PRTPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

January 18, 2024 | 10:00 – 12:00
Zoom Meeting – Login Below

1. 10:00 – 10:05 **Welcome and Introductions**

2. 10:05 – 10:10 **Consent Calendar** ACTION
   - *Approval of Agenda*
   - *Approval of Minutes from November 16, 2023 (Attachment)*

3. 10:10 – 10:15 **Election of Officers** ACTION
   In May 2023, Steve Gray and Michael Bateman were elected to fill the remaining term of Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. That term has now expired and the TAC is asked to nominate and elect a Chair and Vice-Chair to serve the 2024-2025 term.

4. 10:15 – 10:20 **Recommendation on RTP Biennial Currency Review** *(Attachment) Every two years PRTPO is required to review the adequacy of its regional transportation plan (RTP) and submit a statement to WSDOT on its sufficiency or if it needs to be updated. The TAC is asked to review this draft RTP Biennial statement and forward to the Board a recommendation on its approval.* ACTION

5. 10:20 – 10:30 **Cooperative Consideration of Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects** DISCUSSION
   TAC members requested time for regional discussion and collaboration when the next TA program got underway to minimize wasted effort and missed opportunities. The program launched on December 20th. TAC members are encouraged to bring questions and ideas to the table. The TAC will review and rank proposals in March.

6. 10:30 – 11:00 **Opportunities for the RTP to Support WSDOT *Complete Streets* Objectives** DISCUSSION
   (Attachment) In November TAC members talked with Yvette Liufau and George Mazur about WSDOT's decision framework to screen projects for Complete Streets (CS) treatments. This is the next discussion in that on-going effort to refine the CS framework and target scarce resources where they can generate the most benefit, and how the RTP can best support that.
   Nazmul Alam, *Olympic Region*
   Yvette Liufau, *Olympic Region, CS Coordinator*

7. 11:00 – 11:45 **Regional Transportation Plan: Further Inquiry Into Tough Topics and Tactics** DISCUSSION
   In December Board members engaged in an exercise to assess the importance of various regional issues PRTPO has identified over the last few years. The TAC will engage in a similar exercise as a group before we look at and discuss differences in how policy makers and technical staff look at these topics. We will also talk further about the range of strategies that can be employed by PRTPO and other stakeholders to affect change on anything.

8. 11:45 – 12:00 **Member Roundtable** ALL
   An opportunity to share information on activities and other topics of interest.

   Adjourn

NEXT TAC MEETING – March 21, 2024
Review and Evaluation of 2024 Transportation Alternatives Proposals

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85198448602?pwd=WmphaXYyMzRxQnhoUElWemw2TnFRUT09

Or by phone: 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma). Meeting ID: 851 9844 8602 Pass Code: 4780

Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization

TAC Meeting Summary

Meeting Location:

Remote Meeting via Zoom software

November 16, 2023

Attendees

Technical Advisory Committee Members

Jayme Brooke – Jefferson Transit
Gary Abrams, Clallam Transit
Melissa Mohr – Kitsap County
Steve Gray, Clallam County
Ted Jackson, Port of Allyn
Meggan Uecker, City of Sequim
Dick Taylor, Port of Shelton
Wendy Clark-Getzin, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Yvette Liufau, WSDOT Olympic Region
Ryan Jeffries, City of Port Angeles
Katie Cole, City of Sequim
Tracy Parker, Squaxin Island Tribe
Chris Hammer, City of Port Orchard
Vicki Grover, City of Bremerton
George Mazur, WSDOT Olympic Region
Micheal Bateman, City of Poulsbo
Joanathan Boehme, City of Port Angeles
Steffani Lillie, Kitsap Transit

Staff/Guests

Thera Black, PRTPO Coordinator
Edward Coviello, PRTPO Coordinator

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Gray opened the meeting at 10:02 AM and initiated self-introductions.

Approval of the November 16th, 2023, TAC Agenda and the September 21st, 2023, TAC Meeting Minutes (Consent Calendar)

The TAC approved, with a motion and seconded.

Recommendation on Transportation Alternatives (TA) Call for Projects

Coordinator Black provided the draft guidance on the TA Process, Schedule, and Materials.

Two changes include the funding amount from $1.4 million to just over $2.0 million. And the second change is that the recent Federal funding bill from late 2021 includes an equity component (Mobility benefits in high needs areas) in the TA funding requirements.

The agenda item memo was briefed to the TAC. The memo is available on the TAC meeting agenda. The increased funding with the longer time window may help make applications more viable. From two years of programing to four years. There will not be a cap on funding applications. Should phasing be allowed? There may be a limit on the number of applications. Coordinator Black asked for feedback from the TAC on these items.

Member Clark-Getzin suggested projects can be submitted as multiple applications as part of a phased project. The TAC agreed that there won't be a limit on the number of proposals.

Safety assessments for vulnerable populations and EV projects are now allowed in the TA program. Several other changes related to targeting rural and transit dependent populations among others are highlighted in the application criteria.

Projects must have been through a public notice process or similar. And a Certification Acceptance (CA) entity must be a partner or lead in the project. The process will also allow for 100% TA funding, but a match would be helpful.

Mobility benefits in high needs areas were highlighted by Coordinator Black. She noted that the maps in the application packet can help applicants with this requirement.

Member Mohr explained that rural census tracts can effectively hide areas of poverty or other need given the size of the tract. Coordinator Black will adjust the application to acknowledge this.

Member Clark-Getzin offered a peer support group for the applicants to work together on the technical aspects of the application. This will be on the January TAC agenda.

Discussion followed about the video requirement. The TAC asked for an alternative method if an applicant wanted to present differently. The video requirement will be removed.

The TAC motioned and seconded the recommendation. It passed. The draft application will be brought before the PRTPO Board on December 15th.

Complete Streets – Olympic Region Coordination Update

Yvette Liufau of WSDOT Olympic region provided a presentation on the WSDOT Complete Streets program. Highway 101 pre-designs were briefed for Kolonel Way and Kitchen Dick Road. These will look at improving the roadway to a level appropriate for the Complete Streets program.

The process is a change to the older Complete Streets methods. The need is looked at without preventing preservation projects from moving forward.

Member Clark-Getzin asked about the Stakeholder Committee for the Highway 101 design process. Yvette noted the members invited to the Committee. The Level of Stress (LOS) process looked at a segment of Highway 101 that the Olympic Discovery Trail provides a safe alternative for non-motorized travelers.

A discussion followed about how WSDOT will implement the process, including examples.

Regional Transportation Plan: Tough Topics and Regional Strategies

Coordinator Black demonstrated the GIS data resources under development. The data portal will be accessible via the PRTPO website. This will help members with grant applications, staff reports, etc.

She presented a table that can help with thinking through topics for the RTP. It might point the PRTPO to topics that can be highlighted in the RTP to get the discussion moving in the Region. Do local disaster plans meet well together? The PRTPO RTP can identify a gap in planning. The PRTPO can also begin to

address the Hood Canal Bridge issues through an open discussion about the policies for opening the bridge. The RTP is a venue to identify and promote improvements in the transportation system.

Could the TAC use the presented table to identify and brainstorm about transportation solutions?

Member Mohr explained that many of the issues are unavoidable. Will the RTP acknowledge the major issues that the PRTPO cannot solve by itself? The RTP can begin the solution discussion among the right stakeholders.

Member Roundtable

Chair Gray announced that Clallam County received pedestrian bridges from the City of Seattle. The bridges are helping to connect the Olympic Discovery Trail.

Member Bateman supported the Legislative Agenda item highlighting the need for improvements to the system reliability. A discussion followed about the importance of the system to the County. Kitsap Transit was thanked for providing the extra service to supplement the lack of WSF service.

The Squaxin Island Tribe is supporting a grant application for electrification. It is a multi-Tribe application. They also received an FTA grant for a new bus facility! The pedestrian project at SR 108 and US 101 is looking positive. Just awaiting an award letter.

Sequim passed a Complete Streets ordinance. Meggan gave an overview of the local projects in the City. Projects are moving forward. There is a lot of momentum regarding the Simdars Intersection project.

Member Calrk-Getzen explained that the lack of WSDOT staff is challenging with the local projects in the Peninsula Region.

Adjourn

12:02 p.m.

Action Item

To: PRTPO Technical Advisory Committee
From: Thera Black, PRTPO Coordinator
Date: January 12, 2024
Subject: **RTP Biennial Currency Review**

REQUESTED ACTION:

The TAC is asked to review and recommend to the Board approval of the draft 2023 RTP Biennial Currency Review for submittal to WSDOT.

Overview

A requirement in state law governing activities of Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) is the need for a self-assessment of the long-range regional transportation plan (RTP) every two years to determine if it is still "current" – that is, whether it still complies with state requirements and meets PRTPO's needs. The intent of the review is to determine if an update to the RTP is warranted. PRTPO is already in the process of updating its RTP. That is reflected in the draft assessment, attached.

PRTPO completed its first biennial review in 2021, two years after adopting the 2019 RTP update. PRTPO established an efficient two-part test to evaluate the RTP and determine if an update is warranted. That same two-factor analysis was used for this 2023 RTP review.

- The first test looks at statutory requirements associated with the RTP, found in RCW 47.80.030 and in WAC 468-86-080 through 468-86-140. These are the standard checks WSDOT uses to ascertain whether the RTP meets minimum state requirements or if it is out of compliance and necessitates an update.

  As summarized in the attached draft document, findings indicate that the current RTP continues to meet minimum state requirements for a regional transportation plan.

- The second test is a general assessment of whether the RTP adequately supports the Executive Board in its direction of the regional planning work program and decision-making processes.

  This is the impetus behind the update currently underway, to expand the usefulness of the RTP and better integrate it with other PRTPO planning processes and work products. While the RTP continues to provide guidance to the Board and TAC, a clearer relationship between the RTP and other PRTPO activities will be useful going forward in identifying and advancing priority regional initiatives and nimbly responding to emerging matters.

The Board conducted its first reading of the draft Biennial statement in December and offered no comments or changes. The TAC is asked to make any revisions deemed necessary before forwarding its recommendation to the Board on approval of the RTP Biennial Currency Review statement for submittal to WSDOT.

Attachment:

PRTPO Biennial Currency Review of the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan – Draft

For More Information:
Thera Black | 360.878.0353 | TheraB@PeninsulaRTPO.org

Biennial Currency Review of the PRTPO Regional Transportation Plan

PRTPO's 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was adopted by the Executive Board in October 2019. Per a statutory requirement in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.80.030(2), PRTPO must review the RTP every two years for currency and forward this biennial review to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). That is the rationale for this 2023 biennial currency review.

2023 Statement of Currency

PRTPO's Regional Transportation Plan is current with all state requirements. It has continued to support the Executive Board's planning and decision-making processes these last two years. However, an update is warranted to ensure the RTP continues to provide strategic guidance to PRTPO in developing its annual work program into the future. This is the first RTP update since PRTPO transitioned to an independent, self-governing organization. This update will identify regional issues, opportunities, and strategies for further investigation. The update is underway and will be complete by June 30, 2025.

The next biennial review will occur in late 2025.

Biennial Review Documentation

PRTPO's biennial review involves two tests to assess whether the Regional Transportation Plan is still current and useful for its intended purpose:

1 – It continues to meet minimum RCW and WAC requirements

2 – It continues to support PRTPO's work program and decision-making activities

The following brief documents findings of these two tests and supports PRTPO's assertion that while the RTP continues to meet minimum RCW and WAC requirements, an update is warranted.

1. Meet Minimum RCW and WAC Requirements

Finding: PRTPO's Regional Transportation Plan continues to meet minimum state requirements.

Requirements spelled out in RCW 47.80.030 and in WAC 468-86-080 through 468-86-140 describe the elements of a statutorily compliant Regional Transportation Plan for state RTPOs. Numerous requirements are only applicable to large metropolitan areas. This biennial currency review of PRTPO's long-range plan looks for regionally significant changes in the last two years that render some or all of the required elements in the existing RTP out of compliance with those minimum requirements. Statutory requirements of the legislation and administrative code are summarized below.

a. Identify existing and planned facilities of regional significance

Have plans for new regionally significant facilities been developed in the last two years that were not included in the RTP?

No plans for new regionally significant facilities or services have been introduced in the last two years.

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b. Establish level of service for state highways of regional significance

Have changes been made to LOS standards on state highways of regional significance in the last two years?

No changes have been made to established Level of Service standards on state highways of regional significance in the last two years. PRTPO continues to monitor WSDOT discussions about potential future changes to LOS on the state system through its Olympic Region partners.

c. Include a financial plan

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to the financial plan?

No significant changes to revenue sources have occurred in the last two years that can be reasonably forecasted in the RTP. There are unprecedented funding opportunities currently but no indication that this condition represents a permanent state of future revenue streams other than from emissions and carbon markets, which PRTPO cannot reasonably forecast. Similarly, an alternative to the gas tax is likely in the next 20-30 years but there is no way to reasonably estimate that for a long-range plan such as the RTP.

d. Promote preservation and efficiency of existing system

Have any changes in the last two years reduced the RTP's support for system preservation and efficiency?

No, the RTP continues to emphasize the importance of system preservation and efficiency.

e. Regional transportation goals and objectives

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to any of the RTP goals and objectives?

Current RTP goals and policies address all statutorily required elements of RCW 47.80 and are consistent with the GMA Comprehensive Plans of PRTPO's members. Goals and policies are widely used by members to demonstrate coordination between regional and local or tribal plans. The review and update currently underway may introduce some new objectives to guide PRTPO's strategic decision-making.

f. Regional transportation strategy

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to the regional transportation strategy?

No changes to the transportation strategy or fundamental approach to coordinated regional transportation planning have been introduced in the last two years. Any new insights from the update currently underway will be reflected in future documents.

g. Needs, deficiencies, data requirements, and assumptions

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to any of these elements?

- Existing regional transportation facilities and services
- Identification of regional transportation needs
- Forecasts of future travel demand
- Future regional transportation system deficiencies
- Common regional assumptions used for modeling purposes

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No significant changes have undermined the inventory and long-range assessments of system needs. PRTPO does not conduct travel demand forecasting or modeling for the four-county region. PRTPO is exploring future uncertainties that may inform the regional assessment of regional transportation needs in the future.

h. Have new performance monitoring metrics been identified to augment traffic volumes and vehicle miles of travel (VMT), which the RTP already includes?

PRTPO has not adopted any new regional performance metrics in the last two years.

i. Have regional growth patterns and adopted land use plans changed sufficiently that the RTP is no longer consistent with local Comprehensive Plans?

No regionally significant changes to local land use plans were proposed in the last two years.

j. Least cost planning

Have significant changes occurred in the last two years that warrant updates to PRTPO's least cost planning approach for the RTP?

PRTPO's advocacy for responsible, cost-effective strategies and investments, including emphasis on system preservation and multimodal efficiency, is still appropriate for the region.

2. Support for PRTPO Work Program and Decision-Making

Finding: While it continues to support work program direction, an update to PRTPO's Regional Transportation Plan will ensure it continues to support the Board's planning and decision-making processes over the next several years and better integrate it into the on-going regional transportation work program.

The second test to demonstrate currency of the existing RTP is whether it adequately supports the Executive Board in developing the regional transportation work program and in its decision-making processes. This test of the Biennial Currency Review is relevant to the RTP review and update currently underway. This is the first opportunity since becoming a self-directed organization for PRTPO to identify regionally significant issue areas for further follow-up and collaboration.

a. Work Program Support

The RTP supports the Board in directing planning activities identified in its Unified Planning Work Program. The following illustrates ways in which PRTPO's work program activities over the last two years were informed by four big RTP interests.

- **Funding Priorities Align with RTP Priorities:** PRTPO continues to support local efforts at building and operating an integrated multimodal transportation system with investments that support biking and walking, local and intercity bus travel, access to and from ferry terminals, and system preservation and safety. Project recommendations help to retrofit old highway-oriented infrastructure to accommodate all modes of travel and ensure access to services for people of all abilities. Education and information sharing increases awareness and support for vital programs.
- **Support Electric Vehicles and GHG Reduction:** PRTPO periodically convenes an EV Infrastructure Exchange Group to network with other stakeholders across the region while learning about some new topic or ZEV program. This has spawned follow-up activities for members and others including joint

grant pursuits, coordinated EV planning between tribes and PUDs, and even statewide activities regarding the Clean Fuel Standards program.

- **Increase Operational Efficiency of the Existing System:** PRTPO recognizes the need for a review of policies regarding the opening of the Hood Canal Bridge to let over-sized recreational sailboats to pass. PRTPO is working to obtain information that quantifies the delay and economic impacts associated with such openings. PRTPO is encouraging state and federal officials to work with the Coast Guard to ensure policies for recreational openings of the bridge align with state interests.
- **Make Efficient Use of Existing Resources:** PRTPO supports efforts to defederalize small local projects administered by rural agencies as a practical means of increasing cost-effective and timely project delivery. Through its work program PRTPO has facilitated federal funding training, educated legislators on the need for a more rational approach to managing the state's federal funds, and coordinated with members and allies to advance workable strategies.
- **Make Information and Opportunities for Engagement Accessible to All:** PRTPO maintains a website with the primary purpose of making regional information and resources readily accessible to members and the public. This includes some rudimentary online GIS capabilities that enhance communications, and development of a regional profile of population, socio-economic, and household travel characteristics to support on-going planning and information sharing. PRTPO meets annually with its legislative representatives to keep them apprised of regional activities and maintain open lines of communication and produces an annual information piece to support that effort. An important aim of the RTP update is to translate it to a more accessible online format, in furtherance of this objective.

While it has supported the Board's work these last two years, an update to the RTP at this time will ensure it continues to offer effective support into the future. Increasingly the Executive Board and Technical Advisory Committee are probing questions related to resilience, rural accessibility, new partnerships, and future uncertainties. This update will provide PRTPO with a strategic action plan to guide regional inquiries and collaborations around topics of far-reaching significance. The aim is to strengthen the relationship between the RTP and PRTPO's on-going work program and other planning activities.

b. Decision-making Support

Demonstration of how the RTP supports Executive Board decision-making is evident in Transportation Outlook priorities PRTPO develops annually to educate legislators about regional concerns. Topics can be traced back to underlying RTP goals and objectives that have guided this region for many years. All projects identified in the 2024 *Transportation Outlook* are also consistent with and supportive of the RTP.

One aim of the update currently underway is to strengthen linkages between the long-range regional plan and near-term education and planning activities. What shape that takes will be determined by PRTPO over the next 18 months.

For More Information:

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Discussion Item

To: PRTPO Technical Advisory Committee
From: Thera Black, PRTPO Coordinator
Date: January 12, 2024
Subject: **Harnessing Synergy Between RTP and WSDOT *Complete Streets* Requirements**

REQUESTED ACTION:

No action is requested.

Overview

In November TAC members discussed with Yvette Liufau and George Mazur of Olympic Region the decision-making framework WSDOT is using to screen state projects for *Complete Streets* (CS) requirements. There was broad recognition among TAC members that WSDOT does not have sufficient resources to fulfill the legislative proviso that state projects over $500,000 must include *Complete Streets* retrofits to reduce Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) for non-motorized travelers.

Yvette and George explained the framework WSDOT intends to use to screen projects and identify those CS retrofits to be totally or partially deferred until a later time. A statewide committee of representatives from tribes, cities, counties, transit agencies, school districts, and law enforcement agencies are providing input to WSDOT on how to effectively meet the spirit and intent of the CS legislation with the resources WSDOT has available, without decimating the already insufficient funds available for preservation.

Since November WSDOT has been refining this framework with an eye towards improving the potential for local agencies or others to apply for funding to complete deferred CS elements in a timely way. Specifically, they are looking at ways that the regional transportation plan (RTP) can be used to elevate these elements of non-capital projects to improve their competitiveness in grant pursuits.

Working with staff from PSRC they came up with a tentative approach, which Nazmul describes below:

Here is a proposed approach we are discussing with our MPO/RTPO partners. The goal is to take advantage of funding opportunities by including Complete Streets (CS) elements of non-capital projects in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

- *Since a lot of WSDOT projects are deferring the Complete Streets (CS) elements due to budget constraints, the intent is to include only the deferred Complete Streets Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) 2 concepts in the RTP, not the underlying non-capacity (preservation, safety, operational) roadway/bridge) projects.*
- *The prior bullet presumes that all non-capacity projects will have some level of deferred LTS 2 elements. This is admittedly a big assumption but given the current state of funding to implement Complete Streets, this seems a good assumption to make.*
- *This approach would look for all preservation, safety and operational projects that have been identified for implementation in the next 10 or so years. This should not be limited to funded/programmed projects.*
- *Many of the projects in the prior bullet would not have gone through the CS screening process, so professional judgment will need to be used to identify projects likely to ultimately screen "yes" for CS. The CS project list should include those that either have screened "yes" or are likely to do so.*

- *Some of the projects will have cost estimates available for the CS elements, other projects will not. For those without a pre-existing estimate, WSDOT can develop quick estimates or borrow an estimate from a similar/peer project.*

Please note that the above approach is subject to revision based on continued discussions and feedback from you and others. PSRC is on board with this approach as they originally initiated the discussions.

Nazmul contacted me to discuss this approach and how it might work for the Peninsula Region. While I thoroughly support the intent to leverage the RTP to advance the deferred *Complete Streets* elements of state projects, I questioned whether PRTPO might be able to do this more effectively with a programmatic or policy approach in the RTP. Such an approach can be nimble and more responsive to conditions on the ground than a static project list in a long-range plan can be, more efficient than conducting LTS analysis and developing speculative cost estimates for every WSDOT non-capital project, and less prone to misuse as an implied priority project list.

We had a great discussion and agreed that this topic really needs input from the TAC to be able to think it through while still in a formative stage. The timing is good for WSDOT and for PRTPO's RTP update as members wrestle with big issues facing the region and opportunities to shift those trajectories. To date WSDOT has talked with PSRC and TRPC about this. The TAC meeting is a chance for them to talk about ways the RTP can advance local and state *Complete Streets* objectives in a rural region.

Something mentioned at the November meeting that really resonated with me in my conversation with Nazmul is the **very important role** the local Comp Plan land use element plays in WSDOT's CS screening and evaluation process.

TAC members, be sure your community development and planning departments clearly indicate in the Comp Plan all those little rural hubs and hamlets where walkability, bike-ability, and transit access are key to achieving the land use vision for the area, particularly where "main street" is a state highway. Especially in rural areas, WSDOT is looking to the land use plans to understand the local agency's intent for how that area will grow over time. If it's not indicated as such in your local plans, it may be deferred as a result. This is a good time to check-in and be sure your planning colleagues are on this.

For More Information:
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