

January 2012

SRTC

Spokane Regional Transportation Council

"SRTC provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods into, within, and through the Spokane Region with an integration of balanced multi-modal transportation choices."

A Word from SRTC's Executive Director

A lot has transpired since I moved to Spokane last September, and 2012 promises to be even busier. We started the year by welcoming five new members to our Policy Board: Mayor David Condon and Councilmember Nancy McLaughlin from the City of Spokane; Spokane County Commissioner Al French representing Spokane Transit Authority; Mayor Steven Peterson from the City of Liberty Lake; Diana Wilhite, Transportation Advisory Committee Chair; and Chad Coles, Transportation Technical Committee Chair. As our returning Board members know, serving on the Policy Board is a significant time commitment. I'm thankful to work for this group of committed leaders.

As discussed in this newsletter, the SRTC Policy Board approved a list of Regional Transportation Priorities in December, which will be part of the discussion for a potential statewide transportation package during the 2012 legislative session. In January, the Board approved a new air quality conformity determination for our Interim Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update and 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program. SRTC staff worked with local, state, and federal planning partners on this process, and on January 16th we received a formal air quality conformity determination from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. Kudos to SRTC staff and our planning partners who worked hard to make this happen.

So what's in store for 2012? We will be wrapping up several large efforts, including the Inland Pacific Hub freight study and an update to our current travel forecast model. SRTC will also begin an overhaul of our Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which establishes the long range transportation policy framework for our region. We anticipate this process will take approximately 18 months to complete.

People here have been very gracious in welcoming me to the community. As I look at what's in store for 2012, I see both challenges and opportunities ahead. Even in these uncertain economic times, I believe 2012 will be a great year for SRTC.

Kevin Wallace
Executive Director, SRTC

Regional Priority Project List

SRTC recently coordinated with other transportation agencies on a pilot project to help shape the future of the state, by informing you of transportation investments.

The state's Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs), such as SRTC, were tasked by the legislature with recommending investments for all types of transportation. To accomplish this, SRTC staff worked with our Policy Board to compile a list of regional project priorities to work toward funding in the next ten years.

That information was presented to the legislature to demonstrate the need for transportation funding and to help make statewide transportation decisions. It was also posted to 'Forward Washington,' a website that provides information on all statewide transportation priorities.

The website features a map of all projects, project descriptions, visualizations and pictures for each jurisdiction. You can look up projects by region, legislative district, or type.

You can check out the priorities of the Spokane region, and those of other communities across the state, at www.forwardwashington.net.

Check out www.srtc.org for all SRTC's latest projects

Transportation Planning Documents Approved

Two significant transportation planning documents have just been approved by the SRTC Board, the Spokane Metropolitan Planning Area 2011-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The MTP is a long-term, multimodal “blueprint” for transportation systems and services aimed at meeting the mobility needs of the Spokane Area through the year 2035. In addition to transportation goals and policies, analysis of existing and future conditions, and plans for funding the future of regional transportation, the MTP also contains a list of projects to potentially be constructed by all jurisdictions within Spokane County over the next 25 years. The last update of the MTP took place in 2008. It is federally required to be updated every four years. The MTP can be viewed at www.srtc.org under the ‘Documents/Maps’ menu tab.

The 2012-2015 TIP is a program of transportation projects to be completed in the Spokane region over the next four years. It serves as an implementation tool for the goals and policies outlined in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. As required by state law, the TIP must be updated at least every two years.

The TIP is also posted on the SRTC website. It can also be found under the ‘Documents/Maps’ tab.

New SRTC Board Members

SRTC has several new members on its Policy Board. Board members for 2012 are:

- Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane Council Member, Chair
- Steve Peterson, Mayor, Liberty Lake, Small Cities Rep., Vice Chair
- Gary Schimmels, Spokane Valley City Council Member
- Micki Harnois, Small Towns Representative
- Joe Tortorelli, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Keith Metcalf, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Todd Mielke, Spokane County Commissioner
- David Condon, Mayor, City of Spokane
- Jim Williams, Private Sector Transportation Provider
- Mark Richard, Spokane County Commissioner
- Al French, STA Representative
- Diana Wilhite, Transportation Advisory Committee Chair
- E. Susan Meyer, STA Representative (Ex Officio)
- Chad Coles, Transportation Technical Committee Chair (Ex Officio)
- Lawrence J. Krauter, Spokane Airports (Ex Officio)
- TBD, Spokane Rail Representative (Ex Officio)

For more information on SRTC’s Board, go to http://www.srtc.org/srtc_board.html.

INLAND PACIFIC HUB

A global reach for commerce

Phase 2 of the Inland Pacific Hub (IPH) study is wrapping up and a final report (Transportation Investment and Project Priority Blueprint) will be available for public review and comment soon.

Phase 2 of the study focused on the screening and assessment of transportation investments that will lead to the implementation of a successful regional hub strategy. A stakeholder workshop was held in December where benefit-cost and economic impact analysis results were discussed in detail.

As a result of the Phase 2 work, a set of strategies and funding options have been developed. Those will be included in the final report when it is released. Check www.inlandpacifichub.org in coming weeks for that report.



SRTC To Close for Staff Retreat

The SRTC office will be closed part of the day on Friday, February 3rd for a staff retreat.

We will close from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The office will be open before and after the retreat though, from 8-10 a.m. and 3-5 p.m. to conduct regular business.

New Committee Meeting Dates and Times

SRTC's two advisory committees to the Policy Board, the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), are changing meeting days and times.

In order for the TTC to make recommendations and provide information to the Board in a more timely manner, TTC meeting dates have been changed. The Committee now meets every fourth Wednesday of the month at 1:30 p.m.

The Transportation Advisory Committee changed its meeting time to 3:30 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month to better accommodate Committee members.

Meeting dates and time for the Policy Board remain the same. They meet the second Thursday of each month at 1 p.m.

Meetings for all three groups are held in the SRTC Great Northern Conference Room at 221 W. First Ave, Suite 310, and are open to the public.



Last week's big snowstorm was a perfect example of how you can use the Spokane Regional Transportation Management Center's website to avoid accidents and road closures caused by bad weather.

If you were checking the site last Thursday, you would have known that visibility was extremely poor on U.S. 195 between Rosalia and Spangle, Spokane Police closed down some major roads to the south hill due to slick conditions, and southbound Maple Street was 'metered,' only allowing one vehicle at a time to go up the hill.

[Www.srtmc.org](http://www.srtmc.org) uses real time information from pavement sensors, live traffic cameras, officers on patrol, and highway crews to warn you of areas to avoid or where there could be delays caused by accidents or other conditions. All reported incidents are posted to a map on the front page so you can quickly see congested areas. Over 60 live traffic cameras allow you to see in real time how traffic is moving at points along your commute.

During storms isn't the only time you should check the SRTMC website. Many people use it daily before leaving for work or home to see if there are backups on the freeway or other main arterials throughout the area. Construction season is also a good time to check your route before driving. The home page of the site will show the location of construction projects both on the map and the list of incidents next to it, all in an effort to help you avoid congestion and keep traffic moving smoothly.

Sustainable Communities Planning Grant

SRTC was notified in late 2011 that we did not receive a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. SRTC partnered with the City of Spokane, other local jurisdictions, and a number of social service agencies to apply for the grant in October.

The grant was aimed at supporting sustainable planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments.

The selection process was very competitive, with HUD only funding 29 grants from 190 eligible applicants. At this time it is unclear if there will be opportunities to apply for the grant again in 2012, but SRTC and partners will consider doing so if it is available.

The full list of successful grant applicants can be viewed at www.hud.gov under the 'Topic Areas' menu item.

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