

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEF:
PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL (PSRC)
*February 2021***

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At its January 28 meeting, the Executive Board:

- **Approved contract authority for the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories and Modeling Project.** Authorization by the Executive Board is required for the Executive Director to enter into a contract in excess of \$10,000. PSRC staff requested a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with King County to partner on the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Modeling Project. The contract amount is not to exceed \$25,000.

A partnership of agencies, including King County, the City of Seattle, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, and Pierce County, are working together to produce a current and comprehensive Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. This effort aligns with PSRC's work on climate change and emissions analysis. Bellevue staff inventories the City's greenhouse gas. City staff will track the regional effort and seek consistency when possible.

- **Approved a routine amendment to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).** Three agencies submitted five projects. They were reviewed by PSRC staff and were determined to be consistent with VISION 2050 and the Regional Transportation Plan. The projects are:
 - King County Metro: Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Systems Replacement – this project will replace HVAC equipment within three buildings on Metro's Central/Atlantic Base complex;
 - Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT): I-5/Southbound and Northbound Snohomish River Bridge Painting Projects in Everett;
 - WSDOT: State Route (SR) 305/Agate Pass Bridge Repair in Kitsap County. This bridge connects Bainbridge Island to the Kitsap Peninsula;
 - WSDOT: SR 16/Burley Creeks Fish Barrier Removal in south Kitsap County; and,
 - WSDOT: SR 166/Port Orchard Vicinity Fish Barrier Removal in central Kitsap County.
- **Approved the Regional Center Subarea Plans for:**
 - Kent Downtown Regional Growth Center (RGC)
 - Kent Manufacturing Industrial Center (MIC)
 - Kirkland Totem Lake RGC
 - Tukwila Southcenter RGC
 - North Tukwila MIC

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) calls for coordination among local, regional, and state planning efforts. In 2018, PSRC adopted the Regional Centers Framework Update, which requires all existing centers to have an adopted center plan by 2020. The Downtown Bellevue regional center subarea plan was updated and certified in October.

- **Extended Black Diamond's conditional certification.** The PSRC Executive Board conditionally certified the City of Black Diamond's 2019 comprehensive plan update last year. Conditional certification allowed the City of Black Diamond to qualify for PSRC-managed federal funding while working to address the conditions with a deadline of December 31, 2020. In December, PSRC received a letter requesting a six-month extension on the conditional certification deadline because of restrictions on public meetings and staffing changes. The deadline was extended to June 30.
- **Approved a change in the Regional Transportation Plan project status for Pierce County's Canyon Road Freight Corridor Improvements, 84th Street East to 72nd Street East Project.** Pierce County requested to change the status of the Canyon Road Freight Corridor Improvements Project from "conditionally approved" to "approved" status. This project will reconstruct Canyon Road East to accommodate five lanes with sidewalks and add a traffic signal at 80th Street East. The project is estimated to cost \$15.5 million and will be funded with Pierce County Road Funds, traffic impact fees, Transportation Improvement Board funding and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds.
- **Approved distribution of new funding.** The PSRC received new FHWA funding out of sync with the region's regular competitive grant process. The Executive Board approved distributing the funding through the following processes:
 - \$50 million in Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. Per adopted PSRC policy, projects scheduled for later years will be allowed to advance, if the project is ready and the sponsor wishes. The additional funding will then be distributed to projects on the current adopted contingency lists.
 - \$18 million in Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds. PSRC will allocate \$4.5 million in 2021 funding to the adopted 2020 contingency lists. The remaining funding will be distributed through a new competitive process.
 - \$15 million in Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP) Funds. PSRC policy requires awarding these funds to eligible projects on the adopted regional and county-wide contingency lists. The City of Seattle, however, requested that the full \$15 million be allocated to the West Seattle Bridge repair project. The Executive Board awarded \$7.5 million to the West Seattle Bridge project. The remaining HIP funds will be distributed to the 2020 County-wide contingency lists. Seattle will repurpose two previous awards, totaling \$6.9 million, toward the bridge project. As part of this compromise, Seattle committed to submitting only one project in the 2022 Regional projects competition.

- **Discussed regional transfer of development rights (TDR) programs and open space conservation tools.** The adoption of VISION 2050 accompanied an extensive board discussion about growth expectations for rural areas. In general, growth in rural areas can lead to increased transportation and environmental impacts compared to other locations for growth. However, rural areas also have existing vested development potential that is likely to result in growth over time and there are limits to what a county can do to slow or prevent that development. During the debate on VISION 2050 policies, much of the discussion was about whether the Regional Growth Strategy should be more aspirational and aim towards lower amounts of rural growth for Snohomish County or be more “realistic” and consider growth rates more in line with capacity and development trends. Ultimately, a compromise mid-point growth allocation was accepted for Snohomish County and included in VISION 2050.

TDR is an optional tool that cities and counties can use to encourage the voluntary transfer from places where a community would like to see less growth to places where a community would like to see more development. Because TDR addresses both conservation of open space and compact, transit-oriented development, TDR is an important strategy in implementing VISION 2050. Each of the counties within the PSRC four county region have successfully crafted and implemented TDR programs over the past several decades making Washington State a national leader in the use of TDR.

PSRC is continuing to implement the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan that seeks to identify and protect the most important open space resources in the county. That work will include publishing a toolkit for open space conservation, consistent with the Action, that will aid county and city conservation efforts, including during the upcoming comprehensive plan update cycle.

The next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for February 25. Mayor Lynne Robinson represents Bellevue on the Executive Board.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY BOARD (GMPB)

At its February 4 meeting, the GMPB:

- **Discussed the Draft FY2022-2023 Biennial Budget and Work Program.** The PSRC budget outlines transportation, economic and growth planning activities for fiscal years 2022-2023. The PSRC Operations Committee has primary responsibility for developing the budget and work program for both PSRC and the Economic Development District (EDD). The Operations Committee reviewed revenue and expenditure assumptions and PSRC’s financial policies. The draft budget includes estimated revenues and expenditures of \$30.2 million. The draft will be reviewed by the PSRC’s policy boards with comments to the Operations Committee by March 12 for consideration. The final budget is scheduled for approval by the Executive Board in March and adoption by the PSRC General Assembly on April 29.

- **Discussed the 2021 legislative overview of issues that were identified in VISION 2050.** PSRC staff will track relevant Growth Management Act (GMA) bills and report back to the board on legislation related to the priorities outlined in VISION 2050. Priorities include: communicating VISION 2050 to state agencies and the Legislature, concurrency best practices, fiscal sustainability, coordinate planning in unincorporated areas, state support and coordination, and funding.
- **Discussed school siting briefing paper and findings.** VISION 2050 includes updated policies and actions for school siting. PSRC staff are developing a briefing paper to better understand local issues and priorities for school siting. PSRC staff will provide an overview of the draft School Siting Briefing Paper, including major themes, local implementation efforts, and best practices. Staff is seeking for feedback and direction on the implementation of VISION 2050 actions related to school siting (PS-Action-3 and PS-Action-4).
- **Discussed implementation of VISION 2050.** Each chapter in VISION 2050 identifies regional and local actions that will implement its goals and policies. With the adoption of VISION 2050, PSRC is focusing on implementation through regional actions and supporting cities and counties' local efforts. The implementation actions include the following: housing, target setting and countywide planning policy guidance, plan review materials, Puget Sound restoration, regional equity strategy, school siting, Regional Transportation plan and transportation funding, regional economic strategy and Industrial lands.

The next GMPB meeting is scheduled for March 4. Mayor Lynne Robinson represents Bellevue on the PSRC Executive Board.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD (TPB)

At its February 11 meeting the TPB:

- **Recommended approval of a routine amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP.** Sound Transit submitted the NE 130th Street Infill Station project in Seattle for routine amendment into the Regional TIP. PSRC staff reviewed this project and determined it is consistent with VISION 2050 and the Regional Transportation Plan.

The NE 130th Street Infill Station project will build an elevated light rail station at NE 130th Street and I-5. The total estimated cost for this project is \$65 million. It was funded through Sound Transit 3. This station will serve the area between Northgate Station, which will begin service later this year, and the Shoreline South/145th Station, which will be completed in 2024 as part of the Lynnwood Link Extension. The Executive Board will consider final action on February 25.

- **Discussed the 2022-2023 biennial budget and work program.** As described above, PSRC is developing its 2022-2023 biennial budget and work program. In the draft budget and work program, the transportation items are estimated at \$2.8 million for staff time and consultant

support. Funding comes primarily from the FHWA, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and WSDOT's Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) support. Federal law mandates that RTPOs, like PSRC, conduct transportation planning and federal agencies provide funding for that work.

The major transportation item in the draft budget and work program is the update of the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan. Under federal and state law, the PSRC is required to develop a Regional Transportation Plan every four years and the 2022 plan is being developed. It will describe how the region will implement the transportation policies and goals established in VISION 2050, the region's long-range plan. Another important work item is the allocation of the 2025-2026 FHWA and FTA funds. PSRC will lead this competitive process next year.

- Recommended approval of the Consolidated Grant competition regional rankings. PSRC is conducting its biennial Consolidated Grant competition. This program allocates funding from federal and state sources for special needs transportation projects statewide. Special needs transportation provides mobility services for seniors, people with disabilities, and other populations with mobility challenges due to age, income, or disability. The grant funds can be used to purchase vehicles, to pay for transportation agency staff, or other operational costs.

RTPOs, including PSRC, provide regional priority rankings to the WSDOT as part of the competitive process. Regional priority rankings add points to the overall score in the statewide competition. PSRC can allocate 10 regional priority rankings as part of this competition. PSRC staff, the Special Needs Transportation Committee, and the Transportation Operators Committee developed a ranking recommendation. It was unanimously approved by both committees and the TPB.

Several of the projects recommended for regional priority ranking would expand or support existing special needs transportation in Bellevue, including:

- Catholic Community Services of King County applied for about \$110,000 for 2021-2023 to provide transportation free of charge to low-income older adults and persons with disabilities. Bellevue supports this program from its Human Services Fund. In 2021 Bellevue is contributing about \$17,000.
- Hopelink applied for about \$150,000 to create a One-Call One-Click (OCOC) system to provide multimodal trip planning and transportation request services for special needs populations within King County. Bellevue Human Services staff provided a letter of support for this application.

The Executive Board will consider final action on February 25.

- **Discussed the Regional Transportation Plan and financial strategy.** As described above, the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan is being developed. The Plan describes how the region will implement the transportation policies and goals established in VISION 2050, the region's

long-range plan. Under federal and state law, the PSRC is required to develop a financially constrained Regional Transportation Plan every four years.

The Regional Transportation Plan must include a financial plan demonstrating how the investments, including maintenance, preservation, and operations, can be funded over the life of the plan. The financial plan must include system-wide estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available. The financial plan should also include recommendations on additional financing strategies and an assessment of the likelihood of receiving funding.

In the 2018 Plan, approximately \$157 billion was projected from existing revenue sources for regional transportation projects through 2040. About \$40 billion was needed from new sources. In some cases, local, regional, state and/or federal action would be needed to impose new taxes or otherwise increase revenues. Later this year, the TPB will consider which potential new revenue sources to include in the 2022 Plan.

- **Received a briefing on the state of the transportation system.** Over the past two years, the TPB received briefings on PSRC's data collection work, including:
 - bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
 - traffic signals and equipment;
 - freight assets and movement;
 - transportation demand management programs; and,
 - services for people with special needs.

This work culminated in the development of a visual tool that was shared with the Board in December and showed how it might be used to identify needs and opportunities for system improvements. Once identified, this data can be used to inform local comprehensive plan updates. TPB members supported using the new tool for the updates.

The next TPB meeting is scheduled for March 11. Councilmember Jennifer Robertson serves on the TPB.