TPB FTA Working Group – Process and Recommendation

Transportation Policy Board | March 9, 2023
Presentation Overview

• Background and Purpose
• Existing FTA Funding Process
• Working Group Discussion and Recommendation
TPB FTA Working Group

• Purpose = reevaluate the current PSRC FTA funding distribution process with an equity lens

• 11 working group members – TPB members and transit agency leadership

• Met six times between September 2022 and February 2023
TPB FTA Working Group

• Key principles =

• There is a need to improve service to historically underserved populations

• PSRC funds should be equitably distributed, in line with PSRC’s equity focus populations
  
  ❖ people of color, people with low incomes, seniors, youth, people with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency

• The funding process should focus on equity while honoring existing commitments by preserving the earned share distribution

• The funding process should focus on local transit service needs and not just high-capacity transit
FTA Funding Allocations to Urbanized Area (UZA) in the PSRC region

- **National FTA Funding Allocation**
- **National Formulas & NTD* Data**
  - Seattle-Tacoma-Everett UZA (multiple agencies)
  - Bremerton UZA (1 agency)
  - Marysville UZA (1 agency)
- **Individual Agency Distributions**

*NTD = National Transit Database

Note: Funding comes from four FTA programs with distinct eligibility requirements, generally capital improvements and preservation / asset management activities.
Breakdown of Current FTA Process

Transit Agency Operating & Service Data
(revenue and passenger miles)
FTA uses transit data as self-reported in the National Transit Database (NTD)

Regional Attribute Data
(population, density)
FTA uses data from the decennial U.S. Census and the American Community Survey (ACS)

- Historic Earned Share Distribution
- Regional Competition
- Set-Asides

- Bremerton UZA 100%
- Marysville UZA 100%
- Seattle-Tacoma-Everett UZA ~ 86-88%
- Seattle-Tacoma-Everett UZA ~12-14%
Working Group Discussion and Recommendation

- Discussions highlighted each member’s commitment to equity
- Alignment around a new approach, building from the existing process
- Support current transit services and equity populations, but also support expansion of services, particularly local transit
Summary of recommendation for distribution of funds within the Seattle-Tacoma-Everett UZA:

• Maintain the earned share distribution process
  - support and maintain the existing system

• With the regional portion of funds, apply an equity formula distribution
  - Focused, intentional distribution that looks at all transit service being provided to the region’s equity populations and distributes funds accordingly
  - The methodology considers equity populations within a ½ mile walkshed of all bus stops and a 1-mile walkshed of all rail stops, with an adjustment for ferry services
• Monitoring and Reporting:

• Each agency will identify specific projects to receive funding and will include a description of how each project will support and improve equity
  
  • *PSRC will work with the Transportation Operators Committee to develop guidelines for these submissions and the specific level of detail that should be provided for each project*

• PSRC will continue to monitor transit and equity-related data for reporting in the RTP Performance Dashboard, and information related to improving equity and equity trends may be incorporated into future Transit Integration Reports
  
  • *PSRC will work with the Transportation Operators Committee to identify a baseline and specific metrics against which future success will be monitored*

• Reporting and monitoring will be reported both to the TPB and the TPB Transit Caucus
Final Recommendation and Minority Opinion:

Each working group member has provided a signature to demonstrate support of the recommendation, which will be included in the report to the Executive Board.

However, a minority opinion is also included –

- Three members preferred a larger proportion of funding be applied towards the equity formula distribution; key points =
  - New federal act provided a large increase in funding, providing an opportunity to reinvest in new ways
  - The earned share distribution rewards established agencies and services more than smaller agencies seeking to grow
  - A higher share of funding to the equity formula would provide more funding for local transit services, supporting better access to high-capacity transit and a greater focus on equity focus populations
Working Group Members

Councilmember Ryan Mello, Pierce County and TPB Vice Chair

Mayor Becky Erickson, Poulsbo

Councilmember Kim Daughtry, Lake Stevens

Councilmember Ben Zarlingo, Everett

Deputy Mayor Kristina Walker, Tacoma

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila

Mayor Mary Lou Pauly, Issaquah

Hester Serebrin, Transportation Choices Coalition

Michelle Allison, King County Metro

Kimberly Farley, Sound Transit

Patty Rubstello, Washington State Ferries