

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board
Thursday, May 8, 2008
SRTC Office - Intermodal Center – Third Floor
Spokane, Washington

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Spokane Regional Transportation Council was called to order by Chair, Mr. Todd Mielke, at 1:02 pm.

2. Roll Call/Record of Attendance

Board Members in Attendance:

Micki Harnois, Small Towns Representative (Vice-Chair)
Keith Metcalf, WSDOT – Eastern Region
Todd Mielke, Spokane County Commissioner (Chair)
Joe Shogan, City of Spokane Council Member
Dale Stedman, Washington State Transportation Commission
Diana Wilhite, City of Spokane Valley
Jim Williams, Private Sector Transportation Provider

Board Members Absent

Allan Gainer, Spokane Transit Authority Representative
Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane Council Member
Mark Richard, Spokane County Commissioner

Guests Present:

Mike Gribner, WSDOT
Cindy Green, SRHD
Ryan Stewart, STA
Latisha Hill, Avista
Paul Kropp

Staff Present:

Glenn Miles, Transportation Manager
Eve Nelson, Sr. Transportation Planner
Staci Lehman, Pub. Info/Ed Coordinator
Jeff Selle, Manager Transportation Relations
Judy Hazard, Administrative Assistant

3. Approval of April Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to approve the April 10, 2008 meeting minutes. Ms. Diana Wilhite seconded the motion. The motion passed with five members voting for approval and two members abstaining from the vote since they were absent from the April Board meeting.

4. Committee Reports.

a) Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) Report

Mr. Mike Gribner gave an overview of the last TTC meeting. They gave recommendations to forward the draft Bike Plan and MTP Section 1 to the SRTC Board. They also discussed with Ms. Teresa Eckard of Spokane Airports the need for sub-area transportation modeling in the West Plains area. They made a recommendation to forward this to the Board also. All these items are on the Board agenda today.

5. Administrative Matters.

a) Approval of April Vouchers

Ms. Diana Wilhite made a motion to approve the payment of the April, 2008 voucher list in the amount of \$154,383.22. Mr. Dale Stedman seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Recap for April 2008:	
Vouchers:	72,197.99
Salaries/Benefits: Warrant Nos: 12934393-1293507 and 1296319-1296333	80,992.43
Interfund, other expenses, and reimbursements processed directly by the City of Spokane	1,192.80
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	154,383.22

b) May TIP Amendment – Spokane County

SRTC requested approval of the May Amendment to the 2008-2011 TIP. Spokane County requested the following project be amended:

Add – Farwell Road – SR2 to Market, reallocate obligated funds.

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to approve the May TIP Amendment. Mr. Keith Metcalf seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

c) FY 2008 UPWP Amendment #1

SRTC requested approval of this amendment to the 2008 Unified Planning Work Program. This amendment adjusts for a decrease in FY 2007 carryover funds, an increase in FHWA, FTA, and RTPPO, funds, and a reduction in WTP funds. It also

reallocates funds based on actual usage and the expected workload during the remainder of the fiscal year.

Mr. Dale Stedman made a motion to approve FY 2008 UPWP Amendment #1. Mr. Joe Shogan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

d) Intermodal Office Lease

SRTC is seeking to lease the office space directly next door and across the hall from its present offices. This additional space is needed in order to allow more space for the Spokane Regional Transportation Management Center (SRTMC) which has outgrown its present space. Several SRTC employees also are sharing office space with other employees and a larger conference room is needed. It is anticipated that the additional space can also be provided, if needed, to consultants from out of town working on a project/study, etc. for SRTC. This will allow SRTC to recoup a portion of the rental cost. The building is owned by the City of Spokane.

A draft copy of a Lease between the City of Spokane and SRTC has been received from the City and was provided to the Board.

Ms. Diana Wilhite made a motion to approve the Lease between the City of Spokane and SRTC. Mr. Joe Shogan seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

6. SRTC Board Member Comments.

Mr. Keith Metcalf advised of a video that WSDOT has posted on You Tube of the North Spokane Corridor construction taken from an aerial view superimposed on a design-visualization of what it will look like once it is operating.

Mr. Dale Stedman indicated that the Washington Transportation Commission has been spending a lot of time on the ferry system due to the age and condition of several of the ferries. The funding for transportation in all areas of the State are in jeopardy due to the ferry situation. The Legislature will resolve this problem no matter what the cost and it will cost a lot of money.

Ms. Micki Harnois said that last week was the kickoff of the SR 27 safety project. Mr. Keith Metcalf gave a great speech at the kickoff. Also, last week Ms. Harnois attended a planning conference in Chelan and was able to see how the VISSIM model works. She also advised that with Google people now have the ability to get the street view of homes in many areas of the country.

Mr. Joe Shogan mentioned that he has learned that gas consumption in the County has decreased. This will affect the State's transportation funding with its reliance on gas tax. The summer holiday from gas tax is a very bad idea. It will only give people approximately \$28 per vehicle with a negative impact to the state of \$125 million.

Mr. Todd Mielke brought up the subject of road standards. They were reviewed in TTC meetings in 2006 and 2007 and at that time road standards were identified. At the Board Retreat discussion took place regarding taking road standards to the next step. The next step would be trying to come up with a uniform template for the metro UGA on how to define the various road categories and what each of those definitions would look like so all the jurisdictions are building to the same standards and same widths.

7. Transportation Manager's Report.

Mr. Glenn Miles reported that he was in Washington DC recently with the Regional Chamber Alliance. While there he met with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on the Rail Relocation Uniform Investment Act they had approved in SAFETEA-LU. The final regulations that had been promulgated have been ready for 2-1/2 months and just needed a signature from the U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters. Of \$20 million to be spent \$5 million is earmarked. They want to spend the money this fiscal year to show Congress that this is a good program. They encouraged SRTC to apply for \$5 million once this has been signed. Letters have been sent to Secretary Peters asking for her to sign this document.

Also, Mr. Miles said a meeting with Union Pacific and BNSF Railroads was held while in Washington DC to talk about Bridging the Valley, Geiger Spur, and trans-loading options. Union Pacific's response from the meeting is that they are willing to meet with BNSF anytime to resolve the remaining four outstanding issues.

While in DC they also received a presentation by the chair of the Revenue Study Commission. The gist was that 40 cent per gallon gas tax will not happen but in the next 10-15 years the country will move to a vehicle miles traveled tax rather than a fuel tax because the types of propulsion are changing but the vehicle miles of travel remain the same. Also, it will probably follow other countries in regard to a value added tax for things coming into the country so the money can be used to make infrastructure investments along the supply line. There is a lot of infrastructure along the way that needs improving and this could help to finance that. If this region wants a Transportation Summit he would not be able to come but could recommend several knowledgeable people who would talk about where they see the revenue and finance and infrastructure going in the future.

A request has been made for \$250,000 for the Inland Pacific Hub which Senator Craig has indicated he supports. Senator Craig asked that Senator Murray be notified of his intention to put the request in and would like her support. Senator Murray has stated she will be willing to support Senator Craig's request. Along with other funding sources, this would fully fund the Inland Pacific Hub study.

8. Old Business.

a) Regional Concurrency/Planning Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC)

The SRTC Board has asked SRTC to work with the GMA (Growth Management Act) Steering Committee and its Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) related to the population and employment forecasts between the local jurisdictions and the County on the perimeter of the urbanized area and where that population and employment is expected to go. There is a 14% difference between the medium range forecast and the population targets that the Spokane County Commissioners have approved. SRTC staff went to the PTAC meeting and offered to work with the jurisdictions to that end. The first meeting with the County and the Valley has been held; everyone is updating their land quantity analysis at this time. SRTC is to do traffic demand modeling to show the deficiencies for GMA and concurrency so the jurisdictions can plan their capital programs or change their land use design to meet concurrency. SRTC has encountered resistance in getting these issues reconciled. This is a very time sensitive issue because SRTC must certify the concurrency of the jurisdictions comprehensive plans, finalize their forecasts and locations for growth, and at this time is in no position to certify. Spokane Valley is moving forward but the City of Spokane and Spokane County have yet to.

Mr. Joe Shogan stated the problem with the City of Spokane is being rectified. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss this issue with Mr. Shogan, Ms. McLaughlin, Mayor Verner, Mr. Miles, and whatever members of staff are asked to attend.

It was agreed that a letter be written from the SRTC Board to all jurisdictions indicating the importance of speed in providing the requested information to SRTC. The letter should show the need for more information, the time sensitivity to it, why it is important, and what is at stake. Cooperation is what is needed from all jurisdictions.

This letter is to be sent to all the elected officials of the jurisdictions involved as well as to the heads of their planning, public works, roads departments.

The draft of the letter is to be reviewed by the Board Members representing the jurisdiction that will receive the letter.

Mr. Dale Stedman made a motion that SRTC write a letter to jurisdictions from the SRTC Board asking for population and employment distribution by jurisdiction in order for SRTC to meet all the jurisdiction's growth management requirements in a timely manner. Mr. Jim Williams seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

b) Regional Bike Plan

The Board received the final draft version of the Regional Bike Plan. At last month's Board meeting Ms. Eve Nelson, SRTC staff, gave a presentation of all the elements in the Bike Plan. The public comment period ended on April 29th and all public comments have been included in the text. The TTC has looked at the Bike Plan twice and made suggestions and additions which are now included. They made a recommendation on the condition that between then and the time the public comment period ended that there were no negative comments [regarding technical merit] made about the Regional Bike Plan. No negative comments were made.

The members held discussion regarding the projects that are listed in the Plan.

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to adopt the Regional Bike Plan. Ms. Diana Wilhite seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

c) On-Call Modeling Support Services Request for Proposals

A Request for Proposals has been issued for providing technical assistance to the SRTC staff for modeling support which would include assisting with the annual update as well as ongoing validation and questions from staff. The proposals are due to SRTC at 4 pm on May 16th.

9. New Business.

a) SmartRoutes 2010 Presentation

Ms. Eve Nelson, SRTC staff, introduced Ms. Cindy Green, Spokane County Health District, who then gave a presentation on SmartRoutes 2010.

Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) (one of the nation's most successful active transportation funding advocates) invited Spokane County to participate in their 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation. The campaign goal is to double the funding for active transportation from \$4.5 billion to \$9 billion in the next reauthorization of the federal transportation budget. The proposal will advocate that \$2 billion of the additional funds support 40 communities with \$50 million apiece over six years to increase bicycling and walking for transportation. Spokane County has the potential to be positioned very competitively for this funding, if the community rallies behind the SmartRoutes Spokane Plan being developed.

RTC helped create the Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP) funded by Congress in 2005. NTPP provided four communities with \$25 million each over four years to demonstrate that investments of this sort in communities will increase non-motorized participation. Spokane County was selected as the baseline comparison community for the pilot study. This region has now been invited (one of 50 communities around the United States) to participate in this project.

At the invitation meeting, the Bike-Ped communities asked SRTC and the Spokane Regional Health District to facilitate this invitation. A steering committee and technical committee have been formed and a case statement is to be prepared. The technical committee has worked with the local planners from all the jurisdictions to get the various projects. The technical committee also designed the ranking criteria and the projects have been scored.

A Request for Qualifications and Quotes to write the 10-page case statement was released and the contract awarded to Alta Planning, Portland, Oregon. The case statement is due June 30th. It is hoped the case statement will make a compelling case for this community. The case statement will be sent to Rails to Trails who will then repackage all of the case statements, highlighting the ones they feel are the most compelling. After this, they will start working on educating Congress.

The next steps are for the TTC to review the project list; develop compelling marketing material (this will be done by Alta Planning) and return the entire packet to the SRTC Board at their June meeting.

b) MTP Section 1 – Review

At a prior TTC meeting, Section 1 of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) was distributed to the TTC and their comments requested. Comments were received, incorporated into Section 1, and a final draft provided to the members in their April packet. At their April meeting, the members made a motion to recommend approval by the SRTC Board.

Once the Sections have been updated and brought to the TTC for recommendation to the Board the MTP will go out for public comment period after which it will be brought to the Board for a formal presentation and action from the Board later in the year.

c) West Plains Subarea Transportation Modeling

Several things are occurring at the Spokane International Airport (SIA) which have the potential to increase truck and vehicular traffic on the Medical Lake and Geiger Boulevard interchanges with Interstate 90. Air cargo activities are moving to the south side and overall growth is continuing to occur. Also, growth and development south of I-90 are increasing the strain on these interchanges.

SIA and local jurisdictions would like SRTC to develop a sub-area model for the West Plains similar to what was developed for the East Valley/West Rathdrum Prairie. This area has a similar set of circumstances where the geographic area resides on the west side of the regional travel demand model and needs to be more fully developed for the consideration of alternatives.

SIA is planning to undertake some traffic counts and gather other pertinent data for

this study. SRTC has requested they coordinate their traffic counts with SRTC.

The TTC made a recommendation that SRTC resources be used to develop a sub-area planning model.

Mr. Keith Metcalf made a motion to adopt the staff recommendation to establish a West Plains Sub-area Travel Demand Model. Mr. Dale Stedman seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

d) Regional Transportation Vision

Mr. Todd Mielke stated that SRTC has been asked to take a look at transportation infrastructure issues in the region. A “Big Tent” meeting was initially scheduled to discuss transportation needs, what current resources are available, as well as what potential funding options would be available to fund the transportation system. A meeting took place to talk about governance and how this organization is set up and how it is represented. Discussion took place about having a stakeholder’s advisory group to this Board for input.

The result of the first meeting was to ask SRTC staff to facilitate some data to bring back to a larger group meeting at a later date. Several items were requested from SRTC staff:

- Give an inventory of the transportation needs (as expressed by all jurisdictions).
- Supply a list of funding options available to the jurisdictions.
- Look at what is going on with regard to the current revenue streams.

Mr. Glenn Miles gave a PowerPoint presentation (which he indicated is still in draft form) which provides the requested information. Once this presentation has been fine-tuned, it will be presented to the community.

This is SRTC’s effort to pull together a transportation project list to go back to a more broad community dialogue on the needs of transportation and infrastructure for this region. It is a three-pronged approach:

- Figure out what the project list looks like.
- Take a look at current revenue streams (how much are they, where are they coming from and what does the trend data look like)
- After analyzing current revenue streams and what is going on with trends, see what other options are out there. (The public policy piece must be joined with the political piece.)

Several dates in June are being looked at to begin the community dialogue.

10. Public Comments.

Mr. Paul Kropp complimented WSDOT for its You Tube presentation of the North Spokane Corridor; It was a great gesture. This presentation was picked up by a local television station.

11. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

JUDY HAZARD
Recording Secretary