

TASK FORCE MEETING NOTES

July 8TH, 2022, 10:30am – 12:00pm

Zoom

Attendees: Amy Biggs (SVT), Aaron Morrow (Community Advocate), Meredith Sampson (KC Metro), Asela Chavez (City of Duvall), Jesse Reynolds (KC Local Services), Staci Sahoo (Hopelink), Jean Lin (City of Carnation), Victor Londono (Hopelink) Dinah Reed (City of Snoqualmie), Jamie Burrell (City of North Bend)

Staff support: Salwa Raphael, Bree Boyce, Heather Clark

Welcome and Announcements:

Salwa welcomed new SVMC members: Meredith Sampson is the new KC Metro Service Planner, Dinah Reed is the new Senior Planner for the City of Snoqualmie.

Task Force Check-In:

Jesse Reynolds shared that the Subarea planning team just closed a feedback survey on the long-range scoping and visioning for unincorporated Snoqualmie Valley areas. They are now working on coalescing the information. There will be another public feedback campaign to refine input later. They are looking to form focus groups specific to locations and topics. He would like a mobility-specific group. Let him know about any ideas for mobility advocates in the unincorporated areas. He will be out for the next three weeks.

Salwa – Has mobility always been a piece of the subarea plan, or is that new?

Jesse – There has always been a Transportation Chapter regarding roads, road maintenance, and transit, but looking at it more from a mobility lens than in the past. Folks need more transit options. Currently, we do not have enough connections. We are looking to form policies that will fill those gaps.

Aaron Morrow added that community members are doing various things in the community. Some of those efforts make it into the Hopelink CEO report. Just wanted to say thank you.

Jean Lin shared that Carnation is revamping Tolt Avenue. Planning on road closures in two phases. Will go until August 7th. Details are on the FAQ on the city's website. They are reaching out to residents and businesses. Encouraging folks to work from home during this time. Also, they just launched a visioning survey for Carnation residents to develop a vision regarding the comprehensive plan update.

Staci Sahoo asked for more information on the bus stop in Carnation.

Amy Biggs shared that she and Jean talked to KC Metro about a bus stop, but it would be a massive undertaking. Instead, they had to come up with temporary bus stops. One bus stop is right in front of Tolt UCC Church, which has a pullout, and another is in front of the library. It was hard to pull over but has been cleared out. Picking up people further down the street, but is turning out to be a convenient location. She also shared that a dense North Bend housing development included a bus shelter infrastructure. It is only offered on one side of the street but can be used by school buses and SVT shuttles. Excited about the inclusion and hopes to embed it in policy.

Aaron – there is an automatic check mark for infrastructure for those with disabilities that need to be looked at.

Staci and Amy shared about a past bench program. Putting in benches for those who can't make it to a bus stop is important. It could make the difference between whether someone can make it to a bus stop. Amy is putting together a document about rural transportation. Transit planners need to do more than look at what works in urban areas. Staci shared a document, the Bench Cookbook, in chat on how to develop a bench program in your community. Benches are a part of mobility that is not often thought of.

Amy added that it is part of overall mobility. She is working on a document about the importance of rural transportation. It shares her understanding of Snoqualmie Valley, what works, what doesn't, and why.

Asela Chavez shared that Duvall is looking for a new city planner but having difficulty finding a replacement. Duvall is viewed as too far away. Please share the news. The city is working on new contracts with consultants. Phase 3 of Big Rock development with 500 units is starting, requiring 10-20 permits per week. They are excited about changes Metro has made to routes to accommodate the new developments.

SVMC 2022-2023 Priorities Draft Review:

Salwa shared a draft of the 2022-2023 SVMC Priorities Paper resulting from the task force and general SVMC discussions.

Four priorities include: Weekend service, lower valley connection to Redmond, South King County Commuter connection, and First Mile/Last Mile (feeder to fixed).

Salwa asked Amy to help clarify first/last needs. What are the shortcomings of the current door-to-door service in the valley, and how does it need to be expanded?

Amy will put some work into that portion of the document. She dislikes the term first mile/last mile. Understands using recognized terminology, but the average trip is 7-9 miles. It is more like the first 10 miles/last 10 miles. The door-to-door service needs to coordinate timing better with SVT shuttles. Aside from no weekend service, door-to-door services run from 6-8 in the upper valley. The lower valley runs from 7:30-4:30. The Valley Shuttle hours are from 5:30-9:30. Need expanded hours and weekend hours.

Jamie Burrell added that she likes this draft. This will be useful for council and comprehensive plans. She likes that it is succinct and not too detailed. Four priorities are right on. When will it be finalized? She says sooner than later is better. She can try to have it put up on the website.

Staci added that with jargon, it is important to explain terminology, need to explain what it means. Door-to-door services should match fixed route transit. An example of service is Via to transit, which has been successful in South Seattle. Great ridership because service mirrors transit services. Door-to-door services need to adapt as routes change.

Amy: When talking about rural transportation, use the SVGA letter as an example. If you need to drive to a fixed route service, it's not reasonable. That isn't true mobility. Kelly Coughlin would have information on visitors. Rob Wotton is a good contact for understanding Highway 18. He worked on helping people get from Maple Valley to Upper Valley. Rural area to rural area. Snoqualmie Casino started its own transportation for employees. Amanda Martinson from Snoqualmie Tribe is meeting with Amy next week

Salwa noted to be more explicit that a non-driver can be someone who does not have a car or cannot operate a car (it's not always by choice) to language.

Amy: Will this be usable if you don't have a car? Not a data rich document which is fine.

South King County Commuter Connection – Rob Wotton. Van Pools have largely shown they don't work as we don't have large employers with shift work. Vanpools are not flexible enough. The casino put together a Hwy 18 bus. For the most part, the van pool program doesn't work for rural areas.

Salwa – would be interested to know how that is working (the casino bus)

Amy – as soon as you open up a company shuttle to the public, it becomes a completely different thing.

Aaron added that as an advocate for Snoqualmie Valley, it is very difficult to keep needs on the table for those living in the valley. These priorities, in my view, are good. I constantly hear about the need for weekend service. This is a necessity for seniors and those with mobility issues. Weekend service will prevent people from becoming shut-ins. We need to get these priorities in front of policymakers. We need to have discussions with community members. Force politicians to bring people together to let politicians know what the needs are.

Staci addressed Vanpool. There is a way to know what van pools exist. There are 5 van pools in Snoqualmie. Maybe it is worth talking to people using the service to see what works. Requires at least three people to establish.

Jean shared that priorities are spot on. Need for more transit for job centers, improve mobility – fabulous. Coming from a planning perspective. Transit has a huge impact on how we build our cities. Parking? How mobile are people? What options are available? What options are available? It impacts land use.

Amy – low-income folks are spending 25% of their income on transit.

Salwa – the goal is to have this document finalized by the end of the month.

Amy – rural transit needs document will be shared as well. Give folks a primer on transportation.

Non-Driver Focused Projects Discussion:

Salwa shared that mobility is working on the new fiscal year work plan. With staffing changes, projects will still be decided when the new coordinator is hired. Current tentative plans are for:

Finalizing the Priorities document.

A report on demographics in the Snoqualmie Valley. PSRC Coordinated Mobility Plan has data. Ideas on reporting people with disabilities. Who are the non-drivers?

Lastly, in September is Week Without Driving campaign. The idea is to invite elected officials in the valley to ride a shuttle. Ride transit. Commute on our existing system. It may be hard for the mobility team to coordinate, but if partners reach out to their elected officials and find participants, we may be able to help.

Next Steps:

Week without driving – reach out to elected officials to participate and share the experience.

Last notes: Amy – we still need drivers. Also, all youth will ride free this summer. Discussions of free fares for youth up to age 19 starting in September.

Aaron – Do we have updates on resident numbers other than the census? Have we tried pulling at the heartstrings of policymakers? Providing client stories? Have we done this recently?

Amy – 35,000 rides in SVT. Youth make up 16%. Adults 46%. Service is most used by people in North Bend and Snoqualmie (more frequent). Many NEED the service due to mobility issues (34%).

Aaron – TAC is an advisory committee. We have a work plan. We are an advocacy group. We encompass a wide area. Snoqualmie often gets lost in the conversation. SV has unique challenges. Health needs (dialysis) are a pivot point for politicians. When they forget, go back to life-sustaining service.

Staci – we are committed to finding a champion for the valley for a new mobility coordinator. Reach out to Bree if you know anyone.

Action Items:

- City partners reach out to city elected officials about Week Without Driving. Are they interested in participating in a trip on local transit?
- Salwa to edit and finalize the Priorities document by the end of the month
- Amy Biggs to share the Rural Transportation document when completed

Next Meeting:

September 9th, 10:30 am-12:00 pm, via Zoom

Snoqualmie Valley Mobility Coalition Staff Support:

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Please contact Bree Boyce at Bboyce@hopelink.org or 425-495-3191 for any errors or omissions in these notes.