIC FERRY

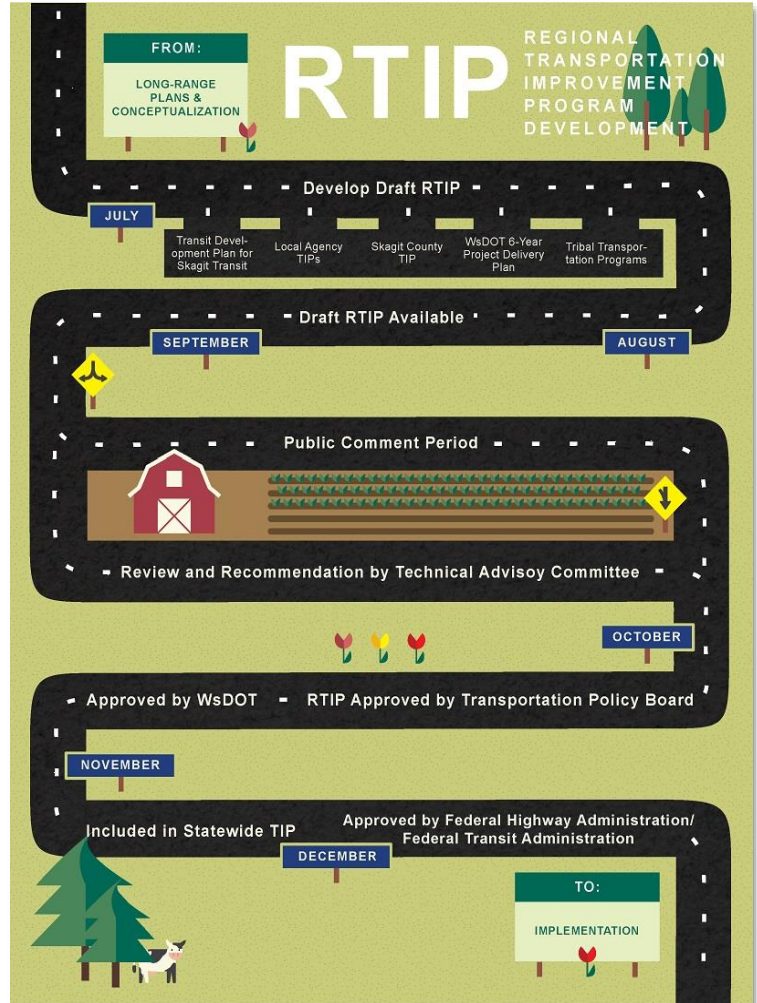
¹ Obligation occurs when the project proponent has established a formal agreement with WSDOT and the funds have been designated, or “obligated” for that particular project.

produces an [Annual Listing of Federal Obligations](#) that documents federal fund obligations that have occurred within the Skagit region in the previous calendar year.

The RTIP also demonstrates the financial feasibility of the included projects. In other words, the RTIP illustrates that the projects programmed² in the next four years will not cost more than the amount of funding the region expects to be available. Section 4.3 includes detailed financial tables for the projects programmed in the fiscally constrained³ portion of the RTIP.

2 DOCUMENT PREPARATION

The RTIP is coordinated with the development of capital improvement plans, local comprehensive transportation programs, and tribal transportation improvement programs of SCOG member jurisdictions. When developing their transportation programs, member jurisdictions evaluate their transportation needs for the ensuing six-year period based on local priorities and expected funding levels available to meet those needs. Because the need for transportation improvements is often greater than the amount of funding available, the member jurisdictions prioritize their transportation needs to identify a six-year list of projects that they determine to be most important to undertake. Drafts of the transportation programs are available for the public, other agencies and internal departments to review. Member jurisdictions then make any revisions deemed necessary before adopting their comprehensive transportation programs, capital improvement plans, and tribal transportation improvement programs – indicating which projects have secured⁴ and planned funding.



RTIP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Local governments, tribal governments and WSDOT then submit their programmed projects to SCOG. The RTIP is a compilation of the projects with secured federal funding or regionally significant projects that have secured state or local funding. The project list for the 2024–2029 RTIP is included in Section 4. From these projects, an assessment of region-wide financial feasibility is estimated in Section 5.

² “Programmed” means that the funding for the project is scheduled to be obligated (see footnote 1) in a particular calendar year (January 1 through December 31) identified in the RTIP.

³ 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 Block Grant program and Transportation Alternatives funds – but may not be fiscally constrained.

⁴ “Secured” means funding has been committed to the project sponsor for the project, including any required match.

Submit comments on the draft 2024–2029 RTIP to:

Mark Hamilton, AICP
Skagit Council of Governments
315 South Third Street, Suite 100
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
markh@scog.net

2.1 REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The draft RTIP is released to the public for review and comment in September, and is presented to the SCOG Technical Advisory Committee⁵ and Transportation Policy Board⁶ by SCOG staff. The Technical Advisory Committee recommends whether the Transportation Policy Board should or should not approve the draft RTIP. Members of the public are encouraged to provide written comments to SCOG staff. Written comments are included in meeting materials sent to the Transportation Policy Board for their consideration. The public

is also welcome to provide comments during the public comment period for the September Transportation Policy Board meeting where the draft RTIP is discussed, and for their next monthly meeting in October where RTIP adoption is considered.

After considering public input and the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee, the Transportation Policy Board decides whether to adopt the draft RTIP. After approval, the adopted RTIP is then submitted to WSDOT. WSDOT then reviews the RTIP and issues its approval by the end of November. With WSDOT approval of the RTIP, all RTIP projects (Section 4.1) are included in the draft STIP. Representatives from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration then review and issue approval of the STIP in early January 2024.

2.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The RTIP is developed in part from local comprehensive transportation programs that are compiled and adopted annually by local governments in the Skagit region. As required by state law, each local agency conducts a public involvement process in the development and review of their comprehensive transportation program. These processes vary by jurisdiction, but all culminate in a formal public hearing prior to adoption by the local governing boards.

Tribal governments follow federal requirements for preparation of tribal transportation improvement programs prior to including projects in the RTIP. WSDOT includes projects in a 10-year list of statewide project priorities referred to as the [Project Delivery Plan](#) that is updated every year, and Skagit Transit includes projects in the six-year [Transit Development Plan](#), which is adopted every year by their board of directors. Both WSDOT and Skagit Transit projects in the Skagit region can be included in the RTIP following inclusion as priorities in their own planning documents.



PLANNED SKAGIT TRANSIT MAINTENANCE, OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION BASE

⁵ The Technical Advisory Committee is a SCOG committee consisting of transportation professionals who provide technical advice and recommendations to the Transportation Policy Board.

⁶ The Transportation Policy Board is a governing body of SCOG consisting of local and tribal elected leaders, a WSDOT representative, a private employer representative and state elected leaders.

In most cases, projects that have secured Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding, or have secured another type of funding and are regionally significant, are included in the RTIP. The RTIP is a compilation of these projects, sourced from local comprehensive transportation programs, tribal transportation improvement programs, WSDOT's Project Delivery Plan and Skagit Transit's Transit Development Plan.

After transportation programs have been prepared and reviewed by the public, a supplementary public review process for the RTIP is also conducted. This allows the public to review and comment on the six years of medium-range transportation projects intended to implement the long-range transportation goals identified in *Skagit 2045*. Comments regarding the specifics of projects are often better directed to the project sponsors during the project planning stage. A flowchart that depicts the development of regional transportation projects from the conceptual stage to implementation and the associated opportunities for public input is hyperlinked below.

- [Project Planning Process Flowchart](#)

SCOG posts notifications in the Skagit Valley Herald when the draft RTIP is available for public review. Notice is also posted on SCOG's website where the document is available to view and download. Printed copies of the draft RTIP are available from SCOG upon request.

A public comment period was held from September 21 through October 6, 2023. The final draft of the RTIP includes the submitted public comments below and will be presented to the Transportation Policy Board prior to any action taken regarding the adoption of the RTIP.

- No Public Comments Received

The public involvement activities and time established for public review and comments on the RTIP development process satisfy the Federal Transit Administration's Program of Projects requirements that Skagit Transit must follow.

2.3 PROGRAMMING POLICIES

SCOG has developed policies to aid in the preparation and maintenance of the RTIP, and to assist in the effective administration of regionally managed federal grant funds. These policies are hyperlinked below.

- [RTIP Policies](#)

2.4 PROJECT SELECTION AND PRIORITIZATION

SCOG is responsible for selecting projects for the regionally managed portion of federal Surface Transportation Block Grant program and Transportation Alternatives funding in the Skagit region. Projects selected are prioritized and incorporated into the RTIP, along with other FHWA and FTA federally funded projects, and regionally significant projects (see Section 4). SCOG has prepared a flowchart that graphically depicts the timeline for selecting projects to receive regionally managed grant funding and the associated opportunities for public input. A hyperlink to this flowchart follows.

- [Regionally Managed Project Selection Timeline](#)

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM, CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM AND TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

SCOG receives an annual allocation of federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program and Transportation Alternatives funds to be committed to priority projects in the Skagit region. Projects are selected by the Transportation Policy Board using a competitive process

guided by evaluation criteria, which is designed to ensure that projects are prioritized consistent with *Skagit 2045*.

SCOG programs four years of prioritized Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program and Transportation Alternatives projects into the RTIP and the STIP. SCOG typically programs an additional two years of projects to provide flexibility in project timelines, though this additional two years of programming can vary depending upon when calls for projects are issued by SCOG. Calls for projects are usually conducted every two years. 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 4.2). SCOG ensures that Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program and Transportation Alternatives projects are competitively selected to receive funding based on their ability to address priorities identified in *Skagit 2045*. A formal project selection process has been developed to provide clarity on how projects will be regionally prioritized for funding and is hyperlinked below.

- [2023 Regional Call for Projects](#) and [Project Application Form](#)
- [Projects currently programmed using Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds](#)
- [Projects currently programmed using Carbon Reduction Program funds](#)
- [Projects currently programmed using Transportation Alternatives funds](#)

EMERGENT NEED PROJECT SELECTION

The Transportation Policy Board approved a process to allocate additional federal funds to projects in certain emergent needs instances. Projects can only receive an emergent need award if they have been competitively selected by SCOG to receive federal funding for construction, and experience an unanticipated need during the construction phase. Emergent need allocation decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the Transportation Policy Board.

- [Project Application Form](#)

2.5 2023–2028 RTIP PROJECTS NOT INCLUDED IN THE 2024–2029 RTIP

The following projects were included in the fiscally constrained portion of the 2023–2028 RTIP, including amendments to the RTIP that added new projects, but are not included in the fiscally constrained portion of the 2024–2029 RTIP. There are various reasons why a project would no longer be programmed in the RTIP. For example, a project could be completed, underway, cancelled or delayed.

See the following table for a summary of 2023–2028 RTIP projects that are not programmed in the 2024–2029 RTIP.

AGENCY	PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST (Est.)	STATUS
Ana-cortes	R Avenue Long Term Improvements	Non traversable median; transit pullouts; add or improve sidewalks/walkways; bicycle wayfinding; signal or roundabout; traffic calming measures; additional lighting; bicycle lanes; physical buffer between pedestrians and walkway.	\$5,711,392	Construction underway
Burlington	George Hopper Interchange Improvements, Phase II	Lane addition on East side of freeway including lighting and improving sidewalk.	\$1,331,000	Project cancelled due to no longer being a local priority
Burlington	SR 20/Skagit Street Signalization Project	Install traffic signal for intersection and pedestrian/bicycle improvement project. Including; overlay, pavement repair, channelization, sidewalk, curb & gutter, signing, stormwater, and lighting upgrades.	\$2,404,000	Construction obligation pending
Mount Vernon	30th Street Improvements - 1	Rehabilitate pavement, add sidewalk, shared use path, drainage improvements, and fish passage culvert.	\$ 2,832,214	Preliminary engineering underway
Mount Vernon	EV Bicycle Charging Facility - MVLC	Installation of EV bicycle charging stations within the parking structure of the Mount Vernon Library Commons project.	\$167,050	Construction obligation pending
Mount Vernon	EV Vehicle Charging Facility - MVLC	Installation of Electric Vehicle charging stations within the parking structure of the Mount Vernon Library Commons project.	\$2,708,000	Construction obligation pending
Mount Vernon	Riverside Drive Improvements - 1	Rehabilitate pavement, repair sidewalk, correct ADA deficiencies, improve sight distance, and underground overhead utilities.	\$3,673,145	Right of way pending
Mount Vernon	Riverside Drive Improvements - 2	Rehabilitate pavement, repair sidewalk, correct ADA deficiencies, improve sight distance, implement data traffic data collection capability and underground overhead utilities.	\$3,103,000	Right of way pending
Samish Indian Nation	Tommy Thompson Trail Trestle and Causeway Replacement	Scope the design required to reconstruct the Tommy Thompson trail to replace the trestle and remove current causeway. Project will add or improve sidewalks/walkways and include bicycle wayfinding.	\$383,333	Planning pending
Skagit County	Barrier Protection	Add/upgrade guardrail. a. Mud Lake Road (#78600) from MP 0.73-0.82 and from MP 1.05-1.62 – guardrail b. Baker Lake Road (#97000) from MP 5.17-5.33 – guardrail c. South Skagit Highway (#07000) from MP 6.98-7.06 – guardrail	\$656,000	Construction underway
Skagit County	Bay View-Edison Joe Leary Slough Bridge (Deck Overlay)	Replace the Bridge Deck & Minor Repairs.	\$501,090	Construction pending
Skagit County	Fisher Creek Restoration at Cedardale and Starbird	Remove Fish Barrier Culverts on Cedardale and Starbird Roads at Fisher Creek and Construct Fish Passable Culvert/Bridge.	\$5,985,026	Right of way and construction pending
Skagit County	Guemes Island Ferry Operating Costs	Guemes Ferry Operating Cost.	\$499,153	Project underway

AGENCY	PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST (Est.)	STATUS
Skagit County	Lane Departure Reduction, Intersection Awareness, Signage & Delineation Improvements	Add/upgrade pavement markings, signing, and delineation.	\$855,000	Construction underway
Skagit Transit	Purchase of Equipment to Support Transit Operations	Purchase of various maintenance equipment to support maintenance of facilities and transit operation.	\$129,599	Project pending obligation
Skagit Transit	Purchase of Replacement Vanpool Vehicles	Purchase of up to three (3) vanpool vehicles to replace aging vehicles in Skagit Transit's vanpool program. The project will assist in maintaining the success of the vanpool program which helps to reduce traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions by providing an alternative to single occupancy commute travel.	\$123,454	Project pending obligation
WSDOT - NW	SR 20/Gulch Bridge Vicinity - Unstable Slope	Remove the outer layer of the failing slope and construct a quarry spall buttress keyed into solid material approximately nine feet below the ditch line. The buttress will be 40 feet tall and 350 feet long.	\$2,529,545	Funding no longer secured to complete this project
WSDOT - NW	SR 20/Unnamed Tributary to Red Creek - Fish Passage	Remove the existing fish passage barrier and replace with a fish passable structures.	\$8,678,097	Project underway

3 AMENDMENT & ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION PROCEDURES

Transportation priorities and funding strategies change over time. It is likely the project list programmed in the RTIP in October 2023 will need to be altered at some during calendar year 2024. Federal requirements stipulate that in most cases jurisdictions cannot utilize FHWA or FTA federal funds on a project until it is programmed in the RTIP and STIP, even though the jurisdiction already has secured funding for that project. SCOG has developed RTIP amendment and administrative modification procedures to ensure that new projects and changes to existing projects can be included in the RTIP efficiently. These procedures are hyperlinked below.

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



Refer to the following figure for differences between amendments, administrative modifications and project updates that do not require an RTIP change.

AMENDMENTS	ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS	NO CHANGE NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding a new project to the RTIP • Deleting a project from the RTIP • Any change to a project's programmed amount equaling 30% or more • Any change to a project's programmed amount equaling \$3 million or more • Major scope changes • Adding a future phase to a project already programmed • Adding federal funds to a project that is already programmed but does not yet have federal funds programmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing the lead agency • Adding a prior phase to a project already programmed • Any change to a project's programmed amount equaling less than 30% and must be less than \$3 million • Correcting typographical errors • Making minor changes to project information (e.g. federal functional classification, improvement type, project termini or environmental type) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving projects, and phases of projects, within the first four years of the RTIP • Changes to a project's federal funding source, when made as a funds management action • Federal authorization of more/less than federal funds programmed for a project phase, up to the total federal funds amount programmed for the project • Adjustments to a project award for project phases that already have federal authorization (does not apply to phases that have not yet received federal authorization or project phases that are closed)

COMPARISON OF RTIP ACTIONS

3.1 AMENDMENT CYCLE

Agencies are generally ready and willing to obligate federal funds soon after they are secured. To accommodate faster implementation of transportation projects, SCOG allows amendments to the RTIP on a monthly basis (excluding November and December). In order to ensure that sufficient time

is available for decision makers and the public to review the proposed amendment prior to formal action being taken, project sponsors must adhere to the deadlines listed in the following table.

SUBMIT REQUEST TO SCOG*	TAC REVIEW/ RECOMMENDATION	SCOG TPB ACTION	WSDOT REVIEW	FHWA/FTA REVIEW**	AMENDMENT INCLUDED IN STIP
12/27/2023	1/4/2024	1/17/2024	1/19/2024	2/2/2024	2/16/2024
1/24/2024	2/1/2024	2/21/2024†	2/16/2024	3/1/2024	3/15/2024
2/28/2024	3/7/2024	3/20/2024†	3/15/2024	3/29/2024	4/12/2024
3/27/2024	4/4/2024	4/17/2024	4/19/2024	5/3/2024	5/17/2024
4/24/2024	5/2/2024	5/15/2024	5/17/2024	5/31/2024	6/14/2024
5/29/2024	6/6/2024	6/19/2024	6/21/2024	7/5/2024	7/19/2024
6/26/2024	7/4/2024	7/17/2024	7/19/2024	8/2/2024	8/16/2024
7/24/2024	8/1/2024	8/21/2024†	8/16/2024	8/30/2024	9/13/2024
8/28/2024	9/5/2024	9/18/2024	9/20/2024	10/4/2024	10/18/2024
9/25/2024	10/3/2024	10/16/2024	10/18/2024	11/1/2024	11/15/2024

Notes: Meeting dates and request deadlines are subject to change.

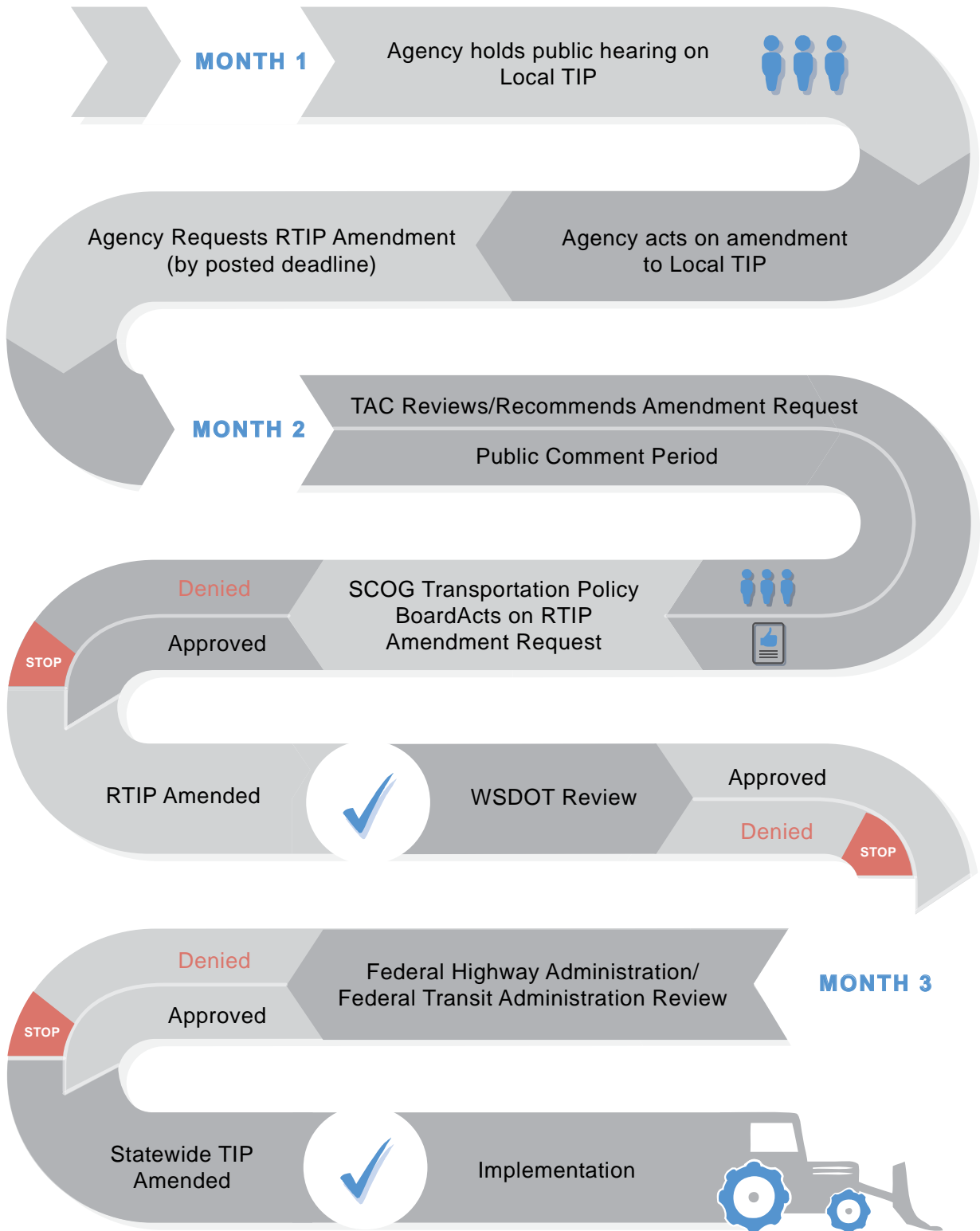
*Request must include documentation of funding award and proof that project is included in local or tribal TIP.

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

†If WSDOT review deadline occurs before Transportation Policy Board action, SCOG will submit amendment to WSDOT at deadline and verify the SCOG TPB action once it occurs.

Refer to the following figure for an illustrative representation of the RTIP and STIP amendment process.

RTIP AMENDMENT PROCESS



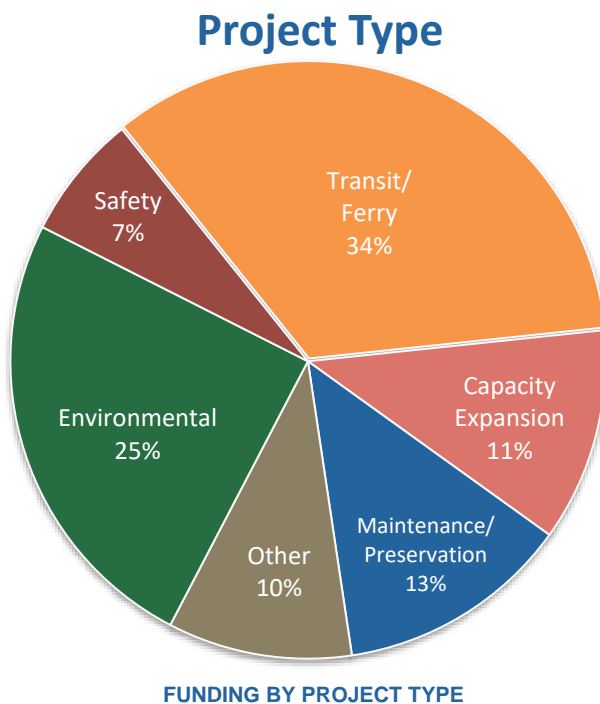
RTIP AMENDMENT CYCLE

4 PROJECTS

4.1 FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PROJECTS

The 2024–2027 fiscally constrained RTIP project list includes projects that have secured FHWA or FTA federal funding, or have secured funding from another source and are also regionally significant. This project list is updated as amendments are made to the RTIP. Projects included in the four-year fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP are forwarded to WSDOT for inclusion in the STIP. Section 4.2 includes projects that have been selected to receive regionally managed Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program and Transportation Alternatives funds in years five and six (2028 and 2029) of the RTIP.

- [2024–2027 Fiscally Constrained Projects](#)



A summary of the funding by project type in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP as of October 18, 2023 is presented in the figure to the left. Many transportation projects planned to occur on non-regionally significant routes are not included in the RTIP. For example, jurisdictions’ repaving programs, other than WSDOT’s, are not included in the RTIP. Also, many of the project type categories overlap. As another example, a capacity expansion project often includes safety, non-motorized and environmental elements.

Thirty-four percent (34%) of secured funding included in the fiscally constrained portion of the 2024–2027 RTIP is dedicated to Skagit Transit and Guemes Island Ferry projects. Twenty-five percent (25%) of secured funding is committed to environmental projects designed to improve fish passage under WSDOT facilities along with a WSDOT soil-abatement project. Seven percent (7%) of secured funding is devoted to safety projects, with thirteen percent (13%) to maintenance/preservation projects – primarily bridge projects on WSDOT and Skagit County facilities. Eleven percent (11%) of secured funding is slated to expand capacity of the transportation system, and the remaining ten percent (10%) of secured funding is programmed to other project types. Project funding that has not yet been secured, and all funding in 2028 and 2029, is not included in these percentages.

The next figure illustrates the proportion of federal, state and local funds programmed in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP. Forty-five percent (45%) of the secured funding for fiscally constrained RTIP projects is from federal sources, with forty-one percent (41%) from state sources. Fourteen percent (14%) of project funding is from local sources, which are commonly used as matching funds to federal grants received by project sponsors. Many transportation projects utilizing only state and/or local funds are not included in the RTIP, so are not included in this financial analysis.

4.2 ILLUSTRATIVE PRIORITIES

To ensure that SCOG has a fully programmed four-year RTIP, SCOG typically selects projects to ensure that at least six years' worth of Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program and Transportation Alternatives funding is programmed. The first four years in the RTIP are fiscally constrained and included in the STIP (see Section 4.1). The additional two years' worth of programmed projects function as Illustrative Priorities if additional funding becomes available to SCOG. Examples of ways that additional 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;
- A project which previously obligated Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program, or Transportation Alternatives funds de-obligates⁷ its funds, including if a project closes out using less than the amount of federal funds awarded; and
- Allocations of Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Carbon Reduction Program and Transportation Alternatives funds are higher than anticipated at the time of RTIP adoption.

If additional funds are obtained by SCOG, 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) may be used in the determination of projects that will be added to the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP from the Illustrative Priorities. The 2028–2029 Illustrative Priorities are hyperlinked below.

- [2028–2029 Illustrative Project List](#)

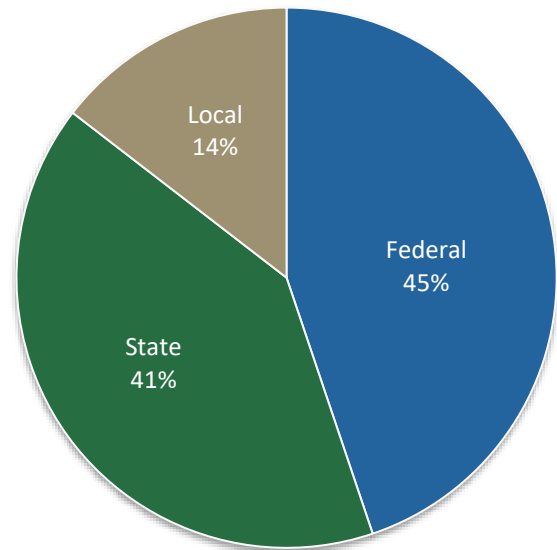
4.3 REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS

Regionally significant projects are projects that serve regional transportation needs on the existing or proposed regional transportation system. Per the [23 CFR 450.104](#) definition of a regionally significant project, examples of these types of projects include "...access to and from the area outside the region; major activity centers in the region; major planned developments such as new retail malls, sports complexes, or employment centers; or transportation terminals..." and would normally be included in modeling of SCOG's regional transportation network.

The determination of whether or not a project is regionally significant is made by SCOG as a metropolitan planning organization. Regionally significant projects are programmed in the RTIP, even if there is no federal funding associated with the project. Examples of projects that are and are not regionally significant are in the following hyperlink.

⁷ De-obligation occurs when the project sponsor has obligated (see footnote 1) funds for a particular project and then the project is unable to move forward for some reason, or a project closes out with federal funds remaining that were not expended. The funds are essentially "returned to the pot" of regionally managed funds.

Funding Source



FUNDING BY SOURCE

- [RTIP Determinations of Regional Significance](#)

5 FINANCIAL PLAN

5.1 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 5.2 include the estimated amount of available funds, programmed funds and remaining funds by fund type for each program year. Agencies with projects in the RTIP have indicated that they have the financial resources available to provide matching funds to complete project phases with fully secured funding.

FINANCIAL PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

ACCOUNTING FOR INFLATION

The project costs reported in the RTIP include an adjustment to account for annual inflation of prices. *Skagit 2045* 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 is left to the judgment of the project sponsors, as they have a better sense of short-term inflationary pressures on their particular projects.

Fiscal Constraint: the RTIP demonstrates that the programmed projects will not cost more than the expected amount of funding available.

FEDERAL REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Revenue projections for WSDOT managed federal funds (e.g. National Highway Performance Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program, etc.) generally equal the amount programmed in the RTIP. Because SCOG has no control over project funding decisions for these fund types, only federal funds that have been secured by project sponsors are assumed to be reasonably available. For future year allocations in the RTIP, SCOG managed federal funds are assumed to be the same as regional allocations for federal fiscal year 2022.

STATE REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Several state sources of funding are identified in the RTIP that have historically been used for transportation purposes. These state projections include projects that have secured funding, including match, to fully complete a phase, as well as available funds that have not yet been secured. State funding is often used with federal funding and any required match to complete a phase of a project, or used alone without any federal funding or match.

LOCAL REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Revenue projections from local sources are funds expected to reasonably be available outside of federal and state sources. These funds are typically used as match for other funds sources, but may be higher than any required match. In addition to meeting match requirements, project sponsors will often use this category of revenues to fill a gap in a project phase and ensure fully secured funding to complete the phase.

5.2 FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY TABLE

SCOG has prepared a financial table that identifies all of the funding programmed in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP and documents the amount of funding that is reasonably expected to be available. The table, linked below, demonstrates that the first four years of the 2024–2029 RTIP are fiscally constrained and financially feasible. Programmed expenditures are balanced with funding reasonably expected to be made available over the programming period.

- [2024–2027 Financial Feasibility Table](#)

6 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS

Environmental Justice principles are considered in RTIP project programming to protect minority populations and low-income populations from disproportionate adverse effects of plans, programs, policies and activities funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation. By accepting federal funds through the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, SCOG and any recipients of federal funds through SCOG must incorporate Environmental Justice into their transportation plans, programs, policies and activities.

The concept of Environmental Justice was first promulgated by [*Executive Order No. 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Poverty Populations*](#). While related, this order is distinct from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Investment in transportation projects can have both positive and negative impacts on the surrounding area. Negative impacts can include creating barriers within communities, restricting access to public facilities, safety risks, as well as environmental impacts such as noise, water pollution and reduced air quality. On the other hand, transportation projects can reduce travel times, increase mobility and accessibility and support the local economy. SCOG has performed an analysis on the projects included in the RTIP, at the time of adoption in October 2023, to determine the spatial distribution of RTIP project priorities as they relate to Environmental Justice populations.

6.1 DATA AND METHODOLOGY

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In 2023, SCOG updated the [*Skagit County Regional Demographic Profile*](#). Based on data from the Decennial Census and American Community Survey five-year estimates, this document identifies protected populations in Skagit County at the Census block or tract level. SCOG uses the analysis from the Demographic Profile to identify geographic areas with relatively high concentrations of Environmental Justice populations.

The key demographic groups used in the Environmental Justice assessment of the RTIP are defined as:

- **Minority:** A person was considered a minority if they self-identified as: American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino. In 2020, 25.5% of Skagit County's population identified as a minority. Any Census block having 10 or more persons and with 25.5% or more of its population describing itself as other than non-Hispanic White is considered a minority block for the Environmental Justice analysis.
- **Poverty:** Any person whose household income is below the federal poverty level. According to the 2017–2021 American Community Survey estimates, 11.1% of Skagit County's population was below the federal poverty level. Any Census tract with 11.1% or more of its population below the poverty level was considered a low-income tract for the Environmental Justice analysis.

RTIP PROJECT DATA

This analysis is based on the geographic location of the projects included in the RTIP at the time of its adoption. Any Census block or tract within 100 feet of an RTIP project is considered to be impacted by the programming in the RTIP (projects that include the entire county in its area or a public transportation benefit area, such as Skagit Transit's Operating Funds project or the SCOG Administration 2022–2025 project, were not included in this analysis). The analysis does not include projects that were in previous RTIPs and not carried over into the 2024–2029 RTIP.

6.2 GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY ANALYSES

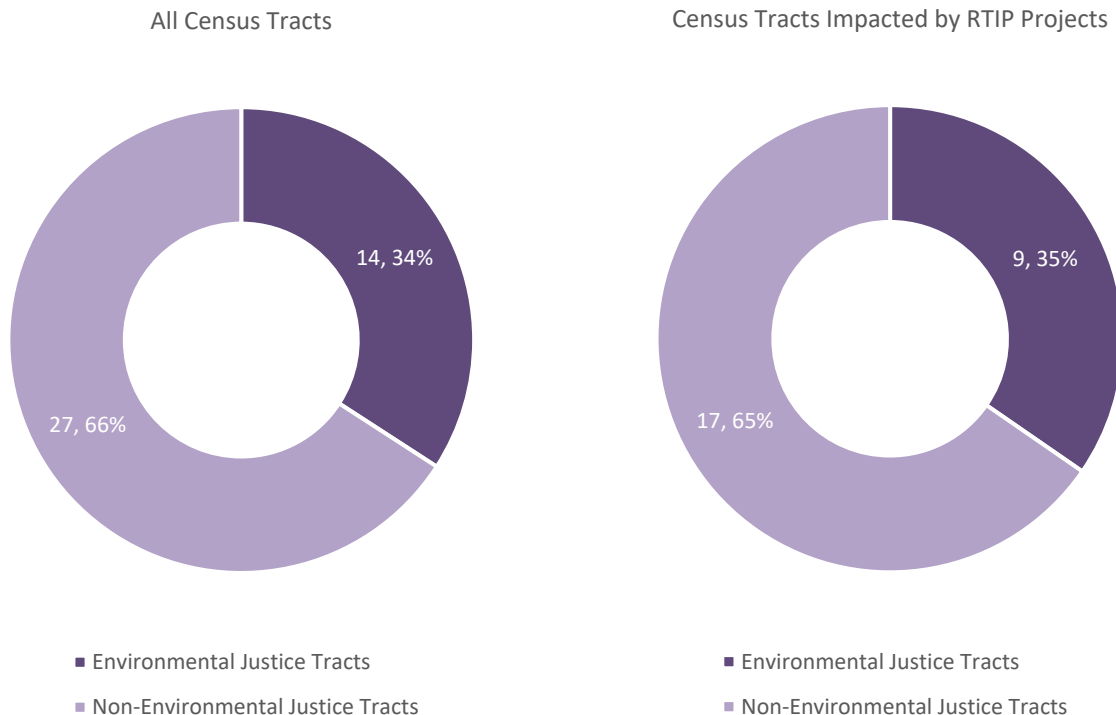
The Skagit County Demographic Profile summarizes the data for Environmental Justice protected populations at two geographies, as designated by the Census Bureau: blocks and tracts. Information regarding minority status is obtained in the Decennial Census so it is available at the smaller Census block geography. Information regarding poverty is obtained in the American Community Survey five-year estimates. Larger analysis geography (Census tracts) is necessary to have reasonable confidence in the results, because it is based on a sample of the population.

Regional thresholds have been established to identify Census blocks and tracts that contain higher proportions of populations to be considered in the Environmental Justice analysis. Any Census block or tract that is above its associated regional threshold is considered an Environmental Justice block or tract.

Geographic analysis was performed to determine how many of the projects included in the fiscally constrained portion of the RTIP are within 100 feet of an Environmental Justice block or tract. This helps identify spatial patterns of transportation investment decisions and how they impact populations. However, this analysis does not determine whether protected populations are benefitted or disproportionately burdened by specific projects. A project-level Environmental Justice analysis is needed to make this determination, which is conducted by project sponsors closer to project implementation.

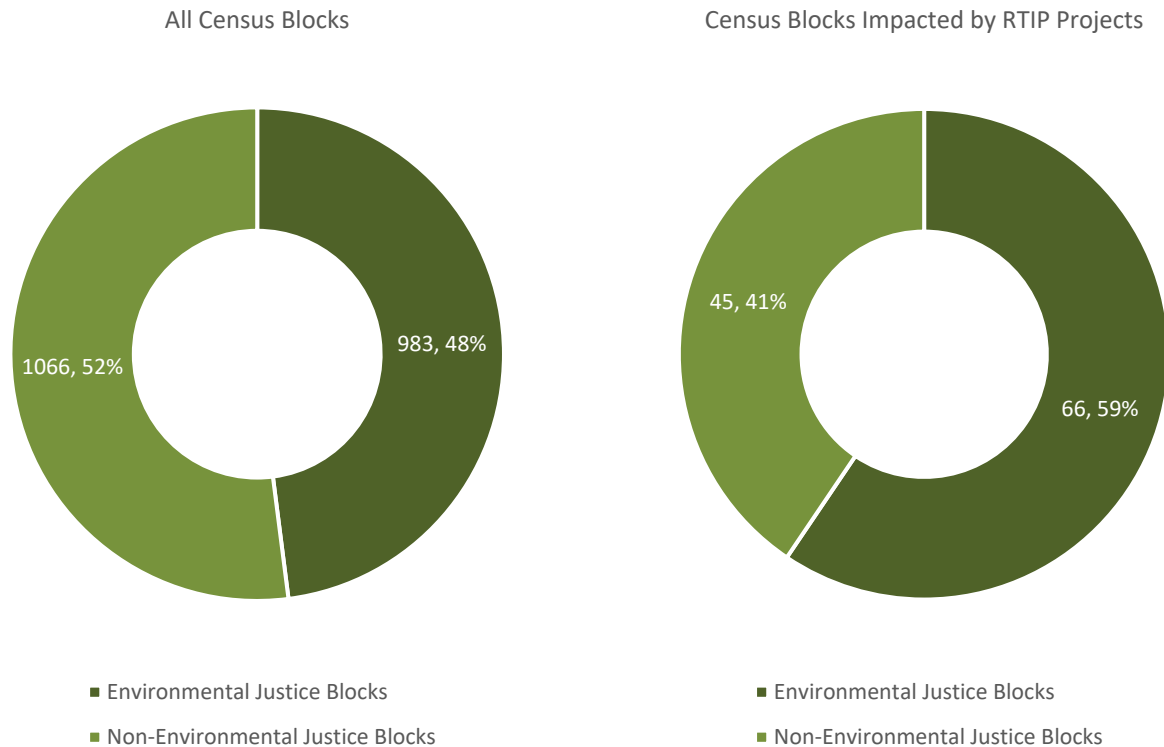
POVERTY POPULATION ANALYSIS

In Skagit County, 11.1% of the population was below the federal poverty level between 2017 and 2021. Of the 41 Census tracts in Skagit County, 14 tracts (34%) had a poverty rate at or above the regional threshold (11.1%). Of the 26 tracts impacted by projects in the RTIP, 9 (35%) were at or above the regional threshold for poverty. Therefore, the proportion of investments identified in the RTIP which impact tracts with poverty rates above the regional threshold is slightly more than the total proportion of tracts above the regional threshold for poverty throughout Skagit County.



MINORITY POPULATION ANALYSIS

Of all 2,049 Census blocks in Skagit County with 10 or more persons, 938 (48%) were above the regional threshold for minority populations (25.5%). Of the total Census blocks with populations over 10, 111 were impacted by projects included in the RTIP, and 66 of these (59%) were blocks that were above the regional threshold. Therefore, the proportion of minority Census blocks affected by projects in the RTIP is greater than the proportion of minority Census blocks in the region as a whole. Minority geographies do not appear to be disproportionately impacted or burdened by projects in the RTIP.



6.3 CONCLUSIONS

The results of this analysis show that transportation investments are not having a disproportionate adverse effect on Environmental Justice blocks and tracts. However, project-level analysis should be completed to ensure Environmental Justice protected populations will not be disproportionately burdened by projects included in the RTIP.

7 REGIONAL PERFORMANCE TARGETS

SCOG is responsible for setting regional performance targets for the nationwide approach to performance-based planning. The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, signed into law in 2012, introduced many new requirements for state departments of transportation, transit agencies and metropolitan planning organizations. As a metropolitan planning organization, these requirements apply to SCOG. Statewide performance targets are documented in folios on [WSDOT’s website](#).

The applicable federal administrations and categories of performance targets are listed below:

- Federal Transit Administration
 - Transit Asset Management Targets
 - Transit Safety Targets

- Federal Highway Administration
 - Highway Safety Targets
 - Highway Bridge Condition Targets
 - Highway Pavement Condition Targets
 - Highway Travel Time and Freight Reliability Targets

Initial regional performance targets for transit asset management were set by SCOG in June 2017 and highway safety targets were set in February 2018. For transit asset management targets, SCOG set targets for buses, other passenger vehicles, ferries, non-revenue service vehicles, administration and maintenance, as well as passenger and parking facilities. For highway safety targets, SCOG agreed to plan and program projects in the Skagit region to contribute toward the accomplishment of WSDOT statewide safety performance targets for the five safety measures – each related to fatalities and serious injuries.

Initial regional performance targets for highway bridge condition, highway pavement condition, highway travel time and freight reliability were set by SCOG in October 2018. For each of these categories, SCOG agreed to plan and program projects in the Skagit region to contribute toward the accomplishment of WSDOT statewide performance targets.

SCOG set initial regional performance targets for transit safety in November 2020. The seven transit safety performance measures are related to fatalities, injuries, safety events and system reliability.

Deadlines for target setting and related target-setting dates at SCOG are in the following table.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS CATEGORY	UPCOMING SCOG DEADLINE TO SET TARGETS	LATEST TARGETS SET BY SCOG
FTA: Transit Asset Management	N/A*	7/19/2017
FTA: Transit Safety	N/A*	11/18/2020
FHWA: Highway Safety	2/27/2024	2/15/2023
FHWA: Highway Bridge Condition	3/21/2027**	5/17/2023
FHWA: Highway Pavement Condition	3/21/2027**	5/17/2023
FHWA: Highway Travel Time and Freight Reliability	3/21/2027**	5/17/2023
Notes: *Initial deadline to set Transit Asset Management targets was 6/28/2017 and initial deadline to set Transit Safety targets was 2/15/2021. Per FTA guidance, SCOG may choose to revise or maintain these targets when RTIP or Skagit 2045 is updated, in consultation with WSDOT and Skagit Transit.		
**SCOG has 180 days to set regional performance targets after WSDOT sets revised dates for these performance targets. SCOG estimates that WSDOT will set targets on 10/1/2026.		

7.1 TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT

Regional performance targets for transit asset management were adopted by the Transportation Policy Board on June 21, 2017, and revised on July 19, 2017. Regional performance targets by asset class for this category are in the following table, and have been maintained since 2017.

NUMBER	NAME	DESCRIPTION	REGIONAL PERFORMANCE TARGET
1	Buses	Percent of Buses that exceed Useful Life Benchmark	No greater than 10%
2	Other Passenger Vehicles	Percent of Other Passenger Vehicles that exceed Useful Life Benchmark	No greater than 10%
3	Ferries	Percent of Ferries that exceed Useful Life Benchmark	No greater than 0%
4	Non-revenue Service Vehicles	Percent of Non-revenue Service Vehicles that exceed Useful Life Benchmark	No greater than 10%
5	Administration and Maintenance	Percent of Administration and Maintenance facilities that have a Transit Economic Requirements Model condition rating below 3 ("Adequate")	No greater than 15%
6	Passenger and Parking	Percent of Passenger and Parking facilities have a Transit Economic Requirements Model condition rating below 3 ("Adequate")	No greater than 15%

The owners of assets that these regional performance targets apply to are the WSDOT Ferries Division and Skagit Transit. SCOG initially coordinated with both these agencies in 2017 to get an inventory of current assets and targets set by WSDOT and Skagit Transit. Condition information for assets and performance targets for 2018 was made available to SCOG after both organizations prepared transit asset management plans in late 2018. Skagit Transit updated their asset inventory and targets in 2019, and provided them to SCOG.

7.2 TRANSIT SAFETY

Regional performance targets for transit safety measures were adopted by the Transportation Policy Board on November 18, 2020. There are seven performance measures for which targets were set for this category. Adopted regional performance targets for fixed-routes buses and not-fixed-route buses are included in the following table.

NUMBER	NAME	DESCRIPTION	REGIONAL PERFORMANCE TARGET BY MODE	
			FIXED-ROUTE BUS*	NON-FIXED-ROUTE BUS**
1	Fatalities	Five-year (2016–2020) rolling average of fatalities	0	0
2	Fatality Rate	Five-year (2016–2020) rolling average of fatalities per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles by mode	0.00	0.00
3	Injuries	Five-year (2016–2020) rolling average of injuries	2	1
4	Injury Rate	Five-year (2016–2020) rolling average of injuries per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles by mode	0.20	0.08
5	Safety Events	Five-year (2016–2020) rolling average of safety events	20	12
6	Safety Event Rate	Five-year (2016–2020) rolling average of safety events per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles by mode	1.40	0.80
7	System Reliability***	Five-year (2016–2020) rolling average of mean distance between major mechanical failures by mode	74,874	69,582

Notes: *Fixed-route Bus targets by mode apply to local and express (40X, 80X, 90X) services; **Non-fixed-route Bus targets by mode apply to paratransit and vanpool services; and ***System reliability is calculated as the mean distance between major mechanical failures.

Transit safety requirements apply to Skagit Transit, which set their initial safety targets in August 2020 and included them within their adopted Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan – a related federal requirement for performance-based planning. The plan was provided to SCOG in August 2020. Most recently, Skagit Transit updated their plan in 2022, adopting new transit safety performance targets, and provided it to SCOG in November 2022.

7.3 HIGHWAY SAFETY

SCOG – along with all other metropolitan planning organizations in Washington state – worked to set regional performance targets for highway safety earlier this year. [Target Zero](#), with the goal of eliminating all roadway fatalities and serious injuries by 2030, is Washington state’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan and is used as the foundation for the target setting process at the statewide level. While the goal of Target Zero remains, the statewide methodology for setting safety targets was modified in 2018, and updated in 2019, to make them less aspirational and more data-driven, realistic and achievable. Highway safety performance measures and targets apply to all public roadways.

The five highway safety measures are included in the following table.

NUMBER	NAME	DESCRIPTION
1	Fatalities	Five-year rolling average of fatalities on all public roadways in the Skagit region
2	Fatality Rate	Five-year rolling average of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in the Skagit region
3	Serious Injuries	Five-year rolling average of serious injuries on all public roadways in the Skagit region
4	Serious Injury Rate	Five-year rolling average of serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in the Skagit region
5	Non-motorist Fatalities and Serious Injuries	Five-year rolling average of non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries on all public roadways in the Skagit region

Metropolitan planning organizations across the U.S. are given a choice through applicable federal regulations when setting regional highway safety targets. The choice is either to:

1. Agree to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the state DOT (WSDOT) safety target for that performance measure; or

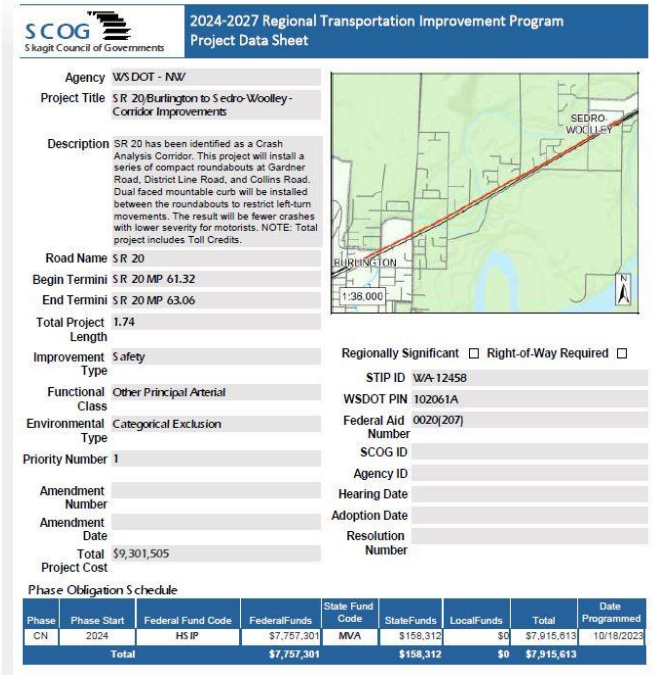
2. Commit to quantifiable safety targets for performance measures in their metropolitan planning area (the Skagit region).

On February 15, 2023, the Transportation Policy Board took action agreeing to plan and program projects in the Skagit region so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of WSDOT statewide safety performance targets. Programming of projects that help meet statewide safety targets can be accomplished when SCOG includes projects in the RTIP that aim to reduce fatalities and serious injuries in the Skagit region.

An [inventory showing statewide and regional safety trends](#) was prepared by SCOG in 2023, using data provided by WSDOT.

EXAMPLES OF INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

The SR 20/Burlington to Sedro-Woolley – Corridor Improvements project utilizes federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funding on what has been identified by WSDOT as a Crash Analysis Corridor. A series of compact roundabouts are included in the project along with dual faced mountable curb, restricting left-turn movements and resulting in fewer crashes with lower severity.



Phase	Phase Start	Federal Fund Code	Federal Funds	State Fund Code	State Funds	Local Funds	Total	Date Programmed
CN	2024	HS IP	\$7,757,301	MVA	\$158,312	\$0	\$7,915,613	10/18/2022
Total			\$7,757,301		\$158,312	\$0	\$7,915,613	

EXAMPLE PROJECT TO IMPROVE SAFETY

7.4 HIGHWAY BRIDGE CONDITION

The condition of bridges on the National Highway System is assessed by WSDOT in the Skagit region and across Washington state. Condition is evaluated for bridge decks, superstructure, substructure and culverts. A rating system is used to classify overall condition as either “Good”, “Fair” or “Poor”. SCOG worked to set regional performance targets for highway bridge condition in spring 2023.

The two highway bridge condition measures are included in the following table.

NUMBER	NAME	DESCRIPTION
1	Good Bridge Condition	Percent of National Highway System bridges in the Skagit region classified in Good condition
2	Poor Bridge Condition	Percent of National Highway System bridges in the Skagit region classified in Poor condition

Metropolitan planning organizations across the U.S. are given a choice through applicable federal regulations when setting regional highway bridge condition targets on the National Highway System. The choice is either to:

1. Agree to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the state DOT (WSDOT) National Highway System bridge condition target for that performance measure; or

2. Commit to quantifiable National Highway System bridge condition targets for performance measures in their metropolitan planning area (the Skagit region).

On May 17, 2023, the Transportation Policy Board took action agreeing to plan and program projects in the Skagit region so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of WSDOT statewide highway bridge condition performance targets. Programming of projects that help meet targets can be accomplished when SCOG includes projects in the RTIP that aim to improve National Highway System bridge condition in the Skagit region.

An [inventory showing highway bridge condition in the Skagit region](#) was prepared by SCOG in 2023, using data provided by WSDOT.

EXAMPLES OF INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

The I-5/Southbound Samish River – Bridge Deck Overlay project, completed in 2022, is an example of a RTIP programming decision made by SCOG linking investment priorities toward achieving performance outcomes. The bridge at this location is on the National Highway System, and was identified by SCOG in 2018 – using WSDOT bridge condition information – as the only National Highway System bridge in Poor condition in the Skagit region. Subsequently, the project was programmed in the RTIP, with the construction phase obligating funding in 2022 and construction complete the same year. Funding to construct this project came through the National Highway Performance Program.

7.5 HIGHWAY PAVEMENT CONDITION

The condition of pavement on the National Highway System is assessed by WSDOT in the Skagit region and across Washington state. Assessment of pavement condition is based on the International Roughness Index, cracking, rutting of asphalt pavement and faulting of jointed concrete pavement. Pavement is classified as either in “Good”, “Fair” or “Poor” condition. SCOG worked to set regional performance targets for pavement condition in spring 2023.

The four highway pavement measures are included in the following table.

NUMBER	NAME	DESCRIPTION
1	Good Interstate Pavement Condition	Percent of pavement of the Interstate System in Good condition in the Skagit region
2	Poor Interstate Pavement Condition	Percent of pavement of the Interstate System in Poor condition in the Skagit region
3	Good Non-Interstate Pavement Condition	Percent of pavement on the National Highway System in Good condition in the Skagit region, excluded the Interstate System
4	Poor Non-Interstate Pavement Condition	Percent of pavement on the National Highway System in Poor condition in the Skagit region, excluded the Interstate System

Metropolitan planning organizations across the U.S. are given a choice through applicable federal regulations when setting regional highway pavement condition targets for the National Highway System. The choice is either to:

1. Agree to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the state DOT (WSDOT) National Highway System pavement condition target for that performance measure; or
2. Commit to quantifiable National Highway System pavement condition targets for performance measures in their metropolitan planning area (the Skagit region).

On May 17, 2023, the Transportation Policy Board took action agreeing to plan and program projects in the Skagit region so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of WSDOT statewide performance targets for highway pavement condition on the National Highway System. Programming of projects that help meet targets can be accomplished when SCOG includes projects in the RTIP that aim to improve pavement condition in the Skagit region’s portion of the National Highway System.

A [pavement inventory of the National Highway System in the Skagit region](#) was prepared by SCOG in 2023. The inventory used the most recently available WSDOT highway pavement condition information for the Skagit region. SCOG also prepared a [webmap](#) in 2023 depicting pavement and highway bridge condition data in the Skagit region.

EXAMPLES OF INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

WSDOT programmatic projects are used to assist in meeting pavement related performance outcomes for the National Highway System. An example of this type of project is the Asphalt/Chip Seal Preservation programmatic project for the Skagit region. While programmed as one project in the RTIP, this is actually a grouping of projects by type of work, often referred to as “pavers” (i.e. preservation of pavement via asphalt or chip seal). This programmatic project is supported by Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds programmed in the RTIP.

7.6 HIGHWAY TRAVEL TIME AND FREIGHT RELIABILITY

Highway travel time and freight reliability relates to how well the National Highway System is performing for travelers. Reliability is assessed using the National Performance Management Research Data Set – a data set available to WSDOT and SCOG that is derived from vehicle/passenger probe data, such as GPS information, navigation units, cell phones and truck transponders. These data are used to compare travel times between 50th, 80th and 95th percentile speeds to ascertain reliability of the National Highway System, both for Interstates and non-Interstates. The measure for Interstate Freight Reliability is calculated using a different methodology than the other two measures.

The three highway travel time and freight reliability measures are in the following table.

NUMBER	NAME	DESCRIPTION
1	Interstate Travel Time Reliability	Percent of person-miles traveled on the Interstate System that are reliable in the Skagit region
2	Non-Interstate Travel Time Reliability	Percent of person-miles traveled on the National Highway System that are reliable in the Skagit region, excluding the Interstate System
3	Interstate Freight Reliability	Truck Travel Time Reliability Index on the Interstate System in the Skagit region

Metropolitan planning organizations across the U.S. are given a choice through applicable federal regulations when setting regional National Highway System travel time reliability and Interstate System freight reliability performance targets. The choice is either to:

1. Agree to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the state DOT (WSDOT) National Highway System travel time reliability and Interstate System freight reliability targets for that performance measure; or
2. Commit to quantifiable National Highway System travel time reliability and Interstate System freight reliability targets for performance measures in their metropolitan planning area (the Skagit region).

On May 17, 2023, the Transportation Policy Board took action agreeing to plan and program projects in the Skagit region so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of statewide performance targets for National Highway System travel time reliability and Interstate System freight reliability. Programming of projects that help meet statewide targets can be accomplished when SCOG includes projects in the RTIP that aim to improve travel time and freight reliability in the Skagit region’s portion of the National Highway System.

Inventories of [highway travel time reliability](#) and [freight reliability](#) were prepared by SCOG in 2023 for the Skagit region using data from the National Performance Management Research Data Set.

8 OBLIGATION AUTHORITY

SCOG is subject to a statewide deadline of obligating regionally managed FHWA funds by the end of the federal fiscal year, along with all other metropolitan planning organizations in Washington state. These statewide requirements are detailed in the Local Agency Federal OA Policy. Washington state, along with all other states, is at risk of losing federal funds every year if statewide obligating authority targets are not met by the end of each federal fiscal year. The 2024 federal fiscal year ends on September 30, 2024.

RTIP projects programmed in 2024 are an “agreed to” list of projects that can obligate federal funding by implementing agencies, following approval of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program in January 2024. Obligation does not occur until project sponsors enter into an agreement with WSDOT for the project/project phase programmed in the RTIP. Funds can also be “flexed” between FHWA and FTA programs in certain circumstances, but must be in the first year of the RTIP (2024) for approval of these transfers.

8.1 2024 OBLIGATION AUTHORITY PLAN

An obligation authority plan is prepared by SCOG for 2024. The purpose of the plan is to provide project tracking information and communicate expected 2024 obligations and dates to partners, including implementing agencies and WSDOT. At a minimum, the obligation authority plan includes all projects selected to receive SCOG regionally managed FHWA funds that are programmed in 2024.

The 2024 Obligation Authority Plan may include projects implementing the following gap strategies, in prioritized order, if the SCOG regional obligation authority target will not be met by March 1, 2024:

- 1. Advancing 2025–2027 Fiscally Constrained Projects;**
- 2. Advancing 2028–2029 Illustrative Projects;**
- 3. Advancing Contingency List Projects; and**
- 4. Adding to Past Federal Project Awards.**

Descriptions of gap strategies, along with procedures used to implement each strategy, are included in the RTIP Obligation Authority Procedures. A process to request extensions on the March 1 obligation deadline is also included in the procedures.

The 2024 Obligation Authority Plan is not incorporated into the 2024–2029 RTIP, and is revised by SCOG as necessary to meet the October 1 regional obligation authority target.

8.2 OBLIGATION AUTHORITY PROCEDURES

Obligation authority procedures – including extension requests, gap strategies and appeals – have been established to clearly demonstrate how SCOG will actively manage the obligation authority process to meet the regional obligation authority target by the end of every federal fiscal year. The procedures are included in the following hyperlink.

- [RTIP Obligation Authority Procedures](#)

The RTIP Obligation Authority Procedures are incorporated as an element of the 2024–2029 RTIP.