Washington State Transportation Commission

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WASHINGTON TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2030

CONNECTING

WASHINGTON

COMMUNITIES FOR A PROSPEROUS FUTURE

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INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Transportation is at the beginning of a new era that brings both great challenges and opportunities that will have an impact on how people travel and goods move over the next twenty years. Because we are in a time of transition, it is more difficult than ever to accurately predict what our transportation network will look like in 2030. Looking back only a few years, we can identify billions of dollars in transportation investments made in our state, whether highways, light rail, bicycle paths, or airport terminals. Although we have invested a lot, we know that much more investment is needed. At the same time, we can see fuel tax revenue – the primary source of transportation revenue in our state – declining as the vehicles we use become more fuel efficient, people find new ways of traveling, and some choose to drive less.

By 2030, the Washington State Transportation Commission envisions a statewide transportation network connecting people and communities, fostering commerce and operating seamlessly across boundaries and modes as an environmentally and financially sustainable system.

There are seven key themes and drivers behind WTP 2030:

- The state's transportation system needs to work as an integrated network, effectively connecting across modes and jurisdictions
- Preservation and maintenance of the existing transportation system is critical
- Washington faces a structural transportation funding problem; every mode needs additional revenue
- Transportation policy should support and reinforce other state policy objectives
- The relationship between land use and transportation is key
- There are significant differences across regions and one size does not fit all
- Continue to move toward performance-based programs

About WTP 2030

The Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) is the overarching state policy framework intended to guide transportation policy and investment decisions. It is a high-level policy plan, providing policy guidance and strategic recommendations across all transportation modes and areas in the state. WTP 2030 is a transitional plan, crafted at the beginning of a new era. The next four years[1] are likely to see broad changes and policy transitions. Federal transportation policy is evolving, as are environmental and economic policies that will influence the direction of transportation and funding investments. This Plan sets the stage for many conversations and decisions still to come in future years.

There are significant transportation needs statewide; the existing 2007-2026 WTP identifies a need to invest more than $67 billion over 20 years (2005 dollars), most of which is unfunded. The Washington State Transportation Commission and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) are working at the state and local level to develop more current estimates on the total investment need. Already we know the investment needs systemwide over the next twenty years will be significantly higher.

[1] State law requires the WTP to be updated every four years.

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To meet these challenges effectively requires an integrated, systemic view of the state's transportation network. This systemic view recognizes the central role that transportation plays in our economic and social well-being and establishes a policy platform against which projects and investments can be assessed and prioritized.

WTP 2030 is the Commission's comprehensive and balanced statewide transportation plan.[2] It does not replace the 2007-2026 Washington Transportation Plan, but will serve as a policy update to that Plan. The Plan will be submitted to the Governor and the Washington State House of Representatives and Senate standing committees on transportation. By itself, this Plan does not change transportation policy. New or revised statewide transportation policies must be enacted by state or local legislative bodies or agencies.

Plan Framework

WTP 2030 is intended to be a useful Policy Plan, one that directly addresses the challenges and opportunities facing the state's policy makers. The Plan is grounded in three **Foundational Themes**, the big ideas that matter most, and four **Strategic Drivers**, the major influencing factors that have shaped the Plan's strategies and recommendations.

Foundational Themes

Three major themes serve as the foundation upon which WTP 2030 has been developed:

Theme #1:The State's Transportation System Needs to Work as an Integrated Network, Effectively Connecting Across Modes and Jurisdictions

A fundamental goal of the statewide transportation system over the next 20 years must be to work towards achieving system connectivity and integration. The system includes modes (aviation, rail, roads, trails, waterways), facilities (airports, ferry terminals, bus shelters, rest areas, information technology systems, weigh stations, etc.) and services (aviation fuel, charters, emergency response, traffic alerts, traffic cameras) that are owned, operated or managed by transportation providers in both the private and public sector. As part of this objective, we must focus on moving people and goods in the most efficient and cost effective manner, with system connectivity serving as a critical factor in investment decision-making.

Theme #2:Preservation and Maintenance of the Existing Transportation System is the Most Critical Need

A safe and effective transportation system is fundamental to a sustainable economy and livable communities and must be made a top priority. Washington's economy depends on moving goods to the state, through the state and within the state, and making our recreational and cultural opportunities available to a strong tourism market, all of which make a properly functioning system essential. With limited resources, the focus should be on preservation and maintenance, with a lower priority placed on building new facilities.

[2] RCW 47.01.071 requires the Commission to prepare a statewide transportation plan.

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Theme #3:Washington Faces a Structural Transportation Funding Problem and Additional Revenue is Needed

The statewide transportation system needs continue to grow, while revenues are declining. As a result, the ability to effectively maintain and operate the statewide transportation system is at risk. New road projects and maintenance of the existing system are threatened by reductions in gas tax revenue. Transit agencies are struggling to meet record demand for services with a revenue base that is largely tied to sales tax revenues, which declined with the economic downturn. Air, rail and water-borne transportation are largely market-driven. The bottom line is that additional revenue is needed to maintain the state's existing transportation system.

Strategic Drivers

Four strategic drivers inform this Plan. These are key influences that reflect the current political, policy and economic environment within which this Plan was developed:

- **TRANSPORTATION POLICY SHOULD SUPPORT AND REINFORCE OTHER STATE POLICY OBJECTIVES.** A strategic transportation policy plan must embrace goals, principles, and policies that support broad policy outcomes for the state, beyond the transportation system. Fostering economic development, supporting healthy communities, reducing energy consumption, and addressing climate change are all broad policy outcomes influencing WTP 2030.
- **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION IS KEY.** The transportation system is a direct reflection of the way in which land is developed and used. The movement of people and goods changes in relation to residential, commercial, industrial, and other land uses; the land use provides the reason for movement and the why for travel. The availability of transportation often influences development and land use plans. WTP 2030 acknowledges this critical relationship and recommends strengthening linkages between desired outcomes in both land use development and the transportation system.
- **THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ACROSS REGIONS AND ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL.** WTP 2030 recognizes that transportation needs and challenges vary across the state, between urban and rural areas, and based on the size of a community. While the Plan takes a systems approach to addressing state needs, it is expected that local jurisdictions and agencies should approach local planning and decision-making in a way that fits within the statewide framework for funding and priorities and best meets the unique needs of their communities.
- **POLICY PLANNING MUST CONTINUE ITS EVOLUTION TO PERFORMANCE BASED PROGRAMS.** WTP 2030 supports the state's focus on performance-based investments, based on measurable results and outcomes. This direction follows from the Priorities of Government process and the performance measurements approach of Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP). It is also consistent with the evolving federal focus on performance-based funding. Continued development of a performance-based investment approach should position Washington well for emerging federal programs and funding.

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How to Read this Plan

Overview of WTP 2030

WTP 2030 was developed by the Washington State Transportation Commission with the ongoing engagement and input from a diverse stakeholder Advisory Group and other partners around the state. Throughout the 18-month planning process, the team worked to involve and integrate the issues, accomplishments and needs of WSDOT, regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs), metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), counties, cities, tribal governments, transit agencies, ports, economic development agencies, and the general public into this comprehensive and balanced statewide blueprint for our transportation future.

WTP 2030 will serve as an overarching strategic transportation policy plan to provide policy guidance and recommendations across all transportation modes and regions in the state. Given the Legislature's interest in potential investment needs and transportation funding options, this Plan is organized to help inform future policy discussions by state leaders.

What WTP 2030 Is and Is Not: A Short Guide

WTP 2030 is an overarching policy plan that builds from the existing 2007-2026 Washington Transportation Plan. It also integrates multiple plans, reports, and data sets, including:

- WSTC Annual Reports
- WSDOT's Gray Notebook
- Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP)
- The State's Priorities of Government
- OFM's Attainment Report
- RTPO and MPO Plans
- WSDOT Statewide Plans, Studies and Reports
- The State Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero

WTP 2030 Is Not:

- A project list
- A replacement of the federally compliant 2007-2026 Washington Transportation Plan
- A substitute for the existing statewide modal plans, such as the Highway System Plan or the Freight Rail Plan

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Components of WTP 2030

WTP 2030 is comprised of six transportation policy goals, each with accompanying background and policy context, a set of priority Strategies, and an Action Plan. The definition of these terms is as follows:

- **POLICY GOAL**. The existing transportation policy goals are listed in the non-prioritized order they appear in RCW 47.04.280. The goals are complementary and support the overall Vision for transportation in the state.
- **BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT.** This section presents relevant policy background information and current challenges related to the Policy Goal. This section helps to define the existing opportunities and problems to be addressed by the Strategies.
- **STRATEGIES.** Strategies are the recommended steps that will enable achievement of each Goal. Strategies integrate multiple modes and jurisdictions.
- **ACTION PLAN.** These plans identify the necessary steps and actions to initiate key strategies in the context of time: near-term (initiate actions between 2011-2017) and longer-term (initiate actions between 2017-2030).

As the Commission views it, there is overlap between the transportation policy goals, and many strategies could easily fit under one or more policy goals. Implementation of the strategies will require the involvement of state agencies, local governments, the Governor and the Legislature. Accomplishing some goals – such as zero traffic deaths by 2030 or major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions – will depend more on individual actions than those of the government.

Explanation of Action Plans

The Action Plans consist of the priority near-term and longer-term actions that are recommended to achieve the objectives of each of the six Policy Goals by 2030. They reflect the three foundational themes and the strategic drivers that frame this Plan: (1) the transportation system must be integrated and connect modes and jurisdictions; (2) the most critical need facing us today is preservation of the existing transport capability; and (3) not only is additional revenue needed, the transportation funding structure itself must be revised.

Some of this work is already underway. These Action Plans recommend both that policies currently in place be continued and that new actions be taken to do things differently in the future. Unless otherwise specified, the recommended actions should be considered as on-going into future years. Finally, while recognizing that each area of the state needs to adopt strategies specific to its economy and geography, the near-term actions here emphasize the critical need to keep what we have that is still important. A focus on preservation now will provide time to restructure and grow transportation funding sources to build the system of the future.

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Economic, Financial and Policy Context for this Plan

Introduction

WTP 2030 has been significantly influenced by current economic conditions, as well as shifts in federal priorities and funding. There is uncertainty about future policy direction at both the state and federal level in many public policy arenas, in particular energy and climate change. In the two years leading up to this Plan, the price of a barrel of oil has ranged from a high of $140 to a low near $40. Recent experience in Washington and the nation demonstrated that the price of gasoline has a significant impact on transit demand and automobile use. When fuel exceeded $4 per gallon, operating costs for transit systems increased and revenue for state, federal and local transportation programs dropped substantially. WTP 2030 was developed in the context of challenging economic conditions and competing needs.

This section presents an overview of Washington's transportation revenue situation as relevant context for the Plan's strategies, describing transportation revenues at the state and local government levels, and the challenges associated with the recession and associated declines in revenues. This section also explores the history of the state's major transportation revenue sources, identifies current state laws regarding revenue sources, and assesses future revenue risks.

Transportation Revenues: State Sources and Trends

The revenue analysis is based on work done for the Washington State Legislature's Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) in 2009, which used the Transportation Revenue Forecast Council's November 2009 projections for its analysis.[3] The Washington State Legislature has developed a 16-year transportation financial plan for the 2009-2025 period with estimated revenues of $46.7 billion.

As shown in **Exhibit 1,** for the 16-year period on average, the motor vehicle fuel tax is the largest source of transportation revenues, comprising 38% of total funding and more than half of total direct revenue. Other sources of revenue include licenses, permits, and fees (21%); bond sales (14%); federal funds (12%); ferry revenues (7%); tolls (3%); vehicle sales tax (3%); and miscellaneous revenues (2%). Because debt service on bonds is repaid from the fuel tax and most federal transportation funds are generated from the federal fuel tax, it is noteworthy that approximately 64% of current transportation funding is dependent on how much fuel cars and trucks consume.

[3] Joint Transportation Committee, Implementing Alternative Transportation Funding Methods, 2010.

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Exhibit 1

State Transportation Funding: 2009-2025 Sources and Amounts

Source	2009-25 Totals (billions)	%2009-25 Funding	% 2009-25 Direct Revenue*
Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax - 37.5¢ per gallon**	$17.7	38%	52%
Licenses, Permits and Fees**	$9.7	21%	28%
Bond Sales	$6.4	14%	
Federal Funds	$5.7	12%	
Ferry Revenues	$3.4	7%	10%
Tolling (Tacoma Narrows Bridge/SR 167)	$1.5	3%	4%
Vehicles Sales Taxes	$1.2	3%	4%
Miscellaneous/Interest	$1.1	2%	2%
Total Funds/Revenue	**$46.7 billion**	**$46.7 billion**	**$34.1 billion**

* Excludes bond sales, federal funds, and interest which are not direct revenues.
** Excludes revenues distributed to local governments.
Source: Joint Transportation Committee, *Implementing Alternative Transportation Funding Methods*, 2010.

HISTORICAL TRENDS: DECLINING FUEL CONSUMPTION AND REVENUES. The reliance on the fuel tax as a primary revenue source makes state transportation funding vulnerable to decreases in fuel consumption. A number of factors have and could decrease demand for fuel in the future, including fuel price increases, greater fuel efficiency of vehicles, shifts to hybrid vehicles, and a decline in vehicle miles traveled.

In recent years, motor fuel tax revenue projections have trended downward. Based on recent consumption patterns, the 16-year total motor fuel tax revenue projection released for 2009 by the Transportation Revenue Forecast Council (TRFC) and included in the 2010 JTC Study was $1.6 billion less than the 16-year projection that was estimated in 2007. Fuel tax, licenses, permits, and fees are set as flat rates, meaning that 80% of the state's direct transportation revenues do not grow with inflation. Under these current flat rate taxes and fees, vehicle owners will pay substantially less in 2025 than they did in 2009. If rates were to be adjusted for inflation, total revenues would increase by approximately $10 billion over the 16-year time period.

REVENUE INCREASES IN THE LAST DECADE. The most recent statewide transportation revenue packages were enacted by the Legislature in 2003 and 2005. In those years, the state raised the motor vehicle fuel tax and other fees and charges to support two WSDOT capital programs: the 2003 Nickel Funding Package and the 2005 Transportation Partnership Act Funding Package. Both funding packages invest in highway, rail, ferry, transit, and freight projects across the state.

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STATE LAW AND RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSPORTATION REVENUES.

- ***Legislative action is required to set rates.*** With the exception of tolls and ferry fares, transportation tax and fee rates are set by state law and require legislative action. Tolls and ferry fares are set by the Washington State Transportation Commission, subject to legislative direction.
- ***The use of funds is restricted by the 18th Amendment.*** The 18th Amendment, approved in 1944, requires motor vehicle fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees collected for highway purposes to be placed in a special fund to be used exclusively for highway purposes. The Legislature has also imposed additional restrictions on the use of most transportation revenue.

These legal parameters limit the state's ability to increase transportation revenues and direct transportation funds to non-highway purposes.

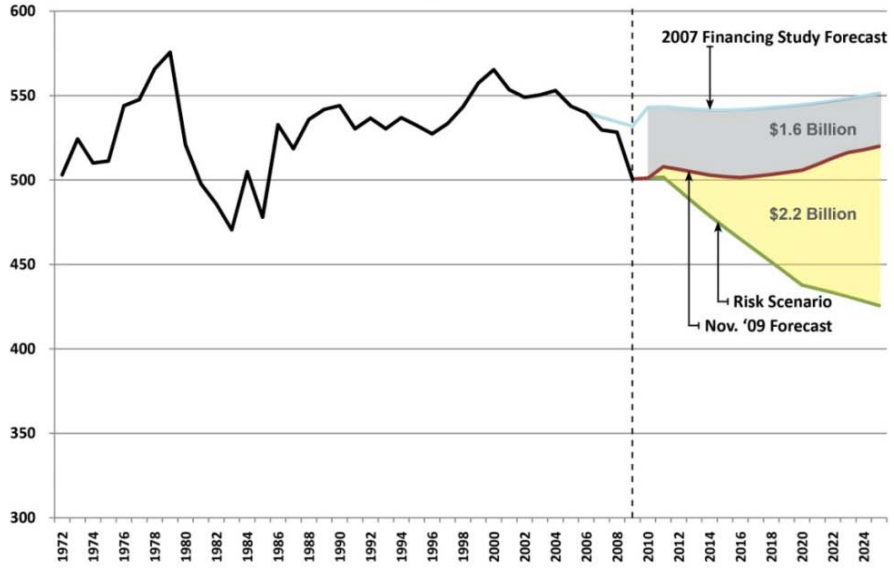
ASSESSING FUTURE TRANSPORTATION REVENUE RISKS. To obtain a picture of potential transportation revenues given the changing dynamics of fuel consumption and vehicle purchases, the JTC's 2010 report *Implementing Alternative Transportation Funding Methods* included a risk assessment of several changes to the status quo. The risk assessment scenario estimates future state fuel tax revenues based on a number of assumptions, including integration of the newly updated corporate average fuel economy standards, increases in the purchase and use of electric and hybrid vehicles, and no change to other variables that affect fuel consumption over time, such as vehicle miles traveled per capita.

Under this risk scenario, total revenues from the fuel tax would equal $19.4 billion over the 16-year plan, a reduction of $2.2 billion or 10% compared to the November 2009 forecast. Vehicle owners would pay approximately 37% to 46% less in 2025 than in 2009 (adjusted for inflation), as a consequence of the state's flat tax rates and higher vehicle fuel efficiency.

Exhibit 2 below presents these projections and highlights the potential significant revenue impacts resulting from decreasing consumption.

Exhibit 2

Historical and Projected Gallons per Capita



Source: Joint Transportation Committee, *Implementing Alternative Transportation Funding Methods*, 2010.

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Transportation Revenues: Local Sources and Trends

Cities, counties, and special purpose districts, such as transit and port districts, also share responsibility for the funding of local transportation systems. Like the State of Washington, these local government entities are experiencing significant reductions in revenues due to the downturn in the economy. Cities and counties rely on sales and property taxes for a significant proportion of their operating revenue and available funding for debt service. While cities and counties receive some funding from gas tax revenue, all revenue sources have declined significantly in recent years due to the economy and limitations resulting from initiatives. Except for gas tax revenue and county road funds, sales and property tax revenues are not dedicated for transportation services. Transportation projects and maintenance needs must compete with other general purpose government needs within the budget structures of cities and counties.

Transit agencies are generally dependent on sales tax revenues for a significant share of their non-federal revenues. As sales tax revenues declined during the downturn, transit agencies have been forced to make significant cuts in service and limit or eliminate expansion of existing service in response to reduced revenues. Port districts are not dependent on sales tax revenue but do generally receive property taxes and their overall activity has been down due to the economy.

Like the state, all of these local governments are making changes to their plans and projects, reducing funds and prioritizing scarce resources to meet only the most critical transportation needs. These local government's primary responsibilities and revenue sources are described in more detail in the *Attachment*s.

A Structural Funding Problem at the Federal Level

Like the state, the federal government faces a significant revenue problem. Federal motor vehicle fuel tax revenues have not kept pace with costs and system needs. According to one comprehensive study, the funding gap is estimated at $400 billion for the 2010-15 period and $2.3 trillion for 2010-35.[4] In response to this problem, $8 billion was transferred from the federal General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund for federal Fiscal Year 2008. This transfer was initiated to address the shortfall from motor vehicle fuel taxes, which declined in response to higher fuel prices, increases in vehicle fuel economy, and the recession. In 2009 and 2010, Congress transferred $7 billion and $13 billion respectively from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund to pay for obligated transportation projects.

Emerging Federal Policy

Authorization of current federal surface transportation policy, the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which encompassed $287 billion in approved funding has been extended to December 31, 2010. Congress is currently scheduled to consider reauthorization in 2011. Regardless of the timeframe for the reauthorization, there are significant indications that transportation policy will change with new federal action. It appears likely that there will be important shifts in the nation's transportation policy goals, including a broader focus on outcomes tied to other policy goals related to climate change, housing, and land use.

[4] *Paying our Way: A New Framework for Transportation Finance*. Final Report. February. 2009. Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission. pp. 3-4.

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WTP 2030 STRATEGIC POLICY PLAN

WTP 2030 Vision

By 2030, Washington's transportation network connects people and communities, fostering commerce and operating seamlessly across boundaries and modes as an environmentally and financially sustainable system. (*Commission Approved Draft Vision Statement, October 2009*)

Summary of Policy Goals

WTP 2030 is organized around the six statutory transportation policy goals as written in RCW 47.04.280. The policy goals are listed in the order they appear in RCW 47.04.280. It is not a priority ranking. Economic Vitality was added to the goals by the Legislature in 2010.

While the six policy goals are shared statewide, the implementation strategies to make the goals a reality may vary across the state.

ECONOMIC VITALITY To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy

PRESERVATION To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services

SAFETY To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system

MOBILITY To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State

ENVIRONMENT To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment

STEWARDSHIP To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system

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GOALS, STRATEGIES & ACTION PLANS

ECONOMIC VITALITY

To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy (RCW 47.04.280)

Background and Policy Context

In the 21st Century, every state is competing with other states and countries around the globe to attract and retain quality businesses and talented employees. Likewise, every region is in a competitive situation, competing for well-paying jobs and companies and institutions that can catalyze community prosperity. A strong economy needs a well functioning transportation system.

THE ROLE OF TRANSPORTATION IN BUILDING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE. The transportation system plays an important role in fostering economic vitality and competitiveness in local and global markets. Washington's key industries are a source of innovation, entrepreneurship and job growth. These industries have infrastructure and workforce needs that tie directly to an efficient and connected transportation system. For employers, access to labor and the ability to move goods are often important location decisions. Transit and access to airports may factor into this decision as well. For employees, commute times, costs and options are all factors in the decision-making process.

THE ROLE OF TRANSPORTATION IN ACCESSING MARKETS. As a trade-dependent state, Washington relies heavily on an efficient freight transportation network to maintain its competitive position. As a global gateway, goods are shipped into, out of, and around the state by truck, rail, air, pipeline, and water. Manufacturers and agricultural producers require an effectively networked system to get their goods to market locally, across the country, and around the world. A well connected transportation system can also help the state's economy prosper and grow, by providing access to new markets as they develop.

DIFFERENT REGIONS HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS AND PERSPECTIVES ON WHAT CONSTITUTES ECONOMIC VITALITY. Economic vitality manifests itself differently across regions. In the state's urban areas, transit is an important factor in both transporting workers to jobs and in attracting development around station areas. For the state's island and peninsular communities, ferries and barges play a critical role in moving workers and goods across waterways. Across the state, access to airports and freight and passenger rail fosters and supports community economic development.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Whatcom Council of Governments, along with federal, state, and local partners, completed the new Peace Arch border facility in time for the 2010 Winter Olympics, and secured funding for major restructuring of the SR 543 commercial vehicle border crossing
- Through its Prosperity Partnership, a coalition of business, labor, government and the non-profit sectors, the Puget Sound Region developed a Regional Economic Strategy that identifies key actions to continue to grow the state's economy
- Sound Transit opened LINK light rail between downtown Seattle and Sea-Tac Airport (2009)
- Driving Rural Yakima Valley's Economy (DRYVE) was established to plan and promote economic investment and development in rural Yakima Valley through improved transportation services and infrastructure
- Improvements to the Port Industrial Road of Grays Harbor provide enhanced access to the port and reduced travel time for port-related and local traffic

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Strategies

A. Enhance Washington's Economic Competitiveness and Vitality

Washington competes nationally and globally to attract and retain people, sell products, and improve investments. Transportation policy and investment decisions can directly connect to economic vitality, by assessing how such investments grow the state's economic clusters and major industries and diversify the economy. The transportation system contributes to economic vitality and competitiveness through improved connectivity and the efficient movement of people and goods.

- Improve travel time, reliability, and access on the state's corridors and connectors to freight hubs
- Work with regional and local public and private partners to maintain economic vitality and diversity through preserving and improving infrastructure
- Streamline the state's public-private partnership law to allow for a wider range of financing opportunities, while maintaining the legislature's responsibility to balance public and private interests
- Build on the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma's Green Gateway Clean Air Strategy by marketing sustainable practices to attract business to Washington's ports
- Commit to meeting the speed, reliability, and service measures in the Northwest Corridor, a federally-designated high-speed rail corridor from Eugene, Oregon to Vancouver, British Columbia
- Work with the economic development organizations to invest in transportation investments to support key industry clusters

CLUSTERS & COMPETITIVENESS

CLUSTER DEFINED: A reinforcing network of companies, institutions, and supporting services that together create a critical mass and economic advantage for a region

Washington State has numerous industry clusters in various stages of maturity, evolution, and growth. Supporting these clusters is an integral part of an effective Economic Vitality Strategy.

Washington's Key Industry Clusters

- Aerospace
- Clean Energy
- Forest Products
- Global Health & Life Sciences
- Information & Communication Technology
- Manufacturing
- Marine Technology
- Agriculture & Food Processing
- Tourism

Source: Washington State Department of Commerce www.choosewashington.com

B. Foster Improved Connectivity of People and Communities

The transportation system is the backbone for Washington's communities; it provides critical infrastructure that affects people's livelihood and quality of life on a daily basis. An effective, well functioning transportation system is one in which all elements are connected and coordinated, providing people with transportation options and reliable access to home, work, school, and other destinations.

- Support strategies and investments to better link people and commerce. Investments could include transit oriented development, bicycle and pedestrian networks, park and ride lots, and broadband access
- Foster economic development and system connectivity by improving linkages to other modes of transportation
- Support locating transportation facilities, such as transit only lanes, where transit operation in the corridor is critical to maintaining and improving mobility, particularly in urban centers
- Maintain and improve the state's competitive advantage in time and energy cost for access to regional, national and international markets
- Improve east-west passenger rail service within the state
- Maintain and improve connectivity of island and peninsular regions to the state ferry system

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C. Support the Coordinated, Connected, and Efficient Movement of Freight and Goods

Washington State's freight system has three components: Global Gateways (international and national trade flows); Made in Washington (regional economies that rely on the freight system); and Delivering Goods to You (the retail and wholesale distribution system). These components underpin our state economy, support national defense, directly sustain hundreds of thousands of jobs, and distribute the necessities of life to the state's residents. Washington's manufacturers, industrial producers, and farmers rely on the freight system to ship Washington-made products to local customers, to major U.S. markets and worldwide.

- Increase coordination of corridor-level freight planning and funding, and continue to develop partnerships for key corridors involving multiple jurisdictions and the private sector
- Improve intermodal connections at freight hubs, including seaports, airports, rail yards, warehouses, and distribution centers to assure efficiency of import and export of goods
- Establish an all weather transportation system, prioritizing investments that minimize closures affecting agriculture, freight dependent industries, and tourism
- Coordinate consistent policies for freight movement across jurisdictions
- Support ferry vessel replacements that accommodate future marine commerce

D. Invest in Aviation, a Critical Component of Washington's Economy

The aviation system is essential to the overall transportation system and is the backbone to a healthy and vibrant economy. The *Long-term Air Transportation Study* completed in 2009 indicated that the current system needs are significant. Many public use airports do not meet performance objectives that are appropriate for their system role in areas such as pavement preservation, safety standards, land use compatibility, and airport facility infrastructure needs. The Plan estimates needs of $600 million to meet general performance objectives and $2.3 billion to meet pavement and airport facility infrastructure needs over the next 20 years. Existing small, community commercial air service has particular challenges; loss of this service could significantly impact the economic viability of communities in the state and across the nation.

- Invest in Next Gen aviation technologies to meet future aviation needs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Establish a five-year capital improvement program to assist in identifying airport infrastructure needs and prioritizing system investments
- Work with the Legislature to identify new funding measures to support the preservation and infrastructure needs of the aviation system

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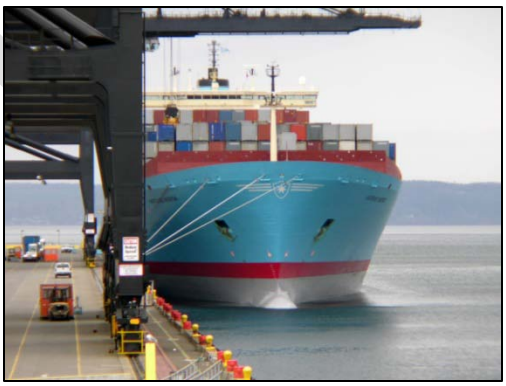
Preliminary Action Plan

Near Term, Initiate Actions between 2011-2017

- Identify key freight corridors from city streets to county and state roads that link producers to distribution points
- Improve designated freight corridors making critical connections with ports (such as completing SR 509 and SR 167 to connect with I-5 and the Port of Tacoma) and assist development of freight modal centers (such as airports and intermodal facilities) to maintain Washington's competitive advantage for trade
- Establish public-private partnerships that benefit the transportation system and the economy, such as:
  - Ferry terminal improvements
  - Shared infrastructure (e.g., Park and Ride lots) with private transit operators, such as Microsoft Connector
  - Freight collection and distribution facilities for agriculture and other goods
  - Housing and commercial development around high capacity transit stations
- Establish an all weather transportation system, prioritizing investments that minimize closures affecting agriculture, freight dependent industries, and tourism
- Work with the Legislature to identify new funding measures to support the preservation and infrastructure needs of the aviation system

Longer-Term, Initiate Actions between 2017-2030



- Prioritize improvements for I-5, the major north-south corridor of Western Washington and the entire West Coast
- Meet the speed, reliability, and service measures in the Northwest Corridor, a federally-designated high-speed rail corridor from Eugene, Oregon to Vancouver, British Columbia
- Continue to support and invest in energy efficient practices for freight movement that build on the Green Gateway Strategy developed by the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma
- Support the Columbia-Snake River barge system strategic dredging and lock maintenance plan
- Connect regional economies by providing daily round trip passenger train service between major metropolitan areas
- Design, plan and fund transportation infrastructure that supports and attracts tourism, such as non-motorized trail networks, intermodal connections for travelers, and enhanced traveler communication systems and signage

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PRESERVATION

To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services (RCW 47.04.280)

Background and Policy Context

Preservation of the capital assets of the statewide transportation network is the most critical need currently facing the state. Additional revenue and new mechanisms for funding are needed to ensure preservation of the existing transportation system.

Preservation needs differ across the state. For example, in Eastern Washington, the timely movement of agricultural production is critical to the local and state economy. In Northwest Washington, the marine highway system is vital. In Puget Sound and Vancouver, urban transportation needs loom large. While preservation needs vary, the fundamental challenge faced by transportation providers is the same - obtaining sufficient funding needed to reinvest in the existing transportation infrastructure.

DEFINING PRESERVATION. Preservation encompasses preventative and major maintenance and replacement of the capital assets that make up the statewide transportation network. This broad and diverse network includes all forms of transportation and all capital facilities.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The state used $144 million of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to reduce a large backlog of state and local road rehabilitation projects
- The Hood Canal Bridge replacement was completed, improving a vital connection between the Olympic and Kitsap Peninsula communities and Puget Sound (2009)
- The City of Spokane Valley used $2.6 million of ARRA funds to ground off 2-1/2" of old pavement and resurface two miles of Sprague Avenue, the city's 7- lane major arterial. The project upgraded stormwater collection and laid conduit for future interconnection of signals
- Urban Partnership Grant from U.S. Department of Transportation for implementation of variable tolling on the SR 520 bridge will improve system performance and generate funds for bridge replacement

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PRESERVATION NEEDS. Much of the state's roadway system was built between the 1950s and 1970s and is now at or near the end of its useful life. Largely built by previous generations, many facilities across the state are in need of rehabilitation, reconstruction, or replacement. As a result of the Nickel and Transportation Partnership Account (TPA) Capital Programs passed in 2003 and 2005 respectively, WSDOT is delivering 421 projects valued at over $15.5 billion. Once delivered, ongoing maintenance and operation will be necessary; preservation and maintenance budgets have not increased to match this major new investment and significant backlog needs still exist across the network.

The need to invest in preservation extends to all modes and jurisdictions. Transportation providers across the state face similar investment needs and challenges related to roadways, ferries, and airports and other assets. Whether public agencies or private businesses, everyone in transportation is working to extend the life of their assets and WSDOT is using technology to reduce the need to build new infrastructure. In some cases, however, total replacement becomes inevitable.

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Strategies

A. Focus on Preserving the Existing Statewide Transportation Network

The most critical preservation policy need is additional funding to maintain the life, safety, and utility of the existing transportation asset base. Additional revenue and new mechanisms for funding are needed to ensure preservation of the existing transportation system. Tolling generates revenues that can help pay for preservation and maintenance, increasing the financial sustainability of the system. The state should continue to use tolling, where appropriate, as a way to fund projects and provide for ongoing maintenance.

Cities and counties face similar preservation challenges and revenue needs as the state. An added challenge for local governments is the need to balance transportation funding with a broad spectrum of local services, many of which are funded from the same general fund sources. Where dedicated transportation funding exists it is often insufficient to meet the preservation needs of the existing network. Many cities and counties lack sufficient dedicated transportation funding to find the local match necessary to obtain state and federal funding.

- Maintain tolling on roadways and bridges after project completion to fund preservation, maintenance and traffic management
- Fund preservation costs by levying additional use surcharges on higher impact users
- Establish adequate and sufficient transportation funding sources for local governments
- Explore establishing performance measures for new funding for cities and counties and assess whether the funding is adequate to achieve the desired performance outcomes
- Restore dedicated capital funding for ferries to ensure reliable long-term support

B. Explore New Funding Strategies for Public Transportation

Public transportation, whether bus, rail, ferries, or vanpools, requires subsidies that reduce the need to recover all operating and capital costs through rider fares. Sound Transit, the state's only Regional Transportation Authority, supplements a relatively diverse tax base with federal grants to provide commuter rail, light rail and regional bus service in portions of King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties.

Across the state, transit districts are struggling financially, due to their dependence on sales tax revenues, which declined in the economic downturn. While some districts increased fares, they account for a smaller share of total funding. Other transportation providers, including human service agencies, also face funding challenges. Some providers are grappling with the need to make service cuts and impose fare increases in a time of increasing demand. The private sector is increasingly taking a role in transit provision through employer-sponsored vanpools, private rideshares, and other services. Expanded public-private partnerships could help to leverage agency operating funds and expand routes.

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(To be developed alongside the current JTC study on defining the state's role in public transportation.)

- Work with cities, counties and transit agencies to identify the state's role and interest in public transportation
- The state should provide transit agencies with adequate revenue authority to preserve current rolling stock and infrastructure (facilities, bus shelters etc.) and maintain access to service, particularly where service is critical to managing demand on the state-owned highway system
- Explore value capture approaches to pay for public transportation corridor construction projects
- Work with local agencies to identify public transportation corridors of statewide significance. Designation would influence prioritization of the speed and reliability of transit service on designated corridors

C. Invest in Preservation of Ferry Vessels and Terminal Infrastructure

There are over 25 public and private ferry operators in the state and each play a critical connectivity role by moving people and goods across the state's waterways. Washington State Ferries (WSF) is the largest and serves about 23 million passenger and vehicle trips per year across Puget Sound. According to the WSF Long-Range Plan, the WSF fleet is among the oldest of any major ferry operator, and significant recapitalization of aging vessels and facilities is needed. The WSF Long-Range Plan estimates needs of $3.3 billion for preservation/acquisition of vessels and another $1 billion for preservation of terminals for the period of 2009-2030.

- Invest in vessels and terminal infrastructure needed to meet service level objectives

Preliminary Action Plan

Near-Term, Initiate Actions between 2011-2017

- Prioritize and dedicate an adequate stream of new transportation revenue to preserve and maintain the existing system
- Tie new state transportation revenue for state or local governments to performance outcomes as part of a new transportation investment plan
- Establish a funding source for capital preservation investment in the ferry system to effectively maintain existing levels of service quality

Longer-Term, Initiate Actions between 2017-2030

- Maintain tolling on roadways and bridges after project completion to fund preservation, maintenance and traffic management
- Implement the July 2009 recommendations of the Washington State Aviation Planning Council
- Establish a long-term system reinvestment strategy that includes criteria to replace or remove infrastructure from service at the end of its life
- Consistently apply appropriate preservation performance standards for all jurisdictions
- Use technology and research to reduce costs and improve and extend the life of infrastructure

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SAFETY

To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system (RCW 47.04.280)

Background and Policy Context

Washington is a national leader in traffic safety and has achieved considerable success through development and implementation of the *Washington State Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero*.[5] *Target Zero* is a comprehensive, data-driven plan to eliminate all traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries by the year 2030. The 2010 update was developed by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission and WSDOT in consultation with state and federal agencies, private and non-profit organizations, Tribal Nations, and local and regional agencies and organizations. The state has been investing resources in projects and programs to address *Target Zero's* priority areas. These investments have yielded a high safety return on the public dollars invested.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The new Tacoma Narrows Bridge opened, improving safety and reducing congestion in that corridor (2007)
- New WSDOT ferry construction increases passenger and freight capacity and also enhances safety
- In Southwest Washington, the I-5/SR-502 interchange project was completed, improving safety and access in and around north Clark County (2008)
- In Eastern Washington, several phases of the US 12 highway widening project were completed, reducing the number of collisions in this corridor
- Benton County, concerned about traffic accidents and fatalities in the Roza agricultural area, developed and implemented a low-cost program of safety improvements, including oversized stop signs, "Stop Ahead" pavement markings, and rumble strips
- The Traffic Safety Commission has worked closely with tribal nations to increase traffic education and improve enforcement. The success of the Colville Traffic Safety Task Force, improving seat belt use to near the state average, is one of many efforts featured in the Protecting Our Future: Reducing Traffic Fatalities on Tribal Lands video

The Data and Results[6]

- Traffic fatalities statewide have decreased from 637 in 1999, to 492 in 2009, a 23% decline.
- The state's primary seat belt law, in combination with media campaigns and enforcement, has increased seat belt use to over 96%.
- In 1971, Washington's roadway death rate was 4.1 deaths per 100 million miles of travel; the 2008 rate was 0.94 deaths per 100 million miles of travel, a 77% decrease. This is well below the 2008 national rate of 1.27 fatalities per 100 million miles of travel.
- Sixty-four pedestrians were killed in 2008, up slightly from 62 in 2007, yet still lower than the 10-year average of 68 fatalities.

The state supports *Target Zero's* educational and enforcement based programs to affect driver behavior. While *Target Zero* concentrates on the state highway system, the state, along with counties, cities and transit agencies also focuses on safety related to waterways, aviation, transit, rail and other transportation systems and emergency preparedness.

[5] *Target Zero* meets the federal requirement for a Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

[6] *Target Zero: Strategic Highway Safety Plan,* 2010 Draft. Numbers will be updated if there are any changes in the final version of *Target Zero.*

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Strategies

A. Foster Implementation of Comprehensive Safety Strategies Across All Jurisdictions and Transportation Modes

Target Zero establishes four priority levels based on the percentage of traffic fatalities associated with different factors. These priority areas help guide investment decisions to achieve significant reductions in fatalities and serious injuries.

- Encourage agencies to consider the 4 E's of traffic safety (education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical services) when planning and implementing transportation safety projects
- Continue to collect comprehensive safety data to identify and prioritize transportation safety problems, and evaluate program performance
- Encourage other transportation modes to adopt a data-driven approach to prioritize and target areas that pose the greatest risks to safety
- Continue statewide, highly-visible safety campaigns that combine education and enforcement to raise public awareness and change behaviors that affect transportation safety
- Support investments, such as the Safe Routes to School program, that improve safety for non-motorized travel by bicycle and on foot

TARGET ZERO PRIORITY AREAS

Priority One
Impaired Driving (48%)
Speeding (40.2%)
Run off the Road Collision (42.8%)

Priority Two
Young Drivers 16-25 years (37.9%)
Unrestrained Occupants (27.9%)
Distracted Drivers (26.1%)
Intersection Related (20.6%)
Traffic Data Systems Improvements (n/a)

Priority Three
Unlicensed Drivers (20.4%)
Opposite Direction Multi-vehicle (18.7%)
Motorcyclists (13.0%)
Pedestrians (11.5%)
Heavy Trucks (11.5%)
Emergency Medical Services (n/a)

Priority Four
Older Drivers (7.0%)
Drowsy Drivers (4.5%)
Pedal Cyclists (1.7%)
Work zones (1.7%)
Wildlife Involved (0.5%)
Vehicle Train Collisions (0.5%)
School-Bus Involved (0.1%)
Aggressive Drivers (n/a)
Integrated Interoperability Communications (n/a)

Source: 2010 Draft Update Target Zero: Strategic Highway Safety Plan

B. Plan and Engineer Projects for Safety

Transportation providers at all levels should continue to prioritize safety in project-specific planning and design. Roads should be designed using best practices to prevent collisions, or reduce the severity if they do occur. The Commission is particularly focused on rural road safety as the fatality rate for rural crashes is more than twice that of urban crashes.[7]

Each year brings new awareness of vulnerabilities in our transportation system due to seismic activity, or geological or hydrologic conditions. Several of the strategies below address safety and also economic vitality, mobility, environment, and stewardship.

- Implement effective, lower cost improvements to improve road safety
- Ensure that new facilities, such as bridges, are built to an appropriate seismic standard

[7] The U.S. Department of Transportation, *Rural Safety Initiative,* February 2008.

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C. Encourage Inter-Agency Collaboration and Cooperation on Safety Issues

Transportation agencies should explore ways to work with emergency management organizations on recovery planning and other evolving safety issues. Interoperable communications allow public safety agencies from all levels of government to coordinate efforts, collaborate on projects, and share resources to meet emergency response demands. Potential activities include assistance prioritizing repairs for facilities, and identifying alternate routes.

COUNTIES ARE COLLABORATING ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

The Department of Homeland Security's Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program has awarded grants to eight Washington counties, who have formed the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team (RCPT). The RCPT is working on a Transportation Recovery Plan that identifies 50 high priority potential disruption scenarios, and a set of solutions to address the disruptions through rerouting, intelligent transportation systems, transportation demand management, and availability of multiple modes of transportation that provide redundancy.

- Continue interagency collaboration to identify cost-effective ways to address safety and to focus resources where they will have the greatest impact
- Continue to develop plans to facilitate continued movement of goods and supplies in the event of a transportation-related disaster
- Enhance Regional Catastrophic Preparedness planning by further defining and communicating regional approaches to coordination
- Continue to support the work of the Washington State Interoperability Executive Committee
- Reduce impacts near airports related to birds and structures that obstruct critical airspace
- Recognize and support transit's role in emergency response efforts such as evacuating large numbers of people or transporting those with special needs

Preliminary Action Plan

Near-Term, Initiate Actions between 2011-2017

- Focus transportation safety investments on projects and programs that implement proven strategies and address high priority needs – as Target Zero has done in roadway safety by focusing on impaired driving, run off the road crashes and speeding
- Invest in providing a safe transportation experience for walkers, bicyclists or those using public transportation
- Accelerate efforts to reduce serious injuries and fatal crashes on the highest risk roads, including rural roads, by implementing low cost safety improvements that often combine engineering, enforcement and public education
- Continue and accelerate efforts for interagency and cross-jurisdictional disaster response and transportation safety, such as communications systems that work with each other and agreed-to evacuation strategies and routes

Longer-Term, Initiate Actions between 2017-2030

- Increase use of technology for all travel modes to reduce fatalities and serious injuries
- Use a risk-based assessment approach to continue to build and retrofit transportation facilities and services to withstand severe seismic events, flooding and other disasters

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MOBILITY

To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State (RCW 47.04.280)

Background and Policy Context

DEFINING MOBILITY. Mobility means different things to different people. Predictability in travel times and the ability to access needed goods and services, the investment of time and effort, and the expense and choice in how and when to travel or move goods are all linked to mobility. Mobility encompasses congestion reduction, as well as connectivity to other modes, access to information, travel costs, and having access to different modes. Land use patterns and policies have an impact on mobility options. Some options, such as expanding transit services, may be better suited to adapt to new land use patterns than others. The ability to travel to jobs and other activities is an important contributor to each individual's quality of life and to the economic vitality of Washington's communities. These issues are critical for individuals in both urban and rural areas and are overarching elements of this goal.

PRICING CAN HELP MANAGE DEMAND. Pricing can help to improve mobility when demand outpaces capacity. Congestion pricing, tolling, and increased parking costs could help to improve mobility by changing the time at which people choose to travel or providing an incentive to carpool, use transit or other modes of travel.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Washington received $590 million to improve high speed intercity passenger rail service (2010)
- On the Olympic Peninsula, the Olympic Discovery Trail, a non-motorized, multi-user shared pathway has been completed (2009)
- The first Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan to address the transportation needs of the elderly, people with disabilities, and low income populations in Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties was adopted in 2007
- Pilot project for SR 167 HOT lanes, one of the first dynamically priced projects in the U.S. improves system efficiency while maintaining transit and HOV speed and reliability
- The Yakama Nation and People for People secured a Federal Transit Authority grant to begin rural transit service between Toppenish and White Swan (2007). The Pahto Public Passage has since added a second route, due to the success of the service
- I-5 HOV lane construction increases system capacity and efficiency in a high demand corridor, reduces congestion at system chokepoints, and improves transit speed and reliability

WSDOT's MOVING WASHINGTON PROGRAM specifically addresses mobility through three key strategies: strategically adding road capacity, operating the system we have efficiently, and providing choices that help manage transportation demand.

To achieve the desired outcomes of the Mobility Goal, appropriate local and regional strategies and policies will need to be employed to address challenges, such as congestion, weather impacts, and connectivity.

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Strategies

A. Support Mobility Options to Help Communities Meet the Public's Travel Needs

In the 2006-2008 period, 72% of Washington workers drove to work alone, 12% carpooled, 5% took public transportation, 5% used other means, and the remaining 5% worked at home. [8] Reliable transportation options that link home, school, work, and other destinations can enable people to meet their needs without a car. When accompanied by land use policies that support compact, mixed-use communities, transit use, and increased walking and bicycling, these options can help meet environmental goals, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and improving public health.

MOVING WASHINGTON

Through Moving Washington, WSDOT hopes to create a balanced, efficient, and reliable transportation system to encourage economic vitality, improve personal mobility, and protect the environment.

Projects are underway to improve travel times, reduce collisions, increase commuter choices and assure reliable, efficient trips.

- Expand the use of pricing strategies to change travel behavior
- Support transit corridor connections to and between job centers
- Produce and circulate information on transportation options and their benefits. Tailor information to the specific mobility and access needs and vary by locality
- Invest in and maximize the use and effectiveness of high occupancy vehicle (HOV), high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, and transit lanes, to improve reliability of travel times
- Support alternatives to driving or driving alone, through promotion and sponsorship of efficient commuter travel options, including convenient bus service, and incentives to carpool or vanpool or work from home, and telecommute
- Preserve capacity on major facilities by improving connectivity of the local street network for all modes, utilizing multimodal hubs, providing incentives for transportation-oriented development, and supporting bicycle and pedestrian transportation
- Improve east-west passenger rail service within the state

B. Improve Connectivity to Facilitate Travel Across Modes and Communities

Better coordination between transportation providers is critical to ensure connectivity between modes, thereby improving the efficiency of the whole trip. For example, when bus or train schedules are not coordinated with ferry landings and departures, it adds time to the trip and passengers that might otherwise make the trip using transit continue to use their cars.

Addressing bottlenecks to relieve congestion is critical to ensuring the timely and reliable movement of people and goods. Private sector data providers are increasingly working with transportation agencies to address a range of mobility problems, including bus arrival times, traffic flow information and real-time incident alerts.

[8] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2008. Numbers do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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Access, rather than congestion, is a greater transportation need for rural residents and communities, who may be hours from job sites, medical and social services, and higher education opportunities.

- Invest in strategic capacity enhancements to promote mobility
- Expand toll lanes to major highway corridors, where appropriate, to make more efficient use of highway capacity
- Help local governments to solve congestion issues through added connectivity and multimodal transportation instead of expanding highways
- Ensure that the transportation system functions as a reliable, predictable, integrated network, including connecting schedules and services across transportation systems
- Create additional separated grade crossings between trains and vehicles, where appropriate, to relieve congestion
- Integrate freight delivery into plans for livable communities
- Develop online, real time transit arrival/departure time information

TOLLING OPPORTUNITIES

The Commission identified the following short-term (within 10 years) tolling opportunities as part of its Washington State Comprehensive Tolling Study Part 2: Exploration of Potential Tolling Opportunities in Washington (2008)

- SR 520 and 1-90
- I-405 North Express Toll Lanes
- I-405 Express Toll Lanes
- I-90 over Snoqualmie Pass
- I-5 in Lewis, Thurston and Cowlitz counties

C. Provide Transportation Options for Aging and Special Needs Populations

By 2030, nearly 20% of Americans will be over age 65[9] and the share in some Washington counties may reach 40%. One in five Americans age 65 and above does not drive.[10] Consequently, as our population ages, many more people will require alternatives to driving alone to travel around and between cities.

People need to travel to and from work, to shop, to visit friends and family and to access medical care. As cars and fuel become more costly, the challenges of meeting these needs will increase for many people, putting related pressure on communities to meet the mobility needs of their population.

Statewide systems, similar to 511, could include special features for aging and special needs populations, such as assistance on reaching medical care or how to get groceries. One challenge will be to provide education about available options and increase the comfort level with those options.

[9] Administration on Aging, *A Profile of Older Americans: 2009.* Available at: http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Aging_Statistics/index.aspx

[10] Linda Bailey, *Aging Americans: Stranded without Options*, Surface Transportation Policy Project, 2004. Available at: http://www.apta.com/resources/reportsandpublications/Documents/aging_stranded.pdf

- Accommodate the needs of the aging population through universal design principles for all modes. For highways this could include signage, roadway markings, lighting and design solutions. For transit and rail this could include easy to read schedules and terminal information and less challenging physical environments
- Produce and circulate information on transportation options and their benefits. Tailor information to the specific mobility and access needs and vary by locality
- Utilize existing volunteer organizations to set up travel-buddy systems, regardless of mode, so that people lacking confidence do not have to travel alone
- Regional coordination should be mandated for all state funded programs that include transportation in the services or programs offered. Use this coordination to increase efficiency and productivity of trips and enhance mobility for special needs populations
- Consider the needs of rural areas that currently lack transit, ride share, or vanpool options by enhancing and utilizing coordination opportunities with human service transportation and school transportation

Preliminary Action Plan

Near-Term, Initiate Actions between 2011-2017

- Continue to add capacity strategically for all modes, including public transportation, by completing the system improvements underway today, managing system demand, and operating the system efficiently
- Continue to reduce bottlenecks on key transportation corridors
- Continue to develop and implement intelligent transportation improvements, such as signal coordination, integrated traveler information, and customized scheduling and trip planner information
- Couple land use policy, siting decisions, demand management and transportation needs to leverage the value of existing infrastructure investments and future transportation investments, such as:
  - Create incentives to concentrate jobs and housing close to transit hubs
  - Make corridor improvements holistically, including local multimodal street connectivity improvements that support bicycle, pedestrian, car, and truck travel to and from the corridor
  - Site government facilities, such as schools or social services offices, to be accessible by travel modes that meet the needs of the users
- Improve public transportation service to connect rural areas and tribal communities to job centers, medical and social services, and higher education

Longer-Term, Initiate Actions between 2017-2030

- Require regional coordination and collaboration to efficiently and economically increase the productivity of travel options for the elderly and people with disabilities
- Require the state, counties and cities to partner with transit districts in developing and implementing corridor management strategies
- Improve travel options for people by providing daily round trip passenger train service connecting major metropolitan areas
- Develop and fund a strategy to maintain and improve connections from producers to distributors for freight and goods movement, regardless of the jurisdiction in which the improvement is needed
- Identify gaps in inter-modal connectivity for freight movement, e.g., ship to rail or truck, air to truck

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ENVIRONMENT

To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment (RCW 47.04.280)

Background and Policy Context

The goal of Washington's transportation system is to move people and goods to support a strong economy, healthy communities, and a sustainable environment.

FOSTERING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES. Transportation plays a critical role in supporting healthy communities. The way a community is designed and its proximity to destinations has an impact on the mode of transportation chosen by users. Public health and environmental goals can be furthered by using public transportation, walking, or bicycling, especially for short trips.

INTEGRATING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION. Infrastructure determines land use decisions. A continued focus on integrating land use and transportation decisions will improve the concentration of jobs and housing, reducing the need for some automobile trips, making public transportation more attractive, and leveraging existing infrastructure. New growth should be planned to maximize affordable, attractive communities with multiple transportation choices. Public transportation services should be central to new growth centers with sufficient density to support service.

ENSURING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BY REDUCING EMISSIONS. Transportation is projected to account for 47% of the state greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory in 2020, and light duty vehicles (cars, pick-up trucks, sport utility vehicles, and vans) are estimated to make up half of those emissions.[11] Supportive transportation policies are in place to reduce emissions through an emphasis on transportation demand management, and more recently, the use of clean fuels and hybrid vehicles.

MITIGATING IMPACTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT. Transportation investments and policies directly affect air and water quality, and many efforts are underway across the state to minimize and reduce impacts. For example, WSDOT, counties and cities are replacing and improving highway culverts that are a barrier to fish passage. Vegetation management practices along highways to reduce herbicide use, structural features such as infiltration ponds and wide grass swales, and regular maintenance to clear highways of sand, litter and debris all help to control and manage the harmful effects of stormwater runoff.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state. The state is pursuing multiple strategies to reduce emissions, including:

- Operating our transportation system to maximize efficiency and improve traffic flow
- Lowering the carbon content of fuels
- Supporting improved vehicle technology
- Supporting efficient transportation options like carpooling; working from home; riding a bus, train or bicycle; or shopping close to home and walking

[11] Department of Ecology Air Quality Program communication.

Wetland mitigation banks, comprised of wetlands, streams, or other aquatic resources that have been restored or created, are often considered a preferred method of compensating for transportation projects that have unavoidable impacts to wetlands. Mitigation banks may provide more comparable habitat than on-site mitigation and have a greater likelihood of successful mitigation. In some cases, however, where a nearby mitigation bank may not exist, payment of mitigation fees into an approved in lieu fee mitigation program may offer long-term remediation that would not otherwise be possible.

Strategies

A. Transportation Investments Should Support and Prioritize Healthy Communities

Investments that support walking and bicycling for trips under two miles, which represent 40% of all trips taken in Washington State, should be encouraged. Land use decisions and community development affect the available non-motorized transportation options and the distance between destinations and thus connect with public health goals to increase physical activity.

COMPLETE STREETS policies are intended to improve safety and mobility for all users.

Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a "complete street. "

- Promote "Complete Streets" policies and implementation for arterials and collectors within Urban Growth Areas
- Promote bicycling and walking as viable transportation options, and as a strategy to improve public health and maintain environmental quality through identifying and addressing multi-modal system gaps, such as sidewalk or trail connections
- Support Washington State Ferries policies and fare structures that encourage walk-on passengers
- Consider transportation demand management policies as a core element of state and regional transportation planning
- Continue to develop and promote programs, such as Commute Trip Reduction, to reduce traffic congestion, reduce air pollution, and reduce petroleum consumption

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B. Manage The Transportation System To Foster Environmental Sustainability

Environmental impacts associated with transportation are particularly acute related to greenhouse gas (GHG) production, and water pollution (hydrocarbons and heavy metal deposits in surface water and receiving waters). Reducing pollution is a function of improving transportation management and choices for roads, modes, fuel choices, and land use and transportation relationships.

- Improve integration of transportation and land use planning with the goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled and GHG
- Couple land use policy, siting decisions, demand management and transportation needs to leverage the value of existing infrastructure investments and future transportation investments
- Support efforts for efficient and effective environmental permitting processes while still protecting the environment
- Reduce stormwater impacts on Puget Sound and other state waterways consistent with the Clean Water Act
- Develop strategies responding to both mitigation and adaptation consistent with the Governor's Climate Action Team findings

STATE GHG EMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

- By 2020, reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the state of Washington to 1990 levels
- By 2035, reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the state of Washington to 25% below 1990 levels
- By 2050, the state of Washington will do its part to reach global climate stabilization levels by reducing emissions to 50% below 1990 levels
- Create 15,000 new green economy jobs by 2020

Source: RCW 70.235.020 and RCW 42.330.370

C. Transition to Alternative Transportation Energy Sources

The twin realities of climate change and foreign oil dependence mean that the world will need to transform its transportation systems and infrastructure. New energy sources will power new technologies for transportation. While it is difficult to predict which specific alternative transportation technologies will emerge as winners, we can create an environment that adapts its capabilities for a wide range of options. Already the Governor has announced the creation of the first electric highway (I-5) which will support plug-in electric vehicles. The infrastructure will enable electric vehicle drivers to travel the length of the state along the 276 miles of I-5 between Washington's borders with Oregon and Canada. Building the infrastructure for electric vehicles is integral to the economic vitality of the state. It will generate economic growth, jobs and make a substantial contribution to our energy security and a cleaner environment.

- Develop innovative solutions to move to transportation systems and infrastructure that reduce oil imports and usage across modes
- Lead the nation in providing smart charging infrastructure for plug-in vehicles and create incentives for the purchase and conversion of plug-in vehicles
- Partner with federal agencies, primarily the Departments of Transportation and Energy and related laboratories and research programs, to demonstrate a model transportation system using advanced communication, software and information tools from regional companies
- Promote the regional development of a smart energy grid through public and private investment
- Encourage the use of pricing strategies to reduce demand-side emissions

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Preliminary Action Plan

*Near-Term, Initiate Actions between 2011-2017**

- Develop a funding source to help the state, counties, and cities manage stormwater runoff from streets, roads and bridges, including collection and treatment from existing transportation facilities
- Create policies to encourage travel using alternative sources of fuel that reduce oil imports and usage
- Foster greater functional cooperation and coordination among environmental resource agencies, transportation agencies, and local and tribal governments
- Implement a program statewide that allows purchase of credits in a mitigation bank or payment of mitigation fees to ensure the most efficient and effective mitigation of transportation project impacts on aquatic resources and habitat

** A Workgroup is responding to Executive Order 09-05, Washington's Leadership on Climate Change. Recommendations from the Workgroup may be incorporated into the Final WTP 2030 to be released in December 2010.*

Longer-Term, Initiate Actions between 2017-2030

- Make significant progress toward meeting statewide greenhouse gas reduction goals by developing and coordinating a mix of innovative transportation strategies, with a focus on alternative energy sources and technologies, while managing congestion through transportation demand management, land use policy and pricing, and by providing transportation choices
- Establish a dedicated revenue stream to mitigate environmental impacts created by the transportation sector
- Ensure efforts to support improvements to the permitting processes in support of protecting the environment
- Complete work to upgrade or replace culverts and other barriers that prevent safe fish passage through transportation facilities
- Require cities of 25,000 or greater population to adopt and implement "Complete Streets" policies that are relevant to their local needs (see text box on page 26)

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STEWARDSHIP

To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system (RCW 47.04.280)

Background and Policy Context

Stewardship is about making wise management and investment choices for the future, to ensure the system's continued safety, mobility and connectivity. A key objective is to simultaneously preserve and maintain the existing system, while working to better manage it for optimum efficiency and effective movement of people and goods.

Stewardship encompasses accountability and performance measures, integration of land use and transportation policies, and protecting and preserving essential public facilities. Increasingly, technology is being employed to increase the efficiency of the existing system and pricing strategies are being explored to address congestion and the financial sustainability of the system.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Reduced demand on the highway system by operating the largest vanpool system in the nation
- Launched a new electronic tolling program on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, and obtained initial authority for expanded tolling on other projects, subject to legislative approval
- WSDOT completed the *Long-term Air Transportation Study*, a Plan for the state's long-term general aviation and commercial aviation capacity needs
- In Yakima County, transit service has expanded into Selah and Union Gap. Following demonstration projects by Yakima Transit, both cities passed local sales tax measures to sustain the transit service

Strategies

A. Continue to Develop and Implement Performance Measures to Align with Federal Direction and Ensure Accountability

Performance measures are receiving increased attention at the state and federal levels. WSDOT is already a national leader in using performance measurement to evaluate projects and system performance on the state highway system. The need to establish targets and use a set of performance measures to evaluate outcomes is widely accepted. However, there is disagreement about what the next steps should be to design and implement a performance-based system for statewide investment in transportation. Key questions include: How should the standards be set and who should set them?

- Work with the Joint Transportation Commission, the Office of Financial Management, WSDOT, and other transportation partners to develop an implementable set of performance objectives for all state-funded investments
- Strengthen the authority of regional transportation planning organizations to certify the transportation and land use elements of comprehensive plans and development regulations

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B. Use Technology to Realize Maximum Efficiency in the Movement of People and Goods

Using technology to make more efficient use of existing systems is critical, particularly when financial resources are scarce. Intelligent transportation systems integrate advanced communications technologies into the transportation infrastructure, and provide information such as real time traffic alerts and information on destination times by routes and set variable speed limits to better manage traffic flow. Active traffic management technologies can help relieve congestion and improve traveler information, which helps manage demand. Systems like Next Gen use communication technology and navigation systems to improve the aviation system.

- Continue to use technology, communications and operational management techniques, such as signal coordination, integrated traveler information, and metered on-ramps, to optimize the existing system
- Maintain and expand HOV and HOT lanes, and optimize their speed and reliability performance
- Encourage transportation agencies to make data available to software application developers to develop and improve real time travel and scheduling information
- Continue implementation of Washington State Ferries' reservation system and introduce variable pricing to manage demand, spread peak vehicle traffic, improve asset utilization, and reduce wait times. Integrate new improvements with WSDOT and other technology applications

C. Review Regulations That Require Road Improvements to Meet Uniform Standards and Performance Levels, Regardless of the Quantity and Type of Traffic

Given the constrained funding environment, uniform standards are being questioned in some communities. New predictive tools from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the Federal Highway Administration can help advance this discussion, along with a variance process to allow exceptions to the regulations that could better tailor solutions to specific facilities, and communities, with potential cost savings at the same time.

- Review and offer recommendations for acceptable levels of preservation and maintenance for the state system, city streets, and county roads; use available and recognized performance measures to assess network performance and new investment needs
- Explore options for differential standards based on community and roadway characteristics

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D. Strengthen the Integration Between Land Use and Transportation Decision-making

Responsibility for land use planning is spread widely among hundreds of local jurisdictions, many of which have different priorities, making it difficult to harmonize all the divergent plans in a region. Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have a major planning and coordination function, and RTPOs and MPOs adopt regional plans to which local plans are expected to conform. Local transportation agencies need to work together with local government planning departments in the design, planning and permitting of development, to ensure that the linkages between land use and transportation planning are well explored and connected.

CONCURRENCY

Concurrency refers to the timely provision of public facilities and services relative to the demand for them. Washington's Growth Management Act requires that transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate development impacts need to be made concurrently with land development.

- Support coordinated land use and transportation planning that facilitates mixed-use infill and redevelopment and regional growth centers (where designated); that separates manufacturing and industrial centers; and that is served by well connected streets, pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure
- Require use of multi-modal concurrency approaches, where possible, to promote density and reduce development costs to the public
- Discourage the siting of incompatible development adjacent to public use airports
- Limit access to state highways through careful access management decision-making
- Use the Centennial Accord between the Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in Washington and the state to improve state-tribal cooperation on transportation and related land use and environmental issues

E. Ensure the Ability to Build and Expand Essential Public Facilities

Transportation facilities and services, such as interstate highways, airports, and intercity passenger rail are designated as "essential public facilities" under Washington State's Growth Management Act.[12] Ports and airports receive some special consideration under the port enabling statutes, Shoreline Management Act and Planning Enabling Act. Private transportation facilities such as rail lines are identified for special protection under federal interstate commerce laws and state laws designed to protect large container port operations. Protecting and preserving the essential elements of the transportation system (roads, rails, water, and air) is vital to future use and expansion.

[12] RCW 36.70A.200 and RCW 47.06.140.

- Encourage identification of key transportation corridors for the movement of people and goods and connecting communities through multiple transportation modes such as rail corridors, water ports, airports and pedestrian corridors, in local and state land use and transportation plans
- Expand protection of rail corridors for the movement of goods and people beyond the largest container ports
- Implement the recommendations of the Washington State Aviation Planning Council, July 2009. This report provides a number of recommendations for the preservation and enhancement of aviation assets
- Specific plans protecting difficult to site facilities, such as airports and rail corridors, from encroachment associated with incompatible land uses should be part of local transportation plans. Such plans should also provide for the future expansion of such facilities
- Integrate local and state land use, transportation and capital investment plans to the greatest possible degree to ensure a systems approach in building and maintaining transportation assets, and in efficiently employing scarce public resources

Preliminary Action Plan

Near-Term, Initiate Actions between 2011-2017

- Create a sustainable funding source for transportation infrastructure
- Continue to develop and improve performance measures for state and local facilities and services of the transportation system
- Establish outcome expectations for new transportation investments to support current Attainment Report or future reporting processes
- Provide WSDOT the flexibility to buy right-of-way for long-term projects that currently lack funding to build
- Expand the use of high occupancy toll lanes in major highway corridors
- Streamline the public-private partnership law to allow a wider range of financing opportunities for non-highway projects, while maintaining the legislature's responsibility to balance public and private interests
- Strengthen land use planning to protect public use airports from encroachment of incompatible land uses

Longer-Term, Initiate Actions between 2017-2030

- Complete implementation of Washington State Ferries' reservation system and implement variable pricing in order to help manage demand, spread peak vehicle traffic, improve asset utilization, and reduce wait times
- Develop methods to capture some of the incremental value derived from transportation infrastructure investments
- Participate in preserving and improving both the freight and passenger rail transportation system where there are sufficient public benefits to the State, its businesses and communities, based on a systematic assessment and comparison of benefits and costs across users and modes
- Use pricing as a tool to manage the use of scarce transportation resources and to provide funding for increased travel choices

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