

Whatcom County Business & Commerce Committee

1801 Roeder Avenue ■ Bellingham, WA 98225 ■ wcbcc@portofbellingham.com ■ (360) 715-5118

WCBCC April Meeting Minutes (4/15/24)

WCBCC Members Present

Dan Dunne, WCBCC Chair
Ryan Allsop, Other For-Profit
Pam Brady, Energy
Clark Campbell, Recreation
Pete Dawson, Commercial Real Estate
Casey Diggs, WCBCC Vice Chair
Rob Fix, Port of Bellingham Executive Director
Mark Stremler, Whatcom County Councilmember

Mayor Korthuis for Jori Burnett
Troy Muljat, Other For-Profit
Brad Rader, Agriculture
Sarah Rothenbuhler, Other For-Profit
CJ Seitz, Higher Education
Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Council
Heather Steele, Public K-12 Education
Russell (RB) Tewksbury, Internet Technology

WCBCC Members Absent

Debbie Ahl, Healthcare
Paul Burrill, Food Processing
Matthew Green, Higher Education
Kim Lund, Mayor
Chris Trout, Manufacturing
Dana Wilson, Marine Trades

Non-Members/Public Present

Chris Behee, Barbara Chase, Lance Calloway, Hugh Conroy, Daniel Darwin, Jessie Everson, Frank (last name not provided) Peter Frazier, Greg Hansen, Brian Heinrich, Mauri Ingram, Scott Korthuis, Michael Lilliquist, Derek Long, Blake Lyon, Maureen McCarthy, Jaymes McClain, Jennifer Noveck, Kori Olsen, Bob Pritchett, Les Reardanz, Margaret Reich, Andrea Ruback, Dann Mead Smith, Lyle Sorenson, Gina Stark, Riley Sweeney, Todd (last name not provided), Julia Tzortzatos

Call to Order

WCBCC Chair Dan Dunne called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Ryan Allsop moved, seconded by Clark Campbell, to adopt the meeting minutes from the March 18, 2024 WCBCC meeting. Motion passed.

Discussion

Per Chair Dan Dunne, sub-committee updates will increase to ten minutes, beginning at the May 20, 2024 WCBCC meeting.

WCBCC April Meeting Minutes (4/15/24) – Cont'd

Discussion: Whatcom County Comp Plan, Transportation Chapter, WTA Overview

Les Reardanz, General Manager, Whatcom Transportation Authority, provided an overview of WTA's current challenges + initiatives.

Challenges: Rising housing prices, continuing growth of the number of residents in the county, economy, jobs, childcare, access to medical care, aging in place, access to food, and overall inflation.

Initiatives: Transit-friendly development in collaboration with affordable/workforce housing (ex.: Lynden Park & Ride + Downtown Bellingham Station expansion).

Service Orientation: Reviewing how to establish transit connection to waterfront activities/services (potential inclusion of passenger van); Rapid transit (how to move into downtown on a quicker basis); Evaluation standards (financial, ridership) as a framework for discussions; Investment in Smart Trips + automated passenger counters; Operational environment includes Transit Access Fund to work with smaller jurisdictions for collaborative transit improvements.

Discussion: Regional Traffic Forecast, WCOG Overview

Hugh Conroy, Director of Whatcom Council of Governments, shared the regional travel demand model built on traffic counts + population growth + population allocation based on where residents live and work. Travel survey additionally factored into the model. Currently updating to 2023, which uses more current traffic counts from this past year.

Fatal crash data dashboard, WA Traffic Safety Commission:

<https://wtsc.wa.gov/dashboards/fatal-crash-dashboard/>

Note: Dashboard can be filtered by county

ArcGIS maps of 2019 base-year traffic and forecast (2045) traffic volume:

<https://wcog.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/portfolio/index.html?appid=fa5f4bdd6d764198b886a4e55df6d55c>.

WCOG's Regional Traffic Counts web page: <https://wcog.org/counts/>.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.