

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

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

At its May 27 meeting, the Executive Board:

- **Approved a routine amendment to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).** Two agencies submitted seven projects for amendment into the TIP. They were reviewed by PSRC staff and were determined to be consistent with VISION 2050 and the RTP. The projects are:
  - King County Parks Department: Eastrail Corridor Wilburton Segment. This project will rehabilitate the historic Wilburton Trestle structure and connect the trail to SE 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Bellevue. King County plans to advertise for construction this fall and open the structure to the public in 2023.
  - Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT): I-5/Northbound Lake Washington Ship Canal Bridge - Deck Overlay in Seattle.
  - WSDOT: SR 167 Toll Upgrade in King and Pierce Counties. This project will integrate the SR 167 toll system with the I-405 express toll lanes (ETL), providing a seamless experience for people traveling between the Eastside and south King County.
  - WSDOT: I-90/Eastbound Mercer Slough Bridge – Rehabilitation in Bellevue. This project funds preliminary engineering and construction phases to stabilize the eastbound I-90 bridge over the Mercer Slough. Bellevue staff is gathering information about stormwater runoff from the bridge and impacts to the Slough.
  - WSDOT: SR 305/Port Madison, Agatewood Road, Adas Will Lane – roundabout safety improvements in Kitsap County.
  - WSDOT: SR 305/Suquamish Way – roundabout safety improvements in Kitsap County.
  - WSDOT: SR 305/Totten Road – roundabout safety improvements in Kitsap County.
- **Approved a change in the status for two projects in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).** King County Metro submitted a request to change the status of the RapidRide H Line Project in the RTP from “Candidate” to “Approved.” Community Transit submitted a request to change the status of the Swift BRT Orange Line – 164<sup>th</sup> Street and 196<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Project from “Candidate” to “Approved.”
- **Approved supplemental funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).** PSRC has project selection authority for FTA funds. In January, PSRC was notified of the region’s final allocation of federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021 FTA funds. Transit agencies use these funds to purchase new vehicles, conduct preventative maintenance, and make improvements to transit bases. Although the funding is not allocated to particular areas within King County, some

programmatic investments will benefit Bellevue, including:

- King County Metro will receive an additional \$14.35 million for a variety of maintenance needs including bus replacements and fleet electrification.
  - Sound Transit will receive an additional \$3.26 million for its Downtown Redmond Link Extension.
- **Approved supplemental funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).** Since 2013, the WSDOT has established annual targets for delivery of transportation funds from the FHWA. Regions must meet their delivery target for the year's FHWA funds or risk losing the unused portion of funds to other regions of the state. Each year, the PSRC adjusts its federal funding allocations to meet the delivery target.

The supplemental funding includes an additional \$750,000 for the BelRed Pavement Preservation project and the exchange of federal and local funds on the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail (MTSG) and 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue Pavement Preservation Projects. As a result of this exchange of federal funds, the preservation project will not be subject to federal requirements. This will reduce Bellevue's costs.

- **Discussed the Regional Aviation Baseline Study.** Demand for take-offs and landings in the region is projected to double by 2050 from over 400,000 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to over 800,000 per year. The Regional Aviation Baseline Study identifies a range of scenarios that could meet varying levels of the projected demand, with an analysis of the potential economic, environmental, and community impacts. The study outlines three future scenarios detailing how the region could meet 50 percent, 80 percent, or 100 percent of 2050 demand. Some Board members supported expanding the region's airports to support economic development while other members recommended limiting expansion due to environmental and community impacts.
- **Discussed the Regional Housing Strategy.** The strategy is being developed by the Growth Management Policy Board (GMPB) and will be completed by the end of this year. The region's housing supply is approximately two years or 46,000 housing units behind housing demand. By 2050, the region will need an additional 810,000 housing units to accommodate population growth. Of those new units, 34 percent will need to be affordable for those with incomes less than 80 percent of area median income (AMI). Housing prices have increased faster than incomes over the past 10 years. From 2010 to 2019, rents increased by 53 percent and home values increased 67 percent. The draft regional housing strategy addresses housing supply, stability and subsidies.

Strategies include building more housing near transit, introducing more housing choices, building more middle density housing, reducing costs (including those associated with regulations and fees), strengthening tenant protections, building more affordable housing, and build-out options for vulnerable users.

The Executive Board met on June 24. A summary will be included in the July Regional Issues packet. The next meeting of the Executive Board is scheduled for July 22. Mayor Lynne Robinson represents Bellevue on the Executive Board.

### **GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY BOARD (GMPB)**

At its May 6 meeting, the GMPB:

- **Approved changes to the Regional Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Committee (RTODAC) Charter.** The (RTODAC was formed in 2014 to advance the Growing Transit Communities (GTC) Strategy, the region's equitable Transit Oriented Development (TOD) strategy at the time. The RTODAC serves as an advisory committee to the GMPB and is comprised of GTC Compact signatories ranging from local elected officials to non-profit housing developers to transit agency staff. To support technical discussions among member staff, the RTODAC Chair and Vice Chair recommended restructuring the Committee as a staff-level advisory body to the GMPB. This structure would enable staff to develop recommendations for review by the GMPB for policy decisions.

Bellevue Councilmember Janice Zahn represents Bellevue on the RTODAC and supported the recommendation. Following GMPB action, PSRC staff is working with current and prospective RTODAC members to stand up the Committee pursuant to the updated charter. Members will be selected through an application and appointment process with seats allocated to staff from member jurisdictions from the four counties, developers and real estate professionals, housing organizations, transit agencies, and Community equity and environment organizations.

- **Received a briefing on the school siting paper.** PSRC staff is developing a briefing paper on local issues and priorities for school siting and provided a briefing on the topic. Major themes include local implementation efforts, legal context, and best practices which were developed with assistance from planning staff and school siting professionals. PSRC staff will work with regional school siting stakeholders and partners to develop potential best practices and guidance. Staff will engage the board and stakeholders to develop a scope of implementation for these next steps later this year.
- **Received a briefing on the Equity Advisory Committee (EAC).** Equity is a key policy area in VISION 2050, the region's long-range plan for growth. A new action in the VISION 2050 plan directs PSRC to develop a regional equity strategy, which is intended to make equity central to PSRC's work and to support the 2024 local comprehensive plan updates. PSRC will convene an EAC to inform and support the Executive Board's work on VISION 2050 implementation. The EAC will be a new standing committee reporting directly to the Executive Board. The GMPB and the Transportation Policy Board (TPB) will receive periodic EAC updates. In March, the Executive Board approved a proposal detailing the structure, functions, and membership of the

EAC. The Committee will have 15 members, composed of residents, elected officials, and staff from governmental and nongovernmental organizations focused on equity issues around the region. Members will be selected through an application process, with the initial roster determined by PSRC's Executive Committee and approved by the Executive Board.

- **Received a briefing on the Regional Housing Strategy**, as described above.
- **Received a briefing on the draft Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) update** for consistency with the multicounty planning policies in VISION 2050. The first local implementation step for VISION 2050 includes updating the countywide planning policies and growth targets. Under the Growth Management Act, counties work with their respective cities to establish growth targets and adopt countywide planning policies. To support the 2024 local comprehensive plan update process, countywide planning policies and targets are expected to be updated by the end of this year. The update of the CPPs will also include establishment of housing and employment growth targets for the jurisdictions in the County. The targets will identify the amount of housing and jobs King County jurisdictions are planning for in their comprehensive plans.

At its June 3 meeting, the GMPB:

- **Received a briefing on the 2021 legislative session.** Staff from the State Department of Commerce gave overview briefed GMPB on legislative changes related to housing. The legislative session, convened on January 11, considered a number of bills related to the Growth Management Act. VISION 2050 emphasizes addressing the need for housing and housing affordability. PSRC coordinates with Commerce and other state agencies to support work on legislative initiatives and coordinate in their implementation.
- **Received a briefing on the Regional Economic Strategy and Economic Development Work program.** PSRC staff provided the Board with an update on the Regional Economic Strategy and the Economic Development District (EDD) Board's adopted implementation focus areas for 2021. The Central Puget Sound EDD Board is the governing board for the federally designated economic development district for King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties and is housed at PSRC. PSRC Economic Development staff are working under the guidance of the EDD Board to update the Regional Economic Strategy, with expected adoption in late 2021. This strategy serves as the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) per U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) guidelines. A CEDS is designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area or region, with adoption by a broad set of regional stakeholders. The updated CEDS will also reflect updated regional policy direction in VISION 2050. An adopted CEDS allows for regional organizations to be eligible for certain types of U.S. EDA funding.
- **Received a briefing on the Regional Housing Strategy.** PSRC staff presented draft strategies to address housing supply for board discussion. In May, the GMPB received a

briefing on the draft strategies. Since then, PSRC staff have incorporated GMPB comments. PSRC staff provided an overview of the updated strategies and requested feedback and direction from the GMPB to guide development of the draft strategy. Based on the findings of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and an understanding of housing efforts currently underway in the region, the Regional Housing Strategy has the potential to further existing efforts and propose new tools and actions for consideration by regional stakeholders.

- **Received a briefing on the updated Plan Review Manual.** PSRC reviews and certifies local plans and policies for consistency with VISION 2050 and the Regional Transportation Plan. Certification of local plans and policies is a requirement for jurisdictions and agencies that intend to apply for PSRC funding. PSRC's Plan Review Manual has been updated to reflect new regional policy direction in VISION 2050 .

The Plan Review Manual, which includes VISION 2050 Consistency Tools, supports the implementation of VISION 2050. The tools help local staff connect multicounty planning policies to local plans and policies. Over the past several months, PSRC assembled a working group of local staff and state representatives to inform the manual update. Discussions with the GMPB, Regional Staff Committee, and Transportation Operators Committee also helped shape the revised manual.

The next meeting of GMPB is scheduled for July 1. Mayor Lynne Robinson represents Bellevue on the PSRC GMPB.

### **TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD (TPB)**

At its May 13 meeting, the TPB:

- **Recommended approval of a routine amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP.** The Executive Board approved the amendment on May 27, as described above.
- **Recommended approval of a project status change for two projects in the RTP.** The Executive Board approved the amendment on May 27, as described above.
- **Recommended approval of the final FFY2021 FTA funding allocation.** The Executive Board approved the funding on May 27, as described above.
- **Recommended approval of supplemental FHWA funds.** The Executive Board approved the funding on May 27, as described above.
- **Discussed survey and outreach as part of the RTP update.** PSRC conducted a representative, statistically valid transportation survey in February and March to gather information on the needs of the transportation system for residents around the region. The survey asked participants how COVID-19 may influence future travel patterns, the quality of

transportation infrastructure near the survey respondent's home, travel modes and more. The survey results will be used to inform the 2022 RTP, which is under development and is planned for adoption next year. The survey found that most people are not planning to change their travel patterns or modes following the pandemic.

- **Discussed the RTP Financial Plan Strategy.** Under federal and state law, PSRC is required to develop a financially-constrained RTP every four years. The RTP must include a financial plan demonstrating how maintenance, preservation, and operations investments 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. Briefings on this topic will continue in 2021 with direction from the TPB to proceed with plan analysis with draft financial strategy assumptions anticipated in July.
- **Discussed PSRC's climate work program with Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and Washington State Department of Commerce staff.** Commerce staff briefed the TPB on House Bill (HB) 1287 which establishes a goal for all publicly- and privately-owned passenger and light duty vehicles of model year 2030 or later that are sold, purchased, or registered in the state to be electric vehicles (EV). As passed by the legislature, the goal would only come into effect when a road usage charge (RUC) is established and when 75 percent of publicly- and privately-owned vehicles are participating in the RUC program. However, Governor Inslee vetoed this section of the bill noting that the goal achieving 100 percent electric vehicles is too important to tie to the RUC. Some TPB members supported expediting the installation of EV charging stations. Other members supported a coordinated and deliberate approach to implementing EV charging across the region.

At its June 10 meeting, the TPB:

- **Recommended approval of a routine amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP.** Five agencies submitted seven projects this month for routine amendment into the Regional TIP. The projects were reviewed by PSRC staff and determined to be consistent with VISION 2050 and the RTP. The projects proposed for routine amendment to the TIP are:
  - Community Transit: Swift Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Orange Line, connecting Mill Creek and Lynnwood.
  - King County: Rapid Ride H Line, connecting Burien to Downtown Seattle.
  - Shoreline: N 175th Street, Stone Avenue N to I-5 street improvements.
  - Sound Transit: Lynnwood Link Extension, connecting Lynnwood to Northgate.
  - Sound Transit: Federal Way Link Extension, connecting Angle Lake Station in SeaTac to the Federal Way Transit Center.
  - WSDOT: I-5/S 375th Street to S 178th Street - Seismic Retrofit in King County.
  - WSDOT: I-90/Lacey V. Murrow and Homer M. Hadley Bridges - Electrical Rehab between Seattle and Mercer Island.

- **Recommended approval of a project status change in the RTP.** This action is a routine administrative change and is typically included on the consent agenda when the project cost is less than \$100 million. Kitsap Transit submitted a request to change the status of the Silverdale Transit Center Phase I and II Project from “Candidate” to “Approved.” This project will provide a multi-modal transit center near SR-3 and SR-303 in Silverdale.
- **Received a briefing on the 2021 legislative session.** Representatives Jake Fey (D-Tacoma) and Emily Wicks (D-Marysville) provided a summary of the 2021 legislative session and transportation budget. They discussed legislative highlights, including:
  - HB 1514 reduces the number of required people in a vanpool from five to three, and expands eligibility for tax exemptions, credits and other incentives associated with commute trip reduction.
  - HB 1457 supports the installation of broadband communications facilities on limited access highways.
  - HB 1091 will enact a statewide low carbon fuels standard.

Rep. Fey noted that the road ahead for transportation revenue is uncertain given that the primary revenue source is the gas tax as existing policies lean toward reducing fuel consumption. The state doesn’t currently have the ability to get multiple sources transportation revenue like the operating budget can and that there is a need to diversity our transportation revenue.

- **Discussed the RTP financial strategy.** As described above, PSRC must develop a financially constrained RTP every four years. The horizon on the draft financial strategy is 2022-2050 (six years longer than the current financial strategy). An estimated \$303 billion is needed for the region’s investments in transportation. Current law allows for \$255 billion in revenue, leaving a gap of \$49 billion which must be funded with new revenue strategies. The draft RTP is \$100 billion larger than the 2040 RTP financial strategy due to a longer horizon, regional growth rates and increasing maintenance costs. In July, the TPB will consider directing PSRC staff to proceed with plan analysis, using draft financial strategy assumptions and Regional Capacity Projects list.
- **Discussed the Coordinated Mobility Plan,** which identifies mobility needs of people requiring specialized transportation services. The plan includes information on population trends, existing services, addresses mobility needs of population groups covered in the plan and outlines prioritized strategies. The region’s population of adults over 85 is expected to grow nearly 300 percent by 2050; this age group is seven times more likely to have a disability than the general population. Therefore, transportation services will need to adapt to provide for this growing age cohort. Board members supported expanding infrastructure such as sidewalks and curb ramps to ensure that people with disabilities can get around safely.

The next meeting of the TPB is scheduled for July 8. Councilmember Jennifer Robertson represents Bellevue on the TPB.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (EDD) BOARD**

At its May 5 meeting, the EDD Board:

- **Discussed Greater Seattle Partners' (GSP) *Partners for Prosperity* regional recovery framework.** The framework is a portfolio of initiatives designed to help build a stronger, more equitable regional economy, particularly as the region recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The framework provides a blueprint for regional economic and workforce development actions over the next three to five years. Strategies include a greater focus on workforce development and the creation of new, low-interest capital options which would be targeted for women- and minority-owned businesses. Implementation will be led by regional organizations with support from the private, philanthropic, nonprofit, and public sectors. Additionally, implementation will align with existing subregional and state-level recovery work. The GSP Executive Committee adopted the Partners for Prosperity plan on May 12.
- **Discussed the Regional Economic Strategy.** PSRC briefed the EDD Board on the update to the region's CEDS, *The Amazing Place*. This plan is meant to build on the existing strategy, strengthen its focus on recovery and resiliency, and streamline the overall document for ease of use. The EDD Board discussed equity, health, childcare, regional job distribution, housing and homelessness, and broadband communications.

The EDD Board will consider adopting the updated regional economic strategy in late 2021 in order to be adopted by the PSRC Executive Board by a statutory 2022 deadline.

- **Received a briefing on regional broadband communications.** PSRC staff provided an overview of a regional broadband work session which took place on March 23. This session discussed expanded broadband access in the region, including service gaps, funding opportunities, and broadband equity. It featured representatives from several state agencies working in the broadband sector, including the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) and the Washington State Broadband Office.

**Received a briefing on the PSRC Regional Housing Needs Assessment**, which is described above.

- **Received a briefing on the PSRC Equity Advisory Committee**, which is described above.

The next meeting of the PSRC EDD Board is scheduled for Wednesday, July 7. Councilmember Conrad Lee represents Bellevue on the EDD Board.