



Meeting Summary

Project Name: QUADCO Regional Transportation Plan Update

Meeting Date and Location: October 15, 2014; Ritzville

Meeting Description: Stakeholder meeting

Meeting Attendees:

Charlene Kay, WSDOT

Brandi Colyar, Adams County

Kell McAboy, SCJ Alliance

Contact: Kell McAboy, SCJ Alliance 360.352.1465

Welcome & Introductions

Kell McAboy welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending the third of four QUADCO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update meetings.

Background and Plan Update

Kell gave a brief overview of QUADCO, its members and the RTP update. Kittitas County is the current lead agency, and the plan will be updated in-house by Jan Ollivier. The expectation is that the plan will be updated and adopted by June 2015.

Website

Kell shared that SCJ Alliance is developing an independent website for QUADCO to be hosted with the State of Washington through their EZ View web service. She talked about the information that will likely be shared such as the current and past plan documents and other items brought up at earlier stakeholder meetings in Ellensburg and Moses Lake.

It was discussed that the website would be great for the following:

- Call for Projects
- Project Updates
- Descriptions of the different transportation-related grant opportunities and funding sources (in addition to QUADCO's funding source of Transportation Alternative Grant)
- Feature project with photos
- Try to simply describe the overall demands and the limited funds (and sources of funds)
- QUADCO Meetings, locations, current contact information

It was cautioned against uploading time-sensitive material (with the exception of meeting dates and other items that are already required by law to be published like the Call for Projects) so that the website does not become outdated and unusable. Must be easy to maintain.

Char mentioned that it would be great to have the region's asset information such as number of road miles, rail miles, number of airfields, Port assets, etc. or any other economic/transportation related information that would be useful in grant applications. A place where everyone in the region could access the same information.

It was also discussed that the website could be a place to provide guidelines for regionally significant projects without hindering local jurisdiction's abilities to receive grant funding.

Regional Transportation Network

Kell discussed the regional transportation network as including at a minimum, all state-owned facilities including roads, rail, airfields and trails.

Kell described the regional network as required by the RCW: 1. Crosses member county lines. 2. Is or will be used by a significant number of people who live or work outside of the county in which the facility, service, or project is located. 3. Significant impacts are expected in more than one county. 4. Potentially adverse impacts of the facility, service, program, or project can be better avoided or mitigated through adherence to regional policies. 5. Transportation needs addressed by a project have been identified by the regional transportation planning process and the remedy is deemed to have regional significance. 6. Provides for system continuity.

Regionally Significant Projects

Brandi talked about the importance of preserving and maintaining the rural corridors used for ag transport that don't qualify as freight and good corridors (or first/last mile corridors) because they don't meet the thresholds for tonnage. She also mentioned that the County is receiving complaints about the bumpiness of the roads and the damage to transporting apples. This is a legitimate economic concern.

There was discussion about the need to improve ag corridors to all-weather roads.

Char stated that WSDOT does not have funding for capacity projects. She mentioned that the Northeast Washington (NEW) RTPO wants to add capacity to US 395 to Canada, but that WSDOT does not have plans to do that.

Char thought that NEW's updated RTP has a good mix of a programmatic approach and priority project list that QUADCO may want to take a look at for reference. She mentioned that the RTPOs responsibility will increase with the new state rulemaking.



Open Houses

Kell talked about holding an Open House in late winter, early spring, once a draft plan is ready for public release. There will be one public Open House, or alternative in each county.

It was generally discussed about the audience that QUADCO is trying to reach, whether it is the general public, representatives of industry, businesses and commuters. The key is to find the best venue to allow all interested persons the opportunity to participate. Brandi said that Othello is more of a hub for industry and business and would likely be a good location for an open house or similar event.

Survey

Kell talked about the draft survey and its intent to be distributed broadly. The information collected should inform the update of the plan, therefore it is important that we are asking the right questions. Kell will send out an updated link to the draft survey next week for feedback.

Char thought it would be a good idea to create a postcard that provided a link to the survey, which could be distributed broadly. It could also have information for people to request a survey by mail if they did not have access to the internet.

END OF MINUTES