

Spokane Regional Transportation Council – Board of Directors

June 8, 2023 | Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Meeting at SRTC, 421 W Riverside Ave Suite 504, Spokane WA and virtually on Zoom

1 Call to Order/Excused Absences

Chair Wilkerson called the meeting to order at 1:00pm and attendance was taken. In attendance were:

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members:

Council Member Betsy Wilkerson, *City of Spokane* (Chair)
Commissioner Al French, *Spokane County* (Vice Chair)
Council Member Paul Schmidt, *City of Cheney* (~~Chair~~)
Mayor Cris Kaminskis, *City of Liberty Lake*
Mayor Kevin Freeman, *City of Millwood*
Council Member Zack Zappone, *City of Spokane*
Mayor Pam Haley, *City of Spokane Valley*
Council Member Rod Higgins, *City of Spokane Valley*
Daniel Clark, *Kalispel Tribe of Indians*
Council Member Micki Harnois, *Small Towns Representative*
Todd Trepanier, *WSDOT-Eastern Region*
Charlene Kay, *Transportation Technical Committee Chair*
Kim Zentz, *Transportation Advisory Committee Chair*

Board Alternates:

Commissioner Josh Kerns, *Spokane County*
Karl Otterstrom, *Spokane Transit Authority*
Francis SiJohn, *Spokane Tribe of Indians*

Guests:

Jeremy Jewkes, *WSDOT-Eastern Region*
Brandi Colyar, *Spokane County*
Carter Timmerman
Paul Kropp
Tom Sahlberg
Kevin Picanco, *City of Spokane*
LeAnn Yamamoto, *CommuteSmartNW*
Adam Jackson, *City of Spokane Valley*

Staff:

Lois Bollenback, *Executive Director*
Eve McMenemy, *Deputy Executive Director*
Ryan Stewart, *Principal Transportation Planner*
Jason Lien, *Principal Transportation Planner*
Mike Ulrich, *Principal Transportation Planner*
David Fletcher, *Principal Transportation Planner*
Kylee Jones, *Assoc. Transportation Planner III*
Michael Redlinger, *Assoc. Transpo. Planner II*
Greg Griffin, *Administrative Services Manager*
Julie Meyers-Lehman, *Admin.-Exec. Coordinator*
Megan Clark, *Legal Counsel*

Chair Wilkerson stated that the following members requested an excused absence from the meeting:

- Council Member Jennifer Morton, *City of Airway Heights*
- Mayor Terri Cooper, *City of Medical Lake*
- Doug Yost, *Major Employer Representative*
- Matt Ewers, *Rail/Freight Representative*
- Kelly Fukai, *Washington State Transportation Commission*

Council Member Schmidt made a motion to approve the excused absences. Council Member Higgins seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2 Public Comments - There were no comments.

ACTION ITEMS

3 Consent Agenda

- a) May 2023 Board Meeting Minutes
- b) May 2023 Vouchers
- c) 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program June Amendment

Commissioner French made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mayor Kaminskas seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4 MPO/RTPO Agreement and SFY 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Stewart recapped the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) development process and reviewed highlights of the 2-year work program, including an update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, development of the 2024 Unified List of Regional Transportation Priorities, Smart Mobility planning initiatives, implementation of the Equity Planning Framework, and others. He spoke about planned federal, state, and local revenues for the program, which are estimated to be \$7.4M.

Council Member Cragun made a motion to approve Resolution #23-16 authorizing the Executive Director to execute the Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Planning Organization Agreement and adopting the State Fiscal Years 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program. Council Member Higgins seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5 SRTC/WSDOT-Eastern Region Safety Pilot Program

Mr. Ulrich summarized the development and objectives of the safety collaboration pilot program and reviewed the proposed 6 step approach to identifying regional safety needs as follows:

1. Map serious and fatal injury crash locations (2018-2022)
2. Snap crash data to the road network with key attributes (crash type, time of day, road conditions, etc.)
3. Assign volumes to the arterial road network
4. Calculate severity index and identify high injury network
5. Analyze vulnerability of road users and potential disadvantage (income level, proximity to transit, etc.)
6. Analyze causal factors (speeding, impairment, distracted driving) on a regional scale

Mr. Ulrich outlined the next steps in the process including additional meetings with the pilot program team and coming back to the Board in September with a list of recommended projects. Members discussed:

- Data sources for this program (American Community Survey, 2020 Census, Spokane Transit, and others)
- Incorporating demographic characteristics into the process
- Definition of “vulnerable users”
- Parallel development safety considerations under the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant

Council Member Higgins made a motion to approve the approach for screening safety projects for the SRTC/WSDOT-Eastern Region Safety Collaboration Pilot Project. Commissioner French seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

6 Preservation Call for Projects: Preliminary Results and Strategies to Address Reduction in Obligation Authority

Ms. Jones reported that in 2022 the Board set aside \$9.2M of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds from the 2023-2026 STBG federal funding allocations to hold a maintenance/preservation call for projects for obligation in 2024 to 2026. She reviewed the suballocation splits (urban, urban small, rural/small towns, and flexible categories), reported on number of applications received, and the scoring process.

She presented the proposed project list, draft award amounts, project rankings, and presented data on current and past annual state/federal allocations. Recent decisions made at the state and federal levels have resulted in a reduction in SRTC's obligation authority this year; the amount of funding available to obligate is \$1.3M. Informal projections indicate increased funding and obligation authority is likely in future years. Staff and the TIP Working Group developed a proposed strategy to address the gap in funding:

1. Utilize \$7.9M from the 2027 STBG allocation to fill the funding gap on an interim basis. If annual allocations to SRTC return to normal levels, the 2027 STBG allocation will be returned for project programming.
2. The Board will be asked to approve a list of projects to receive approximately \$9.2M of awards through the current process.

Alternatively, the Board could choose to award only the \$1.3M of funding currently available. Members discussed and comments included:

- Information regarding future allocation projections is provided by WSDOT
- STBG money is allocated to MPOs by the state, but the MPO decides how to award funding
- The Urban Small allocation will continue to be available if the projects are programmed before 2027

The Board will be asked to award funding at their July meeting.

7 Unified List of Regional Transportation Priorities: Legislative Priority Statements

Ms. McMenemy shared a background of the Unified List priority development process, its 3-steps (setting Legislative Priority Statements, mapping the regional priority projects, and developing project information sheets) and noted the primary purpose is to communicate regional needs more effectively and strategically with state and federal legislators.

She reviewed the seven 2023 Legislative Statements and asked the group to consider additions, removals, or other thoughts. Members discussed and comments included:

- Several key regional priority projects, such as the NSC, are not on the list. In 2022 the Board decided to include only projects seeking funding onto SRTC's Unified List; projects already funded were not included intentionally.
- The purpose of the Unified List process is to demonstrate region-wide support for projects throughout the entire planning area.
- Criteria for projects on the 2024 Unified List was approved by the Board in May.
- There was a suggestion to add a legislative statement expressing support for the enhancement and protection of transportation access to Fairchild Airforce Base.

This topic will be discussed by the Board again in July.

8 Congestion Management Process: Regional Objectives and CMP Network

Mr. Fletcher provided an overview and outlined the requirements of the Congestion Management Process (CMP). He spoke about the 8-step update process, multi-jurisdictional working group formed to inform the update and provide technical expertise. He also provided an overview of the draft updated regional objectives for congestion management and CMP network.

He said the CMP network defines the geographic area where data for the CMP is collected and analyzed and is currently broken up in to two categories, Tier 1 and Tier 2 corridors. The four factors used to define the draft CMP network are:

1. Congestion Data: Level of Travel Time Reliability
2. Travel Demand: Average Annual Daily Traffic
3. Regional Connectivity: Activity Centers, Future Growth, Overall Network Connectivity
4. Best Practices from other MPOs

At the July meeting, the Board will be asked to approve the draft regional objectives for congestion management and the CMP network.

Members discussed and comments included:

- The reasons for congestion vary by area and can be significantly different from location to location. For example, the congested areas of Bigelow Gulch Rd, the south Regal corridor and 32nd Ave between Sullivan and Dishman Mica have very different factors causing the congestion.
- Jurisdictions sometimes purposefully allow congestion to encourage people to walk, bike, and use transit instead of driving.
- There can be different motivations to create or allow congestion to occur, therefore mitigation must be individualized for a particular area.

9 WSDOT Highway System Plan

Mr. Jeremy Jewkes, WSDOT-Eastern Region provided an overview of the Highway System Plan update, the process steps completed, the scenarios considered, and public input received from a statewide survey.

The recommendation emerging from analyzing the scenarios and applying public input is to allocate \$17.3B for highway repair, \$5.4B for environment/safety/operations/active transportation/TDM and \$1.4B for strategic capacity expansion.

Members discussed differences in survey responses from eastern/western sides of the state and the types of question contained in the survey. There was a request for the Board to receive disaggregated survey data from the eastern Washington respondents.

10 Board Member Comments

Mr. Trepanier shared details about the North Spokane Corridor River Crossing groundbreaking event on June 13. Mayor Kaminskis spoke about construction of the new Kramer Parkway I-90 overpass in Liberty Lake opening in August.

14 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:34 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board