



## Washington State Transportation Commission

Kent Meeting Summary  
July 25, 2017

Vice-Chairman Roy Jennings called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. He then asked Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

### **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

Commissioner Young requested a correction to the meeting summary.

*Action: Commissioner Tortorelli moved and Commissioner Batra seconded the motion approving the amended May 16 & 17 meeting summary. The motion was approved unanimously.*

### **TRANSPORTATION 101**

Paul Parker, Deputy Director, WSTC, presented an overview of the fiscal and policy framework of the state transportation system.

#### [Transportation 101](#)

### **SOUTH KING COUNTY TRANSPORTATION**

Linda Johnson, Vice-Chair, South County Area Transportation (SCAT) Board described its membership and role. SCAT Board would like to see the Connecting Washington projects move forward more quickly. Ms. Johnson noted that other corridors also need improvement, including SR 516 and SR 169. Local jurisdictions need additional revenue tools. SCAT Board has held technology conferences and is interested in the impact of Autonomous vehicles on mobility. SCAT Board also supports the Road Usage Charge Pilot.

Roger Millar, Secretary, WSDOT, asked whether SCAT Board is interested in preservation as well as highway expansion. SCAT Board members of course are interested in both. Mr. Millar noted that expanding one state route inevitably results in impacts on others.

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

## **CITY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, CHALLENGES, AND SUCCESSES**

Suzette Cooke, Mayor, City of Kent, welcomed the Commission to the heart of the Green River Valley, home of the 4<sup>th</sup> largest manufacturing/warehousing district in the nation. One-third of all the truck traffic to the ports comes through the valley and 70 trains a day move through Kent.

Mayor Cooke noted that work is underway to complete the SR 509/167 Gateway project, and to improve the I-405/SR 167 connection. The Legislature has asked local jurisdictions to raise \$130 million for the two projects – it is very disconcerting.

The SR 228<sup>th</sup> grade crossing over the Union Pacific Rail Road is the final piece of the long-term effort to seamlessly connect the Kent Valley to I-5 and the ports. Freight impacts on roads are significant. The annual maintenance need is approximately \$12 million per year, yet \$5 million remains unfunded. In addition, there is a \$250 Million backlog of work to replace, upgrade, and maintain our aging roadways that is not funded.

By changing sales tax source from origin to destination, streamlined sales tax mitigation covers only 42% of estimated loss \$12.7 million annually. The Kent City Council enacted a Business and Occupation (B&O) Tax in 2012 to help pay for the backlog of necessary street repairs. The B & O Tax dedicates \$4.7 million to street repairs. Kent also increased its utility tax to 18%. It is still not enough money. The Mayor has proposed a TBD; at \$20, it would raise \$1.7 million annually. However, that license fee will not happen with the large, new ST taxes and fees.

Direct distribution of gas taxes, Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) and Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) grants are essential for first and last mile improvements.

Nancy Backus, Mayor, City of Auburn, noted that the region is adding 1 million more people by 2040. There is a growing number of people who travel through Auburn to other places. Arterial preservation should be funded regionally, and not borne by each jurisdiction.

Auburn is a net importer of jobs; 76% of workers drive alone, 11% carpool, and 7% use public transportation. Industrial property accounts for 57% of the total city property tax base. Auburn has invested in downtown infrastructure to attract transit-oriented development. Sound Transit is working with Auburn and Kent to build new parking garages in each city. ST not a perfect answer to congestion, but it will help keep congestion from getting worse. Local transit improvements also are needed.

Portions of the Muckleshoot Reservation are within the city. Auburn's regional destinations exacerbate its traffic. Auburn is home to:

- SuperMall
- Muckleshoot Casino
- White River Amphitheater
- Emerald Downs

Auburn is completing the last portion of the S 277<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor with \$2.3 million in private contributions, including land donation and construction assistance. Other partnership projects include Auburn Way South and the M Street underpass.

It takes \$7 million year for Auburn to reach and maintain a 70 Pavement Condition Index PCI.

Local options make cities and counties look like the bad guys. Options for Legislature to consider:

- Street utility tax
- Local share of MVET
- Carbon tax on fuel
- User fees

Desiree Winkler, Deputy Public Works Director, City of Federal Way, noted that jobs are to the north, affordable housing to the south, and Federal Way is in the middle. If you add Federal Way's population to NE Tacoma and the city's annexation area, the region's population is about 150,000. Redevelopment of Weyerhaeuser East Campus will bring additional new challenges.

Priority projects for the City of Federal Way:

- I-5 interchanges at 320<sup>th</sup> and SR 18
- Pedestrian improvements

Successes include Pacific Hwy S/International Boulevard Corridor

- HOV Lanes
- Signal upgrades and coordination
- Adaptive signal control

Challenges:

- Mitigation fees/concurrency
- Highway system not keeping up with growth
- Grant funding not available for all capital needs

Can the city impose a moratorium on East Weyerhaeuser development? That is a legal issue.

The City of Maple Valley has 25,000 population. A bedroom community, it is up against the Urban Growth Boundary. Maple Valley has invested \$47 million in its transportation network over the last 10 years.

Transportation issues include:

- Lack of employment opportunities
- Regional development
- Lack of funding for SRs outside of city limits impacts city mobility
- SR 169 safety study did not include landslide potential

Challenges and opportunities:

- Funding for a network outside of Maple Valley
- Increasing economic development
- Housing/jobs imbalance – the SR 169 corridor serves over 100,000 people

- 17% of SE King County residents commute over an hour each way, double that of King County as a whole

Mr. Millar pointed out that housing in SE King County is affordable only if you externalize the costs of transportation and other societal and intangible costs.

Michael Matthias, City Manager, City of Des Moines, reported that his city has 30,000 people. Des Moines is a city on a suburban platform moving to an urban platform. He agreed with other cities that the requirement of a local match to complete Gateway Project is problematic.

Mr. Matthias emphasized that the Sea-Tac expansion plans will impact adjoining cities. He also noted that Des Moines is home to the only marina between Tacoma and Seattle. It is a useful tool for emergency management.

Des Moines' successes include 89 acres adjacent to Sea-Tac that have been fallow are converted to light industrial and, construction of a new FAA headquarters. Altogether, this will bring about 5000 new employees. Metro will provide new access to marina and this new development.

Randy Corman, Councilman, City of Renton, complained that Renton is often left-out of important discussions because it sits on the edge of South County and East County. It has Boeing, Seahawks HQ. It is third, behind Seattle and Bellevue for growth. Sixty percent of traffic on Renton's surface streets is pass-through. People use city streets to work around I-405 access issues.

Renton citizens have put \$500 million into Sound Transit (ST) – and the city has little to show for that investment so far. ST has not even built a parking garage.

[Kent Station Access Improvements](#)

[City of Auburn](#)

[City of Federal Way](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

### **COUNTY ISSUES, CHALLENGES, AND SUCCESSES**

Harold Taniguchi, Director, King County DOT, spoke about the Regional Transportation System Initiative (RTSI), jointly convened by King County and the Sound Cities Association to define the regional transportation network and its unmet needs. RTSI will develop a proposal to engage the legislature in a conversation about local roads funding.

So far, the Technical Committee has agreed on a regional network of connecting roadways.

Next, it will:

- Establish network maintenance, preservation, operations and capacity needs
- Review revenue and financing tools
- Consider early wins for a RTSI package such as regional ITS improvements and pavement preservation work

Mr. Taniguchi also spoke about the ridership growth on the King County Water Taxi. Vashon Island service, on the former WSF Route, operates six round trips daily year round, Monday through Friday for the morning and evening commute. West Seattle service, since beginning in 2010, now operates 13 round trips year round, Monday through Friday for the morning and evening commute and up to 23 round trips every day from April – October with mid-day, evening and weekend hours.

A one-way ticket to Vashon is \$6.25; a one-way ticket to West Seattle is \$5.25.

Ridership on the two routes has grown from 445,000 in 2013 to over 600,000 in 2016. Trip reliability and on-time performance is very high. There is interest in expanding the water taxi service to Lake Washington.

Commissioner Batra noted the usefulness of marine transportation for emergency response.

### Regional Transportation Systems

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, CHALLENGES, AND SUCCESSES

Christina O’Claire, Assistant General Manager, Metro, characterized the transit agency as a “mobility provider.” In 2016, Metro’s fixed route ridership was 121.5 million riders, its 2015-vanpool ridership totaled 3.6 million, and Access (paratransit) ridership was 1.3 million. For the 1600 vanpools, fare-box recovery is 31%.

With the maturation of Sound Transit, Metro’s role is changing. MetroConnects will bring 73% of King County residents within ½ mile of frequent service, including 87% of low-income residents. RapidRide will expand to 26 lines.

2017-18 Budget Highlights:

- Expanding the south bus base and building an 8<sup>th</sup> base in south county
- 68,230 more hours on 11 routes in south county
- Six new RapidRide lines connecting south King County by 2025

Metro currently has three fast-charge electric buses in service and plans for 120 more battery-electric buses by 2020. It is beginning testing of slow-charge, extended range buses.

More than 26,000 people have enrolled in ORCA Lift, which offers a \$1.50 bus fare for King County residents with incomes below 200% of federal poverty level.

Commissioner Batra asked how Metro is thinking about Autonomous Vehicles. Metro is looking at their potential for last mile connections, a conversation it also is having with Transportation Network Companies.

Don Billen, Deputy Director, Capital Projects Development, Sound Transit, talked about Sound Transit expansion in South King County. New parking garages are planned in Puyallup, Sumner, Auburn, and Kent to serve Sounder trains, and additional investments will expand service and extend train service south to DuPont. Link light rail will reach Federal Way by 2024.

Sound Transit (ST) also is following the development of autonomous vehicles. ST will need to program drop-off space for AVs into future terminal plans.

Mr. Billen was asked if ST has considered regional parking facilities, with shuttles to ST stations. ST thinks about parking a lot; about quarter to half of Sounder passengers already get to stations without driving alone.

[King County Metro Transit  
Sound Transit](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

**WSDOT REGIONAL PROJECTS AND PERSPECTIVES**

Lorena Eng, Northwest Region Administrator, WSDOT, talked about WSDOT investments in South King County. An SR 169 safety study was completed in December 2016 and safety enhancements including improved warning signs, and restriping, will be made later this year. The landslide risk on SR 169 was not included in the study because it focused on road safety – a geotechnical review has been done.

Preservation work includes concrete pavement rehabilitation and expansion joint replacement on bridges on I-5 NB from S. 260<sup>th</sup> to the Duwamish River Bridge. In Burien, a \$4.6 million investment in SR 509 involves repaving, guardrail improvement, and ADA compliance.

Over \$5 billion of Connecting Washington investment is planned throughout King County, including these South King County projects:

- SR 18/I-90 interchange
- SR 518 interchange improvements
- I-5/SR 18 triangle improvements
- I-405/SR 167 connector
- SR 509/SR 167 Gateway Program

[WSDOT Perspectives and Challenges](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

**SEA-TAC INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT EXPANSION UPDATE**

Eric ffitich, State Government Relations Manager, Port of Seattle, and Tom Hooper, Senior Planner, Aviation Division, Port of Seattle, briefed the Commission on development of Sea-Tac's Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP).

Sea-Tac International Airport is one of the fastest-growing major airports in the nation. In 2015, passengers and flights grew by 12% or more; in 2016, passenger and flight growth exceeded 8%.

Current projects underway to meet recent and ongoing growth include:

- North Satellite Renovation
- South Satellite renovation
- Baggage optimization
- Concourse D Holdroom Terminal to handle six or seven hardstand operations
- International Arrivals Facility

The airport is out of gate capacity now; it is determining the logical sequence of capital projects. Four expansion approaches have been considered. Under the preferred development approach, Sea-Tac expansion will:

- Add new gates at a new terminal to the north
- Move cargo operations to south of 188<sup>th</sup> Street
- Provide new wide-body international gates on Concourse B

How will the expansion be funded? Port of Seattle is looking at that internally.

What is mode split of passenger arrival to airport – primarily private passenger vehicles? Sea-Tac also is looking at improvements to SR 518.

A couple of gates at Paine Field do not make a dent when Sea-Tac is growing as quickly as it is. The Port of Seattle is happy to be a part of discussions of airport capacity region-wide.

The second terminal will handle 30-40% of the anticipated 66 million total passengers.

## **SAMP**

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

## **WASHINGTON AVIATION SYSTEM PLAN**

Rob Hodgman, Senior Aviation Planner, WSDOT reported that the Washington Aviation System Plan (WASP) is nearly complete. It is a building block for the long-range statewide transportation plan (WTP) update.

WASP studies the performance and interaction of 137 public use airports across the state. The WASP identifies eight aviation system goals:

- Aeronautical and airport safety
- Economic development and vitality
- Education, outreach, and community engagement
- Infrastructure improvement, preservation, and capacity
- Aviation innovation
- Modal mobility, capacity, and accessibility
- Stewardship

- Sustainability

New airport classifications establish a link between aviation activities, population, and infrastructure. They also provide a baseline for airport metrics for different types of airports.

### [WA Aviation System Plan](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

### **BUILDING THE GATEWAY PROJECT**

Mike Rigsby, Principal Project Manager, Senior Vice-President, Administrator, WSP, and Omar Jepperson, SR 509 Project Manager, WSDOT, briefed the Commission on the project and the tolling options under consideration. The Gateway Program, funded in the 2015 Connecting Washington package, will complete SR 509 & SR 167 connections with I-5.

In 2017, the transportation budget shifted funding forward to allow earlier purchase of right of way. It also shifted the local funding commitment to later biennia (shifted from 2019-23 to 2023-2029). An MOU between WSDOT and locals is required by July 1, 2018.

Financing anticipates \$180 million in tolls, which WSDOT continues to assess with Commission input. Tolling is being used to finance and also to manage demand by design. It envisions time of day tolling with all vehicles tolled. A Level 2 Traffic and Revenue study has been commissioned, and WSDOT will come back to the Commission in Spring 2018 with scenarios. WSDOT hopes to have legislative tolling authorization by 2019. Traffic volume modelling show that the new facilities will attract traffic away from local streets.

Stage 1 construction will start first with SR 167, then SR 509.

Commissioner Batra asked whether savings from potentially shortening the build time could be used to relieve the locals from their \$130 million funding commitment? Secretary Millar replied that all the money is needed for completing the project at this point. WSDOT needs the \$114 million federal Infra Grant and the \$130 million local contribution to build the Gateway.

### [Puget Sound Gateway Program](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

### **THE BIG PICTURE: TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE, AND ECONOMIC VITALITY**

Josh Brown, Executive Director, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), reported that metro Seattle is in the top ten nationally for growth. Jobs are driving the job growth at a pace not seen since 1997-98.

Transportation planning and finance is integrally linked with land use and economic development in Central Puget Sound, one of the fastest growing regions in the nation.



Kent and south King County, the home to several regional growth centers and manufacturing industrial centers, will see continued population and employment growth.

Population Perspective:

	<u>Seattle</u>	<u>Region</u>
1960	557087	1512979
1990	516259	2718595
2016	713700	4066800

The PSRC region is growing differently from other regions. In 2015, 96% of housing permits in cities and Urban Growth Areas, as compared to 72% urban in 1991.

The rate of growth is faster than planned. In 7 years, King County has had 45% of the planned 2040 growth. Thirty-two percent of the 30-year regional growth has occurred since 2010.

Today, Amazon has 10,000 job listings in King County. Transit boarding's are increasing faster than population growth. The newest PSRC regional center is Issaquah.

Sea-Tac needs to be viewed as a state asset, because it is. Let the Port of Seattle process move forward.

PSRC appreciates the work Washington State Transportation Commission is doing on Road Usage Charge. It is a long-term effort and we need to work on it together.

Mr. Millar said that WSDOT is playing the appropriate role in aviation, freight and other parts of the system that it does not manage. He also noted that regardless of the promise of RUC, tolling remains a valuable tool in the toolbox.

[WSTC PSRC](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is essential to the economy in Kent and south King County, home to major warehouse and distribution networks. Georgette Redburn, Business and Market Analyst, Northwest Seaport Alliance, talked about the container business that the Northwest Seaport Alliance operates. Between the two harbors, there are 1700 acres of land.

As of May 2017, total container volume is up 8.4%. Imports up 11.1% and exports up 5.4%. Peak season for imports is the fall.

The Kent Valley is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest distribution center in the US, with over 274 million square feet of active industrial space. Over 90 trans-load facilities and two Foreign Trade Zones.

One of the goals of NW Seaport Alliance is to increase operational efficiency. It leases the terminals, but has an operations service center to engage in performance improvements.

- Improved visibility on website, including gate cameras, vessel schedules, DrayQ Pilot Project
- Extended gates program

WSDOT would like to be at the NW Seaport Alliance Table for operational improvements.

### [Northwest Seaport Alliance](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

### **BUILDING COMMUNITY AND MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS AT LIGHT RAIL COMMUTER TRAIN STATIONS**

Kent Station Access improvements aim to improve access for all Sounder riders. Potential strategies include:

- 450 unit parking garage
- Non-motorized enhancements

Currently 51% of Sounder riders arrive by Single Occupant Vehicle. Currently there are 1900 daily riders, projected to grow to 3000 by 2025.

Sound Transit's approach to Transit Oriented Development (TOD):

- Community TOD – coordinate and support planning and development within ½ mile of stations
- Agency TOD – engage private, public, and nonprofit partners in redevelopment of agency property no longer needed

Metro engaged early in planning for the Federal Way Link Extension. This is an example of Metro's transition from hub-and-spoke to a web, with more east-west connections.

Kent started planning for its downtown in 1966. It is now a regional growth center, spurred by arrival of Sounder. Kent Station is 300,000 square feet of retail; Green River Community College has a downtown Kent campus. Showare Center is a 6200 seat arena. There are 640 housing unit's downtown in process and 950 on the downtown periphery, including 492 units in the Meet Me on Meeker project.

Because Sound Transit cannot buy property for development, it thinks about how a project can be most successful in attracting ridership. How Sound Transit (ST) puts the project together and coordinates with other stakeholders, is becoming more important. Secretary Millar suggests looking at the places where value of land exceeds the value of improvements on the land today.

### [Kent Improvements Sound Transit](#)

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ralph Ybarra, President, Diverse America Network, talked about inclusivity, equity, and diversity. What does economic development mean to different groups? How can we enable economic development that comes from small, diverse businesses across the state?

The assumption that these projects will come about on time, on budget is not correct. The workforce does not exist. These projects are opportunities to energize the populace and create sustainable wage jobs.

Linda Johnson, City of Maple Valley, pointed out that the port economic activity does not extend to southeast King County.

**REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

There is great work being done to implement Growth Management Act (GMA) plans drawn up long ago. It will not solve congestion, but will create more options for people.

Local jurisdictions are having problems raising revenue, but there are a lot of big projects rubbing up against each other. You are working together well.

With Connecting Washington, passage of ST 3, and ramp up of ST 2, there is a lot happening. WSDOT released \$1.5 million today in support grants to bring new people into the trades.

Number one factor in economic development is skilled workforce and number two is transportation network.

A lot of cooperation between all the cities, and other agencies.

**Action:** None

**Follow-Up:** None at this time

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

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VACANT

ATTEST:

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REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

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DATE OF APPROVAL