



Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 23, 2022 | 3:00PM

Virtual Meeting on Zoom Videoconference

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Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 23, 2022 - 3:00 PM

AGENDA

Time	Item	Page
3:00	1. Call to Order / Record of Attendance	
3:02	2. Approval of February 2022 TAC Meeting Minutes	3
3:03	3. Public Comments	
3:04	4. TAC member comments	
3:07	5. Chair Report on SRTC Board of Directors Meeting	
<u>FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION</u>		
3:10	6. Transportation Discussion Series: Safety (<i>Mike Ulrich</i>)	6
3:30	7. DivisionConnects Update (<i>Jason Lien</i>)	7
3:45	8. Toll Credits (<i>Kylee Jones</i>)	9
4:00	9. Agency Update (<i>Kylee Jones</i>)	
4:05	10. Adjournment	

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council - Transportation Advisory Committee
February 23, 2022 | Zoom Video Conference

1 Call to Order/Record of Attendance

IN ATTENDANCE

TAC Members:

Rhonda Young, Chair
Heidi Christensen, Vice Chair
Leasa Bolen
Raychel Callary
Todd Coleman
Liz Hall
Carlie Hoffman
Jorgen Rasmussen
Tom Sahlberg
Bill White
Todd Williams
Charlie Wolff
Claudine Zender
Kim Zentz

Guests:

Jason Lefler, WSDOT
Char Kay, WSDOT
Corie (no last name listed), *Epic Land Solutions*

SRTC Staff:

Kylee Jones, *Associate Transportation Planner III*
Lois Bollenback, *Executive Director*
Eve McMenamy, *Deputy Executive Director*
Mike Ulrich, *Principal Transportation Planner*
David Fletcher, *Principal Transportation Planner*
Jason Lien, *Principal Transportation Planner*
Michael Redlinger, *Associate Transportation Planner II*
Julie Meyers-Lehman, *Admin.-Exec. Coordinator*

2 Approval of January 2022 TAC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Sahlberg made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Ms. Zentz seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3 Public Comments

There were no public comments.

4 TAC Member Comments

There were no comments.

5 Chair Report on SRTC Board of Directors Meeting

Chair Young shared highlights of the February 12 Board meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

6 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) February Amendment

Ms. Jones reported that four agencies have requested an amendment to the TIP for seven projects. She clarified that the Brooks Rd project was separate from the Brooks Rd Railroad Crossing project.

Mr. Sahlberg made a motion to recommend Board approval of the March TIP Amendment; Ms. Zentz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7 Critical Urban & Rural Freight Corridors

Mr. Fletcher presented the five most competitive regional freight priority projects and reminded the group about the list development process. He reiterated the funding available statewide in this National Highway Freight Program call for projects and listed the next steps, including a request for Board approval of a

project list on March 10 and the March 11 deadline for local agencies to submit project application to SRTC.

He noted that at their last meeting the Transportation Technical Committee approved a motion to recommend Board approval of the top six projects, reflecting the addition of the *Argonne Rd & Upriver Dr Intersection* project, primarily due to the low dollar amount being requested in comparison to the other five projects.

The following comments were made during discussion:

- Details about project criteria evaluation by staff and the final scoring to be done by WSDOT.
- Reasons why Argonne Rd project was not included in the initial recommended list.
- How WSDOT's project-first approach to this freight corridor updates differs from the last time.
- Community engagement process for projects on the list.
- The freight projects on the list were already part of the Regional List of Transportation Priorities and staff also contacted member jurisdictions for project information.
- At the TTC meeting, several members stated that the dollar amounts for Pines Rd and Wellesley Ave projects would be higher than shown due to rising construction costs.
- These projects are part of a competitive statewide grant process.

Mr. Sahlberg made a motion to recommend Board approval of the proposed list of top six (6) regional priority freight projects for National Highway Freight Program funding consideration; Ms. Christensen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

8 Transportation Performance Measures: Safety Targets

Mr. Ulrich provided a summary of transportation performance management (TPM) developed by federal requirements. TPM for safety consists of five performance measures:

1. Fatalities
2. Fatalities per 100M of vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
3. Serious injuries
4. Serious injuries per 100M of VMT
5. Non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries

Per the federal TPM regulations, Metropolitan Planning Organizations have the choice to either support state DOT targets or define their own safety targets. The SRTC Board approved a resolution in 2019 agreeing to support WSDOT targets. Mr. Ulrich explained that it is time to renew the safety targets and the response is due to WSDOT in early March.

The group discussed the topic at great length. Some comments included:

- The need to track pedestrian safety problem areas throughout the region
- Fundamentals of WSDOT's Target Zero program
- The best way to care more about safety is to cross Sprague Avenue during rush hour after leaving STA Bus 90. It's an eye opener.
- Need to set regional safety goals that are both realistic and attainable
- Excessive number of roundabouts on Highway 2 on the West Plains
- Transportation safety is a matter of engineering, enforcement, and education.
- How can the region obtain more federal or state funding for safety projects
- Communities that sincerely adopt road safety can really make a difference
- There are no penalties to SRTC if the Board agrees to accept state targets, but the region does not experience reductions in fatalities and serious injuries.

Ms. Christensen made a motion to recommend that the SRTC Board agree to plan and program projects that contribute to the accomplishment of WSDOT Highway safety Improvement Program targets with relaying concerns about a focus for safety for WSDOT.

Mr. Coleman made a friendly amendment to re-word the motion as: The TAC recommends the SRTC Board support the statewide targets for safety and engage in a productive discussion on local initiatives to accomplish meaningful progress towards the Target Zero goal.

The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

9 WSDOT Ramp Meter Presentation

WSDOT Traffic Engineer Mr. Jason Lefler shared information about the performance of the I-90 corridor both pre- and post- ramp meter installation in 2020 and 2021.

10 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Lien shared a background of the CPT-HSTP plan, which is focused on serving populations with special transportation needs, such as youth, older adults, people with disabilities, rural populations, etc. The plan is also designed to identify available transportation services and assess gaps in service.

The CPT-HSTP must be updated every four years; it was last done in 2018. The 2022 update will be led by SRTC and Spokane Transit. Mr. Lien explained plan requirements for federal funding and summarized next steps in the update process. He provided a link to the [project page](#) which has more information and to access a survey.

11 Transportation Discussion Series: Quality of Life

Mr. Lien explained the purpose of this discussion series for the committees and the Board. He spoke about the definition of Quality of Life (QoL) in terms of a multimodal transportation system and shared useage data for the regional trail network and STA ridership. He spoke about trackable QoL indicators, such as miles of facility type, network density, level of traffic stress, proximity to a bus stop, etc.

Mr. Lien asked for suggestions about how to measure success in QoL and what other QoL metrics staff should consider. Members commented on:

- The importance of transit and paratransit in rural Spokane County
- The challenge with discussing QoL is you know it when you see it, but it is hard to measure or define
- Walkable areas

12 Agency Update and Future Information Items

Ms. Jones said in the past the TAC had a Work Plan but starting in 2022 instead of a work plan TAC agendas will generally mirror those of the Transportation Technical Committee. There will be opportunities for TAC members to get involved in various SRTC plans/projects, such as the CPT-HSTP, the Equity Framework, Call for Projects application scoring, and others.

13 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Recording Secretary

To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Mike Ulrich, Principal Transportation Planner
Topic: **Transportation Discussion Series: Safety**

03/16/2022

Requested Action:

None. For information and discussion.

Key Points:

- SRTC is interested in developing a more robust process for identifying transportation system needs along with a quantitative evaluation strategy for determining the highest value projects.
- During the first half of 2022, staff will conduct a series of discussions with the SRTC Board and Committees to develop a deeper understanding of transportation topics, seek input and direction from members on key issues, and revisit screening criteria to develop a more data driven evaluation strategy for transportation project prioritization.
- This month's topic is Safety, one of the six Guiding Principles in Horizon 2045.

Board/Committee Discussions:

This is the third in a series of discussions for the SRTC Board and Committees. The role of a Metropolitan Planning Organization presented at January meetings and Quality of Life was discussed at February meetings. The Board received a presentation about Safety at their meeting on March 10.

Public Involvement:

All meetings of the SRTC Board and Committees are noticed and open to the public.

Supporting Information/Implications:

Safety is central to one of the Guiding Principles (Safety and Security) in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Horizon 2045. How this is defined in the MTP and how it's applied to transportation in the region will be presented at the March TTC meeting. The intent is to discuss ways this Guiding Principle can be measured and build understanding on what success look like in the region's projects and programs.

More Information:

For additional information contact Mike Ulrich at mulrich@src.org or 509.343.6370

To: Transportation Advisory Committee 3/16/2022
From: Jason Lien, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner
Topic: **DivisionConnects – Phase 2 Study Update**

Requested Action:

None. For information and discussion.

Key Points:

- DivisionConnects is a multi-jurisdictional study to analyze the Division Street corridor, including implementation of bus rapid transit (BRT). The study area consists of the Division transportation corridor from its connection to downtown and north to its connection with the North Spokane Corridor.
- The first phase of the study concluded in Spring 2021 with identification of a locally preferred alternative (LPA) for BRT and other corridor improvements. The STA Board adopted the LPA by resolution at their April 2021 meeting. The SRTC Board accepted the LPA and Phase 1 study conclusions, as documented in the DivisionConnects Corridor Development Plan, at their June 2021 meeting.
- The second and final phase of the study kicked off in Summer 2021. Final reporting from the study, concluding this Spring, will include preliminary design of active transportation projects throughout the corridor and land use profiles around BRT station locations.

Board/Committee Discussions:

Emphasizing a regional approach to major transportation corridors was born out of the SRTC Board's strategic plan in late 2017. The SRTC funding portion for the Division Street Corridor Study was approved by the Board in March 2018, consisting of a \$400,000 STBG allocation as part of the 2018 SRTC Call for Projects. The Board took action to accept the preferred BRT alternative at their June 2021 meeting. The Board was last updated at their February 2021 meeting. The TAC was updated on public involvement activities at the December 2021 meeting. The Division Street Corridor Study is identified in SRTC's 2-year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Public Involvement:

The study process involves extensive public engagement, and a project website is available (divisionconnects.org). Over the course of the study, information has been distributed through Neighborhood Councils, email lists, focus groups, one-on-one interviews, print media, direct mail, online questionnaires, agency newsletters, and social media.

Supporting Information/Implications

DivisionConnects is a coordinated planning effort with Spokane Transit Authority (STA) to engage the community and analyze opportunities in the Division Street corridor from a multimodal transportation and system perspective. Project partners are WSDOT, City of Spokane, and Spokane County. With approval of a preferred alternative for bus rapid transit by the STA and SRTC Boards in Spring 2021 concluding the first phase of the study, the second and final phase is looking at land use opportunities that can leverage the future transit investment as well as supportive active transportation connections along and through the Division corridor.

The status of Phase 2 work is as follows:

- Active Transportation Planning – review of gaps, safety, and connectivity of facilities for people walking and rolling in the corridor. This process is working on 30 project recommendations, where 15 projects are being taken through conceptual design and 15 projects to 30% design. Projects may include street crossing improvements, sidewalks, and off-Division bike facilities.
- Land Use Planning – this task is evaluating existing assets and conditions (e.g. parks, transportation infrastructure, employment clusters, vacant land, zoning) to see what areas may have the greatest potential for land use development/redevelopment in alignment with BRT investment. This information is being profiled for a number of “nodes” along the corridor to help inform future focused planning work.
- Travel Demand Modeling – the consultant team is utilizing the SRTC regional model to evaluate future land use scenarios along Division Street and the effect on travel demand and corridor traffic operations.
- Public Engagement – Final study questionnaires closed at the end of December, but links to these public engagement platforms are still accessible at divisionconnects.org.

Outcomes from DivisionConnects will feed into the Division BRT preliminary engineering effort, led by STA. In support of additional land use planning at the City and County, STA received a Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning grant through FTA. A final meeting of the study steering committee is scheduled for March 31. DivisionConnects will conclude with its final recommendations in Spring 2022.

More Information:

- For additional information contact: Jason Lien at jlien@srtc.org or 509.343.6370

To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Kylee Jones, Associate Transportation Planner III
Topic: **Toll Credits - Policy**

03/16/2022

Requested Action:

None. For information and discussion.

Key Points:

- Federal law permits States with toll facilities to earn toll credits that can be applied towards the non-Federal share requirements on Federally funded projects.
- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has a toll credit program dating back to 1992 and has recently updated their *Policy for Allocation and Use of Toll Credits*, (see **Attachment**).
- The updated WSDOT policy now allows Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPOs) the option to consider utilizing toll credits for our regional competitive funding programs through 2026. This would include Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Transportation Alternative, and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding programs.
- Toll credits are not the same as cash. The practical implication is SRTC could fund projects at 100% rather than at the typical 86.5% within our funding programs. This would limit the number of projects SRTC could fund for our member agencies and partners.
- Examples and implications of how toll credits work will be presented at the committee meeting.
- SRTC does not currently have a policy on how to utilize toll credits for the benefit of the region. At the pleasure of the Board a toll credit policy would become part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Guidebook and direct the use of toll credits in our funding program.

Board/Committee Discussions:

This is the first discussion of this topic by the TAC.

Public Involvement

All meetings of the SRTC Board and Committees are noticed and open to the public.

Supporting Information/Implications:

The [Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\) Policies and Procedures Guidebook](#) is a transportation programming resource for SRTC's member agencies. The purpose of the Guidebook is to: (1) outline the goals and objectives of SRTC's program and to (2) identify the policies and procedures necessary to implement the program. Any policies or procedures pertaining to the use of toll credits should be

included in the TIP Guidebook.

More Information:

- See Attachment: WSDOT Policy for Allocation and Use of Toll Credits
- For more information contact Kylee Jones at kjones@srtc.org or 509.343.6370

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Policy for Allocation and Use of Toll Credits (Updated)

Background

In 1991, Congress created toll credits as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Toll Credits were established as a mechanism to assist states in meeting the matching requirements on federally funded projects. Toll credits are a matching tool available to any state that generates revenues from tolling facilities and satisfies established criteria. These credits allow federal funds to serve as match for the federal funds on a project.

Washington State has certified toll credits based on toll revenues dating back to 1992. For the purposes of the toll credit calculation, federal law includes ferry fare collections as toll revenue. Each year that WSDOT certifies toll credits, it must demonstrate that it has met criteria designated by FHWA, known as the Maintenance-of-Effort (MOE)¹. Each year that Washington passes the MOE, it is eligible to certify its toll credits based on its tolling revenues and capital expenditures. To date, Washington has certified \$3.25 billion in toll credits and has used approximately \$1.02 billion through federal fiscal year 2020.

Toll Credits earned may be applied toward the non-Federal matching share of programs authorized by Title 23, U.S.C, except the credit may not be applied to projects funded with FHWA's emergency relief funds. Additionally, the credit may be applied to transit programs authorized by Chapter 53 of Title 49, U.S.C.

How Toll Credits Work

Toll credits are not money. They do not bring any funds to a project. Toll credits provide a way to eliminate the need for non-federal matching funds on a project. Typically, projects funded with federal money require matching dollars from other non-federal sources. For each dollar of toll credit earned, a state may use a dollar of its federal funds to serve as match. For example, a project funded with 80 percent federal funds and requiring 20 percent matching funds can be 100 percent federally funded. With some exceptions, toll credits are eligible for most highway and transit capital projects.

Policy for Allocation and Use of Toll Credits

WSDOT's policy for allocating toll credits is to maximize the use of federal funds to deliver the highway and ferry capital programs in its 16-year budget. In addition, toll credits are utilized when federal grant programs allow to maximize the amount of federal funds requested and to minimize the match that is required. WSDOT makes available Toll Credits for use to local agencies and/or transit projects through its Local Programs and Public Transportation Divisions for any eligible priority projects identified.

The projects that utilize toll credits must align with WSDOT's Executive Management, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature transportation investment policy objectives.

¹ MOE determination required by 23 U.S.C. § 120(j)(2)

Use of Toll Credits

- **State Highway and Ferry Capital Investments** - WSDOT utilizes toll credits to match federally funded projects in the department's 16-year highway construction and ferry capital programs. Toll credits are not utilized on highway and ferry projects when:
 - The project has sufficient state or local match
 - For projects that receive discretionary grant funds which do not allow use of toll credits to meet match requirements (e.g., TIGER, INFRA, BUILD, ER (emergency relief, etc.).

Toll credits are a tool that offers greater flexibility to balance the use of state cash and meet the constraints that come with funding projects with bonds and federal funds.

- **Local Projects of Regional Significance** - WSDOT provides toll credits to local projects that aid in the completion of state mega-projects or projects that have significant regional importance from the department's perspective.
- **Local Roadway Projects** - Toll credits are allocated for local bridge, transportation alternatives, NHS asset management and safety projects as these programs align with the state's investment objectives. In addition, any local projects that receive federal earmarks or discretionary funds can utilize toll credits if matching funds are not already available on the project. Projects that utilize toll credits have delivery timelines that must be met for their use. If projects do not meet these timelines, local match is required in place of toll credits. This allows for more certainty in the amount of federal funds that can be distributed to Local Agencies statewide.
- **Legislatively Directed Toll Credits to Transit Projects** - WSDOT provides an allocation of toll credits to be used by local transit providers for the implementation of projects from programs authorized by Chapter 53 of Title 49, U.S.C.

Change from Previous Policy

Applying a practical solution approach in assisting local agencies delivery of the federal program – WSDOT is proposing providing toll credits to projects selected through the MPO/RTPO/County lead agencies regional competitive programs (STBG, CMAQ, TA). This would be available if the project/project phase was fully funded with FHWA funds. Selection agencies would need to review and modify their competitive criteria to allow maximizing FHWA funding on projects and requiring expected delivery timelines.

Previously, toll credits were made available to transit agencies as directed by the legislature, typically through a proviso in the Transportation Appropriation Bill. Under this policy document, the Public Transportation and Rail Division would be provided an allocation of toll credits to be used for transit programs authorized by Chapter 53 of Title 49, U.S.C.

The Public Transportation Division plans to use \$8.5 million in toll credits for rural, small urban, and large urban transit agency projects. It plans to use the other \$1.5 million to meet non-federal match requirements for efforts required by the Federal Transit Administration. This includes [statewide safety oversight](#) of public rail fixed guideways (i.e., Seattle Center Monorail, Seattle Streetcar, and Sound Transit's Tacoma Link and Central Light rail) and [Statewide Planning](#).