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1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS
4. PUBLIC COMMENT
5. CONSENT / ACTION ITEMS

All matters listed within the Consent Agenda have been distributed to each member of the Skagit Transit Board of Directors for reading and study, are considered to be routine, and will be enacted by one motion of the Board with no separate discussion. If separate discussion is desired, that item may be removed from Consent Action Items and placed on Regular Action Items by request.

- a) Approval of March Meeting Minutes..... Page 2-7
- b) Approval of Claims and Payroll
March Payroll Direct Deposit and Checks #16681 - 16691\$816,102
March Direct Federal withholding transfer\$165,859
March Claims Checks and ACH #42188 - #42378\$430,720

6. FULL DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- a) Monthly Budget Update Reports for March..... Page 8-9
- b) 2022 FTA 5307 FLEX Funds Grant Award..... Page 10
- c) Resolution 2022-03 Adoption of Juneteenth Holiday Page 11-13
- d) Approve Deadline Extension to Submit a Claim Regarding MOA-2 Construction Proposal Request (PR) #2..... Page 14

7. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

- a) Skagit Transit Planning Process

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

10. ADJOURNMENT

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Wednesday March 16, 2022

The Skagit Transit Board of Directors met in a special session via teleconference. Chair Janicki called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, roll call, and introductions.

Members Present

Jose Reeves, Labor Representative (non-voting member)

Members Present via Teleconference

Lisa Janicki, Skagit County Commissioner (Chair)
Peter Browning, Skagit County Commissioner
Ron Wesen, Skagit County Commissioner
Jill Boudreau, City of Mount Vernon, Mayor
Julia Johnson, City of Sedro Woolley, Mayor
Steve Sexton, City of Burlington, Mayor
Mark Hulst, City of Mount Vernon, Councilmember
Judy Jones, Community Advisory Committee (Chair, non-voting member)

Members Absent:

Matt Miller, City of Anacortes, Mayor (Vice-Chair)
Rick DeGloria, City of Burlington, Councilmember

Providing Legal Counsel:

None

Staff Present

Arden Flores, Manager of Finance & Administration
Mark Kennedy, Operations Manager
Aggie Juarez, Facilities Manager
Whitney Davis, Clerk to the Board

Staff Present via Teleconference:

Dale O'Brien, Executive Director
Chris Chidley, IT Manager
Greg Latham, Maintenance Manager
Jennifer Davidson, Human Resources Manager
David Miller, Operations Supervisor
Les O'Neill, Operations Supervisor
Alan Brooks, Operations Supervisor
Jason Tepper, Operations Supervisor
Brad Windler, Planning and Outreach Supervisor
Jo-Ann Wynne, Contracts and Procurement
Josh Klinger, Maintenance Supervisor
Ryan Long, Maintenance Parts Technician

Members of Public via Teleconference:

Joe Kunzler
Patrick Donnelly
Michael Serrano
Chris Jones - CAC

1 Public Comment:

Mr. Kunzler noted his appreciation for the salute to the American Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance and offered congratulations for the funding Skagit Transit has been awarded which will support the MOA-2 project. Lastly, Mr. Kunzler shared his appreciation for staff and Skagit Transit with the acknowledgment of National Transit Worker Appreciation Day this Friday.

2 Consent / Action Items:

- a) Approval of February Meeting Minutes
- b) Approval of Claims and Payroll
 - February Payroll Direct Deposit and Checks #16671 - 16680 \$866,046
 - February Direct Federal withholding transfer \$175,362
 - February Claims Checks and ACH #42027 - 42187 \$475,602

Mr. Browning moved to approve all Consent / Action items. Mr. Sexton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3 Full Discussion/Action Items:

a) Monthly Budget Update Report for February

Mr. Flores read the report as presented in the agenda packet. Items of note include Skagit Transit received \$1,414,865 in sales tax in the month of February. Skagit Transit also received \$937,374 in Federal grants from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). Capital expenditures included MOA2 construction management costs. The reserve account balance is \$16,939,509. Mr. Flores also included a budget update on the MOA-2 project noting 44% of the contract amount has been paid.

Mr. Wesen moved to approve the February Monthly Budget Update as presented. Mr. Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Approve Resolution 2022-02 – Adjusting the Board of Director’s Regular Meeting Time

Ms. Davis read the report as presented. This resolution will adjust subsequent meeting times to 11:00a.m. from the original 1:00p.m. meeting time in order to allow sufficient time to present and discuss agency business. Ms. Davis noted at such a time that in-person meetings resume, Skagit Transit Board of Director’s meetings will remain virtual, and in-person meetings will be held at the Burlington City Council Chambers.

Board members discussed delaying subsequent meetings until 1:30 to allow additional time between meetings.

Mr. Wesen moved to approve Resolution 2022-02 Adjusting the Board of Director’s Regular Meeting Time. Mr. Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c) Award Recommendation Bulk Fueling Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) Contract 22-002

Mr. Latham read the report as presented in the agenda packet. Skagit Transit’s existing Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) delivery contract 14-015-F has expired without a renewal option. Staff is proposing to use the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services Contract 08721 with PetroCard to deliver bulk ULSD to Skagit Transit with no budget impact as this was included in the FY 2022 budget.

Mr. Wesen inquired about what determines the fuel prices. Mr. Latham explained that vendors are subject to Opus Rack prices, which are adjusted daily and can be a different price each delivery.

Ms. Boudreau moved to approve the award of Bulk Fueling Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Contract 22-002. Mr. Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4 Information Items

Mr. O'Brien presented a visual update on the progress and current status of the construction of the MOA-2 facility.

Mr. Sexton inquired about the addition of columns to the front entrance if there was going to be a change order for this that Skagit Transit will be responsible for. Mr. O'Brien explained that there will be a change order for this item.

Ms. Janicki inquired as to why the smaller awning over the front entrance needed additional support when the much larger awning on the north side of the building. Mr. Serrano of KBA Construction explained the canopy on the north side of the building is supported by columns that are the full height of the building where the front entrance is not. Ms. Janicki requested an update on what each phase of the construction includes.

Mr. O'Brien explained that phase I includes the administrative area, the skin of the building, the demising wall and addresses structural needs for the mezzanine in the Maintenance Department. Phase II includes the completion of the finished Administrative section. Phase III includes the Maintenance area, and the additional three acres for the wash rack, fueling and bus parking.

Mr. Wesen inquired if the need for additional support beams came about during the snow we had recently and if there was an issue with the County building codes not requiring adequate support requirements. Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Serrano explained this was a design flaw as the main support beams for this awning do not span the full height of the building. Mr. Serrano added the total cost of the added support beams is still being determined and there is still negotiations happening with the architects to determine if the financial expense is the responsibility of Skagit Transit.

Ms. Janicki requested additional discussion on the insulation of the building. Mr. O'Brien explained the original design plans included taping insulation on the inside of the building under the roof. This would have an expectancy of 5 years longevity. Staff and the Construction Management team feel that is not a sufficient long-term plan. Mr. O'Brien explained the current roof is in good – to – fair condition and one option being discussed is to add insulation to the top of the roof and add a new roof above the existing. The cost estimate for this was \$22 per square foot, or \$1.5 million. This would provide a roof good for 25-30 years. Ms. Janicki explained the sprinkler system also creates an issue for the taped insulation. Foam insulation is also not an option as the structure of the roof could not support the weight. Mr. O'Brien stated staff will be negotiation with the design team to determine the best plan to move forward.

d) Approve Construction Change Orders 1-4 for the MOA-2 Project

Mr. O'Brien read the report as presented in the agenda packet. Staff met with the Construction Management Firm and the Architect's and have reviewed and authorized four change orders which total \$68,774.74. Staff is requesting the Board approve the change orders for the MOA-2 Construction Contract.

Mr. Sexton inquired about the amount budget contingency and requested a comparison for the Board to see how much is being added to the overall cost. Mr. Wesen requested staff include an update of the construction completion in addition to the update of budget completion for the project.

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the Construction Change Orders 1-4. Mr. Wesen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e) Approve Waiver of 30-Day Timeframe to Submit a Claim

Mr. Flores read the report as presented in the agenda packet. Staff is requesting the Board's approval for a 30-day extension for the Contractor to submit a claim for all costs associated with Proposal Request #02 which will address issues and costs associated with the MOA-2 construction project. Waiver of the claim deadline will not affect any other terms of the contract agreement.

Ms. Janicki requested clarification of this process. Mr. Serrano explained that if there is a change that is identified, the design team puts together a proposal request which defines the change in the conditions. This is given to the contractors to request a cost estimate based on the revised design. The contractor then submits a change order proposal which is then reviewed by staff to determine if that is to be accepted and to become a change order for the Board to approve. Ms. Janicki clarified that staff is requesting an additional 30-days due to the complexity of issues.

Mr. Wesen inquired about the terms of the contract. Mr. O'Brien explained the items included with PR #02 were unforeseen and there was a lot included in the proposal request. In addition, these items included will have an affect on other projects and later phases. Mr. Flores noted there have been delays in getting quotes and there will be additional requests that staff will bring to the Board for approval.

Ms. Boudreau moved to approve the Waiver of 30-Day Timeframe to Submit a Claim. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

f) Approve Amendment to Increase Contract for Management and Inspection Services

Mr. O'Brien read the report as presented in the agenda packet. The original Construction Management and Inspection Services Contract #19-013-F for the MOA-2 project was planned and agreed upon prior to COVID. With many delays and other complications, the project deadline has been extended and additional expenses have been incurred. Staff is requesting to increase the contract to \$357,848. Mr. O'Brien explained that extreme delays in shipping are creating issues for construction progress. Ms. Boudreau noted we are experiencing extraordinary times, and weather complications have only added to that.

Mr. Wesen noted this is being experienced everywhere, delays and increased costs are to be expected, but we have to continue moving forward. Ms. Janicki shared her support for this amendment.

Ms. Boudreau moved to approve the Amendment to Increase the Contract for Management and Inspection Services. Mr. Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

g) Approve Amendment to Increase Contract for Amount for Task 3 of the Architecture and Engineering Services

Mr. O'Brien read the report as presented in the agenda packet. Staff is requesting the Board approve an amendment to increase the contract amount for Task 3 for Architecture and Engineering Services with TCF Architecture to \$372,241 for payment of services through December 31, 2021. This is an increase of \$118,797 to the original contract. Mr. O'Brien explained staff is requesting approval to finish phase III because staff is close to securing funding to finish the facility to completion. Mr. O'Brien added Skagit Transit was awarded \$5 million in the state transportation bill. Mr. Flores noted this was included in the budget for the prior year so there is not budget impact for 2022. Staff is making clear the changes that have happened since the original contract was approved by the Board in 2019. Ms. Janicki clarified that this is an amendment to approve the contract, and the funding was approved as a capital line item.

Mr. Sexton requested clarification of the amount that was budgeted. Mr. Flores stated there was an amendment mid-year. Mr. Flores stated additional services were needed and Skagit Transit has paid expenses through 2021. Staff is reviewing invoices for 2022 and expect to bring an additional amendment to the contract to the Board after negotiating the contract for 2022.

Mr. Browning moved to approve the Amendment to Increase the Contract for Task 3 of the Architecture and Engineering Services. Ms. Boudreau seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

h) 90-Day Construction Suspension

Mr. O'Brien explained staff met with the Contractor, Design team and the Construction Management Firm to discuss suspending construction for 90-days so Proposal Request #02 can be approved and materials can be received. This would eliminate paying contractors while work cannot be done. If there was no work, and staff didn't suspend construction, Skagit Transit would owe the contractors \$182,250. If the project is suspended and the contractors are given notice, it would cost Skagit Transit \$300 per day or \$32,000.

Mr. Sexton inquired if there was going to be a review of TCF Architecture and the services provided to this point. There have been a lot of change orders already and phase I is not complete. Mr. Sexton shared his lack of confidence and requested to review more efficient options to complete services. Mr. O'Brien stated staff is meeting with TCF to discuss the current situation and discuss a better resolve which will be brought to the Board.

Mr. Wesen inquired if the 90-day delay could be extended further if necessary. Mr. O'Brien stated the timeline could be extended further with Board approval. Staff feels 90 days will provide a good idea of a timeline moving forward.

Mr. Browning moved to approve the 90-Day Construction Suspension. Ms. Boudreau seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5 Information Items

The presentation on Skagit Transit Planning Process has been postponed until the April meeting.

6 Community Advisory Committee Report

Ms. Janicki made note that the meeting is running long and added that detailed information from the Community Advisory Committee meeting was included. Ms. Jones noted the Community Advisory Committee is asking Skagit Transit and the Board of Director's to consider exterior displays on the buses promoting transit as a viable alternative with rising gas prices as well as sending out a press release on the topic. Lastly Ms. Jones shared her appreciation for staff's support with the North Sound Transportation Alliance.

7 Executive Directors Report

None.

8 Executive Session

No Executive Session was needed at this time.

Commissioner Janicki adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Commissioner Lisa Janicki, Chair Skagit Transit Board of Directors

Attest:

Whitney Davis, Clerk of Skagit Transit Board

SKAGIT TRANSIT

TO: Skagit Transit Board of Directors

FROM: Arden Flores, Manager of Finance and Administration

SUBJECT: Budget Update for March 2022

INFORMATION: The monthly budget reports are presented for your review. Items of interest are:

Revenues:

Skagit Transit received \$1,227,470 in sales tax revenues for the month of March 2022. This is 19.4% higher than the \$1,028,007 received in March 2021, and 33.3% higher than the \$920,956 received in March 2020. Fiscal Year 2022 totals so far are 12.42% higher than 2021 and 20.3% higher than 2020.

	2022	2021	2020
Mar	1,227,470	1,028,007	920,956
Jan-Mar	3,825,597	3,402,973	3,179,153

We also received \$1,123,813 in Federal Grants, including \$885,883 from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and \$114,749 from the FY2020 CARES Act Funds.

Expenses:

- ◆ Capital
 - MOA2 Construction Mgmt Costs - \$31,957
 - Tripspark Software - 17,810
- ◆ Fuel - Trending approximately 34% over the budgeted amount due to higher gas prices
- ◆ All other expenses were as expected

Ending Cash:

Mar 2022	Mar 2021	Mar 2020
6,562,342	4,990,447	4,397,370

Reserves:

	Mar 2022	Mar 2021	Mar 2020
Operating	5,021,893	5,017,203	1,907,814
Facilities	6,400,000	400,000	0
Capital Replacement	4,013,973	4,008,153	4,411

Non-Designated	1,504,975	1,503,570	3,8002
TOTAL	16,940,842	10,929,925	1,915,397

MOA2 Phase 1 Construction Finances Update:

Construction Contractor: HB Hansen Construction Inc.

Original Contract Amount: \$2,885,000 + Tax

Total Approved Change Orders: \$68,775

Total payment to Contractor: \$1,292,284

Project % of completion: 40%

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Board approve the monthly budget report.

SKAGIT TRANSIT

TO: Skagit Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Brad Windler, Planner
SUBJECT: 2022 FTA 5307 FLEX Funds Grant Award

INFORMATION:

Resolution 2010-09 authorizes the Executive Director to sign grant agreements upon Board approval of the project and funding of the grant award. The following is presented for Board approval of the programming and award of 2022 U.S. Department of Transportation funding.

1. Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds flexed to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 funds awarded to Skagit Transit from Skagit Council of Government - \$304,300

Skagit Transit will use the funds to assist in delivering the following future projects:

1. **\$164,900** this project is for design and engineering service for the design of a canopy over the bus island at March Point Park and Ride to provide protective cover from rain or sun to passengers as they transfer between buses.
2. **\$73,100** this project is for consultant survey services for locations on Memorial Highway that will support an added sidewalk or platform for boarding where our buses can pull off due to high speed limits.
3. **\$66,300** this project is for consultant services to perform Right of Way surveys to determine if and where along various transit corridors bus stop amenities can be installed. The resulting information will be used for planning and permitting purposes.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board approve the grant projects and budgets, and authorize the programming of the funding and the Executive Director to execute the grant agreements.

BUDGET IMPACT:

The projects will be added to future annual budgets. Estimated project budgets are as follows:

Project 1: \$164,900 grant - \$29,100 match
Project 2: \$76,100 grant - \$12,900 match
Project 3: \$63,300 grant - \$11,700 match

SKAGIT TRANSIT

TO: Skagit Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Dale O'Brien, Executive Director
Jennifer Davidson, Manager of Human Resources
SUBJECT: Resolution 2022 - 03 Adoption of Juneteenth Holiday

INFORMATION:

The State of Washington passed Substitute House Bill 1016 during the 2021 Regular Session making Juneteenth a paid holiday for State employees. Juneteenth is now defined as a state legal holiday to be recognized on the nineteenth day of June as a day of remembrance for the day the African slaves learned of their freedom.

Juneteenth National Independence Day is a US Federal holiday signed into law by President Joe Biden on Thursday, June 17, 2021. The history behind this holiday reflects upon Abraham Lincoln declaring the end of slavery with the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Two and a half years later, and two months after the end of the Civil War, Union Troops arrived in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865 to find that news of the proclamation had not yet reached Galveston and that people were still being held as slaves in Texas. The leader of the Union Troops, General Gordon Granger formally announced the emancipation from the balcony of the former Confederate Army headquarters. Although the news of the emancipation reached towns at different times across the South, there was a collective decision to recognize June 19th as the date of emancipation. The annual commemoration of this date, became known as Juneteenth.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Skagit Transit Personnel Policies Manual Section 8.02 is amended to include Juneteenth as a recognized holiday and section 8.03 is hereby amended to include Juneteenth as a floating holiday. The Skagit Transit Personnel Policies Manual Sections 8.02 and 8.03 is hereby amended as reflected in Exhibit A and attached hereto.

Staff requests that the Board approve the addition of the Juneteenth Holiday.

BUDGET IMPACT:

The additional Juneteenth Holiday will impact the budget by approximately \$36,993.00 per year.

Exhibit A

8.02 PAID HOLIDAYS – ADMIN & OPS Department Non-Represented

Recognized Holidays

Holiday	Date Recognized
New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Day	3 rd Monday of January
President's Day	3 rd Monday of February
Memorial Day	Last Monday of May
Juneteenth	June 19 th
Independence Day	July 4 th
Labor Day	1 st Monday of September
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	4 th Thursday of November
Native American Heritage Day	4 th Friday of November
Christmas Day	December 25 th

8.03 PAID HOLIDAYS – NON-REPRESENTED MAINT. DEPT.

Floating Holidays

1. Martin Luther King Day
2. President's Day
3. Easter
4. Juneteenth
5. Veterans Day
6. Native American Heritage Day

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-03

**A RESOLUTION OF SKAGIT TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVING
JUNETEENTH AN ADDITIONAL PAID HOLIDAY**

WHEREAS, Juneteenth National Independence Day Act (Public Law 117-07) has been signed into law by the federal government, recognizing the historical significance of the Juneteenth National Independence Day to the United States; and;

WHEREAS, Washington State has passed Substitute House Bill 1016 during the 2021 Regular Session making Juneteenth a paid holiday for State employees; and Whereas Skagit Transit encourages more awareness of the significance of this celebration in African-American/Black history and its role in the heritage of our nation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT, the Board of Directors approves one additional paid holiday to all regular employees per calendar year effective June 2022 and continuing into subsequent years. The Skagit Transit Personnel Policies Manual is amended to include Juneteenth as a recognized holiday.

PASSED in open public meeting this 20th day of April, 2022.

**SKAGIT TRANSIT SYSTEM
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

By _____
Lisa Janicki, Chair

By _____
Dale S. O'Brien, Executive Director

ATTEST TO FORM:

Whitney Davis, Clerk of Skagit Transit

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Dannon Traxler, Counsel to Skagit Transit

SKAGIT TRANSIT

TO: Skagit Transit Board of Directors

FROM: Dale O'Brien, Executive Director
Arden Flores, Manager of Finance and Administration

SUBJECT: Approve deadline extension to submit a claim regarding MOA-2 Construction Proposal Request (PR) #02

INFORMATION:

During last month's Board Meeting, the Board approved an extension for the deadline to submit a claim for all costs associated with the MOA-2 Construction Project Proposal Request (PR) #02 to March 22, 2022. As noted in last month's Board report, PR#02 was determined necessary due to the extensive nature of the design issues that were noted during construction, and further exacerbated by the current economic environment.

Due to extenuating circumstances, the Contractor has requested to further extend this claim submission deadline to coincide with the last day of the Project Suspension Period which is June 14, 2022.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Board approve to extend the deadline for submission of claims associated with PR#02 to June 14, 2022.

CAC REPORT

APRIL 12, 2022

We will be needing to change June's meeting date from the second Tuesday, in order to allow working persons to participate in our meeting to be held in Concrete. Date to be determined. Once a motion has been made for the change, this will be brought to the Skagit Transit Board for approval.

This meeting was hybrid, having several in-person and three via Zoom.

Brad reviewed the study for intercounty connector county enhancements funding.

We then discussed the improvements made to the coach screens update of the current calendar, and also will be checking to make sure large fonts are used for convenient reading by all.

Brad then introduced the Move Ahead State Funding, and we are all pleased with the funding Skagit Transit is due to receive.

In May, our guest speaker is to be Mark Hamilton, Planner with Skagit Council Of Governments, to discuss the most recent household survey findings

Later on, we would also like to have Mark Kennedy with Operations to discuss transit emergency protocols in time of a disaster.

Under the staff report, we will wait and see what the state has to say regarding mask requirements for transit coaches by April 18, when the current ruling is supposed to expire.

Ridership numbers have risen almost back to levels in March, 2020, and hopefully will continue in that trend.

As for the Sedro-Woolley Park-and-ride, the building for it will arrive next week, ready for installation.

A successful Skagit Transit Appreciation Day on March 18 was also reported by Cheryl, and she did an overview of upcoming marketing events.

The Region Awareness Committee reports seeing vinyl transit advertising on the Community Transit buses for people to take the light rail. Brad reported on the follow-up inquiry for Skagit Transit to employ such information, and further discussion is to take place with the CAC.

During Round Table, progress for bus stop installation was discussed and applauded, and viewing of current signage by the CAC membership.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Jones

CAC Chair

Transit Service Planning Process



MARCH 9

Skagit Transit

Authored by: Brad Windler, Planning & Outreach Supervisor



Transit Service Planning Process

Overview

Skagit Transit aims to have a transparent service planning process that incorporates input from a variety of internal and external sources. Transit service planning is a unique process in that it does not have an end or a beginning. Our network changes with the needs of our community. This must be a process of continual review and re-invention. Most of the public views our routes as either urban or rural routes, but transit networks are slightly more complex than that.

Transit networks consist primarily of three types of routes; core routes, coverage routes, and intercity routes. Core routes tend to have higher frequency and ridership. They are usually located in urban areas connecting highly used destinations. Core routes are anchored at major transit hubs inside the urban area. Routes 205, 207 and 208 are examples of core routes that serve Mount Vernon and Burlington.

Coverage routes may have a lower frequency of service. They often serve urban residential or rural areas with lower ridership. They provide access to citizens who will use them to connect to the core routes and the important destinations they service. Routes 204 (Mount Vernon), 513 (Peterson rd.), and 717 (Concrete) are examples of coverage routes.

Intercity routes have a lower frequency and are designed to provide connections between urban areas or transit hubs separated by long distances. While they may have a low frequency, they do provide a quicker travel time between the cities than taking other fixed route services. Route 40X, 70X, 80X, and 90X are the intercity routes of our system.

Transit service planning is based on the priorities of the Board of Directors, public input, and the resources available.

Priorities

Transit service planning is guided by the Board of Directors establishing priorities for where staff should focus service improvements. This has been accomplished by either following guidance put forth by the board or getting specific plans board approved such as the 2018 Strategic Plan. In the past, the Board has requested staff to prioritize service to areas with high concentrations of:

- Seniors
- Disabled residents
- Minority residents
- Low-income residents

It would be expected that our priorities will change as the county changes. New transit priorities are based upon the needs of the community as set forth by the board. Those priorities could be based on a variety of factors such as, but not limited to:

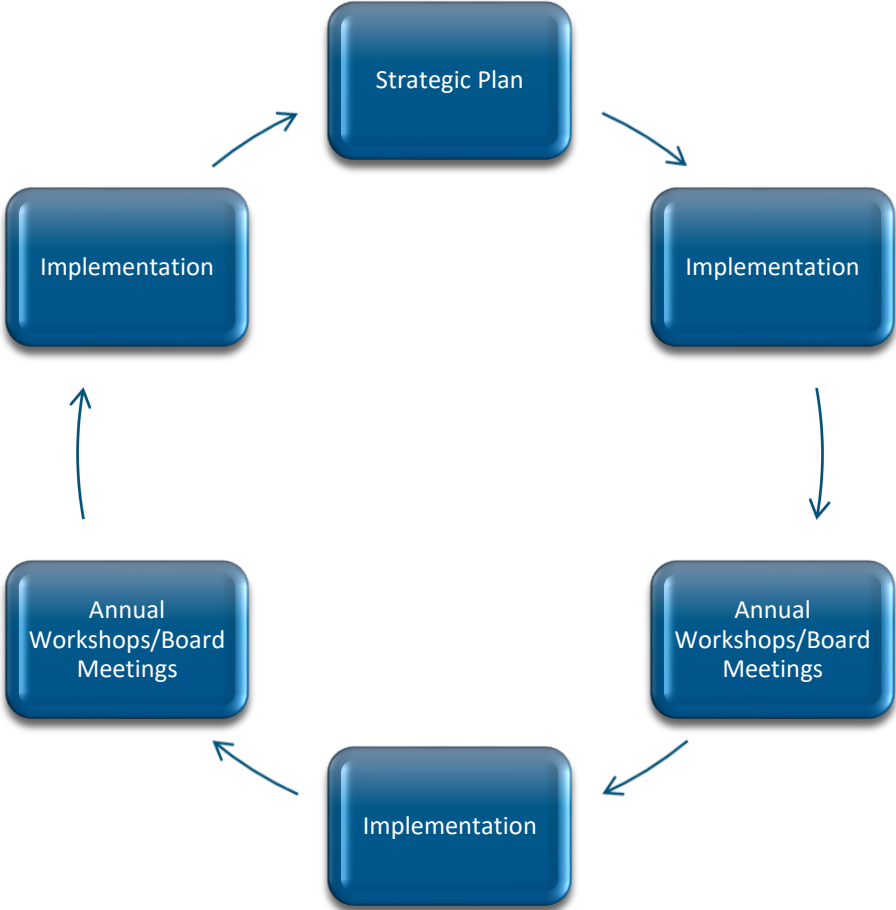
- Service Goals
 - Example- improving route frequency versus adding service to new areas
- Demographics
- Economic factors
 - Example- service to an area to support development
- Budgetary limitations
- Productivity

Skagit Transit adopted the 2018 Strategic Plan to help guide where future resources would be directed. This effort included input from the public through a series of public meetings, a rider satisfaction survey, and through interactions with other public agencies. Strategic plans generally have a 3-5-year timeframe. This agency is emerging from the pandemic at the same time that the last strategic plan is expiring.

We are in the early stages of developing a new strategic plan that can help the agency chart a path forward. With the development of the MOA2, this plan will be bridging

the current agency to the future. Going through the process to set priorities and create a strategic plan for the agency now is ideal timing for such an effort. A new Strategic Plan can guide us.

While strategic planning can help to guide the agency, it does not prevent the agency or board from responding to changing community needs over time. Annual board workshops and regular board meetings provide opportunities for staff to check back with the board about upcoming service plans.



Resources

Service on the street has to match the resources that are available to the agency. Resources is an all-encompassing term that includes budget, staffing, maintenance,

and vehicles. While budgets are an obvious limitation, transit must take other factors into account.

Recruiting and training new drivers can be a 4-month process. New fixed route coaches can take up to 24 months to be delivered from time of order. Service improvements can only take place when timed to appropriately occur with all departments working in coordination.

Public Input

As an agency that provides frontline service on a daily basis, we value public feedback as a vital way of staying in touch with our riders. Public input is received in a variety of ways. Staff has been working to evolve and improve our communication efforts. Certainly the pandemic has reduced our public input but it did not eliminate it.

Methods of Public Input



Public input is never shut off. It informs us on a consistent basis. Our staff has chosen to approach public endeavors as a chance to have a conversation with the riders and general public we serve. Because any conversation has to have a starting point, we will offer or present a series of options at the start of public meetings.

Our staff engages with staff at other public agencies in order to stay informed of events occurring in our community and around the state. Outreach participates in meetings on a regular basis with non-profits and public agencies located in Skagit County. Our agency staff also meets with transit staff around the state on a regular basis through the WA State Transit Association to stay informed on industry trends and standards.

Route Committee

Inside Skagit Transit, the primary workhorse for service improvements is the Route Committee. This committee meets on a regular basis with membership that includes all departments, but some departments such as Finance are only asked to attend specific meetings. This ensures that services changes are viewed from a variety of perspectives.

The Route Committee takes in requests from staff, public input, as well as directives from management and the Board of Directors. The committee develops options, makes test drives, and does all of the work necessary to produce a recommended course of action to the management team and/or the board of directors. The Route Committee does not make decisions. It makes recommendations to the management team.

The makeup of the Route Committee is diverse which allows it to deal with a lot of challenges. Safety and Training participation helps project staffing levels as well as evaluate any safety issues. The OPS supervisors are aware of the day to day challenges in addition to crafting the driver work schedules. The agency Travel Trainer can discuss how changes would affect our rider's ability to use the system. Planning provides background data such as Census demographics of the affected population.

The Route Committee is jointly led by the Planning and Outreach Supervisor and one of the Operations Supervisors. This ensures that collaboration is maximized between the various departments of the agency. Service changes start being developed 9 to 12 months in advance of implementation in most cases.

Summation

Skagit Transit aims to have an open and inclusive service planning process. An essential element to that is having Board implemented planning documents and agreed upon priorities. That is what serves as the guiding principles in our service planning.

As we emerge from the pandemic, the priorities for our service planning should be reviewed. The pandemic has brought significant changes in multiple ways. Also, our county and region are growing and evolving. Public transportation is an essential service and we want to make sure that we are fulfilling the critical needs of our community.