



Washington State Transportation Commission

Marysville Local Meeting Summary November 16, 2016

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Chairman Jerry Litt called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. The Commissioners and staff each introduced themselves.

Action: Commissioner Jennings moved and Commissioner Tortorelli seconded the motion approving the November 16, 2016 meeting summary with a minor correction. The motion was approved unanimously.

TRANSPORTATION 101

Paul Parker, Deputy Director, WSTC, presented Transportation 101 to provide an overview of transportation policy and funding in the state.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[Transportation 101](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TRANSPORTATION

Anneliese Vance-Sherman, Ph.D., Regional Economist, Employment Security Department, reported on the economy and labor force in Snohomish County. Historically, Snohomish County has grown faster than the state as a whole. King County also is seeing population growth that it hasn't seen since the 1990s.

Of the 418,000 residents in the civilian labor force, only 287,000 work in Snohomish County. That tells us there is a lot of commuting. More than 80% of the workforce in North Snohomish County commutes to work. The most common work destinations are Everett and Seattle.

The local employment base is oriented toward manufacturing, comprising 23% of the jobs in North Snohomish County. A lot of professional workers live in north county and commute elsewhere. About half of all inbound commuters travel more than 10 miles for work. Over 500 people are commuting daily into north county from Seattle and Mt. Vernon.

John Nehring, Mayor, City of Marysville, reported that Marysville is the second largest city in Snohomish County with 67,000 residents. And, it is the 15th largest in the state. In 2002, Marysville's population was only 23,000. Looking to the future, Marysville is projected to grow by one-third by 2035, and more than double its current 12,300 jobs.

Arlington and Marysville have proposed a Manufacturing and Industrial Center (MIC) be designated in the area between the two cities and to the east of I-5. It also is served by SR 530, SR 531, and mainline rail service. The 4,100-acre area includes Arlington Airport and currently hosts 7,000 jobs. It could house 25,000 jobs by 2040.

The city is engaged in downtown revitalization that is reconnecting with its waterfront, has developed master plans for its different areas, and has identified infrastructure needs. Residential development is exploding with 789 units planned in the Lakewood area and 28 subdivisions in process representing 986 single family lots. An industrial local property tax exemption (SB 5761) provides another incentive for attracting manufacturing and warehousing jobs.

Patrick Pierce, President & CEO, Economic Alliance of Snohomish County, explained that Snohomish County is growing at the fastest percentage rate in the region. Business is going well. Snohomish County is ranked number one in aerospace manufacturing jobs, number one in concentration of manufacturing jobs, and number two in tech-based jobs.

Defense contractors and naval support businesses are growing or maturing. There is difficulty finding and retaining quality employees due to salaries, commuting challenges, and lack of technical expertise or skilled labor. Housing costs in King County are driving people north for homes and to find jobs.

Reid Shockey, Snohomish County Citizens for Improved Transportation, reported that there is a regional vision to connect workers to job centers. Although Marysville and North Snohomish County are not in the Sound Transit boundaries, Community Transit is planning Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) connections to Marysville and Arlington.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[Looking to the Future](#)

[North Snohomish County Workforce](#)

[City of Marysville](#)

CITY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

Jeff Laycock, City Engineer, City of Marysville, briefed the Commission on system connectivity. There are capacity challenges on I-5, SR 9 and US 2, a lack of arterials connecting I-5 and SR 9, and bottlenecks at interchanges. Future jobs in MIC would steer traffic northward, rather than sending commuters south and adding congestion.

System connectivity challenges include the 88th Street NE corridor, an existing two-lane arterial, with huge right-of-way impacts that drive up costs. Phased improvements through development can cause interim traffic impacts. Current development may rely on future development for access or capacity. The City is moving forward to speed up projects and lessen these impacts (i.e. 156th Overcrossing project alternative access to Lakewood and a future interchange).

Marysville has planned many projects, including 88th Street NE, to address congestion, improve safety and promote economic development

- First Street Bypass
- 156th Street NE, 160th Street NE, 51st Avenue NE
- State Avenue Corridor (100th St NE to 116th Street NE)
- 40th Street NE

Interagency partnerships include the I-5/SR 529 Interchange, 88th Street NE Corridor and US 2.

Connectivity and safety are impacted heavily by 17 public at-grade railroad crossings and 9 private at-grade railroad crossings which currently average 18 trains per day and 70 minutes of gate down time. Up to 43 trains per day and 145 minutes of gate down time are projected by 2035. Currently, there are no grade separated crossings. The cost to address Grove Street alone is estimated at \$25 million.

Marysville has a sales tax Transportation Benefit District generating \$1.8 million annually. The revenue is dedicated to maintenance and preservation and sidewalk projects. The city just adopted a complete streets ordinance, and has coordinated bike/pedestrian plans.

John Spencer, Mayor, Lake Stevens, reported that from 2010-2015 Lake Stevens was the fastest growing city in Snohomish County. Lake Stevens is a bedroom community; most residents commute south and west but the northbound commute is growing. The City Council will consider a TBD in 2017; lacking a strong retail base, it is looking at \$20 license tab.

The SR 9/SR 204 junction ends at a shopping mall owned by Kimco. Lake Stevens is planning a new entrance to the mall and is willing to provide front-end financing to accelerate the project.

He also noted that four intersections merge at the east end of the SR 2 trestle. Every day there is a mile-long backup to get onto the trestle westbound in the morning. He suggests opening the road below the trestle for HOV traffic. It floods, but only occasionally.

Arlington is an employment center with about 12,000 jobs, a rate of 2.2 jobs per household. Half of these are around the airport/tech center. Employers are concerned about freight mobility and employee access to work.

The city has worked with WSDOT to improve traffic flow and safety on SR 530 and SR 531. Connecting Washington included widening a portion of SR 531 to 67th Avenue NE and adding roundabouts. Arlington hopes that practical design cost savings of \$24.5 million can be applied to Phase 2 of SR 531 widening to reach SR 9.

Ryan Sass, City Engineer, Everett, talked about things needed in addition to Connecting Washington, starting with replacement of the US 2 trestle. He estimates the project will entail a very long planning process due to environmental constraints.

Phase 1 is a \$250 million project; the total is \$750 million. Average Daily Traffic on the trestle is higher than the Alaskan Way Viaduct. He also talked about the City's multimodal emphasis, with a number of projects and connections at the north terminus of ST 3 light rail.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[City of Marysville](#)

[City of Everett](#)

COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

Bobanne Fogard, Interim Snohomish County Engineer and Doug McCormick, Transportation and Environmental Services Director, Snohomish County reported that the county population of over 760,000 is forecast to reach 955,000 by 2035. They also noted that the largest employer in the state is located in Snohomish County (Boeing at Paine Field).

Snohomish County Public Works provides roads, solid waste and surface water services. With a large unincorporated urban area, the County has approximately 1600 miles of county roads and 200 bridges. If the urban area in the south county were to incorporate, it would be one of the ten largest cities in the state. Snohomish County has collected impact fees since 1995; they generally come from the Southwest corner of the county. The revenue is used for matching funds.

Snohomish County successes include regional cooperation and partnerships. The County supports creation of the north county MIC. Preservation work and an 85% pavement rating are also part of the county success story.

Although Snohomish County considers its progress on ADA implementation a success, it has fully inventoried the county road system and identified the cost of full compliance cost at \$1 billion. The county also considers itself to be resilient. It has learned a lot from the SR 530 slide.

Snohomish County is barely keeping ahead of concurrency. Challenges include:

- Growth
- Funding
- Mass Transit Implementation

The most congested arterials are connections to state routes. Other priorities are:

- Completion of SR 522 at \$176 million
- Completion of SR 524 between Mill Creek and Lynnwood
- SR 982 bridge in Granite Falls
- How to move people from north county to mass transit nodes.

For 20 years, BRT will be the counties transit priority until ST 3 reaches Everett. The state needs flexibility to work with local governments on priority projects and federal grant opportunities.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[Snohomish County Public Works](#)

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REGIONAL PROJECTS AND PERSPECTIVES

Lorena Eng, Northwest Region Administrator, WSDOT, provided an overview of WSDOT activity, including 10 Connecting Washington projects, valued at \$501.5 million in Snohomish County.

A 6-year plan of preservation projects in Snohomish County totals over \$160 million, and nine fish passage projects are valued at \$43.5 million.

WSDOT also is seeking operational benefits from low cost efficiency gains, as well as low cost safety enhancements.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[WSDOT Regional Projects](#)

TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS & TRANSPORTATION: MOBILITY, SAFETY AND ECONOMY

Les Parks, Tulalip Tribal Treasurer, briefed the Commission on the Tulalip Reservation, which consists of 22,235 acres. About 12,000 residents live there, both tribal and non-tribal; the reservation contains 99 miles of road. Of that, 48 road miles are owned by the Tulalip Tribes or the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The roads are managed jointly and cooperatively.

The Tulalip Tribes have used self-determination to establish economic self-reliance. Quil Ceda village is chartered as a federal city, and is an economic engine for the tribe and the county. A lot of the funding for Quil Ceda village roads comes from the tribal fuel tax. The hotel tax also is earmarked for mitigation. The 116th Street interchange is funded largely by tribal dollars, augmented by state funds. Tulalip Tribes also operates a small transit service for its own members.

Joni Soriano, Director of Planning & Development, Sauk-Suiattle Tribe, reported that the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe was established by the 1855 Point Elliott Treaty. In 1974, the tribe gained partial federal recognition and a ¼ acre of cemetery boundaries. In 1986, it won full federal recognition and now has 236 members.

Eighty percent of the tribal population is below poverty level; the \$38,000 median income is similar to Darrington's \$39,000 median, but substantially below income levels in Snohomish and Skagit Counties.

On October 31, Sauk-Suiattle began fixed-route bus service from the reservation to Darrington and Concrete. The challenges include:

- Capital Funding - Equipment
- Operating Funding – thanks to WSDOT Consolidated Grant
- Marketing and Education on Public Transportation Mobility
- Public Safety Programs
- Human Resources Experience
- Technology and Cell phones

Casey Stevens, Manager, Planning Department, Stillaguamish Tribe, reported that the tribe received formal federal recognition in 1976. In 1986, 30 homes and a community center were built and occupied by the tribe in Arlington.

In the 1990s, the Stillaguamish Tribal population was 170, with 25 employees, and 10 vehicles. By 2016, the tribal population reached 300, with 500 employees, and approximately 105 vehicles.

A Reservation was designated in July 2014. The Stillaguamish Tribe has coordinated with social service and transportation providers in Snohomish County since 1999. Two critical positions are the Mobility Manager and the Program Coordinator. Stillaguamish Transit now provides 16,000 trips a year. Programs include:

- **Stillaguamish Tribe Transit Services (STTS)** provides Demand Response service transporting Tribal members, clients and others in the community for a variety of trip purposes.
- **Vanpool/Rideshare Program.** Offers employees a low cost, shared ride system to get to work.

The Stillaguamish Tribe requests the addition of direct access ramps/flyer stops to improve transit access to north and south.

In 2013, the Stillaguamish Tribe added SR 530 to its Indian Reservation Road (IRR) inventory. When the Oso mudslide occurred, due to SR 530 being included in the IRR inventory, the Federal Government paid 100% of rebuild costs, providing a \$3 million savings to the state and county.

Megan Cotton, Tribal Liaison, WSDOT, talked about her role assisting tribes in working with WSDOT and helping WSDOT employees understand how to work with tribes. In addition to the 29 recognized tribes, an additional six tribes outside the state have interests in Washington. WSDOT works with tribes on WSDOT project development, tribal transportation projects and tribal road inventories, and statewide policy.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe](#)

[The Transportation Program of the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians](#)

[WSDOT Tribal Map](#)

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

Emmett Heath, Chief Executive Officer, Community Transit (CT), reported that CT serves 73% of the Snohomish County population. Sound Transit (ST) overlaps with only about 60% of its service area. CT carries 11,000 people to Seattle each morning.

CT has 45 double-tall (*aka* double-decker) buses and ST is now purchasing the same type.

CT has a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line from Aurora Village to Everett Station which carries about 6,000 passengers a day. CT targets for less than 10-second dwell time at a station. It operates in Business Access Transit lanes and has signal priority. CT is adding another Swift BRT line in 2019, from Boeing to Bothell.

CT has expanded capacity and routes in the past year, including Marysville-Lake Stevens and Lake Stevens-Lynnwood service this year. The ridership is greater than expected. CT is now collecting 1.2% sales tax for transit. CT vanpool program has 427 vans.

Challenges:

- Reliability and predictability of travel time is a big problem. Bus Travel Time Variability: from Marysville ranges from 52 minutes to 130 minutes.
- Park and ride capacity and cost. Several are at or above capacity and the cost of one surface space is \$35,000. A space in a structure costs \$60,000.
- Serving the Arlington/Marysville MIC.

CT loves the I-405 Express Toll Lanes. They have reduced travel times and improved reliability. The hard shoulder running project will also be a big help.

Paratransit service is provided under contract. Cost per rider is seven times higher. Vanpool pays for 73%, fixed route fare-box recovery is 21% and paratransit is 4%.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[Community Transit](#)

HEALTHY TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Blake Trask, Senior Policy Director, Cascade Bicycle Club, reported that Cascade is working in every elementary school in Seattle, and about 70 districts across the state, largely in Eastern Washington. Bicycling is good for the economy. US Bike Route 10 is 407 miles long.

In the past 1.5 years, state and local governments have invested over \$1.1 billion in biking, walking, safe routes to school and complete streets programs, including 2016 ballot measures in Bothell, Kenmore, Bellevue, and Bellingham.

Mr. Trask noted that missing pieces in networks limit bicycle use and that siloed transportation funding doesn't work. Commissioner Young asked whether there is thinking on how to fund dedicated trails. Mr. Trask responded that building out a trail network is less expensive than building roads; there are other societal benefits. Funding for roads comes from property tax and sales tax, as well as gas tax.

Sharon Swan, Principal Planner, Snohomish County Parks and Recreation, said that her agency provides regional trails that connect communities. To date, the Centennial Trail has been funded entirely from local funds.

About 7 miles of the Whitehorse Trail has been developed near Darrington and but another 20 miles are coming on line. After the Oso landslide, completion of the trail became a community priority. The Whitehorse Trail accommodates horses as well as bikes.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

[Cascade Bicycle Club](#)
[Snohomish County Parks & Recreation](#)

I-405 EXPRESS TOLL LANES FIRST YEAR REPORT

Patty Rubstello, Assistant Secretary of Tolling, WSDOT, reported on the first years' operation of the I-405 Express Toll Lanes between Lynnwood and Bellevue. The average peak period, peak direction toll rate is \$2.50.

Since 2000, as planning for the I-405 corridor was underway, the population has increased by 22 % in King County and 27% in Snohomish County. Job Growth has grown by 12% in King County and 33% in Snohomish County. In the last year alone, the Puget Sound region grew by 86,000 people and 64,000 jobs.

WSDOT Goals for the I-405 Express Toll Lanes (ETL):

1. Offer drivers a choice
2. Provide a faster and more predictable trip. I-405 is moving more vehicles at peak periods.
3. Fund future corridor improvements

Challenges to date include maintaining a 45 mph speed in the ETLs, limited capacity, and increased demand.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

I-405 Express Toll Lanes - 12 Month Performance Update

COMMENTS

Phillip Skook, noted that the I-405 trip time is better because more lanes were added. He said that most of the people in the ETL lanes are single occupant vehicles.

David Hablewitz, reported that he has been billed five times when he should not have been billed. We're collecting money, but we are beating up people to get it. The higher priced tolls are hitting the people who live in Snohomish County. Truck traffic is moving off I-405. No matter how high you raise the toll, there will be more traffic.

Susan Gardner, Kenmore resident, recommends that the other parts of the I-405 Master Plan need more attention. She can't leave her house during rush hour due to the diversion.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

JERRY LITT, Chairman

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SHIV BATRA, Member

ABSENT

ANNE HALEY, Member

ABSENT

HESTER SEREBRIN, Member

JOE TORTORELLI, Member

DEBBIE YOUNG, Member

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

DATE OF APPROVAL