

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Chairperson and Members of the Board of Directors

**FROM:** Les Reardanz, General Manager

**DATE:** June 15, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of Modification to the Whatcom Smart Trips Interlocal Agreement with Whatcom Council of Governments to Extend the Agreement's Term

Attachments: (1) Proposed modification #5 of interlocal agreement  
(2) Original interlocal agreement

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to sign the attached modification to the Whatcom Smart Trips interlocal agreement with the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG).

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this modification is to continue the WTA/WCOG partnership on Whatcom Smart Trips (Smart Trips) and extend the existing interlocal agreement through September 30, 2023 to allow us to receive the appropriate grant agreements and develop a new interlocal agreement. Smart Trips is a strategically valuable program to the community, the environment and both WTA and the WCOG and helps implement WTA's strategic priorities.

**BACKGROUND**

Smart Trips is the regional transportation demand management program for Whatcom County and is a partnership among local governments, public agencies, employers, merchants, and schools. Its objective is to increase walking, biking, transit and ride-sharing trips (e.g. vanpool) as a percentage of total trips. Individuals and communities benefit when more daily trips are made by walking, bicycling, sharing rides and riding the bus through such things as increased citizen health, better environment, less congestion, and greater mobility (especially for non-drivers). The Program's efforts include education, assistance, and incentives. The program is jointly operated by WCOG and WTA and helps enhance the community's transportation ecosystem.

The WTA and WCOG signed an agreement to implement the Smart Trips program in March 2017. The parties amended that agreement multiple times, ultimately extending it through June 30, 2023 (Modification #4).

## **STRATEGIC VALUE**

The WTA and WCOG both have identified Smart Trips as a key component to their long-range transportation plans. To that end, WTA, on behalf of both Parties and the Smart Trips program, applied for a Washington State grant to enhance the Program. We have received notification that we have received the grant; however, we have not received the grant agreements with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and do not expect to receive them until July or August, after the new State Fiscal Year begins. The grant will run the next two biennia, which begins on July 1, 2023 and runs through June 30, 2027. Once we receive the new WSDOT grant agreements, we will be able to finalize a new interlocal agreement with WCOG for Smart Trips that will replace the underlying one (Attachment 2). We expect to bring that back to the WTA and WCOG governing bodies for approval before September 30, 2023 (the date of this modification number 5). Accordingly, the Parties only need a short-term extension now, as reflected in Modification #5 (Attachment 1).

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

WTA retains its obligation of paying \$50,000 annually and to provide staff time to help implement the Program. These expenses are in the 2023 budget. Accordingly, there is no new fiscal impact associated with this action.