

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
Whatcom Council of Governments

Meeting Summary

January 7, 2010

Start time: 10:00

Attendees:

Ron Cubellis, WCOG

Gordon Rogers, WCOG

Mary Anderson, WCOG

Andres Gomez, WCOG

Gary Davis, Whatcom County

Mark Sandal, Lynden Public Works

Rollin Harper, Everson, Nooksack, Sumas

Janis Marlega, City of Ferndale

Rod Fadden, City of Sumas

Joe Rutan, Whatcom County Public Works

Ed Conyers, WSDOT

Bill Bullock, Blaine Public Works

Ted Carlson, Bellingham Public Works

Chris Comeau, Bellingham Public Works

I. Possible Additional Stimulus Funding

G. Rogers: My intent is to talk about this, you may have projects in mind, we should get same amount we got last time, which was \$4.3 million for whole region. We didn't really get that much because of 10% rule; however WSDOT has said that bids are coming in higher now. Tier II project money awarded to Bellingham for an overlay project.

I want to make sure everyone is aware of this, you are all aware of how we did it last time. WSDOT prefers that projects be 100% funded with the stimulus money.

R. Cubellis: You could do it either way, 100% fund smaller projects or spread it all around.

C. Comeau: On the last round, was there a requirement for a local match made by the Policy Board?

J. Rutan: Everyone had projects; I thought we should submit projects, rate and fund. The Policy Board wanted to spread the money across the whole region.

G. Rogers: There was no required match.

C. Comeau: Didn't the P.B. want to require match?

G. Rogers: It was the Chairs idea; he thought that since some of the jurisdictions would do the projects anyways, they could only take some of the funding.

J. Marlega: Main St money?

G. Rogers: New title is called Jobs for Main Street, preference of 100% funding from stimulus bill. It protects you from loosing the funds. Better not to leverage project.

J. Rutan: Can't supplant current projects, must be new project that doesn't have any funding.

G. Rogers: We don't have any money now, but WSDOT wants a project list. US Congress did pass a bill that identifies this process, Senate hasn't discussed at all though. States Federal Legislative liaison, Larry Eel feels that it will be approved. When passed and the Governor certifies, the projects can start.

E. Conyers: Pretty similar to ARRA, assume money the same, Fed requirements apply. Expect same ARRA requirements, reporting the same, maintenance of effort. Project has to be on the STIP. We will do STIP updates twice a month, State TIP.

R. Cubellis: Needs to be on WCOG and State TIPs; not City or County TIP.

E. Conyers: What the house passed is different; their timing requirement is 90 days to be under contract. Hopefully the Senate will change to more feasible timing, 90 days to obligate.

G. Rogers: This is why K. Davis wants a list now.

E. Conyers: If up to K. Davis there wouldn't be a local panel, but she doesn't get to make that decision.

R. Cubellis: State has some flexibility on 90 days.

G. Rogers: A question came up about projects in planning stage, have some funding but not total funding.

E. Conyers: If there is a funding gap, you can fill that gap. Another thing that K. Davis has said is that she hopes returned money will stay in MPO. That may be a challenge for you too.

G. Rogers: Does everyone have a project?

R. Cubellis: Projects should be ready to go immediately.

J. Rutan: Will we just rate projects and not have Tiers. Same way we do STP funds.

G. Rogers: K. Davis wants two Tiers.

J. Rutan: County projects, structural overlays of sections of Hannegan, Smith, Everson-Goshen and Slater, 8 miles total, the project is scalable at \$2 million. High value, haven't been overlaid since 1990's. We can get projects out with very little engineering costs. These roads connect smaller cities.

J. Karcher: On original TIP, but we had to cut them.

M. Sandal: Arterials, in Lynden we are running out of Fed classified routes, BC Ave projects, connects 14th St Bridge. Have STPR money under construction now, connects Main St to East Grover, finishing that corridor. Price would be \$750-800,000.

B. Bullock: H St project, from Ludwig to Terrace, design will be finished this spring, has \$500,000 of TIB, we were planning on using developer funds, but they haven't come about, need \$950,000. It is a reconstruction, 2 lanes to 3 lanes, finalizing permits and ROW.

T. Carlson: City of Bellingham, Central Ave Bridge, \$2 million. It is essential to development of the Waterfront site. It is federally classified. We haven't heard anything on TIGER, hopefully will know at the end of January.

J. Marlega: Main St project, design under way for awhile. Have federal money and TIB money, \$1.5 million shortfall. We could add phase II.

R. Fadden: Sumas has one small project on our 6 year plan, exit from US Customs, 300 feet; we can get it classified, \$120,000. Rebuild it to heavy haul standards.

J. Karcher: What is the CA status?

J. Rutan: We commit to doing one CA project for the small cities each year. Check with us and ask. We have a big construction year this year. Lummi isn't here; they will probably throw out a project.

G. Rogers: WSDOT Burlington may have some projects as well. They get 70% of money, we get 30%. We didn't have any up here last time. A possible project is the Mt Baker Hwy; a study was funded for a Welcome Center in Kendall. They own the land; need to develop a turn lane, \$280,000.

E. Conyers: Size of program much like last time, \$4.5 million. Rather than select as many projects as last time, I prefer you to fully fund projects. Last time you funded 7 projects with \$4.5 million, King CO funded 8 projects with \$40 million.

G. Rogers: At next TTAC meeting have a project description that will suffice for submittal to State, with dollar amount. Make case for it.

E. Conyers: You won't know about 90 days until Senate makes a decision.

G. Rogers: If you want to send your projects in early, that is fine. Get your projects to me by the 20th. So others in the group can review them.

J. Rutan: There were competitive grants last time, with 6 months to obligate, I'd much rather have 6 months.

R. Cubellis: House Bill has SAFETE-LU extension through fiscal year.

E. Conyers: There has been talk about extensions, they are reluctant to take up a new bill, want and need new revenue sources. I heard about a call for bridge projects, it's not a lot of money, invitation only. Believe we will do it this spring.