

Spokane Regional Transportation Council – Board of Directors

September 12, 2024, Meeting Minutes

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

1 Call to Order/ Excused Absences

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

In attendance were:

Board Members:

Commissioner Al French, *Spokane County (Chair)*
 Council Member Jennifer Morton, *City of Airway Heights*
 Council Member Vincent Barthels, *City of Cheney*
 Council Member Diane Pfaeffle, *City of Deer Park*
 Council Member Cris Kaminskas, *City of Liberty Lake*
 Council Member Don Kennedy, *City of Medical Lake*
 Council President Betsy Wilkerson, *City of Spokane*
 Mayor Pam Haley, *City of Spokane Valley*
 Council Member Rod Higgins, *City of Spokane Valley (Vice Chair)*
 Doug Yost, *Major Employer*
 Matt Ewers, *Rail/Freight Rep*
 Mary Kuney, *Spokane County*
 Karl Otterstrom, *Spokane Transit Authority*
 Charlene Kay, *WSDOT-ER*
 Kelly Fukai, *WSTC (arrived 1:51pm)*

Barry Greene, *TTC Chair*

Guests:

Ryan Jerman
 Paul Kropp
 J Tortorelli
 Larsole
 Spencer Montgomery
 Steven Polunsky, *WA Commerce*
 Brandi Colyer, *Spokane County*
 Tony Baird, *The Woodshop*
 Jazmin Ely, *The Woodshop*

Staff:

Lois Bollenback, *Executive Director*
 Eve McMenemy, *Deputy Executive Director*
 Ryan Stewart, *Principal Trans. Planner*
 Jason Lien, *Principal Trans. Planner*
 Mike Ulrich, *Principal Trans. Planner*
 David Fletcher, *Principal Trans. Planner*
 Ben Kloskey, *Assoc. Trans Planner*
 Angel Jackson, *Admin.-Exec. Coord.*
 Greg Griffin, *Admin Serv. Manager*
 Megan Clark, *Legal Counsel*

Absent Members:Council Member Kitte Klitzke, *City of Spokane*Chair French stated the following members requested an **excused** absence from the meeting:

- Council Member Kitty Klitzke, *City of Spokane*

Mr. Ewers made a motion to approve the excused absences from the meeting. Council Member Barthels seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

2 Public Comments

There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

3 Consent Agenda

- a) Minutes of the July 2024 Board of Directors Meeting
- b) Vouchers for July and August 2024
- c) CY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) September Amendment
- d) State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program, Amendment Two
- e) Safe Streets for All Planning and Demonstration Grant Application

Council Member Higgins made a motion to pass the Consent Agenda. Mayor Haley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4 2025 Unified List of Regional Transportation Priorities & Legislative Priority Statements

Ms. McMenemy reviewed the Unified List process for both state and federal priorities, with a focus on approving the state version at this meeting. She briefly reviewed the purpose of the Unified List to communicate regional priorities to legislative bodies and decision makers. She discussed the full-page safety statement and its relationship to the Regional Safety Action Plan, explained the three top priority statements, and briefly reviewed additional policy statements. She paused to allow for questions.

Mr. Fletcher then went over how the Unified List is integrated with SRTC's other planning products, from the long-range Horizon 2045 plan to the short-range TIP (Transportation Improvement Program). He reminded the Board that 30 projects, totaling around \$700 million in unfunded need, were submitted for possible inclusion in this year's list. This included 4 new projects that were not submitted last year. Mr. Fletcher explained the scoring process used to decide which projects to include or remove, and reviewed the list of 30 projects, noting that, as in previous years, there were few implementation projects. He highlighted natural break points in the project scores, based on the project evaluation criteria, and pointed out that projects below these breaks that have secured a significant amount of funding, or were in last year's list, are also included in the list. This includes the Craig Road & I-90 Four Lakes Connection project, which has secured \$7.5 million in funding, and Spokane Falls Boulevard, which was in last year's list.

Ms. Kay stated WSDOT has a process by which they identify and take policy positions and several of the items in the package have not been through that process. Therefore, WSDOT will take an agency position of neutrality.

Mr. Ewers motioned to approve the 2025 Unified List & Legislative Priority Statements as presented. Council Member Higgins seconded the motion. The motion was passed with one abstention.

5 Regional Safety Action Plan (RSAP)

Mr. Ulrich provided an update on the steering committee and other groups involved in the development of safety plans. He emphasized the safety target of zero fatalities, with a goal of 50% reduction in (Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes). He discussed the involvement of High Injury Networks (HIN), noting that 43% of crashes occur on these networks. Mike also pointed out regionally targeted corridors where data indicates the need for safety investments.

He presented a prospectus sheet for Airway Heights and other counties, explaining the progress made since the last presentation. Both committees unanimously support the plan and board approval. Staff are collaborating with committees on updates and revisions influenced by ongoing feedback.

Additionally, Mike shared that the SS4A grant has been submitted, and the award announcement is expected within the next few weeks. He also mentioned a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for 2025, which will be based on the findings from the Regional Safety Action Plan (RSAP).

Mr. Otterstrom asked how SRTC ensures that follow-up activity will occur on the study findings. Mr. Ulrich responded that although it will be up to the members to implement the plan, SRTC will follow best practices for tracking and reporting progress; which is also a requirement of the grant. Ms. Bollenback added that this is the question we have to ask at the completion of every planning study. Follow-up is always needed.

Council member Higgins motioned to approve the Regional Safety Action Plan (RSAP), as presented. Ms. Kay seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

6 Website Project – New SRTC Logo/Brand

Ms. Bollenback reminded board members that SRTC has initiated work to update the organization's website and develop a new SRTC brand, including a new logo. She introduced the design team supporting SRTC in this work. Mr. Tony Baird, representing The Woodshop, presented three logo and branding options for SRTC, along with a corresponding color palette. He provided a brief overview of the significance behind each design: Option One – "Pavilion Road," Option Two – "The Community Corner," and Option Three – "The County Line." The Board members expressed their preference for a logo that emphasized transportation as the central theme, with Option Three being favored. Several members commented on the reasons for this choice and suggested modifying the font in the selected design to give greater emphasis to the word "transportation."

7 Calendar Year (CY) 2025 Budget and Indirect Cost Plan

Mr. Griffin informed members that each year, SRTC develops a budget for the upcoming calendar year. Details are presented to the Administrative Committee prior to presenting to the full board. Mr. Griffin explained that the 2025 draft budget shows a 13% decrease from the amended 2024 budget, primarily due to reductions in contractual and professional services, materials, and services, offset by increases in personnel and IT expenses. Key highlights include a 3% cost of living adjustment and a 2.5% merit pool increase for staff.

Revenue sources are categorized as federal, state, and local, with detailed breakdowns of funding from various sources. On the expenditure side, personnel costs make up 80% of the budget, with funds allocated for the MTP update, VMT study, and ETS charging station project. The budget also includes a \$6,000 allocation for printing a new bike map and \$27,000 savings based on a new office lease.

Mr. Griffin also reviewed the Indirect Cost Plan, noting a proposed rate of 51% for 2025, lower than the 10-year average. The plan is developed under federal guidelines and will be provided to WSDOT.

The floor was opened for questions on both the budget and IDC plan; no comments or questions were made.

8 Calendar Year (CY) 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Draft

Mr. Stewart provided a brief overview of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a four-year plan that includes transportation projects across Spokane County. Any project receiving federal funding or deemed regionally significant must be included in the TIP. A section of the SRTC website is dedicated to TIP, featuring a draft of the 2025-2028 TIP and an online mapping tool that allows the public to view project details and submit comments.

Projects in the TIP are sourced from various agencies, including WSDOT and STA, and must align with long-range plans like Horizon 2045 and regional air quality standards. SRTC also administers funding programs for selected projects.

The current draft includes 65 projects, with funding totaling \$897 million, higher than last year's \$839 million. The decrease in the number of projects (from 75) is attributed to WSDOT's budget constraints. Despite fewer projects, overall funding has increased, reflecting successful funding efforts by agencies. Notable projects include the North Spokane Corridor and various high-performance transit and safety initiatives.

The TIP must demonstrate fiscal constraint, ensuring that all projects have available funding for the programmed phases. Public engagement is ongoing, with a 30-day comment period running through September, and a hybrid public meeting scheduled for September 26th. The final TIP will be submitted to the state and incorporated into the statewide TIP, allowing access to federal funding by early January.

9 Smart Mobility & Resiliency Project Update

Mr. Lien presented an update on the Smart Mobility and Resiliency projects. Resiliency focuses on assessing the transportation system and identifying vulnerabilities to disruptions. The Smart Mobility project aims to integrate technologies that improve system efficiency, safety, and resilience. The process involves evaluating potential technologies based on criteria such as problem-solving capability, cost-effectiveness, and public support. These evaluations will lead to recommendations for future projects.

The presentation also highlighted electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure planning as an element on the smart mobility project, which will provide a policy framework for public, fleet, and residential EV charging.

Mr. Lien discussed the use of the Resilience and Disaster Recovery (RDR) tool, which simulates disruptions to assess their impact on the transportation system. This tool helps prioritize critical investments to improve system recovery from both natural and human-caused events.

Next steps include finalizing draft reports on smart mobility and resiliency, engaging stakeholders, and presenting findings to the board in November, with the goal of approval in December. The findings will contribute to a broader needs assessment of the region's transportation system.

10 Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station Grant Update

Mr. Lien provided an update on the Spokane Regional Transportation Electrification Grant Project, managed by SRTC and awarded \$2.5 million through the Washington Department of Commerce in 2021. The project involves installing electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across Spokane County. To date, 20 unique sites featuring 54 Level 2 ports and 22 DC Fast Charger ports have been completed.

The focus is on enhancing public access to EV charging, including partnerships with local agencies and private businesses. He reviewed some of the notable challenges including site security concerns, changing site commitments, and requests for payments beyond the grant's scope. He noted alternative sites are being explored to ensure equitable infrastructure distribution.

SRTC will continue project oversight, including coordination, reimbursements, grant compliance, and reporting, with project closeout in December 2025. Mr. Lien committed to providing another update in 2025.

11 Executive Director's Report

Ms. Bollenback highlighted the upcoming Transportation Summit (October 17th) and stated the SRTC annual audit has begun. She also provided an update on the approved revisions to the model and stated completion should be soon.

12 Transportation Technical Committee & Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting Summaries

No questions or comments.

13 Board Member Comments

Board members highlighted events in their perspective areas.

14 Chair Comments

Council Member French stated the administrative committee will begin the process of evaluating the performance of SRTC's Executive Director and is seeking input from the board members. He stated the committee would set a deadline for input at their next meeting and comments should be directed to Greg Griffin.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:24 PM

Angel Jackson, Clerk of the Board