

**MEETING MINUTES**

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Transportation Technical Committee  
May 27, 2020  
Zoom Video Conference

1. **Call to Order** - Mr. Karl Otterstrom, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

**Committee Members Present**

Karl Otterstrom	Spokane Transit Authority	Brandi Colyar	Spokane County
Heather Trautman	City of Airway Heights	Scott Englehard	Spokane County
Roger Krieger	City of Deer Park	Cindy Green	Spokane Regional Health Dist.
Kara Mowry	City of Spokane	Gordon Howell	Spokane Transit Authority
Inga Note	City of Spokane	Mike Tedesco	Spokane Tribe of Indians
Kevin Picanco	City of Spokane	Mary Jensen	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Gloria Mantz	City of Spokane Valley	Larry Larson	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Adam Jackson	City of Spokane Valley	Glenn Wagemann	WSDOT-Eastern Region

**Committee Alternates Present**

n/a

**Guests**

Char Kay	WSDOT-Eastern Region	Keith Martin	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Paul Kropp		Sean Messner	HDR
Mike Tressider	Spokane Transit Authority		

**Staff**

Eve Nelson	Principal Transportation Planner	Sabrina Minshall	Executive Director
Jason Lien	Principal Transportation Planner	Julie Meyers-Lehman	Admin-Exec. Coordinator
David Fletcher	Assoc. Transportation Planner III		

3. **Approval of March 2020 Meeting Minutes**

***Ms. Mantz made a motion to approve the March minutes as presented. Ms. Note seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.***

4. **Public Comments** - There were no public comments.

5. **Technical Member Comments** – Chair Otterstrom asked each member to describe how the COVID-19 situation had affected their agency/jurisdiction.

- *Airway Heights:* Ms. Trautman reported there was a pause in residential construction and commercial activity due to the Governor’s order but now about 90 – 95% of projects that were in the pipeline and back on track. She said the Smart Growth America grant recently awarded to the city has been put on hold indefinitely by the grant providers. The city continues to proceed with major projects, pursuing grant opportunities, and is looking for ways to help local businesses re-open.
- *Spokane:* Ms. Note said staff is working to expand the “streeteries” ordinance for outdoor restaurant seating. Mr. Picanco reports that some construction was delayed or paused, but most have been reactivated and moving forward. He noted the city is looking at additional street maintenance projects for this year and continuing into 2021.

- *Spokane Valley*: Ms. Mantz said there were minor delays on two or three projects, but other school-related projects to move ahead sooner than expected since the schools are closed. She said staff is looking at budget impacts for next year's projects. Mr. Jackson reported that the city council adopted the city's 2021-2026 TIP last night.
- *Deer Park*: Mr. Krieger stated that the new subdivision project is moving forward and the city submitted an application for a BUILD grant; he thanked SRTC for the letter of support. He said city council meetings have not re-started yet and the updated street plan is on hold until public hearings can be held again.
- *Spokane County*: Ms. Colyar said there has been limited impact to County projects; some contractors had a few weeks delay and others used the reduction of traffic to their advantage and moved ahead on their projects more quickly.
- *Spokane Regional Health District*: Ms. Green commented that, as could be expected, the whole agency is extremely busy. The Safe Routes to School program is on hold since schools are closed.; they are talking with Spokane Public Schools about the possibility of using the walking school bus program to get youth to summer meal programs at the schools. She said the Walk Bike Bus (WBB) program for the Cincinnati Greenway has been delayed until July. The WBB program usually relies on ambassadors to go door-to-door to encourage resident's participation, but now will be relying on direct mail or other media.
- *Spokane Transit*: Mr. Howell reported that some federal and state grant deadlines moved a little. Formula grants received so haven't noticed much change. Mr. Otterstrom said they have instituted service reductions for commuter routes and staffing adjustments. He reported ridership is down 55-70%, depending on the route, but it is starting to pick back up. STA expects to reinstate fare collection when the county is at Phase 3 of re-openings. He said the overall decrease in revenue from sales tax could have an impact on their budget and they may have to adjust some growth plans. He spoke about ongoing construction for the Central City Line and upgrades on Division St.
- *Spokane Tribe*: Mr. Tedesco said they were scheduled to begin expansion on the casino in April but had to pause the project; they are working on a revised schedule. He noted that as a sovereign nation, the Tribe is not required to follow orders from the Governor's office, but they have chosen to do so in this case for the health of their members, employees and customers. He thanked the health district for their COVID prevention/safety advice for casino workers and instructions about how to re-open as safely as possible.
- *WSDOT-Eastern Region*: Mr. Larson said they are proceeding with projects with trepidation due to budget issues; WSDOT is losing \$100 million per month in lost revenues. The agency is doing budget drills and projects may be impacted. He said staff is worried about dire budget forecasts, but a federal funding package could come through. However, nothing is likely to be known about that until July. Mr. Wagemann said WSDOT has created an online tool to track traffic volumes on state highways since the COVID stay-home order. He explained it is updated daily and compares volumes to one year prior; data is available to everyone on the WSDOT website. He reported that increasing volumes on US 195 have made it necessary to re-start the ramp meters onto I-90.

**6. Chair Report on SRTC Board of Directors Meeting** – Chair Otterstrom shared highlights from the April and May Board meetings.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**7. Financial Assessment Subject Matter Expert (SME) Team** – Mr. Fletcher explained that SRTC is requesting the establishment of a SME team to inform the financial assessment portion of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan update. This advisory team will report the to the TTC and will be evaluating the methodology

and assumptions about projected transportation revenue and needs for the MTP through the horizon year of 2045.

Mr. Fletcher explained that the financial assessment will have two parts: a revenue forecast and a needs analysis. He noted the final scope for the team is still being worked on and SRTC currently has an RFP out for a consultant to conduct the revenue forecasting. The role of the TTC in this process will be to review and react to the SME team's work, identify possible flaws, and to recommend the revenue forecast/needs analysis to the Board.

Mr. Fletcher presented an anticipated project timeline and a list of proposed agencies/team members. Member agencies include City of Airway Heights, City of Deer Park, City of Liberty Lake, City of Spokane, City of Spokane Valley, Spokane County, Spokane Transit Authority, and WSDOT-Eastern Region.

He said the SME team is not a formal committee, but a group of member agency staff to assist SRTC in the creation the financial assessment portion of the MTP update, which is scheduled to be presented for Board approval in late 2021.

***Ms. Trautman made a motion to establish a SME Team to inform the MTP financial assessment. Mr. Larson seconded the motion. All votes were in favor.***

## **INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**8. Project Delivery Report** – Ms. Nelson noted this item was presented to the Board earlier this month. Ms. Nelson defined the term “project obligation” and explained that SRTC, along with all other MPO's in the state, is required to meet a WSDOT-set obligation target each year. For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020, SRTC's target is \$11.37 million of federal funds managed through SRTC for projects found in the 4-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Currently at 40% of the target has been reached and she described how project de-obligations negatively affect reaching the target.

She explained that if MPOs meet their targets by July 31 they are in a position to possibly receive additional federal dollars that become available. If MPO's fail to meet their targets by September 30, they are in jeopardy of losing the un-obligated funds. Ms. Nelson reported that last year Puget Sound Regional Council met the July 31 deadline and received an additional \$10 million of funding.

Ms. Nelson said in FFY 2019 SRTC did not reach the target by the July 31 deadline, but was able to meet the September 30 deadline. For FFY 2020, it is anticipated that we will again be short of the target by the July 31 deadline. She presented a list of projects that have been delayed and/or are struggling to deliver and provided some details of why they may not obligate in time; a list of all projects scheduled to deliver in FFY 2020 was included in the packet.

Ms. Nelson said the TIP Working Group actively monitors the obligation target; Spokane County and City of Spokane are working diligently to pull forward several projects to help reach this year's target. She said SRTC actively works with jurisdictions to help in overcoming delays. SRTC will hosting a collaborative workshop for member agency staff on May 28 discuss possible strategies to help the region be in a better position to meet the obligation authority target both this year and going forward and how to prepare more projects for grant opportunities. She will report back to the Board and the TTC in July about any potential new policies.

**9. Agency Update** – Ms. Nelson reported on:

- US 195/I-90 Study is proceeding, with land use assumptions and the existing conditions report under team review
- The DivisionConnects study continues; the Steering Committee just had its first meeting
- D.A.T.A. project just closed its needs survey and is being reviewed by the project team
- Land use update for the MTP is being finalized now
- SRTC has released a RFP for the MTP financial forecast

- The application for the Spokane Electrification Grant will be submitted to the Dept. of Commerce next week
- EWU and SRTC have distributed a public survey to measure mobility impacts as a result of COVID-19
- SRTC will be working with WSDOT on a TSMO panel examining low cost TSMO solutions
- Both SRTC and PSRC have been selected as the MPO partners to participate on the Washington State Freight Steering Committee
- SRTC will be participating at the Regional Transportation Coalition meeting on June 4

### **13. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm.

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Julie Meyers-Lehman  
Recording Secretary