



Puget Sound Regional Council

Regional FTA Caucus Agenda

Date: Wednesday, June 8, 2022 from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Online Meeting Only: Use Zoom Connection Information Provided Below

1. Welcome and Introductions (10:30)

2. Action: Approval of Meeting Summary – May 11, 2022* (10:35)

Approve summary for the Regional FTA Caucus meeting held May 11, 2022.

3. Potential Action: 2022 FTA Annual Adjustments (10:40)**

The 2022 FTA annual adjustments process is currently underway, with Earned Share and Preservation Set-aside project changes due to PSRC on June 3rd. As part of this process, PSRC staff is also working through the FTA regional competitive funding contingency list. The Caucus will review the proposed project changes as of the meeting, and potentially take action to recommend them to the Transportation Operators Committee (TOC).

4. Action: Project Tracking Working Group Update* (11:00)

PSRC staff will provide an overview of proposed updates to project tracking policies and procedures for projects experiencing delays, including a review of the revisions made to the proposals at the May 11th Caucus meeting. The Caucus will then take action to recommend the proposals to the TOC.

5. Discussion: FTA Spare Ratio Requirements (11:20)

The Caucus will discuss fleet planning issues related to complying with the FTA's spare ratio requirements. Agencies will share their experiences with this requirement and how it has impacted their funding strategies.

6. Discussion: Update on Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (11:40)

The Caucus will discuss recent changes to FTA programs in accordance with amendments made by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

7. Roundtable (11:45)

8. Other Business (11:55)

9. Next Meeting: July 13, 2022: 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

10. Adjourn (12:00 p.m.)

* Supporting materials attached.

** Additional supporting materials may be sent in advance of the meeting.

For more information, contact Sarah Gutschow at (206) 587-4822 or sgutschow@psrc.org.

Zoom Remote Connection Information:

To join audio/video conference:

<https://psrc->

[org.zoom.us/j/93353535601?pwd=WDRUVTh2SkxMMnBuM3VTUTNYTjNkQT09](https://psrc-org.zoom.us/j/93353535601?pwd=WDRUVTh2SkxMMnBuM3VTUTNYTjNkQT09)

To join via cellphone (1-touch dial):

8884754499,,93353535601#,,,,,0#,,895936# US Toll-free

8335480276,,93353535601#,,,,,0#,,895936# US Toll-free

To join via phone:

Dial by your location

888 475 4499 US Toll-free

833 548 0276 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 933 5353 5601

Passcode: 895936

Regional FTA Caucus Attendees:

Please adhere to a few virtual meeting rules:

- Please keep your microphone muted at all times when not speaking
- Use chat to ask about a system issue
- Use *6 to mute/unmute phone
- Speakerphone is not recommended

Other Formats:

- Sign language and communication material in alternate formats can be arranged given sufficient notice by calling (206) 464-7090 or TTY Relay 711.
- العربية | Arabic, 中文 | Chinese, Deutsch | German, Français | French, 한국어 | Korean, Русский | Russian, Español | Spanish, Tagalog, Tiếng việt | Vietnamese, visit <https://www.psrc.org/contact-center/language-assistance>



Puget Sound Regional Council

Regional FTA Caucus Meeting Summary

Date: May 11, 2022 from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Location: Online Meeting Only - Zoom Remote Meeting

Welcome and Introductions

Melissa Cauley, Chair and Community Transit, welcomed everyone at 10:30 a.m. She took a roll call and confirmed the members and alternates present. She then introduced Ashley Ross, a new grant specialist at Community Transit who would soon be joining the Caucus as an alternate member for the agency.

Approval of Meeting Summary

The summary for the March 9, 2022 Regional FTA Caucus meeting was approved as presented.

Discussion: Project Tracking Working Group Update

Sarah Gutschow, PSRC, provided background information on the project tracking working group formed to update project tracking policies and procedures for projects experiencing delays in obligating their regional FTA funds and/or “flexed” FHWA funds. She then reviewed the policy and procedural updates proposed by the working group. The Caucus provided comments and suggested some revisions to the proposals.

Sarah said she will make the requested revisions prior to the next meeting. The Caucus would then be able to review the revised version and recommend the proposed updates to the Transportation Operators Committee.

For more information, contact Sarah Gutschow at sgutschow@psrc.org.

Discussion: Update on 2022 FTA Annual Adjustments

Sarah provided an update on the 2022 FTA annual adjustments process, including the funding apportionments received by the region and the draft process schedule. The Caucus provided feedback on the draft schedule and decided that agency project changes would be due to PSRC on June 3rd.

For more information, contact Sarah Gutschow at sgutschow@psrc.org.

Discussion: Update on Recent FTA Program Changes

Sarah provided an update on recent changes to FTA programs in accordance with amendments made by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The Caucus discussed the

potential changes and requested more information from FTA Region 10 staff on the changes in the BIL.

For more information, contact Sarah Gutschow at sgutschow@psrc.org.

Roundtable / Other Business

Melissa Cauley, Community Transit, announced that she would soon be transitioning out of the Caucus as she would be taking on a new position at Community Transit. After that transition, Community Transit would be represented on the Caucus by Kathryn Rasmussen as the voting member and by Ashley Ross in the alternate position.

Sarah announced that the current Caucus Chair and Vice Chair terms ended in January 2022, so after the meeting she would be sending out a request for nominations for these roles. Chair elections would be held either at the next Caucus meeting or via vote by email.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

***Members and Alternates Present**

See attached attendance roster for the member or alternate representing each agency at the meeting; additional alternates present are listed below.

***Alternates, Interested Parties, and PSRC Staff Present**

Tyler Benson, Sound Transit; Eric Irelan, King County Metro; Kirste Johnson, Sound Transit; Amanda Koerber, Everett Transit; Dave Morrison, King County Metro; Monica Overby, Sound Transit; Kathryn Rasmussen, Community Transit; Ashley Ross, Community Transit

PSRC: Monica Adkins, Gil Cerise, Sarah Gutschow, Kalon Thomas

**All attendees were present via remote participation*

Regional FTA Caucus Attendance Roster

(Members and Alternates represented)

Date: May 11, 2022 10:30am - 12:00pm

Online/Remote Meeting Only

Agency/Jurisdiction		Name
Transit Agencies		
Community Transit (1)	x	Melissa Cauley, Chair
		<i>Kathryn Rasmussen (Alt.)</i>
Everett Transit (1)		Melinda Adams
	x	<i>Nathan Groh (Alt.)</i>
King County Metro (1)	x	Peter Heffernan
		<i>David Morrison (Alt.)</i>
Kitsap Transit (1)		Steffani Lillie
		<i>Jeff Davidson (Alt.)</i>
Pierce County Ferries (1)	x	Clint Ritter, Vice Chair
		<i>Peter Lewis-Miller (Alt.)</i>
Pierce Transit (1)		Barb Hunter
		<i>Tina Lee (Alt.)</i>
Seattle DOT (1)	x	Benjamin Smith
		<i>Vacant (Alt.)</i>
Sound Transit (1)	x	Lisa Wolterink
		<i>Kirste Johnson (Alt.)</i>
		<i>Monica Overby (Alt.)</i>
State		
WSDOT - Washington State Ferries (1)		John Bernhard
		<i>Rick Singer (Alt. 1)</i>
	x	<i>Krishan Aggarwal (Alt. 2)</i>
		<i>Leslie Rifkin (Alt. 3)</i>
Non-Voting Participants		
Intercity Transit		Eric Phillips
		Jessica Gould
Skagit Transit		Marcia Smith

1/19/2022

DRAFT - PSRC's Adopted Contingency List - 2020 Regional FTA Competition (June 2022)

Sponsor	Project	Total Score (100 points)	Phase(s) Requested	Current Amount	Proposed Change	Updated Amount
Sound Transit	SR 522/NE 145th St BRT*	85	OTH	\$0		\$0
King County Metro	RapidRide K Line: Speed and Reliability Improvements	71	CN	\$6,000,000		\$6,000,000
Sound Transit	NE 130th Street Infill Station	69	CN	\$7,300,000		\$7,300,000
City of Seattle	Northgate to Downtown Transit improvements	68	PE	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000
King County Metro	Route 36 Speed and Reliability Corridor Improvements	63	CN	\$2,449,000		\$2,449,000
Pierce Transit	Spanaway Transit Center Phase II	54	CN	\$2,000,000		\$2,000,000
City of Seattle	Seattle Center Monorail Station Improvements	54	CN	\$4,800,000		\$4,800,000
Sound Transit	South Tacoma & Lakewood Station Access Improvements	51	PE	\$5,000,000		\$5,000,000
Total				\$28,549,000	\$0	\$28,549,000

* The amount reflects the reduction of \$727,310 awarded in the FTA 2021 Adjustments.

PROJECT TRACKING WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

In Brief: In January 2022, the Regional FTA Caucus formed a working group to review PSRC's policies and procedures for projects experiencing delays in obligating regional FTA funds and "flexed" FHWA funds. The working group developed a suite of recommendations with the goal of ensuring timely funding obligations. At its June 8th meeting, the Caucus will discuss and potentially recommend the proposed updates to the Transportation Operators Committee.

Background: In 2021, PSRC staff worked with the Regional FTA Caucus to review and update procedures for projects experiencing delays in obligating regional FTA (competitive and preservation set-aside) or "flexed" FHWA funds. Based on these discussions, the Caucus decided that staff would begin reaching out to sponsors if applications were not submitted six months after their creation for regional FTA funds, and three months after being flexed for FHWA funds. The purpose of the outreach would be to gather information on the reasons for delay and evaluate if additional follow-up was needed from PSRC and the Caucus.

Following this update, staff reached out to sponsors with projects meeting those criteria, and then presented a summary of the information gathered to the Caucus at its January 2022 meeting. Based on this information, the Caucus decided to form a working group to look at further modifications to PSRC's project tracking policies and procedures for projects with funds that have not yet obligated well after the point of meeting PSRC's initial obligation requirements.

The working group held three meetings in February and March 2022 to review potential policy and procedural updates. The resulting recommendations are detailed in the next section. The goals of these modifications are to ensure that both processes maintain consistency with the integrity of the competitive process, projects continue to stay on track and funds are used efficiently.

Proposed Updates:

Evaluation of Reasons for Delay

The working group discussed potential reasons for delay that would be considered either reasonable or unreasonable. The primary consideration in determining whether a delay would be considered reasonable is whether the delay is due to factors outside of the sponsor's control. Regardless of the reason for delay, the sponsor is expected to demonstrate that they have been putting in effort to progress their application through the grant process in TrAMS, the FTA's grant management system. Examples of reasonable and unreasonable delays are outlined below.

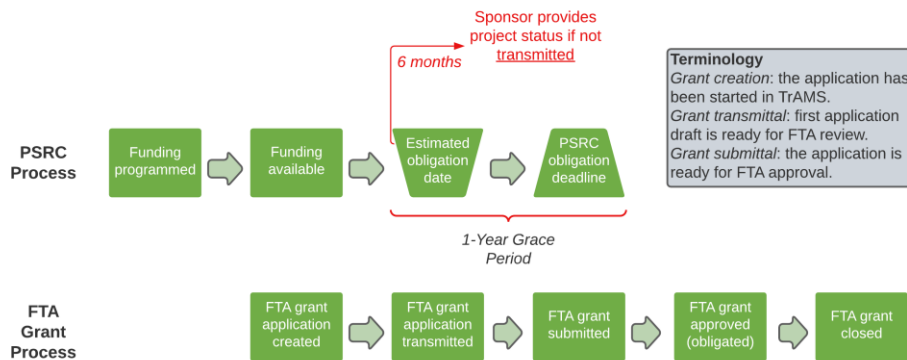
Reasonable Delays	Unreasonable Delays
Processing delays by FTA or other resource agencies, e.g. NEPA approval	Significant changes to scope
New FTA requirements, expectations or interpretations	Shifting priorities within the agency
<u>Project delays due to working with partner agencies</u>	Insufficient funding
	Work that was not begun in a reasonable time to meet the obligation deadline

For delays due to emergent situations, the Caucus will make evaluations on a case-by-case basis to determine if the delay is due to a true emergency. The definition of "emergency" will be applied as follows:

- The need is due to a situation that was unpredictable and for which the sponsoring agency could not have planned; AND
- The facility / project has been impacted by a natural disaster or catastrophic event; or
- The facility / project is experiencing a major safety issue; or
- There are or will be significant impacts to the regional system and/or local population / employment centers if the need is not addressed.

Project Tracking Procedures

Regional FTA – Proposed Procedural Update



Current Policy: FTA regional funds are allowed a one-year grace period beyond their estimated date to obligate funds. Funds are considered obligated once the sponsor has created a grant application in TrAMS.

Proposed Update: FTA regional funds will continue to be allowed a one-year grace period beyond their estimated obligation date to obligate funds. PSRC staff will check in with the sponsor five months after the estimated obligation date if the FTA grant application has not yet been transmitted.

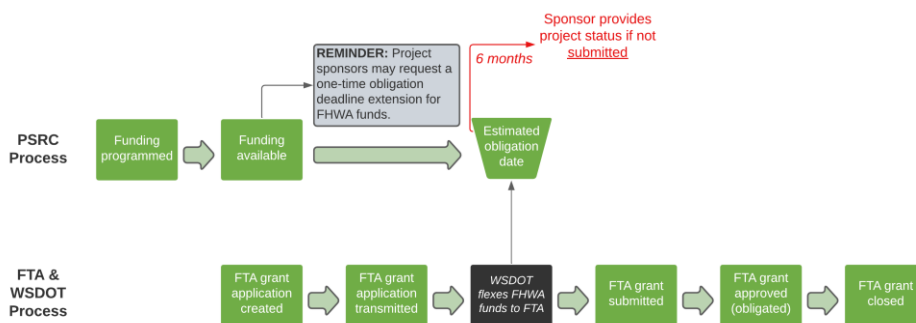
Within one month of the notification from PSRC, the project sponsor is expected to provide further information on the status of the project, any expected delays that would impact their ability to obligate within the one-year grace period, their work with FTA to progress the application and any project work already ongoing under pre-award authority. If the sponsor does not respond with this information by the deadline, the funds would then be at risk of being returned to the region.

PSRC staff will then consult with the Regional FTA Caucus Chairs and FTA to review the information from the sponsor and decide if the project is on track. If not, they will review the reasons for the delay and determine if an extension is warranted. Based on these recommendations:

~~PSRC and the Regional FTA Caucus would then review the information gathered to decide if the project is on track and, if not, review the reasons for the delay and determine if an extension is warranted. Based on this review:~~

- For *reasonable delays*, the Caucus would determine next steps on a case-by-case basis. Next steps could include setting a check-in date for the project and/or revising the obligation schedule for the funds and recommending a one-time obligation date extension. The revised deadline should fall within a reasonable time frame from the original deadline.
- For *unreasonable delays*, the obligation deadline and one-year grace period would still apply for transmitting the grant application. If the sponsor does not transmit the grant application by this deadline, the sponsor would be required to return the funds to the region.

Flexed Regional FHWA – Proposed Procedural Update



Current Policy: Transit agencies can “flex” their regional FHWA-funded projects to be managed by the FTA if approved by WSDOT. Sponsors have met PSRC’s FHWA

obligation requirements when the funds have been flexed to FTA. It is expected that projects are ready to obligate once they have been flexed, and that once flexed they will still be accomplishing the project under the originally awarded scope and funding amount from the FHWA competitive process.

Proposed Update: Transit agencies will continue to be able to “flex” their regional FHWA-funded projects to be managed by the FTA if approved by WSDOT. PSRC staff will then check in with the sponsor five months after the original estimated obligation date if the grant application has not yet been submitted.

Within one month of the notification from PSRC, the project sponsor is expected to provide further information on the status of the project, the reasons for the delay, their work with the FTA on advancing the application and any project work already ongoing under pre-award authority. If the sponsor does not respond with this information by the deadline, the funds would then be at risk of being returned to the region.

PSRC staff will then consult with the Regional FTA Caucus Chairs and FTA to review the information from the sponsor and decide if the project is on track. If not, they will review the reasons for the delay and determine if an extension is warranted. Based on these recommendations:

~~PSRC and the Caucus would then review the information gathered to decide if the project is on track. If the project is not on track, staff would work with the Caucus to review the reasons for the delay and determine if an extension is warranted. Based on this review:~~

- For *reasonable delays*, the Caucus would determine next steps on a case-by-case basis. Next steps could include setting the next check-in date for the project and/or revising the obligation schedule for the funds and recommending a one-time obligation date extension.
- For *unreasonable delays*, the Caucus would set a hard deadline for submitting the grant application, not to exceed one year after the original estimated obligation date. If the sponsor does not submit the grant application by this deadline, then they would be required to return the funds to the region.

Additional Proposed Updates

The working group proposed some additional procedural updates and clarifications to help strengthen current project tracking procedures, including:

- PSRC will inform the relevant project sponsor once WSDOT sends notification that the FHWA funds have been flexed to FTA.
- Project sponsors are encouraged not to bundle multiple TIP projects into one TrAMS application, if possible, particularly if one or more projects is likely to experience obligation delays.
- PSRC will review and potentially make modifications to current progress report forms to better capture information on FTA-funded projects that are at risk for delay or are already experiencing obligation delays.

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Last Updated June 8, 2022

- Once applications have fulfilled PSRC's obligation requirements, the FTA would have primary responsibility for ensuring the funds progress through the grant process. PSRC would continue to monitor projects through its regular progress report and TIP amendment processes.

Lead Staff: For more information contact Sarah Gutschow, Senior Planner, at sgutschow@psrc.org or 206-587-4822.