Summary Notes
Pierce County
Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC)
Thursday, March 24, 2022
9:00AM to 11:05AM
Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Call to Order: 9:00AM

Roll Call: 9:04AM

Voting Members: Deryl McCarty, Paul Lubbesmeyer, Shelly Schlumpf, Tom Pierson, Larry Leveen, Lindsey Sehmel, Brian Devereux, Steve Gordon. There is a quorum.
Absent: Tom Walrath, Jr.
Non-Voting Members: Hugh Taylor, Rob Allen.

Pierce County PPW Staff: Melissa McFadden, Rory Grindley, Jesse Hamashima, Gary Hendricks, Hilda O’Crotty, Neil Quisenberry, Mason Struna, Shawn Phelps.

Pierce County Non PPW Staff: Councilmember Cruver, Larry Stickney (County Council Office), Brianne Blackburn (Parks & Recreation).

Other: Maxine Herbert-Hill (SR-162 Community Group), Elvin Lerew (SR-162 Community Group), Dale Maris (Maris Farms).

Administrative Matters: Staff introduced Melissa McFadden, the new County Engineer. Melissa noted that this is her fourth day as the County Engineer. She has been with Pierce County for approximately 4½ years. Prior to working for Pierce County, she was the Mason County Engineer.

Approval of Agenda: Agenda was approved with the following correction: Delete Lindsey Sehmel, Pierce Transit, from leading Item 7, Public Comment.

Approval of February’s Meeting Summary: Motion to approve. 1st Tom Pierson. 2nd Deryl McCarty. No opposition. Summary notes approved as printed.

Councilmember Comments: No comments at this time.

Active Transportation Project Programs and Funding (Presented by Shawn Phelps, Senior Planner): Reviewed a Tiered Active Transportation Project Proposals map. It showed lots of projects for accessing the future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as well as projects in South Hill. Staff noted that the County needs to further study the best east-west connection across the urban area. Reviewed a second map on Tiered Active Transportation Project Proposals. A board member suggested graying out the red lines which represent the State highways. It was also suggested by board members to include standards for the types of improvements that are being proposed.

Staff presented an Excel spreadsheet which list projects for each tier as well as tiers by Council district. Staff noted that District 4 shows no projects because that district entirely includes cities. Staff stated that the Tier 1 tab includes more projects than Tier 2 and Tier 3 because some of these projects have some funding and/or are ready for construction. A board member asked if there was an analysis of future transit projects outside of Pierce Transit. Staff noted that most of those projects (rail/light rail) are inside cities.

The objective of this presentation is to update the TAC on the TAC Working Group’s active transportation project proposal. On February 24, staff presented to the TAC on the current active transportation funding and projects as well as the six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). At that meeting, the working group discussed proposed tiers for active transportation project funding levels, criteria for including projects in each tier, and possible funding strategies for active transportation. Staff also discussed the active transportation survey results.

On March 2nd and 17th, the working group discussed a range of funding levels for projects, one of which is considered likely to be achievable with existing funding levels in 20 years. The list emphasizes projects that will benefit the largest
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populations, especially in designated Towne Centers and transit corridors with high ridership and/or future bus rapid transit. This is consistent with the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan policy. During the March meetings, the working group tried to strive for a proposal that offers significant benefit to each Council district. These evaluation scores are only one consideration in the project selection.

Staff reviewed the tier levels. Tier 1 assumes continuation of funding programs and modest grant success. The working group decided to include the Pipeline Trail and the Parkland Community Trail projects on the Tier 1 list bringing the total of this Tier to $62 million rather than the $40 million originally envisioned. Tier 2 assumes $29+ million in additional projects that may be attainable if highly successful with grants but likely will need additional funding/match. Tier 3 will add another $28+ million in projects with no funding identified.

The working group recommends that the TAC move to recommend to Pierce County Council the full project list of active transportation projects supporting network connectivity. The group also noted that Tier 1 projects are expected to be financially feasible within 20 years with the existing funding stream. In addition, the working group recommends that Tiers 2 and 3 be combined and identified as unfunded future projects.

The TAC’s recommended list of active transportation projects serves as an important input to the ongoing Active Transportation Plan development which will be shared at EIDC.

Discussion
A board member who also served on the working group reported that the ranked projects have one issue. Although two park projects were included on the list, we need to include additional projects from the Parks 20-Year Comp Plan. Moving forward, we should take the time to make sure we do an adequate job by making sure we include Parks 20-Year Comp Plan.

Staff wanted to emphasize that the TAC’s recommendation doesn’t mean Council will move forward; however, it assists in future planning. It is okay to present to Council with consideration of working and integrating with Parks going forward.

A board member asked, “How do we address the problem?” “How do we move forward?” “Are we here to present an active transportation plan, or are we here to do an integrated Parks mobility package overall?”

Another board member stated that he was having difficulty supporting an active transportation plan that is not considering schools. He supports incentivizing community/students to walk and/or bicycle; however, he feels maybe schools are being underserved.

Staff noted that one criterion for scoring when the TAC was working on prioritizing transportation projects included a category of safe routes to school. The working group used the same scoring criteria. The active transportation list includes 136th and Shaw Road and Meridian which include safe routes to school. We could not include all safe routes to school projects. Staff to include a column identifying which projects include safe routes to schools. It was also noted that this project list can be amended in the future.

A board member recalled that in the planning process that the first mile around the school was not for bussing students but for walking and biking. Another board member noted that the highest growth area is in unincorporated Pierce County. He noted that most of the schools being built are in unincorporated Pierce County as well.

A board member asked how we increase active transportation usage after the projects are built. Staff noted by building active transportation projects for connectivity. It was also noted that if you charge for parking, people are more likely to walk and/or bike.

A question was asked if the working group put projects in based on the survey results. Staff noted that 112th Street East and 224th Street East were two roads that received multiple comment in the survey. The working group project list includes multiple projects on 112th Street East. It was noted that the sidewalk project has started on 224th Street East, but most of the road is in the rural area so additional sidewalk improvements may not be appropriate.
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The Chair stated that the value of the TAC is to have public comments. She feels it is very important to include public feedback when presenting.

Councilmember Cruver noted that there is a lot going on in the maps and proposed presenting the maps in layers so you can look at items separately. It will be like telling a story.

A board member asked about existing funding. Staff noted that other County funding in addition to grants. The County has County road fund money that is allocated in the six-year plan. Other funding includes safe routes to school and ADA funds.

A board member asked where the money comes from for safe routes to school. Staff reported safe routes to school funding comes from grants which is matched with County funds from property tax road funds.

A board member asked what the TAC is going to present at the EIDC on April 12th. It was noted that the TAC will recap the funding and the prioritized list of projects prior to presenting on the active transportation project lists and funding.

A board member stated that the TAC still has not looked outside the box to come up with other funding options.

**Voting Roll Call:** Prior to the motion, the Chair asked to take another roll call to make sure there was still a quorum of voting members. Deryl McCarty, Paul Lubbesmeyer, Shelly Schlumpf, Larry Leveen, Lindsey Sehmel and Brian Devereux were still present. A quorum was met.

**Motion:** The Pierce County Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) recommends the Pierce County Council consider the full project list of active transportation projects presented at the March 24, 2022, TAC meeting, supporting network connectivity, recognizing safe routes to schools, and identifying trail projects contained in the County’s Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

With this motion, the TAC also recognizes and recommends that:

- Tier 1 projects are anticipated to be financially feasible within 20 years with existing funding streams.
- Tier 2 and 3 projects be combined and identified as unfunded future projects.

1st Lindsey Sehmel. 2nd Paul Lubbesmeyer. Passed 6-0 with no opposition.

**Public Comment:** Elvin Lerew is advocating for safe trails to the Orting Valley.

**Action Items:** Staff to add another column to list of active transportation projects identifying which projects are safe routes to school. Staff to update maps as suggested by Councilmember Cruver and board members.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Adjourned at 11:05AM.

**Next Meeting:** April 28 from 9:00AM to 11:00AM.