

## MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board  
Friday, December 19, 2008  
Spokane Interstate Fair & Expo Center  
Spokane, Washington

### **1. Welcome**

The December 11, 2008 meeting of the Spokane Regional Transportation Council was reconvened at 10:10 am. The chair welcomed those in attendance, noting that the purpose of the meeting was to review and confirm the preliminary list of projects for the anticipated economic stimulus package; the deadline date for submittal being Monday, December 29, 2008.

### **2. Introductions**

Introductions were provided by Board Members, Staff, and Guests present as follows:

#### Board Members in Attendance:

Todd Mielke, Spokane County Commissioner (Chair)  
Micki Harnois, Small Towns Representative (Vice-Chair)  
Mark Richard, Spokane County Commissioner  
Keith Metcalf, WSDOT – Eastern Region  
Allan Gainer, Spokane Transit Authority Representative  
Diana Wilhite, City of Spokane Valley

#### Board Members Absent:

Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane Council Member  
Joe Shogan, City of Spokane Council Member  
Latisha Hill, Washington State Transportation Commission  
Jim Williams, Private Sector Transportation Provider

#### Guests Present:

Mike Gribner, WSDOT  
Steve Corker, City of Spokane  
Todd Ableman, City of Cheney  
Troy Gilbert, TD&H  
Joe Tortorelli, Good Roads Assoc.

#### Staff Present:

Glenn Miles, Transportation Manager  
Jeff Selle, Manager Transportation Relations  
Donna Lively, Administrative Secretary

### **3. Background on a Possible Stimulus Package**

Mr. Miles reported on what is known of the economic stimulus package to date. A draft of the stimulus package is expected in early January, after President-elect Barack Obama's inauguration. A final version is expected to be signed around February 20 to 25, 2009. It is presumed that the package will amount to \$1 trillion dollars towards infrastructure. It is anticipated that funding towards regional transportation projects will come in two waves with approximately \$150 million allocated for Eastern Washington in each wave.

Mr. Miles noted that projects should be ready within 120 to 180 days at the commencement of the first wave. It is anticipated that a number of states and jurisdictions do not have enough projects to support stimulus funding; however some states, such as Utah and Florida, have positioned themselves to receive full funding for existing construction ready projects by pulling those formerly supported with state and local funds. It is believed that funds will be distributed utilizing the state's obligation authority whereby if federal funds are not obligated within a certain time period, it is then returned to either the state or the federal government for redistribution to jurisdictions capable of spending the money on construction ready projects. Mr. Miles emphasized the need for each jurisdiction to ensure the ability to deliver their submitted projects or risk losing funding.

### **4. Process Used to Develop a List**

Mr. Miles expressed gratitude for DOT Highways and Local Programs and the Governor's office for allowing each region to compile their list of deliverable transportation projects needing funding. Mr. Miles emphasized that these projects must be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and would be submitted as State Transportation Improvement Program amendments. Since a TIP amendment takes approximately 45-60 days to process, it is imperative that projects are prioritized and deliverable.

Mr. Miles described the process used to develop the regional transportation project list as follows: 1) a draft list was sent to all local jurisdictions; 2) a community group sponsored initially by Greater Spokane Incorporated reviewed and provided comments to the submitted project list; 3) a subsequent meeting of local jurisdictions and consulting firms met to discuss how the projects might be categorized and then sized to ensure project delivery; 4) a meeting of the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) in December provided additional review and input; 5) the list was then categorized by project type, potential job creation, and then readiness to bid.

It was noted that a balance of project types was needed. In addition, because of the uncertainty with regard to the specifics of the stimulus plan itself and its implementation, Mr. Miles encouraged the board and local jurisdictions to be prepared to have multiple, prioritized project plans predetermined and available to fit the final requirements/criteria once they are defined.

## **5. Dialogue to Date**

Mr. Todd Mielke reported that dialogue to date began the first week in December when the Association of Cities requested a call for projects. Various other groups also looked at the stimulus package, including local Chambers of Commerce who wanted to take a look at the economic impact within the region. It was emphasized that participation by all parties and local jurisdictions has been encouraged and discussions have been facilitated since the first week of December in order to promote cooperation and avoid conflicts and stay up to speed with what decisions are being made with regard to the anticipated economic stimulus package. Mr. Miles noted that the project list requested by the DOT Highways and Local Programs and the Governor's office will be a placeholder of what the region can deliver until further criteria clarifications are provided. Mr. Jeff Selle stated that transportation dominated the recent GSI meeting and the process defined and undertaken to determine which transportation projects will be eligible for stimulus funding will be used to define other infrastructure projects for funding. Mr. Mielke pointed out that outside of the Council of Governments there is no formalized structure to coordinate regional projects outside of transportation.

## **6. Presentation of the Preliminary List**

Mr. Miles provided and reviewed a preliminary project list comprised of projects submitted by jurisdictions. The list was categorized by project type: bridge work, new construction, non-motorized, reconstruction, reconstruction-widening, rehabilitation, bus replacement, and resurfacing. Within each project type category, projects were prioritized based on earliest ad ready dates. It was noted that all STA projects fell under Title 49 funding and would be placed ultimately in their own category.

## **7. Discussion**

The Board reviewed the preliminary list of regional transportation projects eligible for stimulus funding in light of known criteria, e.g., must be construction ready, funds are not to be used to secure right-of-ways or applied toward design work or environmental clearance. Mr. Miles noted the potential that money could be available during the second wave of funding for securing right-of-ways. Mr. Mielke asked why there was no category for safety projects. It was explained that jurisdictions are required to address safety issues under each project category.

Mr. Miles recommended that all non-motorized projects be included for funding. He noted that with regard to reconstruction and reconstruction-widening projects, the TTC recommended that each jurisdiction should be allowed one funded project under each category. Also, for bridgework and new construction projects, the TTC recommended that all projects ad ready in 2009 be included in phase I of the funding allocation, and projects ad ready for 2010 be included in phase II. It was suggested that projects ad ready for September to November of 2009 be considered as phase II projects, and that resurfacing projects have long-term lasting value and not be quick fixes. Mr. Miles emphasized that projects must be prioritized by ad ready date as well as the number of

jobs it will create. He asked Board members to 1) consider projects based on what is important to the region, 2) understand that the rules to obtain funding have not been clarified, and 3) be prepared to remain flexible and move rapidly once criteria/rules are defined.

There was extensive Board discussion pertaining to the list of projects, funding, prioritizing, etc. It was suggested that the Board adopt the preliminary project list as is and further refine once criteria is defined. The Board discussed the need to further prioritize projects based on deliverability. It was agreed that further clarification was needed by jurisdictions with regard to prioritizing projects based on necessity, capacity to deliver, and job readiness. It was also agreed that no additional projects will be accepted for inclusion into the final regional project list. Projects submitted late (received less than twenty four hours prior to the meeting) will remain last on the list to receive funding and will only be included for second round consideration.

## **8. Recommendations for Submittal**

Based on Board discussion, it was agreed that the list of projects proposed was complete pending further clarification from jurisdictions. A deadline of end-of-business on Tuesday, December 23, 2008 was requested to receive project clarification from jurisdictions, or existing prioritization will be accepted as is.

**Ms. Diana Wilhite made a motion to: 1) approve the existing list of projects proposed to the Board for consideration under phase I and II of anticipated funding; 2) allow for jurisdiction's reprioritization of projects under the reconstruction, reconstruction-widening, and resurfacing categories to be received no later than 5:00 pm Tuesday, December 23, 2008; 3) allow one project per jurisdiction at a time under the reconstruction, reconstruction-widening, and resurfacing categories to receive funding; and 4) not allow new projects to be added to the list proposed to the Board for consideration. Mr. Mark Richard seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.**

The Board reserves the right to make amendments with regard to the proposed project list at any future date to concur with the final criteria determined by the federal government and/or the State of Washington.

## **9. Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

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Donna Lively  
Recording Secretary