



# PRIORITIZATION OF PROMINENT ROAD-RAIL CONFLICTS

Washington State Transportation Commission  
Beth Redfield, JTC

February 15, 2017

# LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION FOR THE STUDY

## 2ESHB 1299, Section 204(3)

*(3) \$250,000 of the motor vehicle account—state appropriation, from the cities' statewide fuel tax distributions under RCW 46.68.110(2), is for a study to be conducted in 2016 to identify prominent road-rail conflicts, recommend a corridor-based prioritization process for addressing the impacts of projected increases in rail traffic, and identify areas of state public policy interest, such as the critical role of freight movement to the Washington economy and the state's competitiveness in world trade.*

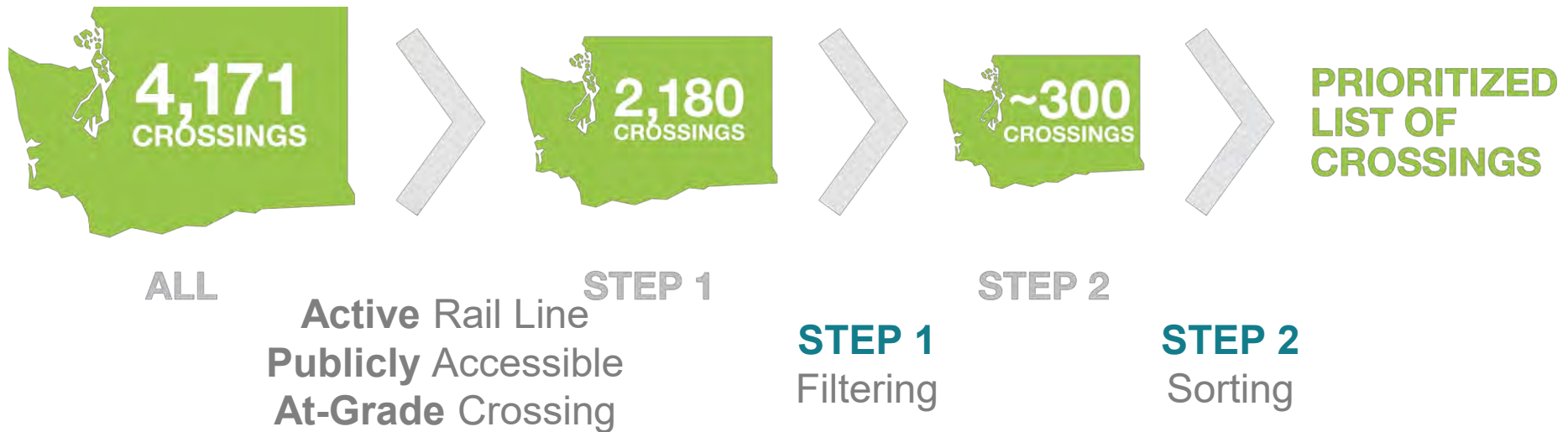
# PARTICIPATION

## ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS

1. Paul Roberts, City of Everett, AWC
2. Sean Guard, City of Washougal, AWC
3. Lisa Janicki, Skagit County, WSAC
4. Al French, Spokane County, WSAC
5. Kevin Murphy, Skagit COG
6. Ashley Probart, FMSIB
7. Dave Danner, UTC
8. James Thompson, WPPA
9. Ron Pate, WSDOT
10. Johan Hellman, BNSF
11. Sheri Call, Washington Trucking Association

***\*Project included a Staff Work Group***

# OVERVIEW OF THE PRIORITIZATION PROCESS



# STEP 2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

MOBILITY 50%, SAFETY 25%, COMMUNITY 25%



Increase Risks



1. Number of Alternate Grade-Separated Crossings
2. Number of Mainline Tracks
3. Proximity to Emergency Services

Safety Record



4. Incident History: Total
5. Incident History: Severity

Infrastructure Status



6. Level of Protection



Freight Demand



7. Roadway Freight Classification

People Demand



8. Existing Vehicle Volumes
9. Future Vehicle Volumes

Mobility Barrier



10. Network Sensitivity
11. Crossing Density
12. Gate Down Time



Economic



13. Employment Density
14. First/Last Mile Freight Facilities

Human Health



15. Population Density
16. Daily Emissions
17. Noise: Quiet Zones
18. Percent Minority
19. Percent Low-Income

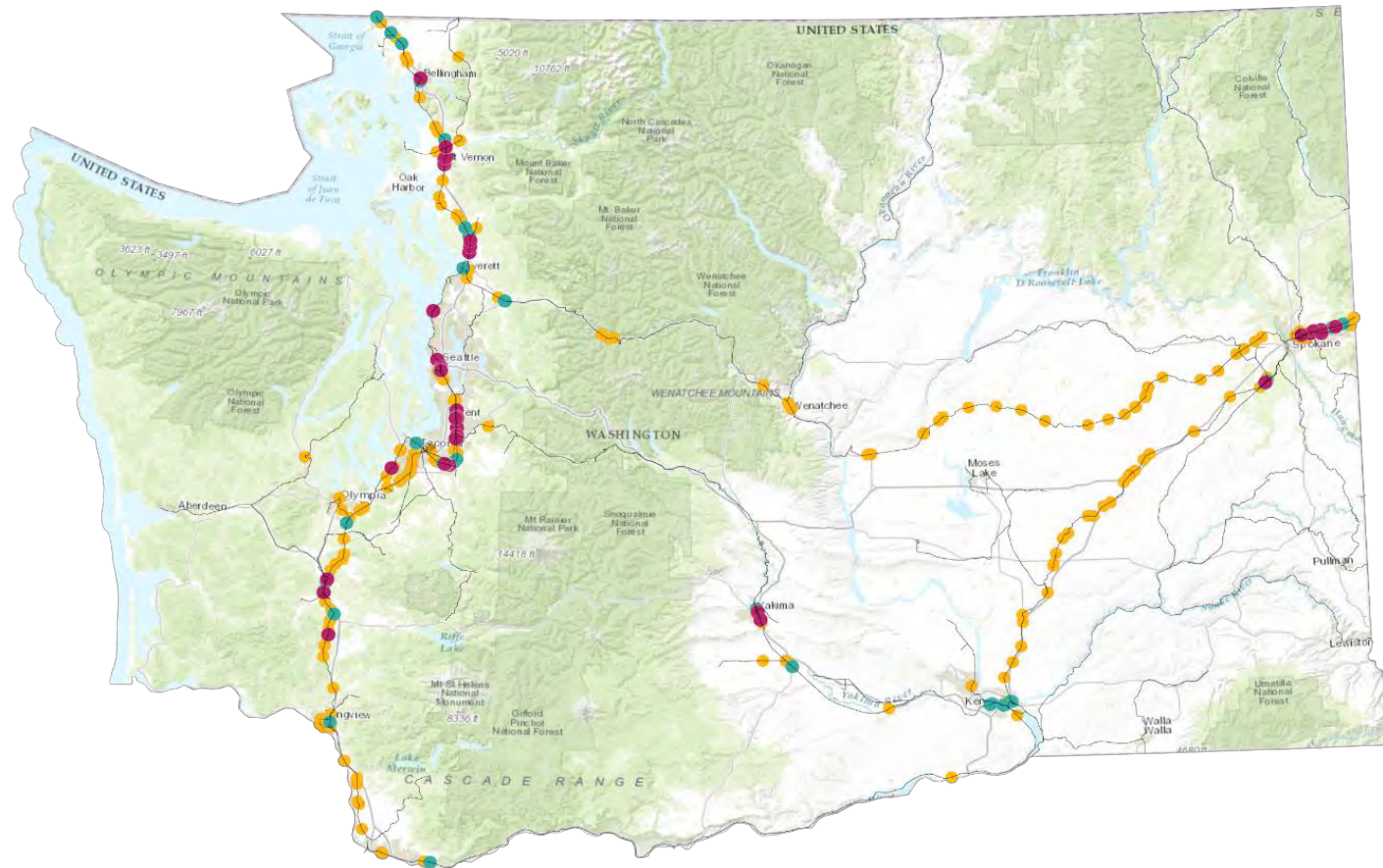
# CROSSINGS SUMMARIZED BY PRIORITY GROUP

## RANKINGS:

1-50

51-100

101-302

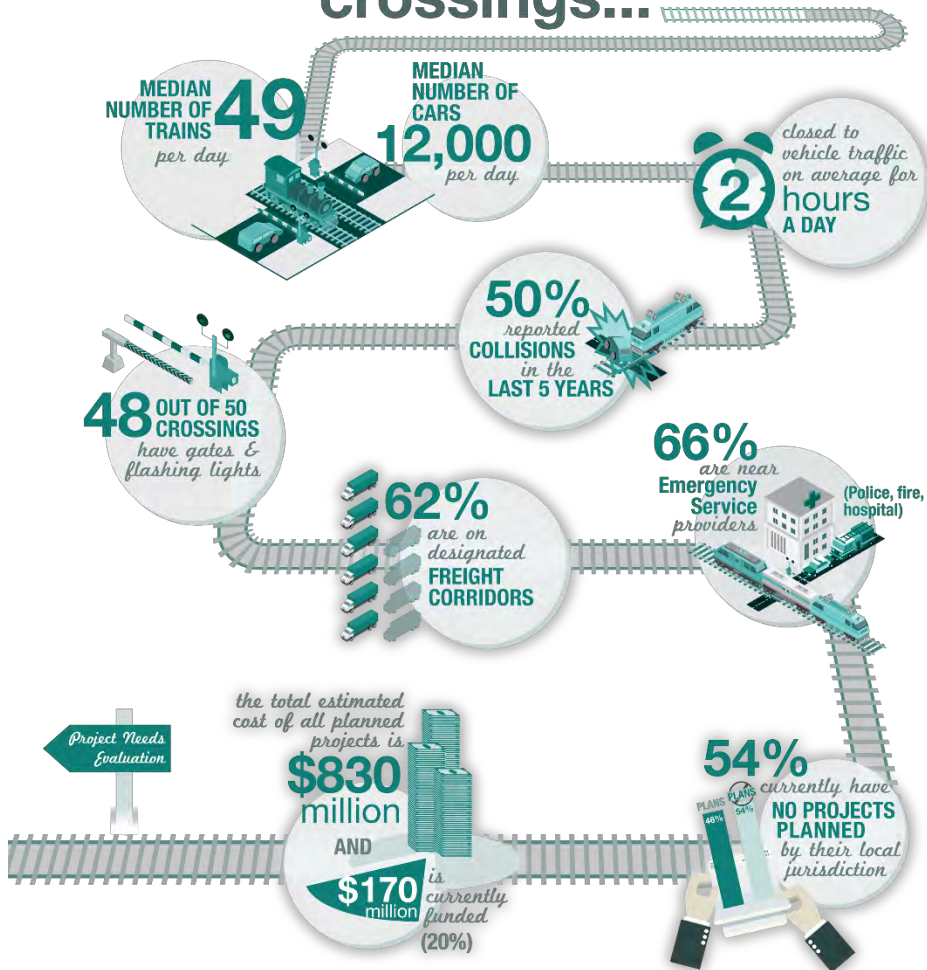


## More Details in the Report

- Page 28 – List of Top 50 crossings
- Appendix C – Entire list of the 302 prioritized crossings

# KEY FACTS FROM THE PRIORITIZATION RESULTS

## Of the Top 50 crossings...



*Closure to road traffic; trains have the right-of-way and are not stopped*

# FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS



# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The road-rail conflicts at the Top 50 at-grade crossings are substantial and there are few funding sources to address them.
2. The prioritization results point to a significant need for additional funding to address crossing improvements
  - a. *Establish a dedicated funding source to address mobility impacts not covered under the current crossing safety programs.*
  - b. *Secure additional funds for the safety programs.*
  - c. *Further analyze Top ranked crossings to identify potential solutions individually and at the corridor level*
3. The database and prioritization process allows analysis of crossing impacts on a statewide basis
  - a. *A multi-stakeholder committee should create standards for common usage and make decisions about future data enhancement or other changes.*
  - b. *Identify an agency to maintain the database and tool and serve as the coordinator for the multi-stakeholder committee.*

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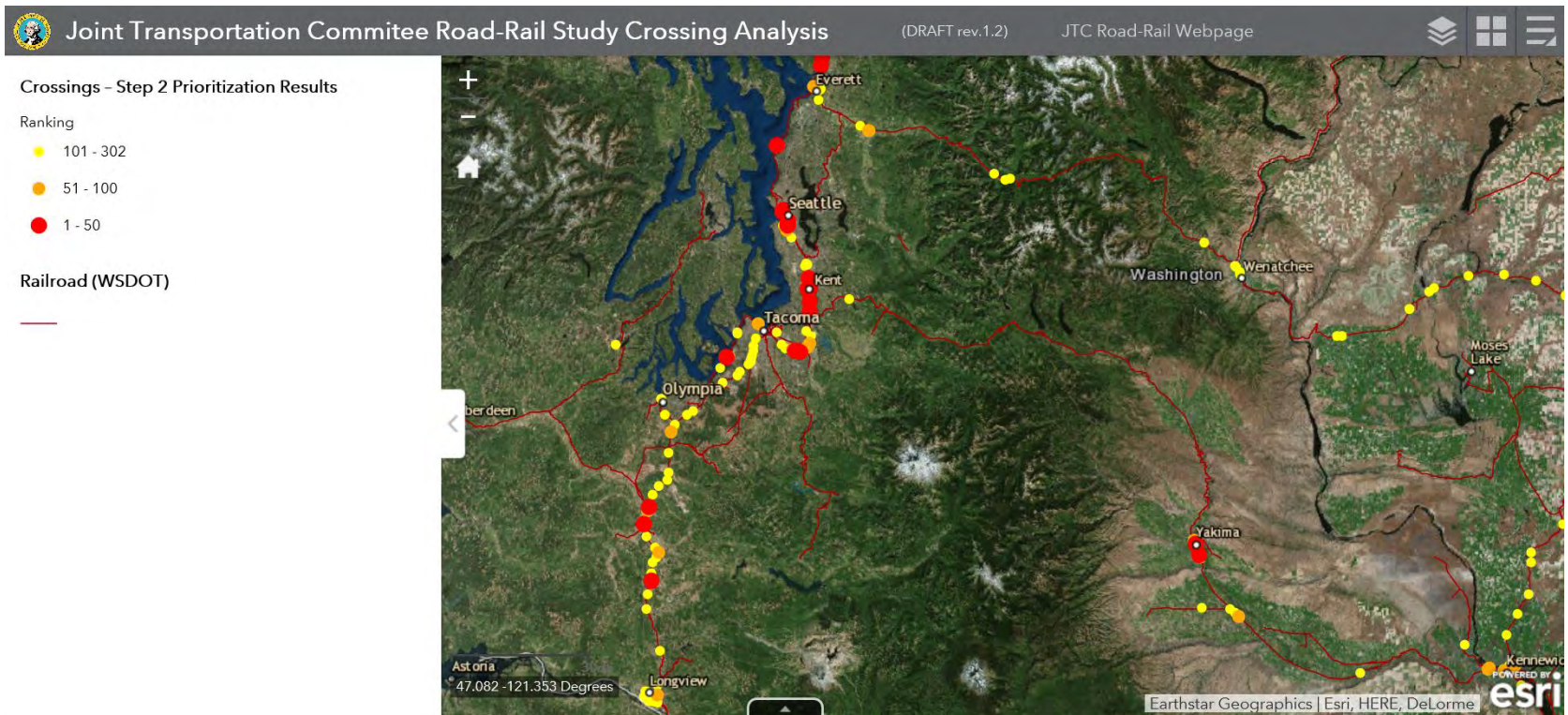
4. In some cases, projects prioritized locally did not rank high when evaluated on a statewide basis
  - a. *Identify specific policy objectives to guide investments in crossings on a statewide basis. This could include separate programs targeted at smaller communities or specific regions of the state.*
5. Safety data serves as a contributor towards mobility impacts, but further analysis is needed to confirm specific safety needs
  - a. *Coordinate efforts with WSDOT & WUTC programs to continue focusing on reducing collisions at crossings.*
  - b. *Separately address mobility and safety impacts at crossings.*
6. The database and prioritization tool would benefit from future enhancements
  - a. *The agency hosting the prioritization tool will need additional resources to maintain, update and enhance the tool.*
  - b. *Incorporate data from the Marine Cargo Forecast once it is complete.*

# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Corridor evaluation and prioritization are most useful when defining project to address crossing impacts
  - a. *Utilize a corridor-based prioritization strategy to assist in developing solutions and prioritizing investments.*
8. Some jurisdictions have not yet identified and prioritized crossing improvements
  - a. *Ensure that local jurisdictions, state agencies, and other organizations, including RTPOs and MPOs, are aware of the tool and the data it contains and how they might use it to assist with planning or funding decisions.*

# ONLINE MAPPING TOOL

- <http://gisdev.transpogroup.com/jtccrossingstudy/>



# QUESTIONS

<http://leg.wa.gov/JTC/Pages/Road-Rail-Study.aspx>

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