



Transportation Improvement Board
November 17-18, 2011 – Tukwila, Washington
Location: Doubletree Suites
16500 Southcenter Parkway, Tukwila 98188
206-575-8220

November 17, 2011
WORK SESSION AGENDA

TOUR

1:00 p.m. SOUTH PARK BRIDGE TOUR – *Bus will load in front of the Doubletree Suites*

WORK SESSION

	<i>Presentations</i>		Page
2:30 p.m. A.	King County Maintenance Priorities	Paulette Norman, Director of Road Services King County DOT	
3:15 p.m. B.	Greenroads – How it Works	Jeralee Anderson, P.E., LEED-AP Greenroads Foundation Director	
	<i>Projects & Program Matters</i>		
3:45 p.m. C.	2011-12 Project Selection	Steve Gorcester & TIB Engineers	29
4:45 p.m. D.	Renton Strander Blvd. Emergent Nature Request	Steve Gorcester/Greg Armstrong	30
	<i>General Matters</i>		
5:15 p.m. E.	JTC Recommendations Approval	Steve Gorcester	38
5:30 p.m. F.	Adjournment	Chair Irish	

Dinner on your own



Transportation Improvement Board
November 17-18, 2011 – Tukwila, Washington
Location: Doubletree Suites
16500 Southcenter Parkway, Tukwila 98188
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November 18, 2011 – 9:00 a.m.
BOARD AGENDA

		Page
9:00 a.m.	1. CALL TO ORDER	Chair Irish
9:05 a.m.	2. GENERAL MATTERS	
	A. Approval of September 23, 2011 Minutes	Chair Irish 1
	B. Communications	Steve Gorcester
	1. Traffic limited as Garrett Street project moves forward – <i>Enumclaw Courier-Herald</i>	6
	2. Work continues on West Valley Highway in Auburn – <i>Auburn Reporter</i>	7
	3. Auburn construction update: West Valley Hwy reopens – <i>Auburn Reporter</i>	9
	4. Seeking rural revival in Whitman County – <i>Lewiston Tribune</i>	11
	5. Southcenter Parkway reopening celebration Oct. 13 – <i>Tukwila Reporter</i>	17
	6. ‘Gargantuan large’ investment in infrastructure needed – <i>The Washington Post</i>	18
	7. Interchange completed, Union Gap businesses ready for traffic – <i>Yakima Herald</i>	20
	8. Section of Carpenter Road will remain closed – <i>The Olympian</i>	24
9:10 a.m.	3. NON-ACTION ITEMS	
	A. Chair’s Report to the Board	Chair Irish
	B. Executive Director’s Report	Steve Gorcester
	C. Financial Report	Theresa Anderson
	D. Project Activity Report (9/1/11-10/31/11)	Greg Armstrong 26
10:15 a.m.	4. ACTION ITEMS	
	A. 2011-12 Project Selection	Steve Gorcester 29
	B. Renton Strander Blvd. Emergent Nature Request	Steve Gorcester/Greg Armstrong 30
	C. JTC Recommendations Approval	Steve Gorcester 38
10:55 a.m.	5. FUTURE MEETINGS	Steve Gorcester
	January 26-27, 2012 Olympia (Ramada Inn)	
	March 22-23 Wenatchee (Coast Hotel)	
	June 21-22 Vancouver (The Heathman Lodge)	
	September 27-28 Walla Walla (Marcus Whitman)	
	November 15-16 Bellingham (Lakeway Inn)	
11:00 a.m.	6. ADJOURNMENT	Chair Irish

**Transportation Improvement Board
September 23, 2011
Holiday Inn Express
Pasco, Washington**

MINUTES

TIB BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor James Irish, Chair
Commissioner Mike Wilson, Vice Chair
Councilmember Jeanne Burbidge
Mr. Todd Coleman
Councilmember Sam Crawford
Ms. Kathleen Davis
Mr. Mark Freiberger
Councilmember Bill Gothmann

Commissioner Greg Partch
Ms. Heidi Stamm
Mr. Harold Taniguchi
Mr. Steve Thomsen
Mr. John Vodopich
Mr. Jay Weber
Mr. Ralph Wessels

TIB STAFF

Steve Gorcester
Greg Armstrong
Vaughn Nelson
Theresa Anderson
Eileen Bushman/recorder

TIB BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Mr. Paul Ingiosi
Ms. Laura Philpot
Secretary Paula Hammond

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Irish called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

GENERAL MATTERS

A. Approval of March 25, 2011 and June 24, 2011 Minutes

MOTION: It was moved by Councilmember Crawford with a second from Commissioner Wilson to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2011 and June 24, 2011 board meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Partch noted that since he was Chair during the June meeting, he would sign the March minutes and Chair Irish would sign the June minutes.

B. Communications

The board was referred to the articles in the packet.

Chair Irish deviated from the agenda to recognize a special guest. He introduced former board member, Benton County Commissioner Leo Bowman, who provided a report and handouts on Connecting Washington. This 28-member committee was appointed by the Governor to provide recommendations to the Legislature on what is needed in Washington to promote jobs and economic development through the state's infrastructure. The Connecting Washington committee continues to meet to address the need for new revenue to meet the Governor's request.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

A. Chair's Report – Chair Irish reported on the following:

- The Governor announced a \$1.5 billion deficit, which will be addressed in a Special Session starting November 28.
- Update on former board member, Bill Ganley, who was in poor health, but is now improving.
- Shared thank you letters/notes from the Town of Coulee City and City of Sultan. These agencies wanted to thank the board for their action taken on respective projects.

B. Executive Director's Report – Steve Gorcester reported on the following:

Application Overview

- TIB received a total of 399 applications requesting a total in TIB funds of \$278.4 million. Of the \$224 million in urban project requests, \$56.3 million were for rapid action projects. Thirty-one applications were for the Expanded Preservation Program (EPP). Steve is expecting \$30 - \$35 million to go toward the rapid action projects and about \$5 million toward the expanded preservation projects.

WAC Revisions

- The passage of SB 5797, which combined the UATA and the TIA, and the JTC recommendations warrants amendments to our current WACs. Once drafted, these will be brought before the board for review.

Desk Manual

- The development of the Engineers' Desk Manual is underway. This will document each step of the project management process and will be used for training purposes for new engineers.

Risk Profile

- There are nine projects that are currently considered high risk. Of the nine, three are at a critical level because a total of \$1.2 million in design money has been spent. If these three projects do not make it to construction, that money is unrecoverable. Steve and TIB engineers meet with these customers on a regular basis to closely monitor the situation.
- Lewis County Airport Road is high risk because it is the only remaining contingency project that has not yet been restored and has an unreliable construction schedule. There is a possibility of transferring administration of this project to WSDOT since it is being constructed by them in conjunction with their Mellen Street/I-5 project. TIB has spoken with WSDOT Southwest Region and if a dollar amount can be agreed upon, this would be a more efficient and streamlined way to handle this project. If all parties agree, this can be brought back to the board for possible action on a scope change at the January meeting.

Ms. Stamm requested TIB staff verify that the Environmental Assessment document is in place on this project to ensure that it will not be jeopardized by this transfer.

Project Events

- City of Ferndale – Main Street ribbon cutting
- City of Covington – 272nd Street SE ribbon cutting
- City of Sultan – Sultan-Basin Road groundbreaking
- City of Asotin – 2nd Street ribbon cutting

Upcoming Events (all ribbon cuttings)

- Shoreline Aurora Corridor – Saturday, Sept. 24 at 1:00 p.m.
- Blaine H Street – Thursday, Sept. 29 at 10:00 a.m.
- Bellingham Meador Avenue Pedestrian Bridge – Thursday, Sept. 29 at 1:00 p.m.

C. Financial Report

Theresa Anderson reported the following:

- There is currently a \$47 million account balance
- Total remaining TIB commitment is just under \$200 million
- TIB currently has 255 active projects
- Total revenue for August was \$8.4 million
- Total expenses for August was \$9.2 million
- Cumulative total from July to August left a net of \$6.1 million
- Revenue continues to drop; it has decreased by 5.4% in the last two-year period

Transportation Improvement Account Balance

Steve Gorcester discussed the projected TIA balance. He noted that since 2005, allocations have decreased by \$5 million per year. Due to that and the continued downward spiral of revenue, the 2009 awards were canceled.

He presented a chart from September 2011 to September 2013 that combines expected revenue and expenditures and takes into account the existing TIA balance. The chart showed that projects currently under construction will decrease the account balance by about \$10 million, with an increase occurring in 2013, which would be used for grants awarded November 2011. If this pattern continues, the TIA would have at least a \$30 - \$35 million balance. The projected fund balance chart demonstrates the funding is currently there to support the rapid action effort and accommodate the total inventory of about 400 projects. If revenue loss was more than one percent, this would need to be re-evaluated.

D. Project Activity Report

Greg Armstrong reported that 76 project actions were processed, with the majority of them going to construction. Notable changes included approximately \$1.5 million in increases and \$3.7 million in surpluses for a total decrease in TIB obligations of \$2,137,435.

Chair Irish asked why Tacoma had such a high surplus (\$1.8 million) on their Alaska Street project. Greg noted it was due to over design on the original application and a re-evaluation of all of their assumptions. The project still met all of the original intent.

ACTION ITEMS

A. City of Walla Walla: Myra Road Scope Change Request – In 2008, the extension of Myra Road north to US 12 was completed employing FMSIB, TIB and local funds. Walla Walla was subsequently awarded \$1.86 million and \$500,000 from TIB and FMSIB respectively, through the 2007-8 grant cycles to construct a bridge at Dalles-Military Road, eliminate the steep grades on Myra, add lanes to increase capacity, and provide a loop road connection between Myra Rd. and Dalles-Military/12th Street. In 2010, it became apparent that the project had been underestimated and was now significantly under-funded to provide all the design elements being required by the various project stakeholders. A new management team at Walla Walla re-evaluated the design in an effort to come up with alternatives.

Evaluation of the alternatives was based on criteria provided by Walla Walla and College Place city councils, cost, operational efficiency in the design year, and input from TIB, FMSIB, and WSDOT. The consultant’s recommendation was to pursue the scope change request of a lowered, at-grade, signalized intersection with additional lanes for capacity.

If the scope change is approved, it would provide sufficient capacity to meet operating standards in the peak hours and allow the project to be constructed within the current funding.

The following table shows the breakdown of original costs and scope changes costs. For TIB funds, there is no change in the dollar amount; however there is an increase in the reimbursement ratio resulting in a 4.6% increase to TIB. This was due to a reduction in STP funds and a decrease in private funds since the private development was removed by the scope change. As a result, TIB would make up the difference at the percentage level, but funding remains the same.

Funding Source	At Selection	Expended	At Scope Change	Total Contribution
TIB	\$1,860,000	\$210,100	\$1,649,900	\$1,860,000
STP	\$1,041,610		\$930,000	\$930,000
Private	\$270,000		\$35,000	\$35,000
FMSIB	\$500,000		\$500,000	\$500,000
Cities*	\$200,000	\$71,500	\$116,720	\$188,220
Project Cost	\$3,871,610		\$3,231,620	\$3,513,220

*City funds for a \$55,000 study are not included in the above table.

Ms. Stamm asked the board to consider keeping the percentage the same, which would decrease the TIB grant to the city of Walla Walla by \$159,000. Councilmember Crawford reminded her that TIB approves the amount, not the ratio. Mr. Freiberger noted that the project would likely fail if the city had to obtain an additional \$159,000.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Weber with a second from Councilmember Gothmann to approve a scope change to lower the elevation of the intersection of Myra Road and Dalles-Military Road, add left-turn pockets, and install a traffic signal system with no change in TIB funds. Motion carried with Ms. Stamm opposed.

There was a brief discussion on lessons learned from this project. It was noted that mechanisms currently in place that help keep this type of underestimation from happening are to closely monitor all projects and to require engineer-stamped cost estimates. If the estimates seem unrealistic, the project engineer schedules an immediate face-to-face meeting with the agency in question to help minimize future concerns.

- B. Delayed Projects Process** – The need to modify this process came about from the passage of SB 5797, merging the TIA and the UATA. The current process uses different timelines for delayed projects in the Urban Corridor Program (5.5 years) versus projects in the Urban Arterial Program (4.5 years). The proposed modification gives all projects in an urban program a completion timeframe of 4.5 years. In addition, the proposal reduces the number of stages a project has in delay from three to two, subsequently moving it to a contingency list. The new proposal provides a better designed process and a faster resolution of delayed projects.

The table below summarizes the differences between the current process and the proposed process.

Current Process	Proposed Process
4.5 or 5.5 years	4.5 years
Stage 1 - letter only	Stage 1 – establish ad date
Stage 2 – establish ad date	Stage 2 – move to contingency List
Stage 3 – Board extension required	Contingency restoration (board approval)
Withdrawal	2 years – Grant termination

A step-by-step process of the contingency restoration was provided in the board packet. Step 5b stated:

5. *Projects may be cut from the contingency list.*
 - b. *The TIB grant is withdrawn for all contingency projects that do not reach readiness within two years of their first date of listing.*

Mr. Wessels suggested changing the word “*withdrawn*” to “*terminate*” in 5b to make it clear to agencies that the grant is no longer available.

It was noted that if approved, this policy would also require a WAC revision.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Freiberger with a second from Commissioner Wilson to approve the delayed projects policy with the following modification to the contingency restoration policy:

5. *Projects may be cut from the contingency list.*
 - b. *The TIB grant is **terminated** for all contingency projects that do not reach readiness within two years of their first date of listing.*

Motion carried unanimously.

- C. Visioning Committee Recommendations** – The Visioning Committee was appointed at the March 25, 2011 meeting and includes Commissioner Partch, Chair Irish, Ms. Davis, Ms. Philpot, Mr. Thomsen, and Mr. Coleman. The committee met three times to review, discuss, and make recommendations on core values, programs and funding, criteria, project administration, new law funding priorities, balanced scorecard, and other miscellaneous issues.

Details of the committee's recommendations were provided to the full board in the board packet. Steve Gorcester reviewed each recommendation providing clarifications and explanations if needed. He specifically noted that these recommendations were substantive drivers of TIB's future criteria, programs, funding decisions, and legislative priorities. He reiterated the legislative priorities, stating that they were listed in order of importance and if the general recommendations were approved, the legislative priorities were included in that approval.

The legislative agenda was listed as: 1) Alternative fuel revenue participation; 2) TIA urban - \$25 – \$30 million per year; 3) SCPP – permanently increase eligibility to include \$1 billion AV [\$3 - \$5 million per year]; 4) Street light reset LED – \$2.5 million per year. If approved, these legislative priorities would be sent in a letter to the House and Senate Transportation Chairs under the TIB Chair's signature.

It was suggested to change "LED" to "low energy lighting" in all appropriate places.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Partch with a second from Commissioner Wilson to approve the visioning committee recommendations with the modification of changing "LED" to "low energy lighting" throughout the document. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Freiberger commended the Visioning Committee on their work.

Evaluation Process for Executive Director

Part of the Visioning Committee's charge was to discuss the executive director's evaluation process. Commissioner Partch discussed this during the September 22 work session. Some thoughts on this were to:

- Conduct an evaluation on the same schedule as the Chair/Vice Chair elections (every two years)
- The Chair and Vice Chair would get input from the full board and bring to executive session for evaluation
- The executive director's performance is continuously measured through the dashboard and tied to the performance measures, with the formal process happening every two years

A final decision on this process will be brought back to the board at the November meeting. In the meantime, Commissioner Partch will ask for input via e-mail from the Visioning Committee.

Strategic Plan

There was consensus from the board to use the Visioning Committee to update the strategic plan starting in January 2012. Once this process is completed, recommendations from the Visioning Committee will be brought back to the full board for discussion and approval.

- D. JTC Recommendations** – The JTC recommendations were provided in the board packet. Steve Gorcester reviewed all the recommendations in detail during the September 22 work session. During that discussion, Ms. Davis requested that a recommendation regarding a combined quarterly project update among the four agencies (WSDOT, CRAB, FMSIB, and TIB) be included in the recommendations brought before the board. As a result, Steve Gorcester requested, and the board agreed, that this action item be deferred until the November 18, 2011 meeting.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting is scheduled for November 17-18, 2011 in Tukwila. Meeting notices will be sent out on October 28, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

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Southbound traffic on Garrett Street will be prohibited for at least two more weeks as work crews continue extensive upgrades to the road serving a handful of Enumclaw's light-industrial businesses.

Funded primarily through a state Transportation Improvement Board grant, the project includes removal of the previous road surface, widening of Garrett Street from Griffin to Battersby avenues and installation of curbs and sidewalks on both sides of Garrett. A left-turn lane is being added from Griffin almost to Battersby.

In addition, a 700-foot stretch of Battersby Avenue has been upgraded, running east from Garrett Street.

Rand Black, project manager for the city, said Enumclaw scored the TIB grant through a competitive process. Including both design work and construction, the grant totaled nearly \$2.5 million. Johansen Brothers, a Buckley firm, was the top bidder to complete work on the project, also through a competitive bidding process.

Black said the project's primary aim is to create a bypass for the large rigs that serve the light-industrial area just a couple of blocks east of Enumclaw's downtown core. In addition, the city scored well from a safety standpoint with the addition of curbs, gutters, sidewalks and lighting. Previously, there were areas that only had ditches along Garrett Street.

Black said the current project is the third phase of an overall process that improves Garrett from state Route 410 to Battersby. Previous projects saw upgrades from the highway to Griffin Avenue and the addition of a traffic light.

Black said the travel restriction on Garrett Street will remain through Oct. 17 and the entire project should be wrapped up by the end of the year.

Enumclaw Courier Herald Editor Kevin Hanson can be reached at editor@courierherald.com or 360-802-8205.

Find this article at:

http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/south_king/ech/news/130722213.html

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Work continues on West Valley Highway in Auburn



Foreman Jeff Scott, right, and Matt Casey direct the digging up of the intersection of West Valley Highway and West Main Street last week. Crews working for the City of Auburn are in the first weeks of a major reconstruction of the well-travelled highway section. Mark Klaas/Auburn Reporter

By **MARK KLAAS**
Auburn Reporter Editor
 Sep 21 2011

Reconstruction of a worn and unstable section of the West Valley Highway in Auburn is well under way. Crews are busy restoring the well-used highway, from the foundation up.

The highway project, estimated at \$4 million, is about 16 years in coming, Mayor Pete Lewis said. The City's wait ended when the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board awarded a grant this year.

The section of the two-lane highway from State Route 18 to West Main Street will be closed until approximately Oct. 21 to allow for the upgrade of a new, expanded and safer roadway.

RELATED STORIES

Auburn Reporter

- [West Valley Highway to close between SR18 and West Main](#)
- [Crews to begin work on West Valley Highway](#)
- [Road work notice: Peasley Canyon Road, west of West Valley Highway](#)
- [Auburn traffic advisory: Crews resurface section of West Valley Highway](#)
- [West Valley Highway reconstruction project begins today](#)

South King County

- None at this time.

NEWS BLOGS

[Auburn Skies](#)

Auburn Reporter editor Mark Klaas

The intersection at West Valley Highway and West Main Street will remain open during the reconstruction period to accommodate business and the delayed flow of detoured traffic. But the intersection will be subject to intermittent lane restrictions and closures.

discusses all things Auburn, including comings and goings, local issues and community efforts

West Main, C Street Southwest and 15th Street Southwest will be signed detour routes.

Construction, weather dependent, is expected to continue until the end of the year, project coordinators said.

The highway is expected to reopen after Oct. 21, but reconstruction will continue and motorists can expect delays. Motorists are advised to avoid the area.

Significant rainfall and runoff from the hillside essentially have made the road unstable, according to Jacob Sweeting, a project manager and engineer for the City of Auburn Public Works Department.

The worn roadway surface is prone to cracks, potholes, wheel ruts and damage caused by surface drainage and groundwater seepage, City officials said.

The City's plans call for rebuilding and widening the 1,870-foot section of West Valley Highway South from Highway 18 to West Main Street, and will include bicycle lanes, sidewalk, lighting, improved drainage, a center median and extended turn lanes.

The intersection of West Main State and West Valley Highway also will be improved with a new signal system. Trucks and large vehicles periodically have hit the signal poles at the intersection corners. New poles will be set back from the corners that will be widened to accommodate turning vehicles.

Highway improvements were needed to improve traffic flow.

During peak traffic times, northbound traffic backs up at the signal near the SR 18 overpass and blocks the turn pocket that serves traffic turning east onto the eastbound SR 18 onramp. The City has determined that the congestion and delays can be alleviated by extending turn pocket lengths and adding a center median.

Auburn Reporter Editor Mark Klaas can be reached at mklaas@auburn-reporter.com or 253-833-0218, ext. 5050.

Find this article at:

http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/south_king/aub/news/130318353.html

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Auburn construction update: West Valley Highway reopens



Crews reconstructed a worn and unstable section of the West Valley Highway in Auburn. Crews restored the well-used highway, from the foundation up. The highway reopened Wednesday to traffic.
 Mark Klaas/Auburn Reporter

By **MARK KLAAS**
 Auburn Reporter Editor
 Oct 19 2011

A reconstructed section of the West Valley Highway is now open between State Route 18 and West Main Street.

The much-used highway reopened early Wednesday afternoon, two days earlier than originally anticipated.

Project officials lauded the work and dedication of the City's Contractor, RW Scott of Auburn, and City construction staff for quickly repairing the roadway ahead of schedule.

"The contractor basically worked long, hard hours, weekend hours, to get the roadway open ahead of time, despite the rough conditions," said Jacob Sweeting, project manager for the City of Auburn.

RELATED STORIES

- [West Valley Highway to close between SR18 and West Main](#)
- [Work continues on West Valley Highway in Auburn](#)
- [Auburn traffic advisory: Crews resurface section of West Valley Highway](#)
- [West Valley Highway reconstruction project begins today](#)
- [Auburn traffic advisory: Expect lane closures at West Valley Highway and 15th St. NW](#)
- [Crews to begin work on West Valley Highway](#)
- [Auburn traffic advisory: Work postponed at West Valley Highway and 15th Street NW](#)

NEWS BLOGS

Auburn Skies
 Auburn Reporter editor Mark Klaas discusses all things Auburn, including

The section of the two-lane highway from SR 18 to West Main Street was closed late August to allow for the upgrade of a new, expanded and safer roadway.

comings and goings, local issues and community efforts

Crews widened and reconstructed the roadway from West Main Street and Highway 18 – approximately a 1,870-foot section. They completely tore out the foundation and rebuilt it. The new section has been widened to include a center median, extended turn lanes, bicycle lanes and a sidewalk, Sweeting said.

Reconstruction also installed a drainage system to catch runoff from the hillside that contributed to the damage of the roadway.

Street lighting is scheduled to be installed on the highway next month, Sweeting said.

The long-awaited \$4 million highway project was made possible when the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board awarded a grant to the City this year.

Drivers are advised to practice extreme caution and use alternate routes to avoid delays as construction is still under way. Construction activities will be intermittent until late January when work to replace the traffic signal and widen the intersection at West Main Street resumes.

For further information, contact the City of Auburn Public Works Department at 253-931-3010 or visit the City's website at www.auburnwa.gov and click on the "Upcoming Road Projects" link.

Auburn Reporter Editor Mark Klaas can be reached at mklaas@auburn-reporter.com or 253-833-0218, ext. 5050.

Find this article at:

<http://www.auburn-reporter.com/news/132175983.html>

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Seeking rural revival in Whitman County

By William L. Spence
Lewiston Tribune
October 2, 2011

In a winding, wooded valley just south of Steptoe Butte, there is a picture of rural bliss called Elberton.

Located along the North Fork of the Palouse River, the area is a green oasis. Hundreds of Ponderosa pines provide shade, while the surrounding bluffs are capped by golden fields of grain.

Back in the day, this was the center of Whitman County's fruit industry. Farmers raised nearly 1,000 acres of apples, prunes, peaches and apricots, and 10 varieties of grapes. In 1900, W.K. Allen of Newberg, Ore., built in Elberton what was billed as the world's largest fruit dryer.

There was a bank and hotel, a hardware store and drug store. There was a post office and full-time physician. Next to the railroad tracks there was a flour mill and several grain warehouses. A sawmill, the town's main employer, got its logs from Idaho, driving them down the river in spring.

At one time Elberton supported a population approaching 400 people - about the size of Colton today. Yet this once-thriving community is now barely a spot on the map, the next closest thing to a ghost town. Only a handful of residents remain, plus a few old buildings that are slowly falling apart. Tall grass grows where children used to play.

More than just a reminder of Whitman County's past, Elberton poses a question about its future: If a place like this can die so thoroughly as to be almost forgotten, what hope do other rural communities have of avoiding that same fate?

Hard work offers hope

One answer can be found a few miles upstream, in the city of Palouse.

Like Elberton, Palouse went into a steep decline after its major employer relocated. The population dropped by more than a third, businesses closed or moved to more promising locations, and the city infrastructure began to deteriorate.

As recently as 1996, the town could have folded up shop. It suffered a devastating flood, with water 2 feet deep in City Hall - but rather than a fatal blow to the community's future, the disaster proved a blessing in disguise.

"It turned out to be quite the catalyst," said Mayor Michael Echanove, who back in '96 was a city councilor in charge of Palouse's streets and sidewalks.

Using infrastructure grants and other outside funding sources, the town began a series of major improvements. Main Street was completely rebuilt, buildings were renovated and a small RV park was built next to the town park. Other "fun" businesses opened, Echanove said, including some antique stores, an art gallery and a cafe, which helped raise the amount of sales tax revenue the city collected.

"We can't compete with Moscow or Pullman, but we found that with arts and antiques we didn't need to," he said. "Instead, people from Moscow, Pullman and Spokane started coming to us for the first time. We thought if we could make our downtown the best, it would be so dang cute that private enterprise would see that as a reason to come."

Nelson Duran was one of those who answered the call. He and his wife, Pamela, purchased the Bank Left Gallery in 2005 and have since enlarged the business.

"I was nervous at the beginning, but the previous owners invited me to have a show in the gallery before we bought it," Duran said. "It sold out, so that encouraged me. It helps that Palouse is a destination because of the antique stores. And our gallery has a show every month, so there's always something new for people to see."

Bank Left now has shows for artists from outside the area, specifically to attract new people who might not be familiar with all the community has to offer. Palouse residents who work in Moscow and Pullman also help spread the word about what's happening in town.

"It's like a team effort," Duran said. "It lets people know we aren't in the middle of nowhere, that there's a variety of things to see and do here and places to eat."

That strong community spirit is particularly evident in the events Palouse has each year, ranging from the Northwest Collegiate Cycling Conference Championship to Palouse Days in September and Haunted Palouse in October.

It takes about 100 volunteers to put on Haunted Palouse, Echanove said, but in nine years the event has become a major fundraiser, paying for such community

amenities as the park playground equipment and the Roy M. Chatters Newspaper and Printing Museum.

"The first year, we raised maybe \$3,000 or \$4,000," he said. "Last year we made \$52,000, and over nine years we've made about \$250,000. All but \$2,000 each year is donated to different Palouse organizations. So even though everyone's dead tired by November, it provides the money that keeps everything else running."

Palouse is what it is today, Echanove said, "because we have a huge pool of civic-minded folks who volunteer their time and have a shared vision of making things better. Our future couldn't be brighter."

But hard work's not always enough

Other communities have stepped up as well. St. John, for example, built a retirement home so its older residents wouldn't have to move away. Garfield formed a hospital district to build an assisted-living facility. LaCrosse is raising money to replace a grocery store that burned down.

But is this enough? Is hard work and community spirit all it takes to reverse the larger economic trends that result in rural decline?

The experience in Elberton would say no. It never lacked for spirit - in fact, the town had a regional picnic for more than four decades, a three-day affair in June that attracted people from across the state, including at least one sitting governor. There's even a report that Eugene Debs, the Socialist candidate for president, once paid a visit.

No matter how popular the event, though, it couldn't overcome the changes taking place on the farms outside of town. Mechanization and improved transportation systems were reducing the need for labor and making it easier for a captive market to escape and take its money elsewhere.

"With the advent of modern transportation, the reason for some of these smaller communities went away. They no longer had an economic imperative," said Tom Trulove, head of the economics department at Eastern Washington University in Cheney.

Better roads and motorized vehicles meant businesses in Elberton were suddenly competing with Colfax and Pullman. A few combines and trucks could harvest fields that once required 120 men and 320 mules and horses, and the average

farm size increased from about 250 acres in 1900 to more than 1,000 acres by 1990.

The result was a countywide exodus: Of the 16 incorporated towns in Whitman County, 11 peaked in population by 1920. Only Pullman is significantly larger today than it was a century ago (see population table).

Schools experienced a similar decline: Excluding Pullman, the combined K-12 enrollment in Whitman County's public school districts has dropped almost 20 percent just in the past decade, according to figures from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Since 1950 it's down almost half, from 3,870 to 2,072 in 2010. During that same period, Pullman's enrollment increased by 10 percent, from 2,205 to 2,428.

Trulove, who also serves as mayor of Cheney and chairman of the Washington state Community Economic Revitalization Board, said it's hard for rural communities to create the economic imperative needed to reverse these trends. Nevertheless, he sees opportunities for the future.

"I think there are opportunities to add value to farm commodities," he said. "We're seeing tremendous growth in the agricultural processing sector. Warden, in Grant County, just landed the first canola crushing plant in the western U.S. I think we'll also see the development of biofuels. These are some of the things I think will keep (rural communities) from going away.

"I think the strategy for smaller communities is to link up and be active participants with their local economic development agency or port district. They're going to have to network to make things happen - and even then it's going to be very difficult."

State, federal money essential for infrastructure

Perhaps the two most critical requirements for the long-term survival of small towns are jobs and infrastructure.

While there may not be much job growth in the rural areas, Whitman County as a whole has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. And in an ironic twist of fate, the same transportation improvements that once contributed to the demise of Elberton and other small towns are now helping them survive as bedroom communities, because people can commute more easily to jobs in the surrounding cities.

That's giving rise to a symbiotic relationship between the two - something Pullman City Supervisor John Sherman acknowledged when he said the "working population" of Pullman is substantially higher than its residential population.

"A lot of people can't afford to live here," he said. "The outlying communities offer an affordable housing stock that's a necessary part of our future."

On the infrastructure side, a variety of state and federal funding sources are available today that didn't exist when Elberton was struggling.

The state Transportation Improvement Board, for example, has funneled more than \$7.3 million to 39 Whitman County road, sidewalk and safety projects just in the last five years. The CERB board that Trulove chairs distributed another \$2 million in economic development grants and loans during that same period, while a state sales tax set-aside program has provided \$1.2 million for several job-creation proposals since 2000. Federal entities allocated millions more for water and sewer projects.

Given the current political and fiscal environment, it's unclear how long these funding sources will remain intact. It could be argued that they're an example of government throwing money at a problem to try to stave off the inevitable - yet the programs are so popular and cost-effective, even Republicans are reluctant to cut back.

"I believe the TIB (Transportation Improvement Board) is the most effective means of driving dollars down to the local level," said Whitman County Commissioner Greg Partch, who has served on the TIB since 2005 and is the immediate past chairman.

"I don't think you'll find anyone to speak against these programs," he said. "Infrastructure is the key to getting people to live in these small towns. As the infrastructure decays, fewer and fewer will want to live there."

State Rep. Joe Schmick, R-Colfax, who initially ran for office because he was tired of watching small communities lose their businesses, said CERB and similar programs are very well run, with virtually no administrative costs or bureaucratic overhead.

"I don't think you can find a community in Whitman County that hasn't made use of them," he said. "They're an example of something government does well."

Farmington shows what can be done with outside dollars

Without these outside funding sources, the idyllic town of Farmington, located near the Idaho border below Skyline Drive, would still have septic systems and gravel roads.

Instead, this community of 146 people has some of the best infrastructure in the county, with wide paved streets, long sidewalks and five bus shelters where the 25 or so school kids can wait for their buses to arrive.

"While I was in office we did all kinds of different grants," said Royce Johnson, who retired a few years ago after 23 years as mayor of Farmington and 18 years as its sole public works employee.

"Our (private) engineering firm did the grant-writing and proposals," he said. "I'm sure there's been several million spent on the town over the last 25 or 30 years. We paved every road that was eligible for TIB funds, some of them multiple times. The main street used to be gravel. We got it paved, then repaved, and the third time they rebuilt it completely and put in sidewalks. Now we can't pass a maintenance levy (for the remaining gravel roads) because most people live on a paved road.

"I know it looks like a big waste spending all this money on sidewalks that don't get used, but we didn't write the rules. If you get TIB money for roads, you're required to put in a sidewalk along one side."

Johnson said those outside tax dollars also go much farther in small towns than they do at the state or federal level. The school bus shelters, for example, were purchased with a safety grant, but he used his own pickup truck and trailer to haul them down from Spokane. He got the pads ready, too, and a couple of his friends poured the concrete.

"There was a lot of volunteer labor in that," he said. "My theory was that just because we're a small town doesn't mean we don't deserve the same things the big cities have. I think the projects we got helped the town and helped keep people here. I can't see that they weren't a good thing."

Having great infrastructure may not attract new industry to Farmington, Johnson said, but it should keep the town from going the way of Elberton. And given the quality of life available in most rural communities, just maintaining what they have seems like a reasonable goal.

"Our goal is for Palouse to thrive, and growth is just a small part of that," Mayor Echanove said. "We want it to be a place where people can't wait to come home."

Southcenter Parkway reopening celebration Oct. 13

Oct 05 2011

Southcenter Parkway and Klickitat Drive are about to reopen and a celebration of the event is planned for 2 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 13.

The public is invited to the kick-off celebration on the new and improved road. Seattle Sounders players Leo Gonzalez and David Estrada and assistant coach Ezra Hendrickson will participate. The Sounders players will break the ceremonial ribbon with a soccer ball.

According to Tukwila Mayor Jim Haggerton, "We are very pleased with the speed of completion of this project and re-opening the roads ahead of schedule. The new bridge and improved roads will improve safety and traffic flow. This is a great example of why shopping is easier at Southcenter."

The public is invited to park in Westfield Southcenter's parking lot behind The Cheesecake Factory. The Cheesecake Factory is located at 230 Strander Blvd.

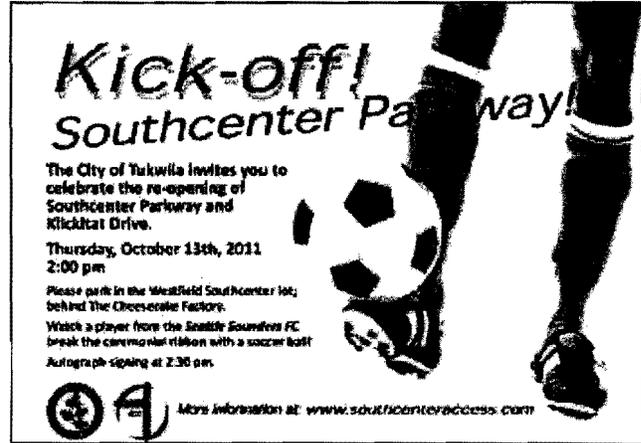
In March, the city closed portions of Southcenter Parkway and Klickitat Drive for the Southcenter Access Project, a \$15 million road reconstruction and bridge installation project to improve safety and traffic flow. The city provided incentives in the construction contract to reopen the roads as soon as possible. During the construction, drivers could still access all businesses but some significant detours were necessary.

For more information, go to www.southcenteraccess.com.

Find this article at:

http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/south_king/tuk/news/131196794.html

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.



The reopening of Southcenter Parkway celebration is scheduled for 2 p.m. Oct. 13. Courtesy photo Buy Photo Reprints

RELATED STORIES

Tukwila Reporter

- [Southcenter Parkway extension begins](#)
- [Work continues on Southcenter Parkway extension in Tukwila](#)
- [Tukwila road closures start March 28 in Southcenter Mall area](#)
- [Southcenter Parkway road work in Tukwila to be completed by early October | Slide Show](#)
- [Street construction underway by Southcenter Mall in Tukwila](#)

South King County

- None at this time.

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The Washington Post

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'Gargantuan large' investment in infrastructure needed, experts say

By [Ashley Halsey III](#) and Dana A. Hedgpeth, Published: October 14

The day of President Obama's inauguration was a record breaker for Washington's Metro transit system: 1.5 million passengers swarmed aboard its buses and trains.

Days such as the one that nearly overwhelmed the system might one day become routine as projected population growth taxes the regional transportation network.

The grim prospect of a transit agency already burdened with a system that has deteriorated after decades of deferred maintenance and yet will face significant new demand was served up Friday as a microcosm of the nation's dilemma.

The U.S. population is forecast to grow by 100 million — a 30 percent increase — before the middle of the 21st century. And right now a nationwide transportation system built in the middle of the 20th century is falling apart.

There isn't enough money to arrest its decline, and the public is largely oblivious to the need.

That was the general consensus Friday at a transportation conference that heard from [Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood](#); House Transportation Committee Chairman [John L. Mica \(R-Fla.\)](#) and his predecessor as chairman, former [representative James L. Oberstar \(D-Minn.\)](#); and a dozen other experts.

"Why haven't we invested?" said Alan Pisarski, a transportation consultant. "We haven't made a credible case to the American people."

The problem is twofold. Although complaints about traffic congestion are commonplace, to the average consumer the transportation system appears to be working reasonably well. And, said several speakers at the conference hosted by Washington Post Live, the amount of money needed to restore and expand it is so enormous that few taxpayers can relate.

"All of the numbers are so gargantuan large that they're useless when you're trying to communicate with the public," said Roy Kienitz, undersecretary for policy at the Department of Transportation.

The American Society of Civil Engineers has estimated that an investment of \$1.7 trillion is needed between now and 2020 to rebuild roads, bridges, water lines, sewage systems and dams that are reaching the ends of their planned life cycles. The Urban Institute puts the price tag at \$2 trillion.

Last year, a report by 80 experts led by former transportation secretaries Norman Y. Mineta and Samuel K. Skinner called for an annual investment of \$262 billion.

Fail to invest now, and the cost will increase later. Already, the civil engineers said, infrastructure deficiencies add \$97 billion a year to the cost of operating vehicles and result in travel delays that cost \$32 billion.

"The politicians have been ignoring this data," said Peter Ruane, president of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association. "This is negligence at the national level."

He said the discussion over meeting infrastructure needs had been "reduced to a cartoon, a caricature," in the political debate. "It looks like Congress is going to do the right thing," he said. "Will they give us the right amount of resources? Right now, it doesn't look like it."

As Congress grapples with taming a massive deficit, just keeping transportation funding at current levels has been heralded as a triumph. Though neither house has made public a written proposal, the House has talked of allocating roughly \$45 billion a year, while the Senate number is about \$54 billion.

Given the gap between estimated need and available cash, there is a bipartisan push to get some form of long-term funding bill through Congress. That, everyone agrees, at least will allow states to tackle major projects that cannot be launched without funding certainty.

But if the nation is going to be saved from a deepening infrastructure crisis, the next steps require finding billions in new revenues, streamlining the project approval process and developing private-public schemes to rebuild and expand highway and transit systems, the panelists said.

Without that, the United States will not remain competitive with other countries.

"We are in a crisis," said Metro's general manager, Richard Sarles. "After ribbons are cut, systems are ignored and decay sets in. There's finally recognition we've got to find a good level of funding to resolve it."

Metro has a six-year plan to spend \$5 billion on capital improvements to the decaying system. But it has constant infrastructure problems. Even as the conference was going on, Metro officials were advising passengers to avoid the Red Line in Friday morning's rush hour because of a track fire that caused the Union Station stop to be temporarily closed for more than an hour.

From the Yakima Herald-Republic Online News.

Posted on Monday, October 31, 2011

Interchange completed, Union Gap businesses ready for traffic

By Mai Hoang

Yakima Herald-Republic

UNION GAP -- Amid the celebrations of a brand new Valley Mall Boulevard interchange, government and transportation officials acknowledged the pain faced by nearby businesses during the 18 months of construction.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony Monday, David Haight, project manager for Apollo Inc., the contractor, called the businesses "unsung heroes."

Added Union Gap Mayor Jim Lemon: "I think we're all apologetic to the businesses who saw a hardship."

Business owners, however, were ready to move on and recover the lost business and customer traffic. They also acknowledged the ultimate need for the improvements.

"There were times of the day you couldn't get out of there," said Steve Hart, owner of the Sea Galley restaurant. "It was really a bottleneck."

That bottleneck created major safety and traffic congestion issues. The \$34 million project includes three new roundabouts that allow motorists to weave in and out of traffic, eliminating the congestion that plagued the interchange.

Paula Hammond, state Secretary of Transportation, also noted the long-term economic benefits of the new interchange and Union Gap's extension of Valley Mall Boulevard to the intersection of 16th and Washington avenues.

"This opens this corridor for business and development," Hammond said.

But there was a price. Hart estimates that his restaurant's profit dropped by about \$150,000 over the past 18 months, leading him to cut half his staff.

"Our goal was just to hang on and just be able to keep the doors open and pay the bills," he said.

Other businesses had their own ways of dealing with the disruption. The Super 8 motel did some remodeling, including new paint and carpet for the hotel's public areas and renovation to several rooms, said general manager Brandy Summers.

Down the street, Denny's mailed Yakima Valley customers coupons as an incentive to visit the restaurant during construction.

Now that the project is done, business owners hope the improved traffic flow will attract customers who once avoided the area. "We're ready to staff up for the holidays," said Rigo Dominguez, general manager for Denny's. "It's going to be much easier for our customers."

Hart said the traffic revision will help recover some of Sea Galley's business, through nothing is guaranteed.

"There's a lot going on with the economy," he said. "People may not even stop at my restaurant or any restaurant for that matter."

** Mai Hoang can be reached at 509-577-7685 or maihoang@yakimaherald.com.*



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Washington state Secretary of Transportation Paula Hammond cuts extra pieces of ribbon from a long ribbon used in a ribbon-cutting ceremony Oct. 31, 2011 at the Valley Mall Boulevard interchange in Union Gap, Wash. Union Gap city council member Dave Matson, center, and Corrie Henke, a WSDOT field engineer, look on. Hammond plans on giving one piece of ribbon to the state Transportation Improvement Board and hanging another piece in her office.



Photo courtesy Washington State Department of Transportation

The middle of three roundabouts which comprise the Valley Mall Boulevard interchange project. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Oct. 31, 2011 to recognize the completion of the project.



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Don Whitehouse, the Washington State Department of Transportation regional administrator, talks at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the now-complete Valley Mall Boulevard interchange Oct. 31, 2011.



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Rep. Judy Clibborn, the chairwoman of the Washington State House of Representatives Transportation Committee, speaks at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the now-complete Valley Mall Boulevard interchange Oct. 31, 2011 in Union Gap. At left is state Sen. Curtis King. At right is Paula Hammond, the state Secretary of Transportation.



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Washington State Department of Transportation field engineer Corie Henke unrolls the ribbon to be used in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the now-complete Valley Mall Boulevard interchange Oct. 31, 2011 in Union Gap, Wash.



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Washington state Department of Transportation spokesman Mike Westbay arranges the participants in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the now-complete Valley Mall Boulevard interchange Oct. 31, 2011 in Union Gap, Wash.



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Union Gap city council member Dave Matson, right, cuts his section of ribbon in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the now-complete Valley Mall Boulevard interchange in Union Gap, Wash. Oct. 31, 2011.



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Dan Mathis, left, shakes hands with Don Whitehouse after concluding his speech at the Oct. 31, 2011 ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Valley Mall Boulevard exchange in Union Gap. Mathis is the Federal Highway Administration division administrator while Whitehouse is the WSDOT regional administrator.

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Published November 04, 2011

Section of Carpenter Road will remain closed; work should be done by April

NATE HULINGS

An aggressive construction timeline on Carpenter Road means the project will wrap up eight months early, saving the City of Lacey money, according to the city's construction manager.

In order to complete the project early, the one-mile stretch between Martin Way and Pacific Avenue will remain closed to through traffic through the end of January, angering some business owners, who want the road open next week as they were told previously.

Original plans budgeted two summers for some of the work, including construction of a new arch culvert over Lake Lois and the utility work, said Dale Mix, city design and construction manager. The contractor elected to work on the culvert and utilities simultaneously, speeding up the timeline, with completion expected in late April, Mix said.

"For a project of this size and the amount of complexity, it feels like it's going really smooth," Mix said.

Getting done earlier also means less cost to the city. Mix said the city spends \$100,000 each month to pay for administrative and construction management costs and flagger pay, Mix said.

With no need for another summer construction season, the decision was made to keep Carpenter closed to through traffic more than two months longer and finish early. The city had planned to open the road Nov. 11, but Mix said that would only create more headaches.

"If we were to open the road to traffic now, there's an expectation I don't think we could meet," he said, noting that there would likely be 20-minute delays and a slower construction schedule.

Mix said the longer closure received mostly positive reaction from about 30 businesses along or near the construction site.

But some aren't happy. Businesses expressing concern about the longer closure include Albertsons and 7-Eleven on Pacific Avenue, as well as Buddies Shell station on the 6500 block of Martin Way, where it intersects Carpenter.

Since construction began in spring, the station has seen business drop 80 percent, store manager Daniel Horton said.

Horton said the station sold 2,000 gallons of gas daily before construction began; now, it's 700 gallons on a good day. Cash transactions during the busiest part of the day have dropped by more than 60 percent, and some customers have told Horton they think the station is under construction because crews oftentimes park near the store.

He said the station owners have been taking money out of their own pockets to pay employees since business dropped.

"I've done everything I could possibly do to keep business coming in," Horton said, adding that he increased the fresh food selection.

Horton is worried that winter weather could delay the opening past January.

"It's all up in the air right now," he said.

Public Works Director Scott Egger said opening the road now would have meant one-way traffic, and volumes would not increase until there are two lanes operating.

"This closure actually will help get traffic on it sooner," he said.

Before being closed, the one-mile stretch of Carpenter had about 20,000 vehicle trips every day, according to the city.

By the end of this year, crews are expected to complete water main installation, concrete curbing and gutter work and place crushed rock prior to paving. Crews will rip up the old asphalt beginning the week of Nov. 14 while at the same time installing the concrete curbs and gutters.

A base layer of asphalt will be placed to allow two-way traffic when weather permits, with the plan being to open the road by the end of January.

Nate Hulings: 360-754-5476

nhulings@theolympian.com

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Project Activity Report

Project ID	Agency	Project Description	Current Phase	Phases	Total TIB Funds	Change in TIB Funds	Approval
SCAP Program							
6-E-944(105)-1	NACHES	Naches Ave/3rd St Resurfacing	Contract Completion	CC	34,739	-4,681	Director
6-E-944(106)-1	NACHES	Allan Road Improvements	Contract Completion	CC	80,273	-5,566	Director
6-E-874(003)-1	SPRAGUE	First Street	Bid Award	BA	674,097	-202,219	Director
						Total SCAP Change	-212,466
SCPP Program							
2-E-900(002)-1	BLACK DIAMOND	FY 2012 Overlay Project	Audit	CC FV AD	101,183	4,259	Director
2-E-77(001)-1	CONCONULLY	FY 2012 Overlay Project	Audit	CC AD	117,857	-5,536	Director
2-E-56(002)-1	COULEE CITY	FY 2012 Overlay Project	Audit	CC FV AD	95,825	4,820	Director
2-E-11(005)-1	GARFIELD	FY 2012 Seal Coat Project	Contract Completion	CC	23,706	-1,091	Director
2-E-889(003)-1	IONE	FY 2012 Sidewalk Maintenance Project	Contract Completion	CC	139,363	-3,137	Director
2-E-852(003)-1	MANSFIELD	FY 2012 Sidewalk Maintenance Project	Bid Award	BA	19,625	7,634	Director
2-E-916(003)-1	PALOUSE	FY 2012 Seal Coat Project	Contract Completion	CC	21,304	-6,824	Director
2-E-864(002)-1	ROYAL CITY	FY 2012 Overlay Project	Audit	CC FV AD	104,412	-4,780	Director
2-E-865(004)-1	SOAP LAKE	FY 2010 Overlay Project	Bid Award	BA	167,745	0	Director



Project Activity Report

Project ID	Agency	Project Description	Current Phase	Phases	Total TIB Funds	Change in TIB Funds	Approval
2-W-841(003)-1	SUMAS	FY 2012 Seal Coat Project	Contract Completion	CC	31,624	5,138	Director
2-W-960(002)-1	WESTPORT	FY 2012 Overlay Project	Bid Award	DE CN BA	56,551	0	Director
						Total SCPP Change	483
SP Program							
P-E-903(P05)-1	KETTLE FALLS	SR-395 (North Side)	Bid Award	BA	192,945	0	Director
2-W-155(P04)-1	MOUNT VERNON	College Way (SR 538)	Bid Award	BA	49,200	-30,800	Director
32(P05)-1	SPOKANE COUNTY	Freya Street	Audit	CC FV AD	100,152	0	Director
24(P08)-1	SULTAN	1st Street	Withdrawn	WD	0	-100,000	Director
						Total SP Change	-130,800
UAP Program							
8-1-105(033)-1	AUBURN	Auburn Way S (SR 164)	Design	DE	508,176	0	Director
8-2-156(035)-1	BELLINGHAM	Sunset Drive	Audit	CC FV AD	1,864,734	-84,766	Director
8-1-117(005)-2	PACIFIC	Stewart Road (8th St E)	Construction	CN	329,388	0	Director
8-3-165(083)-1	SPOKANE	Five Mile Road	Audit	FV AD	1,900,000	0	Director
8-3-165(084)-1	SPOKANE	Francis Avenue	Construction	CN	2,498,200	0	Director



Project Activity Report

Project ID	Agency	Project Description	Current Phase	Phases	Total TIB Funds	Change in TIB Funds	Approval
8-3-032(061)-1	SPOKANE COUNTY	Market Street/Magnesium Road	Audit	CC FV AD	1,332,599	1	Director
8-3-032(063)-1	SPOKANE COUNTY	Freya Street	Audit	CC FV AD	433,003	-37,478	Director
						Total UAP Change	-122,243
UCP Program							
9-P-102(011)-1	RENTON	Rainier Avenue S	Construction	CN	6,939,700	0	Director
9-P-031(016)-1	SNOHOMISH COUNTY	20th Street SE	Audit	FV AD	798,605	0	Director
9-P-031(017)-1	SNOHOMISH COUNTY	20th Street SE	Audit	FV AD	309,311	0	Director
						Total UCP Change	0
						Total Change	-465,026

PND - Pending CC - Contract Completion
 PD - Predesign FV - Final Voucher
 DE - Design AD - Audit
 CN - Construction WD - Withdrawn
 BA - Bid Award



Project Selection Summary

November 18, 2011

BACKGROUND

The preliminary target size for the project selections was set at the June 2011 Board meeting, with a deadline for application submission of August 31, 2011. After the board meeting, TIB engineers conducted 21 funding workshops across the state. TIB received 399 applications requesting almost \$302 million, an increase of \$30 million from last year.

During the months of September and October, TIB engineers made site visits to all projects in order to review the submitted data and validate the desk ratings applied to the applications.

At the end of October, the engineers met with the Executive Director to discuss the ratings and propose a preliminary list of projects for approval at the November Board Meeting.

SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Program	Applications	Funds Requested
Urban Program	79	\$172 million
Rapid Action Projects	26	\$56 million
Expanded Preservation Program	31	\$8.1 million
Small City Arterial Program	72	\$40.2 million
Sidewalk Program	70	\$14.5 million
Small City Preservation Program	121	\$11 million
TOTAL	399	\$301.8 million

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED FUNDING

Program	# of Recommended Projects	Target Funding Level	Recommended TIB Funds	Total Project Cost
Urban Program	29	\$70,000,000	\$66,567,815	\$160,599,241
Rapid Action	16	\$30,000,000	\$32,309,060	\$65,092,380
Expanded Preservation Program	23	\$5,000,000	\$5,116,315	\$5,949,777
Small City Arterial Program	19	\$10,000,000	\$11,018,949	\$12,022,182
Sidewalk Program	10	\$2,000,000	\$2,274,084	\$3,801,866
Small City Preservation Program	30	\$2,500,000	\$2,553,613	\$3,192,162
City Hardship Assistance Program	2	N/A	\$336,625	\$336,625
TOTAL	129	\$119,500,000	\$120,176,461	\$250,994,233

RECOMMENDATION

TIB staff recommends that the Board adopt the project selection as presented.

Emergent Nature Staff Review Urban Arterial Program (UAP)

Board Meeting Date: November 18, 2011

REGION	Puget Sound	FUNDING YEAR	FY 2013
LEAD AGENCY	Renton	PROJECT LENGTH	0.20 miles
PROJECT NUMBER		FUNCT CLASS	Minor
PROJECT NAME	Strander Boulevard Extension Naches Ave SW to Sounder Commuter Station	AADT	New Road
		VE STUDY	Not Required
		BID AWARD TARGET	Nov 2011
Phase		TIB Funds	Total Cost
CONSTRUCTION	Funds requested for Construction	<u>2,772,369</u>	<u>\$17,702,557</u>
		TOTALS	17,702,557
NONELIGIBLE COST	\$0	TIB REIMBURSEMENT RATIO	17.8%
LOCAL MATCH	Renton \$700,000, Federal Funds \$7,100,000, FMSIB \$4,550,000 Sound Transit \$2,580,188		
EXISTING FACILITIES	The road currently ends at Naches Ave SW. Vehicles access the Tukwila Sounder Commuter Rail Station via substandard, private, grade separated crossings of the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Railroads on Longacres Way.		
PROJECT BENEFITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a public access for new Tukwila Sounder Station which will open in 2013. • Provides a safe grade separated crossing 		
PROPOSED WORK	<p>This phase 1 of the project will construct a grade separated crossing under BNSF railroad with two lanes, and a separated pedestrian path on the south side. Phase 2 will construct the remaining two lanes and a grade separated crossing under the UP railroad and the remainder of the four lane roadway between Naches Ave SW and West Valley Highway. Phase 2 is currently unfunded and is anticipated to cost \$27 million.</p> <p>This phase of the project is submitted with a sidewalk deviation since the city only constructs a pedestrian walkway on the south side of the roadway, and the pedestrian access will not be changed in the ultimate configuration.</p>		
DISCUSSION	<p>The design of the project is complete, right-of-way has been acquired, and the project bids have been opened and the contract will be awarded as soon as funds are secured.</p> <p>The project meets the intent of the emergent nature policy and is consistent with TIB's core values of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a Catalyst to Project Completion; and • Dollars in the Ground, Not in the Bank 		

DISCUSSION

This project was advertised in August 2011 and the engineer's estimate showed that the project was fully funded.

Since the city believed it was fully funded they did not submit a rapid action funding request. Once bids were opened, it was determined that there was a \$2,772,369 shortfall, mainly due to the high price of steel.

If a rapid action application had been submitted, this project would have been within the funding range for either the UCP program with a rating of 58 or UAP with a rating of 53.

The city has approached all of their original funding partners and their request for additional funds has been denied.

This project is the city's number 1 priority and staff has been directed by the council to seek additional funds from TIB. They would also withdraw their S Lake Washington Road Rapid Action request of \$1,755,496 if the Board agrees to fund this request.

If the city does not find additional funding the bids must be rejected, delaying the beginning of construction.

**STAFF
RECOMMENDATION**

Staff defers the recommendation of this emergent nature request to the Board.

Denis Law
Mayor

City of Renton



Public Works Department - Gregg Zimmerman, P.E., Administrator

October 31, 2011

Steve Gorcester, Executive Director
State of Washington
Transportation Improvement Board
505 Union Avenue SE, Suite 350
P.O. Box 40901
Olympia, WA 98504-0901

NOV 01 2011

**RE: Strander Blvd Extension, Phase 1, Seg 2a
2011 Urban Funding Application
Rapid Action Projects**

Steve

Dear Mr. Gorcester:

Attached is the completed grant application for the Strander Boulevard Extension, Phase 1, Segment 2a Project, we request consideration by the Transportation Improvement Board.

The project will ultimately provide for a much needed regional connection and between SR-167 and SR-181 (West Valley Hwy) and beyond to I-405 and I-5. This project is broadly supported by local governments and the state. This major east-west (railroad grade-separated) connection between the Renton and Tukwila Urban Centers/Employment Areas will significantly improve access and circulation in the area by relieving congestion on I-405, South 180th Street and South Grady Way. This phase of the project will construct a railroad bridge for three BNSF tracks and a roadway that will provide commuters with pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular access from Renton to the Sounder Commuter Tukwila Station.

The project began in 1994. The funding partners include the City of Renton, City of Tukwila, Sound Transit, FMSIB, FHWA, and The Boeing Company. The City of Renton contributed \$6,601,787 and the City of Tukwila contributed \$1,950,000 towards this project. Phase 1, segment 1: extension of SW 27th St to the BNSF railroad tracks is completed.

Design on phase 1 segment 2a (current phase) was completed in June of 2011, a value engineering study was done on Dec 8, 2010, cost-saving suggestions were incorporated into the design. The environmental work was completed and approved in March of 2008. Construction and maintenance agreement with BNSF were executed on March 10, 2011, Interlocal agreements with the City of Tukwila and Sound Transit were executed in February of 2011, and right-of-way acquired and certified in March of 2011. Federal funding for the project was obligated on August 5, 2011. A risk analysis study was performed on October 3, 2011.

The project was advertised for bid on August 12 and the bids opened Wednesday, October 12. We received 12 bids ranging from \$10,837,356 to \$15,366,999. The low bid has been determined to be non-responsive. The second low bid from Atkinson Construction was

Steve Gorcester,
State of Washington
Transportation Improvement Board
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\$11,381,159. The engineer's estimate was \$9,200,000. The difference has been found to be mainly in the cost of steel.

Our current funding is not adequate to cover the cost of the project. Our request for \$2,772,369 covers the cost of the low bid and a 10% contingency as suggested in the risk analysis.

The construction contract for this project is ready to be awarded immediately. Our City has applied for a TIB grant for another project in the amount of \$1,755,500. We find this project to be far more urgently needed. Had we known the results of the bid earlier, this project would have been applied for. This request is made with the belief that if we are unsuccessful, the rest of the funding will collapse, and the project may be lost for many years to come.

If you need any additional information, please contact Juliana Fries, Program Development Coordinator, at 425.430.7232.

Sincerely,



Rich Perteet, P.E.
Deputy Public Works Administrator - Transportation

Enclosures: 2011 Urban Application

cc: Gregg Zimmermann, Public Works Administrator
Jim Seitz, Transportation Planning Supervisor
Juliana Fries, Program Development Coordinator

What is the purpose of the project?

The overall project will construct a new major east-west (railroad grade-separated) connection between the Renton and Tukwila Urban Centers/Employment Areas. The route is located midway between I-405 / Grady Way to the north, and S 180th Street/SW43rd Street on the south. When completed, the project will significantly improve access and circulation in the area by relieving congestion on I-405, South 180th Street and South Grady Way.

The project will provide a connection to Sound Transit’s commuter rail system by providing direct access to the Tukwila Sounder Station. Improved access to this commuter rail station will encourage transit use and help relieve traffic congestion in the region. The project also promotes non-motorized transportation by providing connectivity between two regional trails: the Interurban Trail (in Tukwila) and the Springbrook Trail (in Renton), therefore improving the mobility of pedestrians and bicyclists.

The project is being developed in two major phases. Phase 1 encompasses construction of the “missing link” between the intersection of SW 27th Street and Oakesdale Avenue in Renton with the intersection of Strander Boulevard and West Valley Highway in Tukwila. Phase 2 includes improvements to existing SW 27th Street in Renton.

What is Renton proposing to construct with this phase?

This project is one of several phases of the SW 27th St/Strander Blvd connection project that will extend SW 27th St/Strander Blvd from Oakesdale Ave SW in Renton to West Valley Highway in Tukwila and improve existing access along SW 27th St between Oakesdale Ave SW and East Valley Rd.

A previous phase of the project, Phase 1 - Segment1, constructed a four lane extension of SW 27th Street from Oakesdale Ave. SW to Naches Ave. SW. Phase 1 – Segment 2 will begin at Naches Ave SW and continue westerly to the Sounder Tukwila Station.

Phase 1 - Segment 2a consists of the design and construction of a railroad bridge at the BNSF tracks to span a two lane road and walkway connecting SW 27th St to the Sounder Commuter Rail Tukwila Station. This two lane road will provide commuters with vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access from Renton to the Sounder Commuter Station.

The BNSF bridge is designed and will be constructed in its ultimate configuration. This will allow for a future five lane arterial undercrossing complete with sidewalks and a combined pedestrian bicycle trail while incorporating construction of a small portion of the BNSF third rail.

Why is Renton approaching the Transportation Improvement Board for funding for the project?

Applications were due to the TIB under the Rapid Action Program on August 31. Had we known the bid results prior to that time we certainly would have applied for funding under that program. Unfortunately we were unable to get the project advertised and bids opened prior to that date.

The engineers estimate for the project is \$9.2 million. When the 12 bids we received were opened for the project on October 12, 2011 the lowest responsive bid was \$11.4 million, or 24% above the estimated cost as prepared by Berger ABAM, our consulting engineer (the lowest bid we received was \$10.4 million but was deemed non-responsive by WSDOT, FHWA and the Attorney General’s office). We believe that award to the lowest responsive bidder, Atkinson Construction, is in the best interest of the City if funding is available.

Further, we want to have as little impact as possible on construction of Sound Transit’s permanent Sounder Commuter Rail Tukwila Station. That \$16 million facility is slated to begin construction in 2012 and to be completed in 2013.

The construction contract for this project is ready to be awarded immediately. This request is made with the belief that if we are unsuccessful, the rest of the funding will collapse, and the project may be lost for many years to come.

What steps have been taken to reduce project costs?

The project design has been through a formal value engineering process and a pre-bid risk analysis. The designers used an innovative approach to dealing with the areas high water table, replacing an extremely expensive watertight “boat” with a permanent groundwater pumping plan. The project has been divided into manageable phases that will allow the project to be constructed as funds become available in future years.

What future project phases are under consideration?

The next \$27 million dollar phase of the project (Phase 2) will complete the two lane roadway from the terminus of the current project at the Tukwila Sounder Station, heading westward under the Union Pacific Railroad and on to a connection with West Valley Highway. We currently have a commitment from FMSIB for \$5 million for that project. Ultimately the roadway will be widened to a five lane configuration as required to meet capacity needs.

Total Project Funding To Date

City of Renton	\$ 7.3 million
City of Tukwila	\$ 2.0 million
Sound Transit	\$ 4.0 million
FMSIB	\$ 5.25 million
FHWA	\$ 2.45 million
STP(U)	\$ 4.6 million
STP (through FMSIB)	\$ 2.5 million

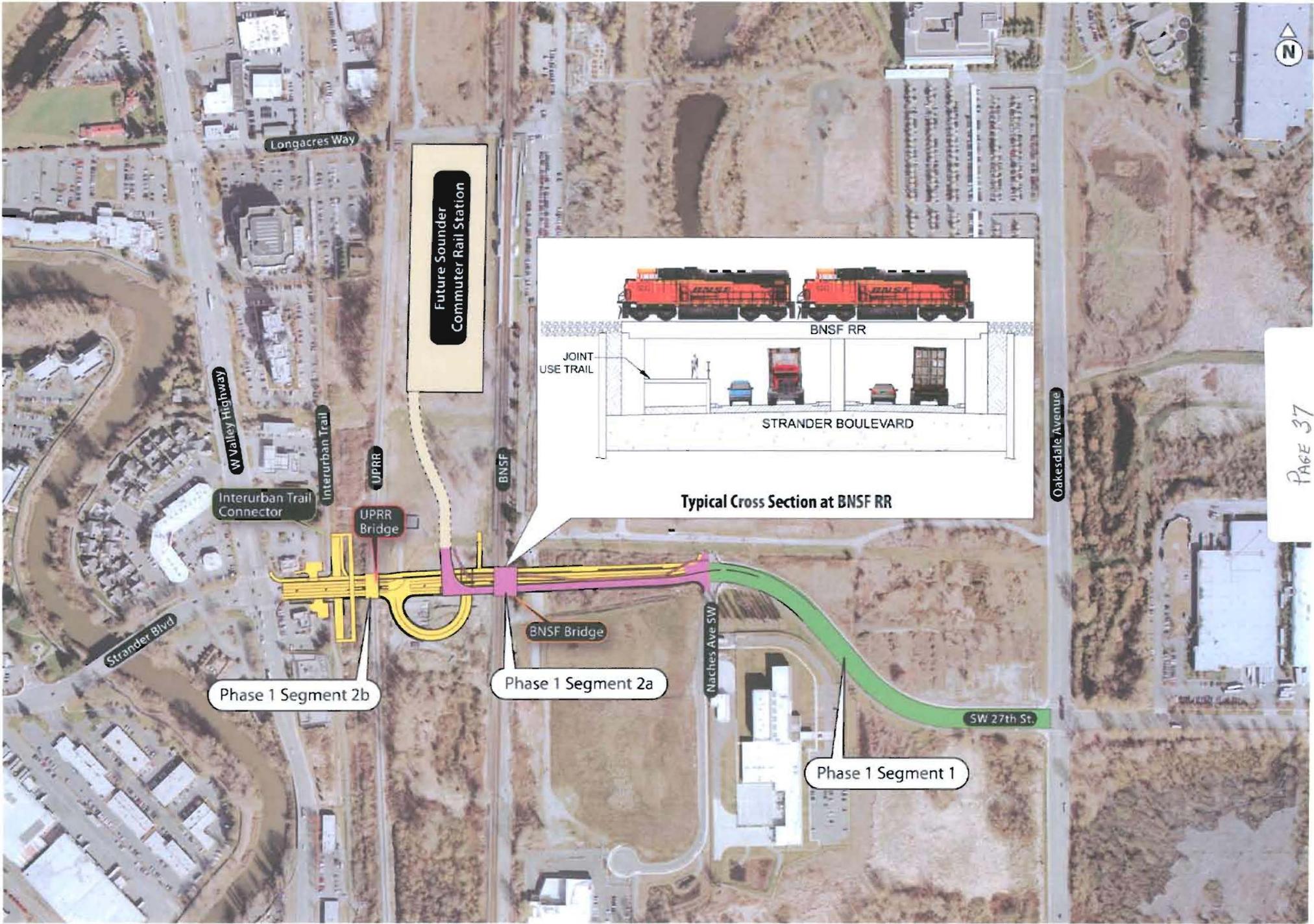
Total \$28.1 million

Current Project Funding for Construction

City of Renton	\$0.7 million
STP(U)	\$4.6 million
FMSIB	\$4.55 million
STP (through FMSIB)	\$2.5 million
Sound Transit	\$2.58 million
Total	\$14.9 million

Construction Expenses

Atkinson Bid	\$11,381,159
Contingency	<u>\$ 1,138,116</u>
Construction contract cost	\$12,519,275
BNSF & Utilities	\$ 3,023,281
Construction Management	\$ 2,160,000
Total Construction cost	<u>\$17,702,556</u>
Available for construction	\$14,930,188
Construction Shortfall	\$ 2,772,369





JTC Efficiency Study 2010 Recommendations Response

November 17, 2011

BACKGROUND

Governor Gregoire proposed a bill during the 2010 legislative session that would have consolidated CRAB, FMSIB, and TIB into WSDOT in an effort to streamline state government activities and increase efficiency. Though not introduced, the bill provided the genesis for a study to identify opportunities to improve service delivery to local governments.

In response, the Washington State Legislature directed the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) to conduct a study to assess the delivery of transportation funding and services to local governments by the four agencies.

The study provided 23 recommendations for improved efficiency. TIB staff have identified 11 of those recommendations that pertain to TIB.

STATUS

A draft of these recommendations was provided in the board packet at the September meeting and reviewed in detail. At that time, it was recommended to include "Recommendation 10," which pertains to quarterly reporting. That recommendation has been added to the responses below.

The final report is due to the JTC on December 1, 2011.

The numbering of each response below is consistent with the recommendation numbering from the study. The numbers not shown are recommendations that were not related to TIB.

3. Agency boards and staff should use flexibility within existing programs to focus on maintenance and preservation needs.

TIB implemented this recommendation in its 2011 grant cycle.

For the 2011-2013 biennia, TIB is offering a pilot program by extended its successful pavement preservation grants to 30 additional towns with population over 5,000, but with cumulative assessed property values under \$1 billion. Assessed value is a good measure of local fiscal capacity. TIB will use fund balance to pay for the additional coverage in the current biennium only. Future funding may be included in a new law request in order to make the program extension permanent. The following 30 towns will be eligible for paving assistance in 2011-2013:

City	Assessed Value*	Population
City of Toppenish	262.88	9,080
City of Clarkston	368.61	7,265
City of Colville	380.12	5,045
City of Grandview	407.17	9,290
City of Prosser	411.14	5,140
City of Ephrata	416.76	7,080
City of Hoquiam	434.95	8,770

City	Assessed Value*	Population
City of Othello	437.04	6,800
City of Cheney	507.47	10,680
City of College Place	520.81	9,165
City of Union Gap	528.13	5,850
City of Selah	530.30	7,180
City of Orting	539.53	6,245
City of Pacific	600.84	6,305
City of Sunnyside	602.61	15,410
City of Chehalis	628.44	7,185
City of Yelm	689.91	5,900
City of Fircrest	694.58	6,345
City of Kelso	728.20	11,780
City of Milton	731.01	6,540
City of West Richland	746.66	12,130
Town of Steilacoom	747.05	6,300
City of Shelton	747.49	8,975
City of Stanwood	775.78	5,705
City of Duvall	816.27	5,990
City of North Bend	840.58	5,665
City of Brier	840.60	6,490
City of Sedro Woolley	848.75	10,040
City of Sequim	882.92	5,830
City of Aberdeen	952.38	16,450

*In millions of dollars

7. TIB should evaluate the need for and implications to creating a first-in funding mechanism for cities in its Urban Arterial and Urban Corridor programs.

No change to TIB policy was identified for this recommendation.

First-in funding can be defined in a number of ways and it is not clear, specifically, what was intended by this recommendation. TIB funds projects on a life cycle basis, distributing the grant over the design, right-of-way and construction phases. During the study, at least one customer perceived TIB as a last-in funder, choosing to withhold grants until other funding sources were assembled. This perception may reflect TIB’s requirement that projects demonstrate “a strong prospect to achieve full funding” or that we do not provide design only grants. TIB rarely provides design only funding because the projects pose a significant risk of never going to construction. If the state desires to provide design only funding to ease project development, such costs should be convertible loans in order to manage the risk of speculative projects. Such loans would convert in whole or part to grants only if the project proceeds to construction. TIB currently has no authority for convertible loans.

10. Opportunities to create a combined quarterly project update should be explored so a jurisdiction with a project funded by multiple funding sources could complete a single update.

TIB does not require that customers provide a quarterly report. Instead it requires that agencies provide reports at certain milestones during the lifecycle of the project; such as, design, bid, and construction phases. These milestone reports are integral to TIB’s project tracking system and Performance Dashboard. Changing these reports would require a complete re-tooling of these programs. Sharing information would be more efficiently done in a regular project coordination meeting between TIB,

H&LP, and FMSIB. Other partners may also need meetings with CRAB, however, TIB has no common projects with CRAB.

12. Agencies should actively manage their portfolio of projects. While individual projects may be subject to unforeseeable variances, it is critical that agencies manage predictable aggregate portfolios. Agencies must invest in the staff and tools required for data tracking and reporting. They should establish portfolio management targets and have the ability to modify program parameters to achieve those targets.

TIB believes it excels at portfolio management as evidenced by receiving many national awards for transparency and performance management.

TIB currently operates an extensive data tracking and reporting mechanism. Our project engineers maintain a Project Tracking System providing real-time data to the TIB Dashboard. The executive director and staff meet monthly to discuss the portfolio of projects aggregately and specifically. Project risks are actively managed through a delayed projects process and the entire portfolio is managed to meet a variety of administrative and financial performance targets.

14. Take legislative action to merge TIB's two accounts (UATA and TIA) to allow for simpler cash management.

The 2011 Legislature took action to implement this recommendation.

SSB 5797 merged the UATA and TIA into one account. Combining the two accounts allows TIB more flexibility to fund the best projects by eliminating funding silos that allocated the money into smaller pots. TIB is currently amending WAC rules to implement 5797.

17. Agencies should link program outcome measures to program objectives and project selection criteria.

In 2011, TIB worked to strengthen the link of its programs to the state transportation policy priorities.

In response to the Efficiency Study, TIB established a board Visioning Committee to strengthen its strategic direction. The Visioning Committee recommended re-engineering the TIB selection process. The new selection process refines TIB program objectives and more specifically implements state transportation policy priorities. The TIB Dashboard provides many measures including program outcome measures and financial measures. TIB will complete a five-year update to its strategic plan in 2012. Program objectives and outcomes will be further developed in that process.

18. The same set of outcome measures should be tracked consistently over time. Tracking measures over time facilitates comparison across agencies, when appropriate, and provides valuable information to agencies on trends.

TIB has tracked time lapse performance measures since 2003.

The TIB Dashboard publicly displays our performance measures, including annual year-end statistics on our most vital metrics. Shown below are the annual statistics from 2006-2010.

YEAR END PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<i>Targets</i>	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Active Projects	450	427	427	375	230	303
Current Grant Obligation	\$300M	\$397M	\$380M	\$357M	\$209M	\$257M
Average Project Life						
Urban Corridor Program	7 Years	8.4 Years	7.8 Years	7.4 Years	5.7 Years	5.9 Years
Urban Arterial Program	5 years	6.2 Years	5.7 Years	6.0 Years	5.6 Years	4.5 Years
Small City Arterial Program	3 Years	3.2 Years	2.8 Years	3.4 Years	2.8 Years	2.9 Years
Net Grant Increases/Surpluses	<0	-\$15M	-\$3M	-\$3M	-\$8.5M	-\$9.9M
TIA Balance	\$10M	\$14M	\$16M	\$6M	\$3.4M	\$32.2M*
Average Payment Cycle						
Urban	<39	39 Days	27 Days	19 Days	21 Days	15 Days
Small City Arterial Program	<21	18 Days	13 Days	11 Days	12 Days	8 Days
Delayed Projects (Delayed/Total)	<5%	71/418	50/337	29/368	24/292	16/185

*Fund balance currently exceeds target due to program cancellations during 2009-2010 recession. TIB has taken action to increase expenditures in the 2011-2013 biennia.

19. Institute a manageable set of internal performance measures consistent across the four agencies related to financial management, portfolio management, and customer service.

TIB worked with our partner agencies to compare portfolio performance measures.

TIB portfolio measures have been tracked monthly and annually since 2003. Portfolio measures have been shared across our partner agencies. Current TIB portfolio measures are provided below:

PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Number of Projects in Design	97 Projects
Number of Projects in Construction	162 Projects
Number of Delayed Projects	14 Projects
Remaining Grant Dollars	\$207,498,750
Total Account Balances	\$46,308,678
Current Average Payment Turnaround	5.3 Days
Percent Administrative Overhead	1.3 %
Percent of Application Dollars Funded	15.5 %

20. Agencies should ensure that their reports and briefings tell the full story, reminding decision makers of their distinctive roles, how these roles create specific benefits and challenges, and an annotated description of current contributions and challenges.

The Executive Director can use the JTC Efficiency study as a reference for new lawmakers. It is a good tool to show how the agencies are different and how TIB has a specific role in funding urban and small city projects.

21. Briefings with decision makers and staff should augment written reports, and particular effort should be taken to develop relationships with new policy makers and their staff as turnover occurs. The executive director provides reports and information to legislators, policy makers, and key staff on a regular basis. Keeping stakeholders informed is a high priority for the executive director, which helps maintain excellent working relationships.

23. CRAB, FMSIB, and TIB should develop formal plans for leadership development and succession.

As a small agency with weakening revenue, TIB has reduced staff 35 percent since 2004 in response to decreasing workload. Unfortunately, it's impossible to maintain a staffing depth chart under such constrained conditions. TIB developed the succession plan summarized below, but it does not provide an ideal condition of immediate succession.

Position	Replacement Options	Staff Development/Training
Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire Interim • Backfill with CAO as temp during ED search process • Hire new employee 	
Accounting Manager/Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract with Small Agency Client Services (SACS) • Request personnel loan from other state agency • Hire new employee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate training to new hire.
Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire new employee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each engineer has a back-up engineer. That back-up would take over until a new engineer is hired. • Desk manual is in place for training new engineers.
IT/Network Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use in-house employee as temporary until replacement is hired • Request personnel loan from other state agency • Hire new employee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have passwords and network operations instruction available for temp/new hire. • Provide appropriate training to temp/new hire.

RECOMMENDATION

The board is requested to approve the proposed JTC recommendations for final submission to the JTC on December 1, 2011.