

## AGENDA

Transportation Policy Board

**Wednesday, July 13, 2016 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.**

Thurston Regional Planning Council

Conference Room A, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

2424 Heritage Court SW, Suite A

Olympia, WA 98502-6031

1. **Introductions/Announcements** Andy Ryder  
Chair
2. **Approval of Agenda** **ACTION**  
Andy Ryder, Chair
3. **Approval of Meeting Notes from June 8, 2016 (Attachment)** **ACTION**  
Andy Ryder, Chair
4. **Public Comment Period**
5. **7:15 – 7:25 Special Recognition** **RECOGNITION**  
*Executive Director Lon Wyrick is retiring after 16 years at TRPC. The Policy Board will recognize his contributions to the Thurston region.*  
Andy Ryder, Chair
6. **7:25 – 7:35 Executive Director Recruitment (Attachment)** **BRIEFING**  
*Staff will provide information on the process for selecting a new Executive Director.*  
Veena Tabbutt,  
Research & Data Director
7. **7:35 – 8:05 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): Planning for Transit...** **DISCUSSION**  
*At its June meeting, the Policy Board posed some questions about Intercity Transit. The Board will hear insights from recent survey results and short- and long-term plans. We'll also explore: What does the community need from transit? What does transit need from the community? From state and federal government? From local jurisdictions?*  
Karen M. Parkhurst,  
Programs & Policy Director  
Ann Freeman-Manzanares,  
General Manager,  
Intercity Transit
8. **8:05 – 8:15 Business Representative Recruitment (Attachment)** **DISCUSSION**  
*The Policy Board will discuss recruitment for the two unfilled Business Representative positions.*  
Karen M. Parkhurst,  
Programs & Policy Director
9. **8:10 – 8:25 2017 Legislative Session (Attachment)** **DISCUSSION**  
*TPB will continue to discuss issues and strategies for the 2017 state legislative session.*  
Karen M. Parkhurst,  
Programs & Policy Director
10. **Outside Committee Reports** **BRIEFING**  
*At the discretion of the Chair, this may be covered in the after meeting summary.*  
Doug DeForest

**Next TPB Meeting**  
September 14, 2016

**REMINDER: No August 2016 meeting!**

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## MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Transportation Policy Board  
June 8, 2016  
Thurston Regional Planning Council  
Conference Room A, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
2424 Heritage Court SW  
Olympia, WA 98502-6031

### Call to Order

Vice Chair Graeme Sackrison called the meeting to order at 7:00 a.m.

### Attendance

#### TPB Members Present:

Cathy Wolfe, Thurston County  
Graeme Sackrison, Citizen Representative (Vice Chair)  
Martha Hankins, Citizen Representative  
Debbie Sullivan, Intercity Transit  
Clark Gilman, City of Olympia  
EJ Zita, Port of Olympia  
John O'Callahan, City of Tenino  
Pete Kmet, City of Tumwater  
JoAnn Schueler, WSDOT, Olympic Region (Alternate)  
Doug DeForest, Business Representative  
George Carter III, State Government Representative  
Jonathan Stephenson, City of Rainier  
John Suessman, North Thurston Public Schools

#### TPB Members Absent:

Andy Ryder, City of Lacey (Chair)  
Heidi Thomas, Nisqually Indian Tribe  
Tracey Wood, City of Yelm

#### Staff:

Lon Wyrick, Holly Gilbert, Karen Parkhurst, Paul  
Brewster, Veena Tabbutt, and Tom Gow

#### Others:

Martin Hoppe, City of Lacey  
Joel Carlson, Citizen  
Dennis Bloom, Intercity Transit  
Erik Martin, City of Tumwater  
Randy Wesselman, City of Olympia

### Introductions/Announcements

Members, staff, and guests provided self introduction.

### Approval of Agenda

Boardmember O'Callahan moved, seconded by Boardmember Zita, to approve the agenda as published. Motion carried unanimously.

### Approval of Minutes from May 11, 2016

Boardmember O'Callahan moved, seconded by Boardmember Zita, to approve the May 11, 2016 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

### **Federal Transportation Funding**

Senior Planner Paul Brewster briefed members on the role of TRPC in its authority to select and award priority transportation projects to jurisdictions in Thurston County.

Currently, the federal gas tax is 18.4 cents on each gallon of gasoline sold. This tax funds the Highway Trust Fund, managed by the Federal Highways Administration, which is apportioned to states to finance surface transportation projects. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) allocates a share of its apportionment, based on population, to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs), and other lead organizations for funding priority projects within their communities. These funds are the only revenues that TRPC has discretion to award to local agencies for projects. The Transportation Policy Board serves in an advisory role to TRPC for issuing the call for projects, reviewing project submittals, and developing a funding recommendation for submittal to TRPC. TRPC is responsible for selecting and awarding projects. Staff anticipates issuing a call for projects in the fourth quarter of this year.

The three major federal funding programs include the Surface Transportation Program (STP), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ).

Staff proposes to conduct a multi-year funding process from the current annual process. The Board is asked to review regional funding priorities, consider whether to continue including non-traditional partners as applicants, and review and discuss the application review and selection process.

Since the last transportation funding program under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, TRPC has programmed over \$74 million in federal funding to local agencies. The actual value in transportation investments is much higher as local agencies often provide a significant match to the federal funding. Regional funding priorities have focused on system safety, preservation/maintenance/pavement management/maintenance of bridges, and efficiency of the multimodal system to move more people, goods, and services. Historically, TRPC allocated 5% of the total funding amount to non-traditional partners. Since 2001, TRPC has strived to ensure that as many projects are funded across the region. The selection process moved away from a point-based competitive application process to a policy-based review and selection process.

Since 2013, regions and counties have been subject to the changes by WSDOT to establish obligation authority limits requiring communities to be accountable for project completions within the fiscal year. If the region is unable to meet its obligation authority because a projects can't obligate as expected, the region faces a risk of losing the unobligated funds to the state for reallocation to other communities.

For the next four-year funding cycle from 2016-2019, the region anticipates receiving \$9.1 million in funds from the three funding programs. TRPC will award approximately \$6.5 million for STP projects, \$1.2 million for TAP projects, and \$1.4 million for CMAQ projects. The region anticipates no additional CMAQ funds by 2020.

*Boardmember Sullivan arrived.*

When the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) passed in December 2015, the federal transportation bill converted STP and TAP funds to Surface Transportation Block Grants. WSDOT has not received its STP Block Grant appropriation for the FAST Act. Until this occurs, WSDOT Highways

and Local Programs will continue utilizing the old program names of STP and TAP. Overall, the policy for using the funds between MAP 21 and the FAST Act has not changed.

The STP funding program is the largest source of funds, as well as the most flexible. STP funds of \$6.5 million can fund a variety of projects. In general, STP funds are limited to projects located on federally classified routes that are rural major collectors or a higher functional classification. Project eligibility ranges from construction to reconstruction, resurfacing projects, bridge and tunnel replacements, inspections, transit projects, transportation demand management facilities, such as park and ride lots, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, electric and natural gas vehicle infrastructure, planning programs, and a variety of transportation alternative programs such as environmental mitigation, stormwater, habitat mitigation projects, and intelligent transportation systems.

TAP funds are for smaller scale projects and are historically referred to as Transportation Enhancement grants. The funds are used for bicycle and pedestrian projects such as sidewalks, bike lanes, recreational trails, shared use paths, Safe Route to Schools projects and programs, and historic preservation. Previously, TRPC funded the restoration of an historic tugboat in downtown Olympia under the competitive point-based process. TAP funds can also be used for vegetation management and environmental mitigation.

CMAQ funds of \$1.3 million are for projects intended to reduce congestion and emissions in Thurston County as part of the Clean Air Act requirements. Historically, Thurston County has not been subject to air quality problems related to vehicle emissions. In fact, Thurston County's air quality problem stemmed from particulate matter (PM10) from wood smoke emissions. The region mitigated its air quality problem by reducing the number of woodstoves lacking catalytic converters. At present, the region receives CMAQ funds due to its maintenance status. The county's maintenance area is approximately the city limits of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater. CMAQ funded projects must be located within the maintenance area. Eligible projects include transportation demand management programs (programs like CTR and Safe Routes to School activities), encouraging the use of alternative modes, lane channelization projects, roundabouts, vehicle charging infrastructure, and vehicle infrastructure communications systems (transit signal priority). The funds can also be used for diesel retrofits on school buses and fire trucks. The region has used CMAQ funds for the Smart Corridors project, which included updating intersection signal controllers along major corridors to improve signal timing and coordination. The outcome of Smart Corridors better positions Intercity Transit to implement traffic signal priority for buses when routes experience delays.

The region's traditional transportation partners are the cities, towns, Thurston County, and agencies with a core function of providing service transportation. Non-traditional partners include school districts, Port of Olympia, and others not necessarily an organization that either own or are responsible for maintaining transportation. Previously, the Woodland Trail Greenway Association applied for funds, as well as the Boys and Girls Club of Thurston County in Rochester.

*Boardmember DeForest arrived.*

Project administration involves adherence to permitting requirements and federal regulations. WSDOT oversees many of the regulations and issues Certification Acceptance (CA) status to local agencies that demonstrate compliance with federal funding requirements. Non-traditional partners are required to comply with the same federal requirements.

The funds also include a local match requirement. For most states, the minimum local match is 20%. However, Washington State's quantity of federal lands reduces the local match to 13.5%. Most Thurston County jurisdictions provide a higher local match through the utilization of other grant funds and local funds to maximize the investment of federal funds.

The obligation authority is the total amount of federal funds in any given year that the MPO or RTPO must meet. Obligation authority is satisfied when local agencies enter a contract with the Federal Highway Administration for reimbursement of funds spent on projects.

Previously, during multi-year funding processes, the region would delay the call for projects for several years to build up a sufficient amount of funds to award to projects. In 2013, WSDOT initiated accountability requirements compelling communities to meet obligation authority targets. When communities failed to meet the target and didn't have an alternative project to fulfill the obligation authority, the state could rescind the funds to allocate to other communities. The region successfully avoided this situation by switching to a one-year process. The region had awarded several projects that have not obligated, due to challenges of acquiring right-of-way or not having sufficient funds to move the project to construction phase. In an attempt to catch up, the region limited the call for projects on an annual basis to enable the region to meet annual obligation authority targets, but not without some challenges. Consequently, each year, the region received less revenue to program resulting in fewer projects. This year, staff proposes to revert to a multiple year process in some respects to provide more revenue opportunities. The proposal is a three-year STP funding program from 2017-2019 affording the region with \$6.5 million to program versus \$2 million. The proposal provides more certainty and flexibility to jurisdictions, as well as encouraging a greater variety in project types meeting goals in the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Thurston Plan. Additionally, if a project is in jeopardy of not meeting the obligation authority, the region has other projects that could move forward in its place. The greatest challenge is to establish clear guidelines accepted by all jurisdictions and partners to ensure obligation targets are achieved.

The regional priorities of safety, preservation, and efficiency of the multimodal system have remained unchanged. The region has not funded capacity projects. Previously, the Board and TRPC recommended other regional priority projects that were not submitted by a member jurisdiction. One notable example was the 2001 funding recommendation for Phase 1 of the Chehalis Western Trail 'Bridging the Gap' project to acquire right-of-way for the trail bridge spanning Interstate 5. Through partnerships, the region used the STP award as seed funding to leverage other monies to complete the 'Bridging the Gap' project. Thirteen years later, the region completed three bridges spanning Interstate 5, Martin Way, and Pacific Avenue. In 2014, TRPC recommended funding the "Hub Junction" project commemorating the "Bridging the Gap" project at the roundabout along the Chehalis Western Trail and Woodland trails corridor. The Board has the option of recommending a project to fund, which would require TRPC approval.

Non-traditional partner applicants must adhere to the same regulations and requirements for obligating federal funds as the traditional partners. Complying with federal requirements can be costly. Because non-traditional partner projects are small, they commonly will request a local agency to exchange federal funds for non-federal funds. This request must be negotiated in advance of the application and may incur an additional cost of 20% of the total federal award. The agency performing the exchange would apply the federal funds to an eligible project and the 20% would help cover the cost of administering the federal funds. Another option for non-traditional partners is to seek advance approval from a local jurisdiction to serve as the organization's Certification Acceptance agency. Historically, TRPC has allocated 5% of the funds for non-traditional partners for STP projects and 10% for TAP funds. There is no requirement by local agency partners to fulfill sponsorship roles or exchange federal funds. Additionally, having many smaller non-traditional projects can be difficult to track.

Planner Brewster reviewed the application process. The process is a policy-based review by the Board to identify which applications should receive funds and to ensure they meet the region's funding priorities of safety, preservation and maintenance, multimodal system efficiency, and the goals of the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Thurston Plan. It's incumbent upon the Board and TRPC to objectively evaluate and review project applications especially when the total number of project applications exceed the amount of available funding. Since moving away from the point-based process, policymakers have intended to fund as many projects in the region to the extent possible by employing

the region's transportation demand model to estimate vehicle miles traveled or total trips by each community as a surrogate to establish a funding target. The non-point based process allows local agencies to submit their high priority projects, and not worry about point-based outcomes. The call for projects assumes that the projects have been vetted through local processes and include appropriate internal and public review. The region typically has not established a funding cap, limits, or targets for TAP and CMAQ funds because these programs offer less revenue to award than the STP funds. However, the process limits three applications to each agency for CMAQ and TAP.

During this call for projects, the region plans to award projects that are year-specific. For STP, TAP, and CMAQ projects, the region will rely on local agencies to intensify local planning and programming to commit to project obligations in 2017 and beyond. Since the process will be multi-year based, the region must meet obligation authorities. Having a sufficient pool of projects reduces the risk of not meeting its obligation authority when a project misses its year of obligation.

*Boardmember Stephenson arrived.*

TRPC will receive a similar briefing in July. The Board and TRPC are not meeting during August for the summer recess. The Board is scheduled to receive a proposal in September for action by TRPC in October. The call for projects may be issued as early as October following TRPC's approval. The call for projects would follow TRPC's public outreach process to include conducting a workshop for local agency members and non-traditional partners to describe the process and answer questions. The region's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is tasked to review all project applications for technical and financial feasibility. Any issues that are identified are typically coordinated between TRPC staff and the applicant. After completion of its review, the TAC forwards a recommendation to the Board on any issues.

A public review and comment period is conducted for the eligible submitted applications. The Board reviews all project applications and recommends a list of priority project selections to TRPC. TRPC conducts a final review and selects the projects for funding. TRPC staff issues award letters to the applicants which initiates amendments to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

TRPC may conduct an annual call for projects or wait two to three years before issuing another call for projects.

Boardmember Gilman asked whether the federal monies track closely with fuel consumption within the state. Planner Brewster replied that fuel tax has not kept pace with maintaining the Highway Trust Fund at the level necessary to meet the funding demand of maintaining the nation's infrastructure. However, the funding appropriation has remained consistent over the years. The final federal funding allocation amount is identified after projects are identified to receive funding awards, typically in April or May. Boardmember Gilman asked whether the multi-year process is an aggregate of a larger amount that affords some flexibility to fund larger projects that are phased. Planner Brewster affirmed that is the intent.

Boardmember Kmet remarked that the multi-year aspect is somewhat confusing. He asked whether the \$6.5 million in STP funds covers a four-year cycle. Planner Brewster advised that the \$6.5 million covers three years of funding. Boardmember Mayor Kmet cited some typical agency allocations that occurred in the past and project selections. Since the funds are not available in the first year but would be allocated over the three-year period, he questioned whether staff intends to sequence the projects to match available monies. Planner Brewster affirmed the intent and reiterated that the region is also tracking previous awards. During the 2015 process, Intercity Transit submitted several project proposals that were funded. Intercity Transit likely wouldn't receive the same level of funding during this process. The process will be complex in terms of determining ways to meet the obligation authority. However, jurisdictional staff members are well experienced in project scheduling and obligating.

Boardmember Kmet asked about the CMAQ funding process and whether there are any emerging themes such as diesel retrofits or traffic signal coordination that were completed in the past. Planner Brewster said the Board's discussion would establish funding priorities. The 2015 process included a variety of projects for CMAQ funds. The Board did not establish a theme or the type of projects to fund.

Boardmember DeForest said the sources of all funds are tied to the Federal Highway Administration transportation funding plan. Over the years, Congress has been reluctant to identify the amount prior to the deadline for approving the plan. The process has typically been erratic in terms of knowing all the provisions in the funding package. The new five-year plan recently adopted offers more stability and more guidance affording an easier planning process.

Executive Director Wyrick added that each bill offered a projectable source of funding and typically reflected a 2% to 3% increase over the years. Projections on previous funding awards form the basis for a conservative method moving forward.

Planner Brewster added that after review of previous appropriations, staff is confident in terms of the amount of funds the region is anticipated to receive. Another tool to consider is projects identified for advance construction. Those agencies having sufficient funds could proceed with a project regardless of obligation authority constraints and agree to receive reimbursement later. The City of Lacey previously utilized that process.

Boardmember O'Callahan asked whether the three-year funding cycle might endanger projects. Planner Brewster advised that the projects wouldn't fail but would encounter delays until funding becomes available or jurisdictions elect to use the advance construction method.

Boardmember Kmet said that previously for those projects expending funds for planning and right-of-way acquisition, the agency was obligated to proceed with construction within a certain timeframe or would be required to return the funds expended up to that point. Planner Brewster acknowledged that after federal funds are expended on a project, a timeline initiates a 10-year period to complete construction.

Boardmember Kmet said that previously, the Board focused the funds on safety, preservation and efficiency, as well as multimodal projects when possible. In many instances because of challenges in permitting and right-of-way acquisition, many projects have shifted to maintenance within existing right-of-way, which is an appropriate approach to ensure the funds are expended rather than creating a new project with uncertainties. He recommended continuing that approach. The policy-based decision making may be confusing to new members; however, in previous years the point-based system provided ease in submitting projects that maximized the point system often enabling larger jurisdictions an advantage in competing for funds. The policy-based approach is a fair process to ensure all jurisdictions have an opportunity to receive funds especially for south county jurisdictions that have encountered problems in competing against north county projects. He added that he is unsure about the 5% allocation for non-traditional partners, as it would equate to approximately \$325,000 and because of the federal requirements attached to the use of those funds. Generally, the concepts utilized in the past should be continued.

Executive Director Wyrick noted that another outcome of the point-based competitive process resulted in the submittal of many projects that competed well but were not the top priority for the respective community, resulting in the agency pursuing the grant game rather than addressing priority projects within the jurisdiction.

Boardmember Hankins said she is assuming the discussion is not unique to the jurisdictions. She asked about other processes utilized by other MPOs, especially those that are sized similarly to the Thurston region. Executive Director Wyrick said many MPOs of medium size employ the same basic ideas and principles. The state's "Use it or lose it" policy applies across the state. The process affords the opportunity for each region to fine-tune the process. Although there are federal criteria for project

competitiveness and obligation of the funds, within that realm the region has the ability to allocate funding that is appropriate for the jurisdiction.

Boardmember DeForest noted that Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) recently met and discussed options for allocating \$67 million in federal funds. PSRC is considering a process to streamline, improve the process, and to ensure no funds are lost.

Planner Brewster said the next step is meeting with the TAC to review the process. TRPC intends to streamline the process for local agencies because the intent is to fund and complete projects.

Vice Chair Sackrison commented that the prior point system was awkward and difficult. The best example was the restoration of the Sandman tugboat that scored higher than other projects. The current practice works and will continue to evolve.

### **Regional Transportation Plan: Status Update**

Research and Data Director Veena Tabbutt reported the Regional Transportation Plan is slated for adoption by TRPC on July 8. Previously, the Board reviewed draft changes and provided input, which was reviewed by the TRPC on June 3.

Generally, TRPC accepted the Board's recommendations and offered three amendments:

- Chapter 2: "Multimodal Capacity Improvements" was renamed to, "Capacity Projects including Multimodal Improvements."
- Chapter 3: Policy 18, Environmental and Human Health, original language of "18.b. Use transportation planning, design, and construction measures that minimize negative impacts on priority fish-bearing streams and other environmentally sensitive areas." to reflect, "During transportation planning, design, and construction proactively address fish barrier removal, taking into consideration the habitat of fish bearing streams and environmental sensitive areas."
- Add to supportive measures the following, "Support health of pollinators and other environmental goals by preserving and using pollinator friendly native vegetation when appropriate and possible during building and maintenance."

### **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): Planning for Transit...Planning for Rail...**

Programs and Policy Director Karen Parkhurst said with new members on the Board and the questions and ideas raised during the RTP update, it is time to look at transit and rail again to ensure that everyone has the same level of information. The question to the Board is what information is desired for transit in terms of assisting in the implementation of the RTP and increasing the number of people using transit.

Intercity Transit recently completed a package of surveys and have compiled much data. Director Parkhurst asked whether the Board would be interested in receiving information on the survey results. The Board agreed it would be helpful. The Board expressed interest in also receiving information on how transit decisions occur, future plans by Intercity Transit for service, how transit is funded, who pays, the percentage fare contributes to agency funding, Express Bus service to Tacoma/Seattle, and services provided by the agency.

Vice Chair Sackrison shared that he was approached by several individuals with questions surrounding buses in terms of the future of bus/transit transportation in the county through collaborative efforts rather than only service offered by Intercity Transit. Director Parkhurst recommended including the efforts by Twin Transit serving the Chehalis and Lewis County areas and RT in rural Thurston County.

Boardmember Zita said the suggestion relates to unmet needs in the rural areas, as well as transportation for the disabled community in the rural areas. She questioned whether other areas have developed solutions that the region could learn from.

Boardmember O'Callahan referred to services offered by Uber and Lyft. Often the development of regulations by each jurisdiction can be onerous and begin to create gaps that Uber and Lyft can fulfill. Although the services are private, they should be considered in the same context as they serve to fill gaps. Director Parkhurst remarked that those services also typically provide the last mile of service in terms of someone traveling to the bus stop that might be two miles from a passenger's home.

Boardmember Zita said many people have inquired about passenger ferry service to Seattle. Director Parkhurst agreed it's an issue to discuss, as ferry service in the state is a component of transit services – considered a part of the highway system. Therefore, gas tax funding can be used for ferries but not for transit.

Boardmember Hankins said her request would be in the context in terms of the change in transportation demands and projecting demographic shifts.

Boardmember Kmet mentioned technology and apps used in conjunction with buses.

Boardmember DeForest said he also assumes the transit discussion would touch on the subject of Pierce County/Transit. Director Parkhurst agreed the discussion would include funding of transit, how its funded, the state's role in funding express service connecting different regions, as well as whether funding is sustainable.

Boardmember Sullivan recommended including emerging technologies as driverless cars are on the horizon. The forecast even includes driverless cars picking up passengers, which could occur sooner rather than later.

Director Parkhurst outlined future agenda topics on a monthly basis to include discussions and presentations by subject matter experts from Intercity Transit and other organizations.

Director Parkhurst invited input on rail. She reviewed differences in various forms of rail service.

Boardmember Kmet spoke to the need to review some of the prior rail discussions and some of the challenges of extending rail from DuPont to Thurston County.

Vice Chair Sackrison recommended beginning the discussion with a reexamination of the work product of the previous TRPC Passenger Rail Group to ascertain changed conditions.

Boardmember Hankins said that often the discussions generate conversations about bus rapid transit whereby dedicated roadways are available for bus similar to light rail. One example often cited is Bogotá, Columbia. She recently visited Bogotá and the comparison between Bogotá and Olympia is night and day as Bogota has a population of 11 million people and enormous transportation challenges. The region's problems pale in comparison. It's not a solution the region could implement.

Boardmember DeForest said the original study focused on freight mobility. Vice Chair Sackrison said the study focused on rail transportation. Boardmember DeForest suggested distinguishing between passenger and freight rail.

Director Parkhurst asked about interest in discussing both passenger and freight rail. Executive Director Wyrick recommended a review of rail definitions because often when someone refers to "rail" it tends to be all inclusive when in fact there are different rail services.

Director Parkhurst recommended inviting Sound Transit to review its service plans, invite representatives from the new short line operator, invite representatives from Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, as well as include some review of at-grade rail crossings in the region that relate to safety and requirements

necessary to qualify for federal funding. It's also important to consider high capacity transportation as a future study must define all options.

Boardmember Zita commented that part of the problem associated with extending light rail is the lack of urban density. When the BART system was constructed in San Francisco, the location of the stations resulted in an increase in density. Urban density may increase when better transportation services are provided in the urban area as part of the region's planning process for the future.

Director Parkhurst remarked that the way the region articulates density is another important aspect because many people are opposed to density because of a particular vision or experience rather than understanding that density can occur in a variety of ways.

Boardmember Gilman recommended including a discussion on safety improvements for rail funded by local jurisdictions in terms of the investment in local train tracks.

Vice Chair Sackrison commented on the importance of newly elected politicians becoming informed to avoid knee-jerk reactions either for or against transit or rail. The discussion could provide a good mechanism to inform new legislators, councilmembers, and commissioners.

Director Parkhurst added that staff would envision creating some materials to assist Boardmembers in their respective discussions with councils and commissions.

Boardmember Kmet questioned the timing of the briefings. Director Parkhurst advised that the briefings would likely begin next month. Boardmember Kmet recommended extending an invitation to the Board's legislative membership to attend the meetings when briefings are scheduled. He recommended receiving an update from the state in terms of the state's investment process for trains.

Joel Carlson spoke to prior attendance by WSDOT representatives and the desire to provide a presentation on Sound Transit. He cited the nearly three hours that it often takes to travel from Lacey to SeaTac Airport.

Vice Chair Sackrison suggested the conversations on rail should include current track conditions because tracks have a limiting effect on future service and require identification of investment necessary to improve track conditions.

Director Parkhurst added that the discussions could tie to creation of the region's transportation legislative agenda for the next several years.

Executive Director Wyrick noted that in terms of cost, the usage fee Sound Transit is required to pay Burlington Northern Santa Fe is in the millions of dollars.

**Federal Funding Opportunity: Leveraging Travel Demand Model Greenhouse Gas Data Outputs to Support Data-Driven Local Land Use and Transportation Decision-making**

Director Tabbutt briefed the Board on the recent grant proposal to seek new funding to implement some of the items within the Work Plan. The federal Department of Energy grant focuses on energy efficiency and the innovative use of tools to inform decision-making. The grant supports two work program items:

- Develop a greenhouse gas emissions framework for integrating emissions analysis into traffic impact analysis and other transportation decision-making.
- Update the "Vision Reality" report...including analyzing what actions and investments it will take to reach the regional vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions goals.

The grant proposal is for two years with the first year focused on building and enhancing data by improving the travel demand model by adding an emissions module to track emissions and ways

technology might change outcomes over time. The model would be used to help inform local decision-making. Testing would be through the creation of case studies to gauge the responsiveness of the model to different policy questions to ascertain its effectiveness. Staff is optimistic that the model could be used to some extent to address the 10 policy areas.

Boardmember Kmet asked whether TRPC submitted an application and the amount of the funding request. Director Tabbutt replied that staff plans to submit the application in the next several weeks for \$440,000 for a two-year period with the awards announced in September.

Boardmember Gilman noted his reaction to the grant application's wording that elected officials often take in terms of the most revolutionary action they can take is to follow their own plans in the face of public opposition. Although it may not be meant to be inflammatory, it could be seen as seeking efficiencies and elegance that can be tracked through field consumption and emissions to increase the efficiency of the network and not just moving forward to challenge or forcing some model on those who may be unwilling. He suggested framing the proposal differently.

Director Tabbutt said the description wasn't intended to be inflammatory but to point out that when people have more information they are more apt to listen. Providing more information might be helpful for local officials.

Director Tabbutt added that TRPC also submitted a concept paper to the Department of Energy, which authorized the submittal of a proposal.

Director Tabbutt addressed questions on the transportation modeling process.

#### **Adjournment**

With there being no further business, Vice Chair Sackrison adjourned the meeting at 8:24 a.m.

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Graeme Sackrison, Vice Chair



**MEMBERS:**

City of Lacey  
City of Olympia  
City of Rainier  
City of Tenino  
City of Tumwater  
City of Yelm  
Confederated Tribes of the  
Chehalis Reservation  
Nisqually Indian Tribe  
Town of Bucoda  
Thurston County  
North Thurston Public Schools  
Olympia School District  
Intercity Transit  
LOTT Clean Water Alliance  
Port of Olympia  
PUD No. 1 of Thurston County

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:**

Lacey Fire District #3  
Puget Sound Regional Council  
The Evergreen State College  
Thurston Economic  
Development Council  
Timberland Regional Library

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Transportation Policy Board  
FROM: Veena Tabbutt, Research and Data Director  
DATE: July 7, 2016  
SUBJECT: Executive Director Recruitment

**PURPOSE**

To update the Transportation Policy Board on the recruitment of a new Executive Director.

**Summary:**

- Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) appointed an Executive Director Recruitment subcommittee.
- The subcommittee will be issuing a request for qualifications/proposals for a consulting firm to assist with the hiring process.
- The expectation is that TRPC will have a new Executive Director on board by the end of 2016.
- TRPC is expected to appoint an interim Executive Director at their meeting on July 8, 2016.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

No action is required.



Lon D. Wyrick  
Executive Director

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**MEMBERS:**

- City of Lacey
- City of Olympia
- City of Rainier
- City of Tenino
- City of Tumwater
- City of Yelm
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Town of Bucoda
- Thurston County
- North Thurston Public Schools
- Olympia School District
- Intercity Transit
- LOTT Clean Water Alliance
- Port of Olympia
- PUD No. 1 of Thurston County

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:**

- Lacey Fire District #3
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- The Evergreen State College
- Thurston Economic Development Council
- Timberland Regional Library

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Transportation Policy Board

**FROM:** Karen M. Parkhurst, Programs & Policy Director

**DATE:** July 7, 2016

**SUBJECT:** TPB Business Representative Recruitment

**PURPOSE**

To discuss recruitment strategies.

**Summary:**

- TPB by-laws allow for up to three business representatives, who serve for a term of two years – with no limit to the number of terms served.
- The Policy Board currently has two unfilled Business Representative positions.
- Staff will begin a recruitment process to fill these positions.
- Board members are encouraged to provide ideas for the process or potential candidates, and to help get the word out.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

None. Discussion only.



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Transportation Policy Board

**FROM:** Karen M. Parkhurst, Programs & Policy Director

**DATE:** July 7, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Preparing for the 2017 State Legislative Session

**PURPOSE**

To discuss priorities and strategies for the 2017 state Legislative Session.

**Summary:**

- Each year, the Council articulates a list of regional priorities to bring to the state legislature. Members and staff also visit our 2<sup>nd</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 35<sup>th</sup> district legislators to review these issues.
- TRPC also works with several broader coalitions, reinforcing regional priorities, such as I-5.
- Legislators have very little time during the session to meet. Some have suggested that we work together during the interim on issues such as remedies for the cost-prohibitive septic/sewer conversions and upgrades. However, many elected officials are up for re-election.
- At their July 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, Council will be continuing discussions at possible issues for 2017 and strategies for working with legislatures prior to the session.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Direction and guidance for interim work.



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