



MINUTES

MEETING: Regular Transportation Commission Meeting
TIME: Wednesday, March 15, 2017, 5:30 p.m.
PLACE: 9th Floor Visibility Center, Tacoma Municipal Building
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Moore called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

CM Skaught had asked to be excused.

All other Commission members were present.

2. Roll Call/Introductions

Co-Chair Moore moved to excuse CM Skaught.
Seconded by Co-chair Leighton. Voice vote was taken and carried.
The motion was adopted.

3. Approval of Minutes (February 15, 2017)

There were no minutes to approve.

4. Public Comment for Items on the Agenda

No Public Comment.

5. Business Items

a. WSDOT Updates – SR 167, JBLM, 15 HOV, SR 163, HOV Connectors (Steve Roark & Tom Slimak)

HOV Lane program:

Steve said that the 167 off-ramp will hopefully be open this weekend, weather permitting. The other HOV lane projects are expected to be complete next year. One of the projects – Nalley Valley is the first Design-Build in this corridor. The last piece is the Southbound HOV project which is also Design-Build. Procurement for this project will happen later this year with construction expected to start next year. This is a \$1.6 Billion effort and at this time estimated completion date is June 2019.

Question: Is this going to make it so the dead end ramps are gone or worked into the final piece of the Nalley Valley? Answer: Yes they will be incorporated – they will be the direct connect ramps.



It has not been decided whether or not the Portland Ave. to Port of Tacoma SB HOV will be built – more than likely it will.

Question: Would WSDOT still own the ROW (air rights?) – Yes they would.

Question: Will the HOV program be all the way through with L St. not being taken down? Answer: Right now they are tearing down McKinley and rebuilding – L St. may also be torn down but not determined yet.

JBLM program:

Aggressive timeline – from Dupont north to Thorne Lane (about \$300M to add an additional lane in each direction and replace. Expect to be under construction next year – same time as the HOV project.

Question: Have you coordinated with InterCity, Pierce and Sound Transit to see about busses being able to use the HOV after construction is complete? – Answer: WSDOT is not sure but they are coordinating with these groups.

Question: Will the design allow for pedestrians or bikes to get across? –Yes. Are pathways part of the plan? –Not this phase, but it is coming up (between 2021 and 2024). Don't have time to get all the easements in place for those paths and they can only build as funds are made available.

Question: Is there Federal funding available? – No this is all State funded.

From DuPont to Mounts Rd. they will add a lane to where Center gets back on to alleviate congestion in this area.

Question: How is the Thorne lane intersection being designed? Answer: It's being designed so that it is wide enough to allow for another lane if needed in the future. It will not connect to another highway.

Question: Do you have estimates on what impact it will have on travel time? Answer: WSDOT does but they did not bring the information with them. They will forward that information to the group.

The Point Defiance Bypass project – new locomotives are being tested out end of summer and are supposed to be quieter.

SR 509 & SR167 Gateway Program:

The intent is to provide more direct freight links from Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma as well as the distribution centers. Also intended to provide direct access to SeaTac. Total funding is \$1.875 billion for Phase 1. \$310M will come from local match (\$130M) and tolling funding (\$180M). The tolling will only be of the pieces that are being constructed.

Question: Where are the local governments going to come up with \$130M in contributions? -Answer: Good question and the program administrator is having

those conversations – it could come from ROW, but by no means has this been settled.

Question: Can you tell us more about the tolling? –Answer: It's a travel demand management tool but has not been approved by legislation yet.

They anticipate receiving an endorsed construction implementation plan in September of this year. Outreach will continue with the next Open House being held for SR167 on April 18 in Fife.

Currently they envision toll points on the west and the east sides. The estimated cost right now is about \$1Billion.

Question: What are the other items – the Interurban trail and the RRP?– Answer: Wetland mitigation – Repair & Restoration program – to capture stormwater treatment.

Question: Has it been decided that the section from Port to I-5 will be first to be completed? – Yet to be decided.

Start construction late 2019 and open to traffic late 2024.

Co-Chair Leighton asked that WSDOT consider during their design phase that the COT would like to work on connecting NE and downtown Tacoma for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Question: Is River Road now State controlled and would it turn into a locally controlled road? – Yet to be determined.

Question: If SR509 is under budget can the funds move over to SR167 to accelerate that piece of the project? –Answer: The legislature looks at it as one project so it is up to WSDOT to determine. The money within the bin stays within the bin. Are both sections being built at the same time? -The intent is to have the projects proceed side by side.

b. Prairie Line Trail – S. 21st Street Crossing (Josh Diekmann)

Josh gave a short recap of the history of the crossing. 21st Street comes down from the south side of UW campus and goes to SPUI – our Single Point Urban Interchange at I-705 and SR509. It is one of the only ways out of the City and one of the busiest connections to the State highways.

Josh presented a YouTube video of a HAWK signal which is being considered for the S. 21st Street Crossing area. There is another HAWK signal being considered several blocks to the West at intersection of Fawcett & 21st.

Question: Why use a HAWK instead of full traffic signal? One of the reasons is because you don't have the room to serve the side streets. Because the signals are so closely spaced to each other that you wouldn't have the ability to store the vehicles for the amount of time that you would need for that to serve side streets.

With the HAWK once the lights are flashing vehicles can proceed so they don't backup in the intersection. Another consideration is that the intersection would not meet signal warrants which is so installing a signal becomes much more problematic at that point. There are specific warrants for a HAWK though.

Josh introduced a Grade separation which includes a bridge/tunnel option. Initial estimates are \$18-20 million dollar.

Josh asked the Commission if they would consider allowing Proposition money to be spent to further explore this idea, get a better cost estimate, conduct public outreach, and a feasibility study. The cost for a study would be approximately \$100K or more depending how many alternates are evaluated and other factors.

The Commission said they would weigh the cost of a study and where the money would come from.

Question: How wide would the tunnel be and how long to cross? – Not long – it would be about the width of 5 lanes.

Question: Could you attach it to the developer coming in? – Usually through the SEPA process this could be done, but it's difficult to find a way to get a proportionate share of contributions for a major capital improvement like this.

The Commission would like to see what the feedback is from BPTAG.

Is there a viable funding strategy if the project moves forward – would it score well? -Josh said partnerships would be needed since Grant funds probably wouldn't be available for the full amount.

Public safety with a tunnel needs to be considered – it may be possible to include campus security since UW will be a key stakeholder.

Co-chair Leighton said that he did not feel the study should be completely funded out of Active Transportation money. It's not just a pedestrian project – it's also a road project.

Question: What is the timeline for a decision? – Josh said that he didn't need a response from the commission tonight.

It would be good to get BPTAG and UWT input and come back with that for the Commission to review. Also recommendations about where the money comes from.

c. Complete Streets Ordinance (Jennifer Kammerzell)

This is a follow up to the Complete Streets Ordinance. Jennifer is going to IPS next Wednesday. The one change Jane recommended was the definition on page 2 of Complete Streets. Jennifer will refine the definition.

Generally the information is the same. It has been presented to Utilities, Street Ops, and PW – they had some questions and concerns about the applicability side of it. Jennifer let them know that this doesn't change anything they currently are doing in their day to day operations. They would like more clarification under Applicability – major utility work and maintenance.

The Commission was asked to review and get any changes to Jennifer by Friday or latest Monday AM.

We would like to adopt a second reading by end May. The Commission will draft a support letter for the first reading.

6. Other Business/Updates

a. Parking Technical Advisory Group (PTAG)

Judy provided an update - The residential parking permit program was discussed and the tedious process of making decisions as people approach PTAG. Also discussed was how to phase in the residential parking program when it abuts a commercial area.

Question: Are they looking at paid parking in other areas of the City? -Not unless someone asks.

The Commission feels it would be good to look at other areas where paid parking could be applied.

b. Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group (BPTAG)

Jennifer provided an update - They have a new youth member. Also there are two potential vacancies in the group. Term limits and instituting bylaws were also discussed. Each month they choose an intersection of concern and come up with solutions. One was a follow up to Union and Skaught Pearson by Target. The other was SR7 at 38th St off ramps.

c. Planning Commission Agenda

The meeting today was cancelled.

d. Commission Comments

No comments.

7. Staff Reports

a. Responses to Commission Inquiries

Met with SB HOV project team from WSDOT today – one item talked about was the L St. bridge over I-5. If there is anyone who would like to provide comments or direction about the aesthetic appearance of the bridge and what changes could be made, please let Josh know.

Annual Report

Still a draft – Reid and Kurtis are presenting to Study Session and Council next Tuesday-3/21, but they are not bringing the Annual Report since it is not final. Co-chair Leighton said they'd still like to add comments and he will send them on to Jennifer.

b. Status of Grant Applications & Major Capital Projects

Updates coming in April.

c. Upcoming Public Meetings & Events

Sound Transit Open House –they may come to present in April, but you can also attend the Open House which is in April.

Monday was the second planning development forum committee meeting at Gray Middle School. Next month the meeting will be held at NE Tacoma.

At IPS next week the 6 Year Transp. Program and Complete Streets Ordinance will be on the Agenda. On April 4 N 21st Street will be on the agenda.

Recommendation to place poles in middle will stand and will be the gist of the conversation.

8. Public Comment

No Public Comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.