



Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Serving Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Whitman Counties

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Palouse RTPO Transportation Policy Board (TPB) Meeting Minutes

Meeting was held via zoom

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

1. Welcome/Call to Order/Introductions.

Those present included:

Name	Representing
Brian Shinn	Asotin County
Jenny George	Asotin County PTBA Transit
Laura Aukerman	City of Dayton
Carla de Lira	City of Pullman
Grant Morgan	Columbia County
David Ocampo	Columbia County Public Transportation
Jeff Ruchert	Garfield County Public Transportation
Shawn Turpin	Garfield County
Jennie Dickinson	Port of Columbia
Brian Davies	Uniontown
Jeff Walters	University of Washington, Tacoma Researcher
Chris Boyan	Washington State University
Melissa Cleveland	Welch Comer
Mark Storey	Whitman County
Tom Handy	Whitman County
Charlene Kay	WSDOT Eastern Region Administrator
Greg Figg	WSDOT Eastern Region
Rebecca Couch	Palouse RTPO Director

2. Public Comments. None.

3. Approval of Minutes from September 10, 2024. Brian Shinn motioned to approve. Jenny George seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Update on Transportation Research Project: Understanding the Interconnected Challenges Impacting Rural Transportation Services in Washington State (Dr. Jeff Walters, UW Tacoma). Dr. Jeff Walters provided an update on this project, informing that there were 14 individuals who participated in survey #2 and rated the level of importance of the 54 factors that were identified in survey #1. From those results, similar factors were then aggregated into a total of 17 factors. Dr. Walters described that similar factors were interestingly given similar ratings for level of importance. An example discussed was “Available Funding”, which includes seven total factors that were related to funding. Dr. Walters asked for feedback on top factor names and whether or not they made sense,

explaining that survey #3 will consider the interconnection of factors that will eventually be mapped, creating the system. To get the 17 factors narrowed down to the ideal number of 10 factors for survey #3, Dr. Walters agreed to send out the list of 17 factors requesting region partners review/vote for their top 10 factors to be included in the final model. Dr. Walters then explained what survey #3 will be asking for. Survey #3 will be asking respondents to consider connections between each of the final 10 factors, and provide an opinion on whether or not the polarity between two factors is positive or negative and the level of strength of that polarity (weak, moderate, or strong).

5. Financials Review/Approval

- a. Approval of Vouchers from September, October, and November 2024. Jenny George motioned to approve the vouchers as presented. Carla de Lira seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Palouse RTPO Vouchers		
Reporting period: September 1, 2024 - November 30, 2024		
September Vouchers Rosalia		
Payroll	P16-P21	\$ 8,531.70
Payables	A09-A13	\$ 4,976.95
Reimbursements	R04	\$ 135.76
		\$ 13,644.41
October Vouchers Rosalia		
Payroll Rosalia	P22-P25	\$ 5,721.35
Payables Rosalia	A14-A15	\$ 254.14
		\$ 5,975.49
Funds Transfer Rosalia to Port	A16	\$ 17,966.62
October Vouchers Port		
Payables	A17-A18	\$ 418.65
Reimbursements	R05	\$ 92.88
		\$ 511.53
November Vouchers Port		
Payroll	P26-P27	\$ 13,618.09
Payables	A19	\$ 114.11
Reimbursements	R06-R07	\$ 161.22
		\$ 13,893.42

- b. **SFY2025 Budget Report: Quarter 2 to-date.** Rebecca provided an overview of reimbursements and expenses up to November month end, including current fund balance. Report received, no action taken.

6. 2411 Amended Palouse RTPO 2024-2029 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) Approval.

The 2024-2029 Palouse RTPO RTIP was adopted by the Policy Board on December 12, 2023. The 2402 amended RTIP was approved on March 12, 2024. The 2404 amended RTIP was approved on June 11, 2024. The 2407 amended RTIP was approved on September 10, 2024. The TAC reviewed and recommended approval of the 2411 Amended RTIP on November 26, 2024. The 2411 amended RTIP includes STIP amendments (additions/edits) for August through October 2024, as follows:

- a. City of Pullman
 - o Addition of WA-16277 Arterial Streets Resurfacing 2026
- b. WSDOT – South Central
 - o Addition of 501217W07 US 12/Turner Rd Vicinity to Messner Rd Vicinity – Chip Seal

Rebecca explained the 2411 Amendment. Brian Shinn motioned to approve the 2411 Amended RTIP. Jenny George seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Pullman/Whitman Freight Alternatives Study Scope of Work and Contract.

Welch Comer presentation of the draft Scope of Work and Contract for the Pullman/Whitman Freight Alternative Study. The Scope of Work and Contract were reviewed and recommended for approval by the Palouse RTPO TAC on November 26, 2024.

Melissa Cleveland from Welch Comer provided a presentation of the scope of work and contract for the project. Tom Handy asked if the TAC and TAG were different or the same groups. Rebecca clarified that they are different groups with some overlap. Tom Handy pointed out that Item 2.6, the June 2024 date should be 2025, Melissa will correct. Tom Handy commented on the proposed deliverables for the videos specific to the project, noting that the Recraft proposal anticipates a 1-minute video in their scope of work and the Welch Comer scope indicates a 3–5-minute video. Melissa will make sure we get what meets our needs and is within budget. Tom Handy asked about the number of figures listed in Kittleson’s Scope, Melissa described that reference is for the count of figures that will be created/provided for the project (maps, etc.). Carla de Lira complemented the scope of work, particularly the public engagement plan. Ms. De Lira asked about the collection of data outside of harvest season. Melissa described that we are not taking traffic counts and collecting new data as part of this study. With the heavy ag traffic occurring during harvest season, the consultants will use sources of data like Replica to use past data and see various seasons/volumes of traffic. Melissa also described that one of the best sources of data for this project will be system users/stakeholder interviews. Grant Morgan asked if any data could come from the LRSD WSDOT study and if that could be shared for this project. Rebecca indicated she has already reached out to that study lead, and it sounds like there should be some traffic volume data that can be shared from that study effort. Melissa indicated other WSDOT, County or City data will be gathered for the project as well, scouring all available data. Greg Figg indicated via chat on zoom that he would serve on the TAG for this project, representing WSDOT.

Carla de Lira motioned to approve the scope of work/contract as presented today. Jenny George seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

8. RTPO Director Updates. Rebecca reported that the transitions with the MPO Administration and Port of Whitman as fiscal agent are both going very well. Looking ahead to 2025, Rebecca informed that she will be starting to work on the RTPO Title VI Policy Update as well as the Human Services Transportation Plan update which is due at the end of 2026.

9. **Whitman County Spotlight.** Carla de Lira with City of Pullman shared several updates. Pullman has formed a workgroup around the bypass and railbanking. Downtown Pullman roadways are now all open with a renewed Main Street. Pullman Transit airport service is well underway, and some bus shelters are soon to be installed. The city received a TIB Grant for Orchard Drive repairs. Airport Road work is also planned for the near future. Brian Davies from Uniontown informed about the ADA improvements/work being done on the rest area in Uniontown (along US195), thanks to funding through Port of Whitman. Tom Handy reported that Whitman County is ready for snow operations, Chambers Bridge work is about finished. Appreciates the work in Pullman and downtown being opened back up.
10. **Board Member Comments/Open Discussion.** Nothing further.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Next Policy Board Meeting:

**March 11, 2025
Spotlight: Asotin County**

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