

**JOINT MEETING OF THE WASHINGTON AND CALIFORNIA STATE
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONS
Meeting Summary**

**San Jose, California
August 19, 2014**

The joint meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission and the California State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m., on Tuesday, August 19, 2014, at the Fairmont Hotel, 4th Street Summit Center Ballroom, 88 South Fourth Street, San Jose, California

CHAIR WELCOME AND COMMISSION INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioners were welcomed to San Jose by Carl Guardino, Chairman of the California Transportation Commission. Then, members of each Commission introduced themselves.

ROAD USAGE CHARGE

Jack Opiola, D'Artagnan Consulting, and Jeff Doyle, Washington State Department of Transportation, provided an overview of the international, national and west coast consortium on road usage work. The Western Road Usage Charge Consortium is a multi-state research consortium of western state DOTs.

Mr. Opiola emphasized that a key to a successful Road Usage Charge (RUC) program is to define the objectives clearly from the start. He discussed the value of and criteria for demonstration projects.

Mr. Doyle briefed the commission on the research project underway to consider options and approaches for addressing out-of-state drivers in a RUC system.

Jim Whitty, Oregon Department of Transportation, briefed the Commissions on Oregon's history of RUC work. The project began out of concern that transportation revenue would decline as vehicles become more efficient and individuals travel less. Oregon's first pilot, a pay at the pump technology, concluded that a different approach was needed. The second pilot provided drivers' options for reporting miles.

Oregon's 2013 law establishes the parameters for the third pilot, in which 5000 volunteers will participate. They will pay a road usage charge and be eligible to receive a fuel tax rebate. By law, drivers' options are required and GPS is not required. The law also requires protection of personal identifiable information. Work is underway to hire consultants to be an administrative manager and a commercial account manager.

Commissioner Lucy Dunn asked if the USDOT or eastern states are working on RUC. Mr. Whitty responded that Congress has not authorized USDOT to work on RUC and that, to his knowledge, no east coast states are engaged in researching it. She also asked if the Oregon pilot requires devices in all cars. Reporting can be electronic or manual, he responded, but Oregon is using electronic reporting.

Commissioner James Madaffer asked about collecting charges from Canadian or Mexican drivers. Mr. Opiola suggested that we look to European Countries for solutions. Commissioner Madaffer also asked whether the data destruction provisions would withstand legal challenge. He asked whether there is any discussion of a national RUC. Mr. Whitty responded that it is desirable that a coalition of western states act together.

Commissioner Dan O'Neal, Washington State Transportation Commission, noted that the benefit of the gas tax is that it incorporates vehicle weight and speed into the consumption tax. Mr. Whitty responded that the weight of automobiles and light-duty vehicles is not a significant factor in road wear and tear.

Mr. Opiola advocated that simplicity is important for starting any new program.

Commissioner Fran Inman asked why people who drive fuel-efficient vehicles would opt into the RUC pilot program. Mr. Whitty acknowledged that the Oregon legislature provided few incentives.

Commissioner Yvonne Burke asked how the fuel tax credit could be calculated. Mr. Whitty explained that the device collecting mileage information also collects information on fuel consumption.

Commissioner Darius Assemi asked whether the Oregon system would benefit the driver of a gas-guzzler. Mr. Whitty answered yes.

Reema Griffith, Executive Director, Washington State Transportation Commission, briefed the Commissioners on the revenue and expenditure challenges facing Washington State due to long-term obligations of gas tax revenue. The legislature has directed the Commission to examine and assess the feasibility of the RUC, the business case for it, and what options could be pursued to implement it.

The overarching goal is to find a long-term, sustainable funding source to replace the gas tax.

Key findings to date:

- it will cost more to collect
- fuel tax increases can provide more revenue in the short run, but over the long run, fuel consumption will decline
- people want choices
- a RUC ensures that everyone pays their fair share
- consistent and clear messaging is critical
- an objective, independent body to research and assess is very useful

Commissioner Bob Alvarado asked if the diesel tax would remain in place. Yes.

Commissioner James Earp noted that the world as a whole is not up to speed on RUC and why not just focus on the efficient cars. Ms. Griffith noted that the Washington Commission has

wrestled with these issues; that the Washington Legislature is considering a gas tax increase; and that Washington currently is collecting a fee on electric and hybrid vehicles.

Commissioner Madaffer asked if the RUC Steering Committee worked well and if we would recommend other types of members. The biggest concern, Ms. Griffith said, is the Committee growing too big.

Mayor Richard Walton, Provincial Member, Metro Vancouver Mayor's Council, suggested that we change the language and discuss "mobility pricing" rather than "road usage pricing." In British Columbia, they have reached the tipping point on gas tax and are looking at a rollback in tax level. Tolling equity, as well as revenue generation, is driving the mobility pricing discussion in Metro Vancouver. Another problem is the carbon tax, while reducing gas consumption; it does not provide any public transportation funding.

Norma Ortega, CalTrans, noted that the gas tax has not been raised in California for 20 years. While the buying power of the gas tax revenue has decreased by 40%. The California Infrastructure Priorities Workgroup (CTIP) is examining RUC and preparing recommendations. SB 1077, which has passed the Senate and is under consideration in the Assembly, would establish a technical advisory committee to explore feasibility of RUC. A pilot is also under discussion.

Policy considerations identified in California:

- revenue sustainability
- privacy protection
- equity
- technology
- environmental sustainability
- travel out of state
- communication and outreach

Commissioner Carl Guardino noted that Washington's goal of sustainable revenue and revenue neutrality seem to conflict. Ms. Griffith clarified that the Commission does not advocate any increase in revenue, but that for purposes of the analysis it was best to assume that RUC would generate the same level of revenue as the gas tax.

[Setting of Objectives and Demonstration testing](#)

[Western Road Usage Charge Consortium](#)

[Road Usage Charging in Oregon](#)

[Washington State Road Usage Charge Assessment](#)

[The Current and Future Role of Mobility Pricing in Metro Vancouver](#)

[Are We Ready for RUC in California](#)

TOLLING AND PRICING

Noah Crocker, Washington State Transportation Commission, provided an overview of tolling in Washington State.

Washington tolls for a variety of reasons:

- to raise money for a specific project
- to manage traffic
- to raise money for a specific project and to manage traffic
- in the case of some ferry fares, to manage a corridor

In Washington, the Transportation Commission sets tolls and ferry fares, within parameters established by statute.

Darrell Johnson, Orange County Transportation Authority, briefed the Commissioners on the Orange County express toll lanes on SR 91. The toll scheme is adjusted quarterly based on traffic volumes. The criteria have not changed in 11 years. The average cost is \$3.65.

SR 91 Corridor goals:

- optimize speed and throughput
- provide travel time savings
- reinvest in the corridor
- provide options

Michael Kraman, Transportation Corridor Agencies, briefed the Commissioners on Orange County toll roads. The toll roads are planned, financed, and built then turned over to Caltrans.

Stephanie Wiggins, LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, briefed the commissions on HOT Lanes in Las Angeles County. HOV Lanes were converted to HOT Lanes.

Public acceptance challenges faced:

- tolls are double taxation
- tolls are unfair to those with limited income

Education and outreach is a major challenge and critical to success.

The tolling policy goal is congestion management. A social equity program has enrolled over 4,000 households.

Lessons learned:

- have political champions
- address equity issues
- leverage congestion pricing with transit
- conduct extensive outreach

The three California agencies each toll for different purposes: corridor management, construction payback, and congestion management.

[Washington State Tolling](#)

[Tolling and Pricing 91 Express Lanes](#)

[Tolling and Pricing](#)

[Metro ExpressLanes](#)

INNOVATIONS IN TRANSPORTATION

Sarah Hunter, Google[x], explained that the focus of her project on autonomous vehicles is safety and mobility. Google [x] began by modifying a Prius and a Lexus with sensory equipment, and has now developed a prototype vehicle of its own to test.

Ms. Hunter predicted that if all cars could communicate with each other, throughput on most roads could double.

Reema Griffith and Bill Young, Research Assurance, briefed the Commissioners on the Washington Transportation Commission's online survey program.

Rick Schuman and Ted Trepanier, INRIX, talked about its programs for the public sector:

- real time traffic
- historical traffic
- analytics

INRIX's largest US client is the I-95 Corridor Coalition. Indiana DOT is reviewing data on a 250-meter basis to identify congestion developments and dispatch highway patrol before accidents happen. INRIX is developing new programs to measure arterial performance, capture origin and destination data.

[Google Self-Driving Car Project](#)

[Washington's Online Public Input Program](#)

[Innovations in Transportation](#)

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Alix Bockelman, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, focused on the difficult challenge of meshing housing development and greenhouse gas reduction with transportation planning.

In California, regional planning organizations play a significant role in air quality and housing, as well as transportation.

Paul Parker, Washington State Transportation Commission, briefed the Commissioners on Washington's approach to statewide transportation planning, where the Transportation Commission and the Department of Transportation both have roles. Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, counties and cities, all play a large role in transportation planning, which is a critical piece of Washington's Growth Management Act.

[Regional Planning in California](#)

[Transportation Planning in Washington State](#)

FREIGHT

Hasan Ikhata, Executive Director of the Southern California Association of Governments and Ashley Probart, Executive Director of the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board, (FMSIB) briefed the commissions on freight movement and logistics. West Coast Ports comprise 60% of the imports; Los Angeles/Long Beach accounts for 40%.

Mr. Probart also explained the unique structure and approach of FMSIB to leverage investment in freight projects and minimize the impacts of freight movement on communities.

[Collaborative Planning for Goods Movement](#)

[Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board](#)

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

ANNE E. HALEY, Chairman

JOE TORTORELLI, Vice-Chairman

ROY JENNINGS, Member

JERRY LITT, Member

DAN O'NEAL, Member

MARY RIVELAND, Member

CHARLES ROYER, Member

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

DATE OF APPROVAL