

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Spokane Regional Transportation Council  
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday December 9, 2021  
Zoom Video Conference Meeting

### **# 1 Call to Order/Record of Attendance/Excused Absences**

Chair Ben Wick brought the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

##### ***Board Members:***

Mayor Ben Wick, *City of Spokane Valley* (Chair)  
Paul Schmidt, *City of Cheney* (Vice Chair)  
Mayor James Weathers, *City of Airway Heights*  
Council Member Dee Cragun, *City of Deer Park*  
Mayor Cris Kaminskas, *City of Liberty Lake*  
Mayor Shirley Maike, *City of Medical Lake*  
Mayor Kevin Freeman, *City of Millwood*  
Council Member Lori Kinnear, *City of Spokane*  
Council Member Candace Mumm, *City of Spokane*  
Council Member Linda Thompson, *City of Spokane Valley*  
Larry Stone, *Major Employer Representative*  
Matt Ewers, *Rail/Freight Representative*  
Commissioner Al French, *Spokane County*  
Commissioner Mary Kuney, *Spokane County*  
Susan Meyer, *Spokane Transit Authority*  
Todd Coleman, *Transp. Advisory Committee Chair*  
Adam Jackson, *Transp. Technical Committee Chair*  
Mike Gribner, *WSDOT-Eastern Region*  
Kelly Fukai, *WA State Transportation Commission*

##### ***Guests\*:***

Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority  
Adam Jackson, City of Spokane Valley  
Tony Newman  
Charles Hansen  
Tom Sahlberg  
Char Kay, WSDOT

##### ***Staff:***

Lois Bollenback, Executive Director  
Eve McMenemy, Deputy Executive Director  
Ryan Stewart, Principal Transportation Planner  
Mike Ulrich, Principal Transportation Planner  
David Fletcher, Principal Transportation Planner  
Kylee Jones, Associate Transportation Planner III  
Michael Redlinger, Associate Transportation Planner II  
Greg Griffin, Administrative Services Manager  
Julie Meyers-Lehman, Admin-Exec Coordinator

*\*due to a technical malfunction, not all guest names were recorded.*

Chair Wick stated that Micki Harnois requested an excused absence from the meeting;

***Mr. Schmidt made a motion to excuse the absence. Ms. Cragun seconded. All votes were in favor.***

### **# 2 Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **# 3 Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Bollenback reported on;

- Funding Update: The new federal infrastructure package contains \$550B in transportation funding; as a comparison the last 5-year re-authorization had \$293B. Most funding in the package are formula funds, based on states/populations, but some are new programs with discretionary funding or competitive grant funds. SRTC primarily distributes Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding. More details about the federal package to come.
- Nominating Committee: The group initially met on 11/3 and will meet again on 12/13 to review the applications for the Major Employer and Rail/Freight positions, review the proposed TAC bylaws, and review TAC membership applicants. They are expected to make a recommendation to the Board at the January meeting.
- Election of 2022 SRTC Board Chair and Vice-Chair: The new Interlocal Agreement specifies that officers shall be elected at the first regular meeting of the calendar year, so this will be an agenda item at the January meeting. She read the requirements for Board officer position eligibility.

## ACTION ITEMS

### # 4 Consent Agenda

#### a) November 2021 Meeting Minutes

#### b) November 2021 Vouchers

There was no discussion or questions about any item on the Consent Agenda.

***Ms. Cragun made a motion for approval of the Consent Agenda as presented; Ms. Thompson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.***

### # 5 US 195/I-90 Study Final Report

Mr. Stewart recapped the purpose of the study and described how the study advisory team was involved throughout the entire process. He summarized the public outreach, including the past few months of public outreach which generated quite a few comments from the community. Many of those comments were in support of the proposed strategies. A sample of some of the verbatim quotes were shared; several of the comments expressed concern about growth and land development in the area.

He noted that throughout the study process, the team compared potential strategies with the study's five goals; the goals were developed with significant community input at the beginning of the study. Some suggestions from the community for strategies did not align with the goals; for example, a particular suggestion may not have been implementable/fundable within a reasonable timeframe. All public input was made available to the study advisory team and at their last meeting, the study advisory team agreed to support the final report. Board members had no questions or comments.

***Ms. Maiké made a motion to adopt the US 195/Interstate 90 Study Final Report. Ms. Kaminskis seconded. Motion carried with all votes in favor.***

### # 6 Horizon 2045-Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Mr. Ulrich shared the importance of the MTP in supporting the Board's project funding decisions and project selection process. He highlighted the critical elements of the plan which were updated.

He presented information about increases in volume and trips from 2019 to 2045 in vehicle miles traveled, vehicle hours traveled, people/vehicle trips, transit trips and walk/bike trips. The MTP contains a financial forecast that reveals a \$5.1B gap in funding for operations/maintenance/preservation. He discussed the MTP Guiding Principles and the implementation strategies covered in Chapter 4 of the document.

Mr. Ulrich summarized the stakeholder and public engagement processes for the MTP update, which had to be modified in light of the pandemic. Next steps in the MTP development include a web-based user interface with interactive elements which will allow users to explore regional transportation data along with other types of visualizations.

Mr. Ewers commented on the need for the plan to have a greater emphasis on freight; increased population growth, even if more people utilize transit or active transportation, will still result in greater freight traffic because about 90% of all goods consumed in Spokane county comes in by truck. More people in the region will mean more truck volume.

***Ms. Thompson made a motion to adopt by Resolution 21-06 the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Horizon 2045. Ms. Cragun seconded. Motion passed unanimously.***

## **# 7 SRTC Public Participation Plan**

Ms. Jones described the PPP and what it is designed to do. She highlighted the components which were added or updated, including:

- Develop goals and strategies for the plan
- Create a stakeholder engagement matrix
- Update equitable public participation techniques and methods
- Update engagement evaluation
- Other administrative updates

She shared the plan update process timeline and spoke about the significant involvement by members of the Transportation Advisory Committee in the work.

***Ms. Cragun made a motion to adopt the 2021 update to the SRTC Public Participation Plan. Mr. Weathers seconded. All votes were in favor.***

## **# 8 2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Guidebook**

Ms. Jones summarized what a TIP is and explained the purpose of the TIP Guidebook, which is updated by SRTC each year. There were very few edits from the 2021 version; only revised calendars for TIP amendments and administrative modifications and new information about the upcoming call for projects. No Board members had questions or comments.

***Mr. Ewers made a motion to adopt the 2022 TIP Guidebook and Ms. Thompson seconded. The motion carried with all votes in favor.***

## **INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **# 9 2024-2026 Call for Projects Overview**

Ms. Jones reported this is a region-wise call for projects and the Board will discuss principles of investment at their January and February meetings. The call will be released on 2/11/22 and applications due to SRTC by 4/4/22. She said staff will have a more accurate number next month, but preliminary information shows that there will be approximately \$40M of funding available.

She reviewed the five funding categories, the estimated amounts available, and the types of projects eligible in each category. Staff is currently engaging with the TIP Working Group, the TAC and the TTC to review the application. At the January meeting, the Board will discuss:

- Off-the-top requests from SRTMC and SRTC
- Potential set-aside for a preservation only call for projects in 2024
- Potential set-aside for small towns/small cities
- Setting application limits per agency.

The Board will be asked to take action in February. There were no questions or discussion.

### **# 10 TIP: Additional Obligation Authority**

Ms. McMenemy said staff is seeking guidance from the Board to report back to the TIP Working Group and the TTC. She explained how obligation authority works and the reasons behind the additional \$4.26M award from WSDOT. This extra award money increases the 2022 obligation target, therefore staff, in conjunction with the TIP Working Group and the TTC, are looking for projects to advance that can obligate by June 2022. Ms. McMenemy described the amount of funding available by type and which types of projects are eligible.

She reported that three member agencies have submitted requests to SRTC for contingency funding (below) and briefly described the reasons they provided for the additional funding requests:

- City of Airway Heights – Hwy 2 Pathway Gap Project - \$145,761
- City of Millwood – Argonne Road Congestion Relief - \$1,000,000
- Spokane County – Brooks Road - \$1,800,000

Ms. McMenemy presented a list of projects that have been identified as very likely to be able to obligate the additional funds by the required deadline. Several of these projects were partially funded already and, while not dependent on more funding, these projects are already federalized and could obligate the funds quickly. She said the determination process was to start from the top of the contingency list and look for award opportunities for those projects that could deliver by June 2022.

She asked if the Board had any concerns about funding the three member requests. The group discussed the City of Millwood's challenges in coordinating with the Union Pacific Railroad on this project. Mayor Freeman commented that city staff is confident that the \$1M will be sufficient to move the project forward. Ms. McMenemy also asked: (1) Does the Board have any concerns about increasing the federal portions of awards, funding cost overruns or new project phases that can deliver by June 2022; and (2) Does the Board have concerns about funding new projects off the preservation list that can deliver by June 2022. No concerns were raised. There was a comment that the project list is very well thought out.

Ms. McMenemy said the project list will be brought back to the Board for action in January.

#### **# 11 Critical Urban and Rural Freight Corridors Update**

Mr. Fletcher explained that Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC) and Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFC) are part of the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) which is primarily related to federal funding eligibility. WSDOT has created a working group of MPO/RTPO staff from throughout the state to work on this update.

He described the funding amount anticipated from the National Highway Freight Program for 2022-2025, which will be split between WSDOT preservation and local agency projects. Facilities designated as CUFC or CRFC makes them eligible for this funding.

Mr. Fletcher presented information about CUFC/CRFC mileage in Spokane County, which accounts for 8.3% of the statewide total, and described the differences between the 2016 and current CUFC/CRFC update process, which is to:

1. Identify regional freight priorities for NHFP
2. Prepare and submit NHFP applications
3. WSDOT applies statewide freight prioritization criteria
4. Selected projects designated as CUFC/CRFC awarded funding
5. Remaining CUFC/CRFC mileage distributed.

There were no questions or comments.

#### **# 12 Spokane Transit Authority: Strategic Planning Activities**

Ms. Meyer explained that because of the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill and STA's current financial status, there is an opportunity to expand existing planned improvements, to develop a plan for the next 10 years, while continuing to implement the 24 projects in STA's *Moving Forward* plan. She shared a map showing locations of STA Moving Forward projects. Other concurrent initiatives are updates to the fare collection system, preliminary engineering and project development of Division Street Bus Rapid Transit, and up to 30 more battery electric buses added to the fleet.

They are almost finished creating their new strategic 10-year plan. The investments have been identified by Board members, staff and the community. The Board is working on a plan approve next week to implement things that can have immediate impact in the next two years.

Ms. Meyer gave the floor to Mr. Otterstrom to discuss near term investments. Spoke about the process to develop these proposed near-term investments. 25 distinct projects that were identified in four categories, service improvement/expansion, fare & mobility partnerships, real estate and transit-oriented development and analysis/studies. He showed a map identifying where the proposed projects are located and provided an overview of some system-wide investment concepts.

Mr. Otterstrom explained that in October the STA Board identified a \$19.1M that could be applied towards these near-term investments. He spoke about the framework identifying the projects (initial screening, evaluation, packaging, and scoring). Two packages of projects/programs have been developed and will be considered by the STA Board. He said this has been a very fast process; only 4 months long. He spoke about the differences in Packages A and B. STA Board will be asked to select and approve the final package of investments next week and then the projects will be incorporated into programs and budgets for implementation.

### **# 13 Board Member Comments**

- Chair Wick thanked Mr. Stone for his many years serving on the SRTC Board. Mr. Stone commented that he has enjoyed his time and getting to know agency leaders in the region. He hopes SRTC can return to in-person meetings soon. He thanked everyone for
- Mr. Weathers thanked Chair Wick and Mr. Schmidt for their leadership on the Board over the past year.

### **# 14 Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:27pm.

---

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board