

Spokane Transit Authority  
1230 West Boone Avenue  
Spokane, Washington 99201-2686  
(509) 325-6000

## **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

Minutes of the February 2, 2022, Board Meeting  
Via Video Conference

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Al French, Spokane County – *Chair*  
Karen Stratton, City of Spokane  
Betsy Wilkerson, City of Spokane  
Dan Sander, Small Cities Representative  
(Millwood) *Ex Officio*  
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer  
*Ex Officio*

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development  
Brandon Ropez-Betty, Director of Communications  
& Customer Service  
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer  
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources &  
Labor Relations  
Vicki Clancy, Executive Assistant to the Director of  
Planning and Development

### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley

### **PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL**

Laura McAloon, McAloon Law PLLC

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#### 1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Al French called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and Ms. Vicki Clancy conducted roll call.

#### 2. **COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**

*(No items being presented this month.)*

#### 3. **COMMITTEE ACTION**

##### A. **MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 1, 2021, COMMITTEE MEETING**

Mr. Otterstrom noted a correction to the minutes related to how we characterize small cities and their respective roles on the board. The correction was displayed on a slide for all members to see.

Chair French noted the correction.

**Ms. Karen Stratton moved to approve the December 1, 2021, Planning and Development Committee meeting minutes as corrected. Chair French seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.**

#### 4. **COMMITTEE ACTION**

##### A. **BOARD CONSENT AGENDA**

*(No items being presented this month.)*

##### B. **BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA**

*(No items being presented this month.)*

5. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

A. REVIEW 2022 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAM

Mr. Karl Otterstrom presented. In December 2021, the Planning and Development Committee approved its work program for 2022. A copy of the work program is provided in the packet. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the highlights of the work plan. Annual planning involves the Transit Development Plan and other planning efforts include: Division BRT, Connect Spokane, I-90/Valley HPT, City Line, HPT Procurement Activities (Cheney Line, Sprague Line), 2025-2035 Strategic Planning, State and Federal grant application, and transit-oriented development work program.

As was noted at the time, the work program was subject to change. Following the timeline is a brief list of other projects that the Committee may be directly involved in. Other projects or activities may emerge through the calendar year.

B. TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2028 OVERVIEW

Mr. Otterstrom presented. The Transit Development Plan (TDP) is a requirement of state law, SRTC policy, *Connect Spokane* policy, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). STA is kicking off the development of this important plan. The Transit Development Plan (TDP) is expected to be adopted by the Board in July 2022 and will include the Capital Improvement Program and the Service Improvement Program. Per RCW 35.58.2795, the Transit Development Plan (TDP) needs to:

- Provide consistency with comprehensive plans of the jurisdictions we serve
- Document how STA intends to implement the state and local long-range plans for: public transportation, capital improvements, significant operating changes, and funding for program needs.
- Set forth regionally significant projects.

Mr. Otterstrom noted that the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) prepares annually a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Any regionally significant projects or federally funded projects need to be in this TIP so that it can be rolled up into the statewide transportation improvement program (STIP). Only programs in the STIP can be funded; funding cannot be released by the federal government for federal grants until this occurs.

The first step in the development of the TDP is for the Board to set forth six-year planning guidance statements. The TDP project schedule proposes that the Planning and Development Committee will develop the Mid-Range Planning Guidance over the next two meetings. Beginning in May, the Committee will review the draft sections of the plan, working toward Board approval of the plan in July. Parallel to preparing the 2023-2028 TDP, STA will be engaged in preparing a ten-year strategic plan which will be completed later in 2022. Major strategies and guidance developed in this new strategic plan will inform the preparation of the 2024-2029 Transit Development Plan.

C. CONNECT SPOKANE: PHASE I DRAFT REVISIONS REVIEW

Mr. Otterstrom presented. *Connect Spokane* is STA's Comprehensive Plan that sets forth a vision and policy framework to help guide decisions made by the Board of Directors, staff, and partnering agencies for at least the next 30 years, and is the foundation of our planning documents. The last major update was in 2017 with some minor updates in 2019. Work that initially began in

2020 was put on pause due to the pandemic until February 2021, when the work program was again presented at the April 2021 Committee meeting, followed by an update on the process and status at the September 2021 Committee meeting.

Since the September Committee meeting, staff presented the idea to split the *Connect Spokane* update into two distinct phases. Phase I with elements that will inform the Strategic Planning efforts, and Phase II, containing elements that will be informed by the Strategic Planning efforts. *STA Moving Forward* will need a successor plan to inform STA's actions later this decade and into the next. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed highlights of the draft changes in the Phase I elements, including the Comprehensive & Strategic Initiatives Integrated Timelines. Next steps include a redline review and discussion at the next Planning and Development Committee meeting, public outreach to begin in March, and a Public Hearing at the April board meeting, with adoption proposed at the May 2022 board meeting.

Ms. Karen Stratton asked if there are plans to review STA's maintenance and administrative buildings since continued growth will necessitate more space. Mr. Otterstrom responded that the system infrastructure element update would prepare for this, and it is part of the strategic planning effort; it will help define the scale and scope of the changes required to accommodate growth. In the Capital Improvement Program there is an updated master plan for facilities – maintenance, operations, and administrative.

D. I-90/VALLEY HIGH PERFORMANCE TRANSIT CORRIDOR PLANNING:  
ALTERNATIVES AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Mr. Otterstrom presented. As a part of the STA Moving Forward plan, the I-90/Valley High Performance Transit (HPT) project extends from downtown Spokane to Liberty Lake with a planned pilot extension of service into Idaho subject to a cross-state partnership. This corridor is one of six corridor investments in *STA Moving Forward*. It will include increased night and weekend service and increased parking capacity for commuters choosing vanpool or bus to complete their commute. Funding for the corridor includes state and federal grants. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed planning work in preparation of public outreach planned for in late February and March.

The preferred scenario I-90/Valley HPT corridor architecture envisions three primary trunk lines connecting greater Spokane Valley to Spokane and the region. Each trunk line includes components of regional point-to-point travel, and urban and arterial-oriented access. The integration of these components seeks to balance mobility and access. The corridor architecture supports a pilot extension to Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene, consistent with *STA Moving Forward*. The three trunk lines can generally be described as:

- Stateline to the north bank of downtown Spokane via Greenacres
- Liberty Lake to the West Plains Transit Center via Mirabeau, downtown Spokane, and Spokane Airport
- Greenacres to the University District via the Valley Transit Center

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the corridor architecture as well as the basic differentiations provided in three preliminary alternatives for evaluation that will explore differing placements of new transit facilities and the intended changes to route configurations.

Ms. Betsy Wilkerson asked the duration of a bus trip from the Spokane Airport to Liberty Lake as an example to provide context as she imagines how the average bus rider makes their plans. Mr. Otterstrom responded that the bus service is not intended to be a non-stop express service from one end to another; it is most likely 45 minutes. The bus service is intended to serve a

variety of travel needs, such as those traveling to and from work, connecting Spokane Valley riders with job sites to the west, including the Amazon facility in West Plains as an example. Chair French added that the new facility being built next to this Amazon Fulfillment Center (adding 750 jobs) and the addition of the Douglas Legacy Industrial Park, should continue to increase the demand for bus use across the region and to the West Plains.

Next steps include a technical advisory committee (TAC) meeting on February 15, presentations to city councils and other agency boards and commissions, a virtual open house on March 2, followed by an online survey, with additional outreach to inform project stakeholders.

## 6. CEO REPORT

Ms. E. Susan Meyer presented the CEO Report:

January 2022 Voter-Approved Sales Tax Update – Revenue collected on November retail sales: 20.4% above January 2021 actual (\$1.5M), 20.4% YTD above 2021 actual (\$1.5M), and 16.8% YTD above budget (\$1.3M).

Unaudited Financial Statements Report – Staff closed the books on 2021 and will present a report at the March 2 meeting, followed by a report at the March board meeting.

Board Workshop – A Board Workshop regarding strategic planning to take place March 17, 2022, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. This workshop would immediately precede the board meeting. Details to follow.

Governor Inslee Electrification Meeting – Governor Inslee recently convened a roundtable meeting with elected officials and ten transit general managers (CEOs) from across the state to discuss electrification of local government fleets, including transit vehicles. Spokane City Council President Beggs participated in the discussion and mentioned the effort to electrify police cars and other vehicles in the City's fleets. Ms. Meyer communicated the Board's commitment to electrification and shared that STA will have 40 electric vehicles by the end of 2024; the maximum amount the Boone NW Garage will hold for charging. It was a good opportunity to highlight the good work that STA and the Board has completed. Governor Inslee expressed excitement about STA's progress.

Revenue Transportation Package – Conversations continue in the House and the Senate about a potential transportation revenue package; there will not be a gas tax, thus revenues would come from other sources and not require bonding. Staff has communicated the importance of the Division Bus Rapid Transit project. State funding for it would leverage federal funding in the same kind of grant program that STA has for the City Line.

Return to Full Bus Service – On Monday, February 7, STA plans to return to full bus service. Service had been reduced by about 10% due to numerous coach operator absences during the past two weeks. The Covid peak appears to have passed.

## 7. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Chair French shared that Punxytony Phil saw his shadow this morning – predicting six more weeks of winter to endure.

## 8. MARCH 2, 2022, COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT AGENDA REVIEW

## 9. NEW BUSINESS -- *None*

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER'S EXPRESSIONS -- *None*

11. ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair French adjourned the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. VIA WEBEX.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vicki Clancy".

Vicki Clancy, Executive Assistant  
Planning and Development Department