



Puget Sound Regional Council

MINUTES

**Puget Sound Regional Council Transportation Policy Board
December 14, 2023
1011 Western Ave., Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98104**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m. by Mayor Dana Ralph, Chair. Chair Ralph announced that all members would be participating remotely due to PSRC's office move. A video of the meeting was streamed live as well as recorded and is available for viewing on PSRC's website. A call-in number was provided on the meeting agenda for members of the public to call in by phone and listen live to the meeting. Roll call determined attendance and that a quorum was present.

Mayor Ralph acknowledged outgoing board members and thanked them for their service:

- Councilmember Alex Pedersen, Seattle
- Councilmember Debora Juarez, Seattle
- Mayor Daryl Eiding, Edgewood
- Councilmember John Clauson, Port Orchard
- Councilmember Jennifer Robertson, Bellevue
- Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ralph thanked members for their work this year and acknowledged how much has been accomplished.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Kelly McGourty, PSRC, also thanked the outgoing members for their service. Ms. McGourty reviewed activities that had happened in the past year related to PSRC's

safety, climate and equity work programs. On safety, these activities included the Regional Safety Summit and the grant received under the Safe Streets for All program (SS4A). She informed the board that it was just announced that PSRC received its second round of SS4A funding to support additional member agencies in their safety planning. On climate, PSRC conducted a 2030 analysis and sensitivity testing, hosted a climate expert review panel, and is partnering with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) and a consortium of agencies to develop a regional climate action plan under EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program (CPRG). On equity, Ms. McGourty reminded the board that PSRC's FTA funding process was revised to include an equity formula distribution and the FHWA equity pilot was conducted.

Ms. McGourty shared that the first two presentations of the day would lead into the presentation on project selection. The board has been discussing project selection since September and consensus is being sought on the various improvements proposed. In January the board will then review the final suite of improvements for action.

Ms. McGourty reminded the board that PSRC is moving to 1201 3rd Avenue in January 2024. All members will participate remotely for the January meeting. PSRC hopes to host a hybrid meeting for members in February.

The near-term Priority Climate Action Plan being developed under CPRG will be ready for review and comment by late January 2024. PSRC and PSCAA are also working with agencies interested in pursuing implementation grants, which are due in April 2024. The survey to gauge interest for jurisdictions has been extended to December 22.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approve Minutes of Transportation Policy Board Meeting held November 9, 2023

ACTION: The motion was made and seconded (Clauson/Robertson) to adopt the Consent Agenda. The motion passed.

DISCUSSION ITEM: PROJECT TRACKING POLICIES AND PROGRAM UPDATES

Jennifer Barnes, PSRC, shared an overview of the project tracking program and policies. The program and policies have been in place since 2003 and help ensure efficient delivery of projects and federal funds. The policies are periodically updated. The policies set out a five-step process to meet gaps in delivery. She provided background on each of the steps of the process, noting that the last three steps require supplemental funding actions.

PSRC continuously monitors funded projects and communicates with project sponsors. PSRC staff maintain a project tracking summary throughout the year and share it with the Regional Project Evaluation Committee (RPEC).

In 2023, PSRC exceeded the delivery target and received \$4.5 million in additional allocation of funds. However, Ms. Barnes pointed out the challenges faced each year in achieving the target, and achieving it in a timely enough manner to receive additional funding. She reviewed delivery trends over the last decade, and the reliance on supplemental funding actions to meet the target.

Ms. Barnes reviewed the problem statement and goals for project delivery moving forward. She gave an overview of the Working Group on Project Delivery that has been convened from members of RPEC and the countywide forums throughout 2023. The group has focused on addressing overall project delivery challenges and developed recommendations that were reviewed and put forward to the board by RPEC. Ms. Barnes went through the four recommendations for improvements to the project tracking policies and procedures related to funding competitions and the annual rebalancing process.

At its meeting in January, the board will be asked to recommend the Executive Board take action on these revisions as part of the *2024 Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds*.

DISCUSSION ITEM: RECOMMENDATIONS ON PSRC'S FHWA EQUITY PILOT

Dr. Charles Patton, PSRC, shared that in 2022 the criteria for equity and safety in PSRC's project selection process was strengthened. In addition, an FHWA Equity Pilot for \$6 million was established. Dr. Patton reviewed the goals of the pilot and the development work throughout the year. Dr. Patton emphasized that the goal of the pilot was to develop improvements for future project selection processes, rather than just distributing funding to projects.

Dr. Patton gave an overview of the Equity Pilot Framework. He shared that the Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) tested two pathways for the pilot. The first pathway updated the criteria within the existing structure, while the second built from those improvements and wove equity throughout all criteria. Dr. Patton shared how the EAC encouraged PSRC to set expectations for what effective outreach to marginalized communities looks like and to improve anti-displacement policies. Dr. Patton also reviewed the parameters of the pilot and noted that 8 projects applied and were asked to respond to both pathways. He then gave an in-depth overview of the EAC recommendations, on both the projects to be funded as well as the improvements for future project selection processes developed under the second pathway.

Since only 8 projects were submitted into the pilot, requesting a modest amount above the available funding, the EAC recommends all projects be funded. They acknowledged that not all projects scored highly, but their participation in the pilot was very helpful to evaluating the proposed changes and refining the final recommendation on improvements. The EAC further recommended staff continue to develop guidance to encourage better responses and stronger scores in the future, and to assist smaller jurisdictions with less resources to devote to grant writing.

Members asked if the pilot would be continued. Ms. McGourty noted that it was intended to be a one-time pilot, with the focus being on identifying improvements to address equity in the project selection process. Members asked for clarification on how point values will be assigned if pathway two is selected. Staff shared the breakdown of points would be presented in the following presentation but also highlighted that additional equity questions have been incorporated throughout the rest of the criteria. Members expressed concern that smaller jurisdictions may not have the resources and staff to address the criteria. Staff noted the types of outreach and other guidance that will be implemented, and also noted that the EAC discussed this topic as an additional equity consideration. Staff also noted that the criteria document will be very transparent in that each question and associated points will be clearly identified. Staff noted that the questions developed from the pilot are more direct and clear and resulted in better responses from applicants.

Ms. McGourty noted that the eight projects from the equity pilot will be released for public comment. The board will review comments received and take final action at its meeting in January.

DISCUSSION ITEM: PREPARING FOR THE 2024 PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

Ms. McGourty shared that the board has discussed project selection since September, and the presentation would continue the review of potential improvements with a focus on safety, climate and equity.

Ms. McGourty shared that no changes had been proposed to set-asides or distribution splits between the Regional and Countywide competitions. She then reminded the board of the project evaluation criteria under discussion.

Ms. McGourty shared that consensus from the last meeting was to increase scoring values for safety. She pointed to the agenda attachment which includes options for changes to the overall scoring values. Members shared a variety of comments related to the scoring options, with some supporting changes to reflect these priorities and others expressing a preference to allow time for the changes from the 2022 process to be more fully evaluated before making further substantial changes. Members expressed concern about reduced point values for centers.

Ms. McGourty noted there had been consensus to update safety criteria and language to tie to the Safe System Approach and FHWA proven safety countermeasures. She provided further details on how this would be accomplished.

Ms. McGourty noted that there had been previous board conversations regarding incorporating a commitment to develop a safety plan/policy based on a Safe System Approach. She shared that PSRC is developing a Regional Safety Action Plan with scheduled adoption in early 2025. Ms. McGourty then reviewed the current safety plan inventory for the region and expectations after the SS4A grant activities. She shared an

option for commitment language that would allow jurisdictions flexibility and would not implement specific requirements for 2024. PSRC would monitor local safety action plans and report back prior to the 2026 project selection process.

Ms. McGourty shared that there had not been board consensus from previous discussions on changes to how climate is addressed. She provided background on the current air quality and climate scoring process. She also reviewed additional changes that have been put forward for consideration, including a proposal to limit the types of projects that can participate in the competition. A version of this suggestion would be to not allow projects on limited access highways that add general purpose capacity. Members shared a diversity of opinions on this topic. Those not supportive of this change shared that general purpose capacity could serve centers and there are times where there is a reason for adding capacity. The change is significant, and concerns were expressed about applying this change without further evaluation and discussion. Further, while the fleet may electrify, there remains the need to eliminate gridlock and encourage transit. Those supportive of the change shared that the proposal was consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and it was helpful to clarify that the change would not impact projects such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. Expansion projects are often the most expensive, and funds could instead be used to support land use and alternative mode strategies. It was pointed out that the types of projects in question are large scale projects for which the majority of funding would come from other sources. However, there could be downstream consequences for related local facilities.

As the meeting was over time, Ms. McGourty proposed sending a poll to board members to gather additional feedback. In January, Ms. McGourty will share the results of the poll for further discussion.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2024. All members will be remote as PSRC moves.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Attachment:

- A. Attendance Roster.

Transportation Policy Board - December 14, 2024				5.a - Att. A			
Voting Members				Non-voting Members			
King County	2	CM Girmay Zahilay		Associate Members			
		CM Dave Upthegrove	1	Island County	1	COMM Melanie Bacon	
		Vacant Alt				COMM Jill Johnson Alt	
		Vacant Alt		Thurston Regional Planning Council	1	MYR Andy Ryder, Lacey	
Seattle	2	CM Dan Strauss				Marc Daily	1
		CM Alex Pedersen	1	Public Agency Members			
		CP Debora Juarez Alt		Puget Sound Clean Air Agency	1	CM Megan Dunn	1
Bellevue	1	CM Jennifer Robertson	1	Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board		Christine Cooley Alt	
		CM Janice Zahn Alt			1	Vacant	
Cities/Towns	3	CM Kate Kruller, Tukwila	1	WA Transportation Improvement Board	1	Vacant Alt	
		MYR Dana Ralph, Kent, Chair	1		1	Vacant	
		MYR Mary Lou Pauly, Issaquah	1	PSRC Committees		CM Sam Low, Snohomish Co. Alt	
		CM Peter Kwon, SeaTac Alt	1				
		CM Wendy Weiker Mercer Isl Alt		Regional Staff Cmte.	1	Vacant	
		DEP MYR Jay Arnold, Kirkland Alt	1			Vacant Alt	
Local Transit	1	CM Rod Dembowski		Regional Project Evaluation Cmte.	1	Doug McCormick, Snohomish Co.	1
		Vacant Alt				Shane Weber, Bremerton Alt	1
Kitsap County	1	COM Christine Rolfes		Transportation Operators Cmte.	1	Peter Heffernan, King County	1
		COM Charlotte Garrido Alt				Vacant Alt	
Bremerton	1	MYR Greg Wheeler	1	Private/Civic Members-Business/Labor			
		CP Jeff Coughlin Alt		WA Trucking Associations exp. 12/31/25	1	Sheri Call	
Cities/Towns	1	CM Leslie Schneider, Bainbridge Isl				Jeff DeVere Alt	
		CM John Clauson, Port Orchard Alt	1	Vacant exp. 12/31/25	1	Vacant	
Local Transit	1	MYR Rob Putaansuu, Port Orchard				Vacant Alt	
		CM John Clauson, Port Orchard Alt		Seattle Met. Chamber of Commerce exp. 12/31/25	1	Lorelei Williams, WSP USA	
Pierce County	1	CM Ryan Mello, Vice Chair	1			Amy Grotefendt, Enviroissues Alt	
		CM Dave Morell Alt		Master Builders of Pierce County exp. 12/31/23	1	Jessie Gamble	
Tacoma	1	DEP MYR Kristina Walker	1			Jason Gano Alt	
		CM Olgy Diaz Alt		Private/Civic Members-Community/Environment			
Cities & Towns	1	CM Tim Ceder, Milton	1	Seattle Aging & Disability Services exp. 12/31/23	1	Dinah Stephens	
		MYR Josh Penner, Orting Alt				Vacant Alt	
Local Transit	1	CM Marty Campbell, Pierce County		Vacant exp. 12/31/25	1	Vacant	
		MYR Daryl Eidinger, Edgewood Alt				Vacant Alt	
Snohomish County	1	CM Jared Mead		Public Health Seattle/ King County exp.12/31/23	1	Dr Faisal Khan, Seattle-King County	
		CM Strom Peterson Alt				Dennis Worsham, Snohomish Co. Alt	
Everett	1	CM Ben Zarlingo	1	Vacant exp. 12/31/23	1	Vacant	
		MYR Cassie Franklin Alt				Vacant Alt	
Cities/Towns	1	CM Jan Schuette, Arlington	1	Non-voting	16	Non-voting members present	5
		MYR Pro Tem Stephanie Vignal, Mill Creek Alt				Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members	
Local Transit	1	CM Kim Daughtry, Lake Stevens		State Legislators	87	Districts within PSRC's boundary	
		CM Jan Schuette, Arlington Alt					
Regional Transit	1	CM Ed Prince, Renton					
		MYR Kim Roscoe, Fife Alt					
Federally Recognized Tribes							
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe	1	CM John Daniels, Jr.					
		Vacant Alt					
Puyallup Tribe of Indians	1	Andrew Strobel					
		Robert Barandon Alt					
Suquamish Tribe	1	CM Luther (Jay) Mills					
		CHRMN Leonard Forsman Alt					
Statutory Members							
Ports	1	COM Toshiko Hasegawa, Seattle					
		COM Cary Bozeman, Bremerton Alt	1				
WA Trans. Commission	1	COM Jim Restucci	1				
		COM Nicole Grant Alt					
WSDOT	1	Robin Mayhew	1				
		Todd Lamphere Alt					
Legislative Transportation Cmte. (Not Counted for Quorum)						Abbreviations	
House Transportation Cmte.	2	Vacant				CHRMN Chairman	
		REP Jake Fey, D Alt				CM Councilmember	
		REP Dan Griffey, R				CP Council President	
		REP Andrew Barkis, R Alt				COM Commissioner	
Senate Transportation Cmte.	2	SEN Marko Lias, D				MYR Mayor	
		SEN Emily Randall, D Alt				DEP MYR Mayor	
		Vacant, R				SEC Secretary	
		Vacant, R Alt				ASST SEC Assistant Secretary	
Voting	32	(Quorum = 14) Quorum Total	16			REP Representative	
		Total Voting members present	18			SEN Senator	