



Washington State Transportation Commission

Olympia Meeting Summary
July 15 & 21, 2020

July 15, 2020

Chair Jerry Litt opened the meeting at 9:00 am with introductions by Commissioners, ex-officio members, and staff.

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Statewide Planning Overview

Marshall Elizer, Assistant Secretary, Multimodal Development & Delivery, Washington State Department of Transportation

Kerri Woehler, Director, Multimodal Planning Division, Washington State Department of Transportation

Mr. Elizer and Ms. Woehler provided an overview of fiscal challenges facing transportation, how WSDOT is working to align regional planning and statewide multimodal planning needs to better inform the state's 20 year Washington Transportation Plan and provide the legislature with well-coordinated information to inform transportation project selection and investments.

An overview of the state's transportation system and the various challenges before the entire statewide system; rural, suburban, and urban. These include I-976; over 10 deaths a week; State of Good Report; Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake; federal treaty obligations regarding fish passage; and revenue challenges in the "new normal." These challenges provide the opportunity to rethink prioritization, programs, and funding opportunities to become better stewards of the system; look beyond addressing immediate wants and needs; and build a long-term vision for the future, working with the people of Washington State.

Currently, the 10-year plan is extremely underfunded and will be unable to meet WSDOT system policy goals, across the board: State of Good Repair, safety, transportation systems operations and management, transportation demand management, and system expansion. At current funding levels, and with I-976, WSDOT does not expect to meet federally required 10-year condition targets. In the current plan, starting in 2021-23 and beyond, WSDOT is evaluating investing in: access-controlled ramp paving and paving on roadways with lower speed zones (40-45 mph or less). Strategies are fundamentally about reducing the rate of deterioration – not about improving the condition of infrastructure. WSDOT is not funded to make the right investments at the right time, which increases costs over time.

The Stay at Home order has created additional revenue challenges. Adhering to the order, leave to significant reductions in travel:

- Vehicle traffic – down 45% average
- Ferries ridership – down 75% average
- Transit ridership – down 75% average
- Amtrak Cascades ridership – down 95% average
- Use of toll facilities – down 42-77%

Additionally, construction projects suspended for safety are incurring costs to restart. The official June revenue forecast is currently estimated at \$100 million in lost revenue per month for all transportation agencies or 35% of our average monthly revenue collections. 85% of the transportation budget comes from state revenue sources and bonds. The COVID 19 shutdown has presented opportunities to rethink how we do business.

Planning is an important in the state's transportation system. Public investment in transportation should achieve these policy goals: economic vitality, preservation, safety, mobility, environment, and stewardship. Due to the multi-layer approach of the transportation system, planning must be cooperative. Planning should be performance-based, comprehensive, cooperative, and continuous.

Planning is important in the middle of an emergency, like a pandemic. It allows us to be responsive and reactive as information changes; apply lessons learned; reinforces the need for working together and prioritizing needs; and adopt flexible strategies. There are many different plans in Washington: statewide, metropolitan and regional, local, and network, corridor, modal.

WSDOT's job is to provide data and work with partners to inform investment decisions. There are immediate, mid-term and long-term efforts:

- Joint Transportation Committee Study – Legislatively directed, 10 year, comprehensive assessment of statewide transportation needs, priorities and funding options; near-term
- Highway System Plan update – Blueprint for preserving, maintaining, improving and operating state-owned roadway system for next 20 years; mid-term
- Investment Strategy – Our long-term vision is to be aligned with our partners so that we have a unified transportation investment recommendation to the legislature; long-term.

This year's transportation budget included a project evaluation proviso that is a tasking from the legislature to engage customers.

WSDOT is updating the highway system plan (applies to all modes) to identify program and financing needs to:

- Preserve and maintain the existing state highway system
- Improve safety
- Maximize operational efficiency
- Provide people with travel choices

The plan will meet our collective responsibility to protect and leverage past taxpayer investment before investing in multimodal system expansion consistent with RCW 47.06.050. WSDOT's objectives for the plan development are: community engagement; address highway modes; apply

financial constraint and forecast assumptions; and analyze programmatic investments. The work is starting Summer 2020. WSDOT plans to have it available for public comment in Fall 2021.

[Beyond Tomorrow Statewide Planning Overview](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 00:04:24, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

WSDOT Active Transportation Plan Update

**Barb Chamberlain, Director, Active Transportation Division, Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Ms. Chamberlain briefed the Commission on the state's active transportation plan, including its emphasis on completing walking and rolling networks, the role of state right-of-way in the overall network, community engagement findings, and the plan's connections to the statutory transportation policy goals.

The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) serves as a statewide needs assessment required under state law ([RCW 47.06.100](#)) to address: statewide strategy; integration of bicycle and pedestrian pathways with other road users; coordination with local and regional government; and the role of such facilities in reducing traffic congestion. The ATP will result in tools, recommendations and performance measures to improve safety and mobility for everyone using transportation.

There was a specific focus on meaningful, community engagement, to increase the public: social media, blog posts, questionnaires in spring and fall of 2019, on-line open houses (over 11,300+ visits), webinars, and events. Beyond extensive outreach, WSDOT examined who had not responded and made another attempt to reach them. The #1 concern raised was safety and facilities.

The Active Transportation Plan Goals are:

- **Networks:** Connect comfortable and efficient walking and rolling networks so people can reach their destinations and other forms of transportation and have everyday access to physical activity.
- **Safety:** Eliminate deaths and serious injuries of people walking and rolling.
- **Opportunity:** Eliminate disparities in access to safe active transportation connections for people and communities most dependent on walking, bicycling and transit.
- **Participation:** Increase the percentage of everyday short trips made by walking or bicycling.
- **Partnership:** Collaborate with local, regional, state, tribal and federal partners to complete and improve the network across boundaries.

The ATP will be out for public comment in late summer/early fall 2020.

[State Active Transportation Plan Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 00:27:44, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

2040 Peninsula Regional Transportation Plan

Bek Ashby, Chair, Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO)

Annette Nesse, Past Chair, Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Ms. Ashby, Chair, and Ms. Nesse, Past Chair briefed the Commission on the PRTPO's transition to an independent RTPO, the recently adopted 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and new directions for the Peninsula RTPO.

The region includes the Kitsap and Olympic Peninsulas; Pacific Ocean and Salish Sea; Olympic Mountains (Olympic National Park); US Navy Base; remote and limited access areas; and an international border crossing. The RTPO include four counties, nine cities, four transit agencies, four port districts, nine Indian tribes, and the WSDOT Olympic Region. RTPO was created in 1990 and was administered by WSDOT. During state fiscal year 2019, WSDOT informed the RTPO that administration would be transitioned to the RTPO, over the course of a year. July 1, 2019, the RTPO was independent: Kitsap Transit is the lead planning agenda and Jefferson Transit is the lead fiscal agency.

The RTPO published their first plan, "Regional Transportation Plan 2040," in late 2019. RTP 2040 recognizes: critical state highway corridors, the marine highway system, and coordinated transit services that complement the other two systems; relationships between transportation system efficiency, safety, reliability, access, and economic health in a rural setting; environmental priorities to mitigate transportation system impacts on habitats, both natural and human; and that interagency collaboration and coordination are key in providing seamless multimodal travel choices.

Regional challenges include: insufficient funding for core system needs; intractable congestion chokepoints, like SR 16 and SR 3; inadequate funding flexibility for small rural agencies; system vulnerabilities with a backlog of past-due bridge replacements and culvert retrofits, plus climate and seismic adaptations needs; and multiple state routes with limited redundancy opportunities. All RTPOs, not just PTRPO, need consistent, reliable funding to support regional planning mandates and growth management planning requirements.

PRTPO's future work will include: promoting more rural intercity public transportation; completing rural broad band coverage; increasing system resiliency; accelerating system electrification; nurturing economic opportunity; and broadening opportunity for rural areas.

[Peninsula RTPO Long Range Plan](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 00:47:00, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

“What Moves You: 2040” – Thurston Regional Planning Council’s Transportation Plan Update

Marc Daily, Executive Director, Thurston Regional Planning Council

Mr. Daily briefed the Commission on the TRPC’s update of the region’s transportation plan. The current plan *What Moves You Regional Transportation Plan 2045* is the strategic plan and blueprint for the region’s transportation system, with a draft published in June 2020. Key improvements in the plan include more comprehensive coverage of state facilities in the region, performance of the transportation system, and public input on the region’s 25-year transportation needs. In developing the 2045 plan, TRPC emphasized alignment with the Washington Transportation Plan *2040 and Beyond*. Commissioners were pleased to see that *WTP 2040 and Beyond* was used and enjoyed seeing the plans side-by-side.

This is the first regional transportation plan in the state to include a chapter on state facilities which was drafted in collaboration with WSDOT. The plan focuses on system efficiencies and getting the most out of the existing investment. TRPC partnered closely with WSDOT to include transportation demand management and operations efficiency measures. There are outstanding questions and doubt in the Legislature about whether these aspects work should be included, instead of just building new roads.

The plan includes a System Performance Report, which focuses on 18 measures that were developed with WSDOT, Intercity Transit, and TRPC. The plan identifies the need to develop “multimodal level of service” measures. The plan needs to focus more on freight goods and services mobility strategy. This need is elevated due to development at the Port of Olympia and other development in Lacey. There is a challenge with balancing spending on planning and analysis with other funding priorities and obtaining

WTP 2040 and Beyond talks about climate change and resiliency. Being a Council of Governments, TRPC is more robust than other MPOs. Currently TRPC is contracted with Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, and Thurston County to create a regional Climate Mitigation Plan, which will be completed this year. The plan includes work related to defining and improving detour and alternate routes in expectation of increased peak flow events impacting the transportation system. We are working on the climate mitigation plan now, so it is not well integrated into the current transportation plan. This integration will be a focus of the next update.

State plan focuses on identifying and removing fish barriers. TRPC has allocated almost \$10 million of dedicated funds towards the Thurston County Fish Passage Program. The TRPC host the Deschutes Watershed Salmon Recovery Lead Entity. There are many benefit of having this

program housed with the traditional transportation organization. While this is beneficial, the dispersed ownership of the areas needing correction presents challenges to correcting barriers.

TRPC is already looking forward to the next update. That update will include revising goals and policies. Currently, there are 20 goals, over 100 policies, which is too many to focus on. TRPC had intended to focus on technology in the current update; however, it became clear that there wasn't enough specificity in the plan to accomplish that. We know that the plan needs to do more here and will work on for the next update. Additionally, in the next plan the TRPC will be integrating the Climate Mitigation Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan, with a focus on reducing greenhouse gas emission. The TRPC is on the cusp of a population of 200,000 for their urban areas. With the 2020 Census, it is expected that they will become a Transportation Management Area. If this occurs, the approach to the plan will shift. It is unknown what exactly this shift will mean.

Intercity Transit is fare free; which has been a huge success. In January, there was a ridership increase, compared to the last year, in the high 20%. In February, increases was in the high 30%. Rural transit also saw an increase, but not as high as InterCity Transit. Based on the increases experienced, TRPC is confident that these were riders that had not been using transit before. It is clear that having the fare barrier removed, led new people to use and ride transit. However, it is unclear if this will be sustained. It is important to note that this was before the COVID 19-related Stay Home Order.

[Thurston Regional Transportation Plan 2020 Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 01:12:15, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

“2040 Island Access” – Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization’s Regional Transportation Plan Thera Black, Regional Transportation Planner, 3P Transportation Planning Services

Ms. Black provided an overview of Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (IRTPO), one of the newest RTPOs in the state, as well as, being a single county of Whidbey and Camano Islands. IRTPO recently adopted *2040 Island Access*, the region’s first long-range plan, since becoming a new RTPO. The fundamental aim of this strategic plan is to recommend actions that IRTPO and any of its members or partners can pursue to advance practical solutions to transportation issues and opportunities in the region.

This is a rural, slow growing county. To get from one part of the county to another, one must leave the county. The region is extremely attuned to what is happening within the larger area, which leads to active inter-regional collaborations and lots of interaction with neighboring areas.

IRTPO wanted a plan would have a practical approach to long-range regional planning in an era of rapid change and disruption. Focused on three areas: island access, ferry pulse, and economic resiliency.

There are four ways to access the islands. These four gateways include two state parks, two ferry terminals, one historic bridge, and one national historic reserve; which means that they don't control these access points. Exploring collaboration, they identified opportunities. What can be done to improve how things work, without capital investment?

Ferry traffic has a pronounced pulse with a character of its own. This "ferry pulse" is the economic heartbeat of the region. This can be mitigated by public education, TSMO strategies, roadway design, and enforcement.

In approaching the creation of the plan, IRTPO considered: embracing regional planning as a complement to local and state decision-making; putting transportation in its broader community context; not promising what IRTPO can't deliver; leveraging opportunities that IRTPO and regional cooperation can provide; making transportation work better for everyone; linking policy objectives to implementation activities; not working about how others do their plans – make this work for IRTPO; and building a regional planning framework that supports development and implementation of practical, common-sense solutions.

Plan was adopted in September of 2019. Since then, they have set things into motion to achieve goals laid out in their plan, with very little resources.

[Island Access 2040](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 01:44:38, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

National Developments in Cooperative Automated Transportation **Roger Millar, Secretary of Transportation, Washington State Department of Transportation**

Secretary Millar provided an overview of key national activities and initiatives related to Cooperative Automated Transportation (CAT) and how these activities relate to and align with the work of the Washington State Autonomous Vehicle Work Group and WSDOT programs.

In October 2019, WSTC endorsed eight CAT policy goals: organize for innovation; shared mobility; economic vitality and livability; infrastructure and context sensitive street design; land use; equity; safety; and environment. These eight policy goals are the framework for action within Washington.

Secretary Millar serves as Co-Chair, with Jennifer Cohan, Delaware DOT, on the CAT Coalition Organization Committee. The committee has three focus areas: programmatic and strategic activities; planning, scenarios, and resources; and infrastructure and industry.

Commissioners asked about how the national discussion about racial bias in algorithms is playing out in the field.

Secretary Millar informed the Commission that WSDOT is holding conversations within the agency about systemic racism and the history of WSDOT and other transportation agencies within Washington and their decisions. He expressed that this has been hard for people to wrap their minds around; that he has asked staff to consider the experience of their colleagues; and that WSDOT need to acknowledge the past, recognize that the agency is far from perfect, and look to move forward together. It has been determined that computer algorithms are basically red-lining; this must be acknowledged and we need to determine how to move beyond it.

[Cooperative Automated Transportation \(CAT\) National Developments](#)

For more detail on agenda item 7, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 02:18:02, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

The Future of Transportation: Post-COVID – Transit Services **Justin Leighton, Executive Director, Washington State Transit Association** **Hannah McIntosh, Recovery Planning team Lead, King County Metro** **Richard DeRock, General Manager, LINK Transit** **Russ Arnold, Chief Customer Experience Officer, Sound Transit**

The Commission heard from a panel of representatives from transit agencies from around the state. The session explored the operational services that transit agencies have made for safety of passengers and operators, changes already made in response to demand for transit service, and the potential fiscal and operational changes yet to come.

Justin Leighton, Executive Director, Washington State Transit Association

It is important to remember the COVID-19 pandemic is not over. Transit agencies are still responding. We are not in the recovery yet. Every agency has taken measures to protect drivers & passengers: daily & spot cleaning; fare free; rear door boarding; driver barriers; reduced service levels; balancing between essential & non-essential riders; pandemic leave; and food and medicine delivery.

Washington State Transit Association (WSTA) has been busy supporting their members. WSTA delivered 130,000 face mask to 40 transit agencies in three states. WSTA holds weekly calls with small and midsize agencies to facilitate ideas and problem solving. WSTA convenes frequent meetings for managers of agencies department: human resources, finance, operations, maintenance, and general managers. WSTA acts as a clearinghouse of resources.

The impacts of COVID-19 are deep and expected to be long lasting. Recovering ridership and lost revenue could take years. The impacts are in four main areas: ridership, fare-box revenue, sales tax, and rider psyche.

Ridership decline was swift and deep. The lowest point in ridership, statewide, was April 23, 2020, with a 76% average decline. Intercity Transit changed to an on-demand system. They experienced a 90% decrease. Currently we are at about a 71% decrease, statewide.

Impacts at the fare-box: as part of keeping drivers and passengers safe, nearly all agencies were fare free in April. Fare-box revenue make up only a fraction of revenue from transit agencies.

Month	Fare-box Decline
March	-15%
April	-80%
May	-81%
June	-60%

The real issue is sales tax. Local sales tax makes up 70-80% of public transit revenue. A prolonged recession will cause long term impacts.

Month	Puget Sound	Statewide
March	-24.68%	-17%
April	-18%	-11%

The federal government provided funding relief in the CARES Act. CARES Act transit was well taken care of, for the first part; however, it is still hurting. \$800 million to Washington State Transit. The CARES Act was relief funds, not recovery. Can be used for any expense back to January 20, 2020; no state match; no timeline on when you must use.

Moving forward with an on-going response to COVID, transit agencies will need to balance conflicting needs. The need for social distancing leads to less capacity, which leads to a need for more service (vehicles). The pandemic is not over. With recent cases on the rise, we should caution ourselves to begin “re-defining” what transit or transportation looks like in the “new normal”. Additional relief and recovery funding is still needed, both from the federal and state levels.

Hannah McIntosh, Recovery Planning Team Lead, King County Metro

King County Metro is focused on making high-quality and rapid decision, while in the midst of a state of emergency and to start planning for the future.

There are three aspects of the current crisis: the COVID-19 pandemic; national reckoning with racial justice; and the economic recession. Thoughtful planning for recovery from this crisis is needed to rebuild toward our long-term goals and center our values of equity, safety and sustainability. The crisis is having a disproportionate impact on communities of color: significant disproportionate impacts by race/ethnicity and “essential” personnel are more likely to be women of color.

The impacts specifically to King County Metro: new public health and safety measures, limitations on vehicle capacity, 40’ buses have a limited capacity of 12 riders, 60’ bus have a

limited capacity of 18 riders (~20% of capacity). When buses are full, drivers are authorized to pass people waiting on curbs, which increase rider frustration. Adaptable work practices, for employees, have been adopted, such as telework; decreasing traditional ridership. Travel patterns have changed: overall there has been a reduction in demand, as residence followed public health guidance; an increase in teleworking; demand in peak periods has decreased. The greatest dip was about -80% ridership; back up to about -30%. Metro reinstated the standard schedule in late-June. Metro has seen a disproportionate impact on customers with the greatest needs.

The highest ridership loss during COVID 19 has been in northern King County, communities that tend to be higher income and whiter populations, than other areas.

Before COVID 19, King County Metro (Metro) faced a budget shortfall of \$1 billion over 10 years. Metro will use CARES Act funding (about \$242 million) and revenue stabilization reserves (\$260 million) to cover unexpected costs of responding to COVID 19. Even with offsets, Metro expects a \$2 billion deficit, by 2028.

Richard DeRock, General Manager, LINK Transit

Voters in Chelan and Douglas Counties passed a sales tax increase to fund service expansion in 2019, took effect January 2020. Link Transit was preparing a 22% service expansion in July 2020: improved Saturday service, starting Sunday service, and starting service with earlier and later weekday hours. January's daily ridership was up 6.1%. February ridership was up 16.2%, the highest daily average in 20 years.

Link Transit did not experience a drop as significant a drop as other systems; worse was about 50%. During the drop, riders were: essential workers: fruit processing, medical housekeeping, senior living food preparation, grocery and retail staff; low income food shoppers; persons with disabilities; and homeless, displaced populations. Populations that have stopped using transit include college students, government employees, school kids, office workers, hospitality workers, riders for medical appointments, and discretionary riders.

Sales tax is down about 25%, based on comparison. With voter passed increase, actual down is about 8%. The issue is that the sales tax increase was tied to an increase of service, which is not happening.

Impacts of COVID 19 on Link Transit: enhanced sanitation – additional staff, supplies, and time; elimination of fare collection; addition of personal protection equipment (PPE) acquisition and driver shields; social distancing requirements (full sized bus is 35' can carry 10 people; cut-a-way bus can carry 3 people: currently cancelled all cut-a-way); older buses that were scheduled to be retired are being kept on routes, which will increase maintenance costs; an increase of security, due to shut down of service agencies.

Due to the new sales tax, Link Transit can weather the immediate impacts. There will be impacts to federal funding, since the formulas are based on ridership. Unless the loss of revenue exceeds 35%, Link Transit can operate at current service level for 5 years, which will require spending reserves. However, the planned expansion had to be delayed. Additionally, Link

Transit will delay capital projects (park and rides, regional transit facilities). Even with all of the steps that Link Transit has taken, the risk of having to reduce service due to new outbreaks still exists.

Russ Arnold, Chief Customer Experience Officer, Sound Transit

System wide ridership is down:

- Light rail -84%
- Express Bus -80%
- Heavy rail/Sounder -90%

Sound Transit started monitoring services very early to see how to adjust services. Adjustments have been applied based on route, not system wide.

1. How to schedule to help people maintain social distancing
2. Increase demand: how to deploy safe and reliable services when demand has increased to where social distancing cannot be maintained
3. Commute normalization: as commuting returns or new commutes emerge
4. Full service: thinking 18-24 months away

Communicating with similar systems, around the US, to learn from each other. What do passengers need to feel confident to use the system? The top three responses were:

1. Ensure everyone is wearing a mask
2. What is the system doing? If an employee is sick are they being encouraged to stay home?
3. Customers want hand sanitizer or sanitizing wipes

This information is being used to determine how to deploy resources.

Hearing that Puget Sound area employers, which make up a huge portion of ridership, are teleworking through the end of the year. Additionally, watching what is happening with schools. Children remaining a home greatly impacts ridership.

Aside from this research, looking at lessons learned across the country and internationally. However, are learning that most systems are doing the same things Sound Transit already had in place.

In addition to mask, air flow in coaches greatly impacts health and safety in vehicles, mostly trains. Industrial Hygienists are saying that increasing air flow; through HVAC on trains and by opening windows on buses; greatly decreases exposure.

Top priorities

- 100% of passengers and employees wearing masks at all times
 - o Industrial hygienist would like no speaking on coaches
 - o How to collect data? Enforcement to spot audit (by fare enforcement), think that we are at about 80%, which is a good start
 - o Piloting on handing out masks, starting as a reminder campaign – Monday mornings. How do we operationalize long term
- Increasing cleaning protocols
- Changes to HVAC system to increase airflow

Key is communicating with riders as to when high-rider times are, so that they can make decisions about when to travel. Increased information to passengers is vital so that they can make informed decisions.

[WSTA COVID-19 Transit Response](#)
[King County Metro's COVID-19 Recovery Planning](#)
[COVID-19 and Rural/Small Urban Public Transit](#)

For more detail on agenda item 8, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 03:06:06, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

The Future of Transportation: Post-COVID 19 – Freight Mobility
Chris Herman, Senior Director for Trade and Transportation, Washington Public Ports Association

Sean Eagan, Director of State Government Affairs, The Northwest Seaport Alliance

Johan Hellman, Executive Director of External Affairs, BNSF Railway

Sheri Call, Executive Vice President, Washington Trucking Associations

The Commission heard from a panel about freight mobility during the COVID pandemic. The session explored how changes in consumer demand, supply chains, and public safety are altering the movement of freight and goods at the international, national, and local levels. Presentations included information about ports across the state, specifically seaports; railways; and various trucking industries.

Sean Eagan, Director of State Government Affairs, The Northwest Seaport Alliance

Mr. Eagan provided an overview of The Northwest Seaport Alliance, a partnership between the Ports of Tacoma and Seattle, and the impact of COVID on their operations. This partnership makes up the 4th largest container port in North America. The Alliance supports 54,400 jobs generates more than \$250,000 state tax revenues. Half of staff, mostly administration, has been working remotely since the Stay Home Order. Safety proposals for on the terminal operators, agreed to by management and labor, for the entire west coast, were put into place, within a few days of the Order being issued. The first infection on the marine terminals, in the Pacific Northwest, was in early July; were able to isolate the facility, clean, and reopen within 24 hours. Ports of Tacoma and Seattle are major supply lines for the states of Alaska and Hawaii.

Despite all of this, the ports have been significantly impacted by the COVID shutdowns. May 2020, container volumes were down 24%, compared to May of 2019. So far in 2020, container volumes are down 19%, shipments of automobiles are down 22%. In 2020, to day, there have been 62 voided or cancelled sailings; compared to 59 in 2019, and 38 in 2018. Longshore hours are down 20-33%, covers marine cargo and the travel cruise business. Numbers are grim and employment is down. There is a lot of work to go into recapturing cargo, employment hours, and market share.

Chris Herman, Senior Director for Trade and Transportation, Washington Public Ports Association

In Washington, freight mobility industries not only move items; but also create jobs and generate state tax revenues. There will be both short and long-term impacts of COVID 19 related shutdowns. COVID is exasperating tariff and supply chain issues. Appears that impacts are situation and short term, but very fluid; but there will be long-term impacts. Across the state, infrastructure projects are still happening; some have been delayed. Those that are just going out to bid, are coming in under budget. The systems that have been put in place to safely reopen are working; however, there are some longer term impacts from a port needing to close, for even 36 hours. A huge lesson, is that ports need to be nimble and flexible for dealing with emerging issues.

Sea-Tac is about 75%, year to date, passengers through the airport. Domestic travel is down 86%, year to date; international travel is down 97%, year to date. Domestic air cargo has increased; but international cargo is down about 50%, much of which moves in the cargo holds of passenger flights.

Westport, WA 11th largest seafood producer in the US. They are extremely dependent on international markets. With the closures, this has been hit very hard. The CARES Act earmarked \$15 million to Washington specific to this. Dutch Harbor is the largest, much of their harvest is shipped to Washington for processing.

Johan Hellman, Executive Director of External Affairs, BNSF Railway

Railroads have been resilient throughout the COVID-19 crisis. This fits with the history of freight rail being one of the first services to come back on-line after a natural disaster; usually one of the first restored and providing services and delivering goods. This illustrates how critical this infrastructure is and the services that it provides to the community. Railroads have had to deal with issues that every other employer has, while serving our communities. COVID has also shown the flexibility of the system. Railroads have adapted well, but still feeling the impacts – furloughing staff, restructuring, impacts to capital projects. Trade and transportation will continue to serve as the state’s backbone.

The shift to critical services has highlighted weaknesses with critical infrastructure. Just in Seattle, can think of three bridges that are in imminent need of repair, if not replacement. This is seen across the state. The recent shift has also highlighted the need to focus on last mile connectors and rerouting intermodal transportation systems. This investment has many levels of positive impact on our society: puts people back to work with good paying construction jobs; spurring investment that gives back to the community; and position Washington to be ready to respond to increasing trade. We can build our way out of the current recession.

Sheri Call, Executive Vice President, Washington Trucking Associations

Trucking is dependent on freight volumes. Freight has been volatile, dependent on sectors. The freight trucking industries have reported the same experiences as rail and ports have reported. Timber industry has continued without much disruption. They had concerns about shutdowns at mills, but have been okay. Hazardous material movement is up about 40%, there were some

delays, but less traffic on the roads has been helpful. We have seen an increase in on-line retail sales. Overall, 1 in 4 companies have been unaffected by the pandemic. This is attributed to consumers keeping trucking afloat. It seems like it is too early to determine if we are at our new normal. We will not know until after the virus has peaked.

A positive has been a great deal of regulatory relief, state and federal regulators responded quickly. Trucking tends to be a low margin, cash dependent industry. We have concerns about PPE money running out before freight levels return.

WSDOT did a great job of keeping rest areas open and sanitized. A number of other states shutdown their facilities. We did not have that issue here in Washington. Weigh station facilities are being used for night time parking. Drivers are concerned with staying healthy with lack of clean and sanitary facilities with flushing toilets.

WTA is receiving reports of an increase of shorter hauls. However, we are not able to determine a cause. Could be tied to long-haul movements associated with international rates.

A positive of the COVID shutdown was short drive times. Trucks were moving at speed limits and bottlenecks disappeared, nationwide, over a few months.

Post pandemic issues – truck parking associated/tied to clean facilities is critical. We are watching business model changes, such as an increase of teleworking and work from home. The industry will continue to prepare for emergencies/disaster – business continuity, etc; and consumer changes.

Discussion:

Since the response to COVID 19, our daily lives are different and might not go back to pre-COVID 19 “normal.” Trade still happens on the back of trains, trucks, ships, and airplanes. That infrastructure remains the same. Now is the time to invest in infrastructure. As far as policy goes, everything is on the table now. How do we fund these transportation infrastructure - vehicle mile traveled, carbon tax, etc.? What ideas have we not we explored? We will have to build our way out of the COVID 19 created recession.

Something to consider is that the majority of the ports customers do not live in Washington. All Washington ports fiercely compete with other ports: California, the East Coast, and Canada. With all of the changes resulting from COVID 19, freight volume is not down and competition seems to be increasing.

The trucking industries are all about highway capacity, which varies by area. Capacity is created, not just by adding highway miles, but changing how we live and work. An important part of our transportation system are bridges. Many bridges in Washington are approaching the end of their lifecycles. In addition to state investments, the various sectors should be planning for resiliency and redundancy.

Due to COVID-19, we will expect to see a major change in the service industry and urban design. Are there merits in decentralizing terminals and ports? Maybe commodity specific ports

and hubs? Many ports are having these conversations. As a society, we have learned that we can do our jobs remotely. We will see a reimagining of how business is conducted happen; related to terminals and load centers, we will continue to see incentives for continued consolidation. There is more capacity. This is why you saw the emergence of the Northwest Seaport Alliance, so that local ports are working together, not bidding against each other.

Since the COVID 19 outbreak, the Seattle and Tacoma ports have seen a reduction in our volumes, due to increasing competition. We need to figure out ways to move cargo faster and cheaper. An important component of increasing this is land use. As we are building bicycle and pedestrian paths, we still need to be able to get product into communities. The last 3 months, we seen the resiliency is really in the industrial areas as opposed to condo, high-density areas. Additionally, our ports are great centers of resiliency. We're seeing lots of innovation, especially as we shift away from retail centers. Despite the changes in consumer purchasing, away from malls to home delivery, there is not a shift to the supply chain. The difference is the "mall" is now a distribution center facility. To move cargo for home delivery, you still need the logistic chain. Encroachment on marine terminals, etc.; with non-compatible uses, causes disruptions in the chain. This can be address when determinations of land use are made.

[The Future of Transportation – Post-COVID – NW Seaport Alliance](#)

For more detail on agenda item 9, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 04:25:00, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Reflections and Recommendations

Commissioners offered their reflections and thoughts from the meeting:

- Marshall Elizer, Assistant Secretary WSDOT, made a statement right at the beginning about the disconnect between land use and transportation systems. This was reinforced by the other presentations. The last panel (freight mobility) specifically discussed increasing capacity and stated that this does not mean building more miles, but being more efficient.
- Interesting hearing from the Active Transportation Division that good design is on the job 24/7; that the most effective safety improvement is through design.
- Transit systems are safer, related to COVID 19, than many of us think. Air flow is better and safer than being in your office.
- We have talked a lot about working from home; but the freight mobility panel reminded us that most of our essential services cannot work from home. We need to have a transportation system that is well maintained and can keep materials moving.
- We need to think how, as a state, we compete with other states; talking about the things that make us win. Energy is a place where we win. We can also be winning related to transportation: not just related to freight mobility, but ensuring that the transportation system works for everyone. How we move ourselves around our communities?
- We need reliable and sustainable revenue systems; long term solutions to fix the funding problems.

- Marshall Elizer and Kerri Woehler, Director, Multimodal Planning Division Washington State Department of Transportation, provided an overview of what the entire system. The public needs to hear this because it is so comprehensive and expansive that I do not think that the public understands.
- The Peninsula RTPO has done a lot of work in a short time and has been very busy.
- Roger Millar, Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation, presented so much information it would be nice to hear it in a slower way, so that we can actually process and discuss it.
- Fascinating hearing about the CAT. Would be interested to see how mobility on demand is being used.
- A couple of the transit agencies discussed the national reckoning about equity issues; but they did not discuss remedies. What are they doing to address? Small tweaking won't help. We need game changing ideas.
- The freight mobility panel was excellent. It sounds like they are the least impacted by COVID.
- Really enjoyed the RTPO conversations. It was interesting to hear the differences between RTPO, MPO, and COGs. With a COG you can reach across county or state borders. COGs can fill the space with whatever the membership wants, since they can reach across borders. Really impressed by this.
- Appreciated hearing from the transit agencies. Being from a barren transit area, I am always interested to hear how they function. I think it is important to recognize that transit can be funded by government. It is always interesting to hear different approaches.

For more detail on agenda item 10, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 15](#), which starts at 05:41:50, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Chair Litt reminded the Commission that the meeting will continue on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, and recessed the meeting.

July 21, 2020

Chair Jerry Litt opened the meeting at 9:00 am with introductions by Commissioners.

I-405 / SR 167 Express Toll Lane Low-Income Tolling Study
Gabor Debreczeni, Economic Analysis and Forecasting Manager, WSP USA
Brent Baker, Senior Vice President, WSP USA
Catherine Larson, Principal Consultant, Larson Consulting Associates
Shanwen Liu, Economist, WSP USA

The I-405/SR 167 Express Toll Lanes corridor project team provided a mid-project update, including reporting out on a nation-wide scan of similar discount programs, opportunities and challenges for implementing such a program in Washington State, and on the expected timeline for future decisions by the Commission.

This is the third presentation to the Commission on this project. The project has been broken down into six tasks. Two tasks, scan of existing programs and interviews and surveys have been completed. Two tasks, assessment of the tolling system's capacities and assessment of low-income populations are in mid-progress. There are two tasks starting now, analysis of existing financial and operational commitments and identification of possible program feature and evaluation criteria for selection of programs to take forward into deeper analysis.

The team will present program options and performance measures for selection in the fall.

The poverty rate used was 100% of the federal poverty line, which is defined as, for a four person household in the lower 48 states, \$26,200/year. Commissioners feels it is important that end users are surveyed, to establish what needs we are trying to meet, what could actually be helpful. This was identified and we are working to include this in part of task six, so that proposals and criteria have been vetted with end users.

The group is exploring identifiers other than social security numbers that could be used for a program in Washington State. Currently, looking at using a number assigned by the Department of Social and Health Service (DSHS) for economic assistance programs, referred to as the DSHS client number. Using this would allow verification of eligibility to align with other state programs, for consistency.

Tolls are specific to very specific geographic locations and, in Washington State, most tolls are in King County. So why use a federal number and not a King County number? That is being explored, but the conversation has started here, since it is already an established amount and participants, clients would already have met established eligibility criteria.

There are three programs, nationally, that require some of the tolls collected to be used for transportation projects within the area of the toll facility. These are in Virginia, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis. In Virginia, along the I-66 corridor, all net revenue are used within 5-10 miles of the facility for non-driving projects. The thought is that the congestion is caused by there not be alternatives to get from the suburbs into Washington DC. Funds are used for bike lanes, ride

shares, bike shares, safety and pedestrian improvements. About \$20 million per year, which goes a long way, given the types of projects being funded. Minneapolis is a small program with about \$2 million per year, all of which goes to funding bus routes that use the express lanes. All three programs are legislatively mandated. In Washington State, use of funds, for these purposes from toll revenues, would likely require legislative authorization.

[Low Income Toll Study Mid-Project Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 21](#), which starts at 00:04:00, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Social Equity Considerations in the Context of Tolling

Alan Hoffman, Founding Director/Principal Planner, Center for Advanced Urban Visioning

Alan Hoffman, co-author of *Pricing Roads, Advancing Equity*, presented how the potential efficiencies of road pricing can solve several problems at once, including the redress of systemic inequities. Mr. Hoffman, focused on five topics: equity, framing, the equity framework, institutional issues, and equity in a post-COVID 19 world.

Inequities are an inherent part of our systems. Examples include: redlining, highway construction, “urban renewal”, access to opportunities, and dispirit health outcomes. As these conversations continue, they should be opened up to include voices that we typically do not hear.

Keep in mind that how the tolling issue is framed, it is important on how people feel and respond to it. Re-framing road pricing: the question really is what are you paying for? We often frame it as drivers are “paying to use the road.” People typically respond that they already pay for the road, through taxes. In Singapore, they frame it as you are paying others to not use the road. Creating alternatives to driving, so those that needed to drive, could. Another alternative is “imagine the opposite of today: drivers pay to use the roads; congestion is far lower; pollution is far lower; transit is faster and more frequent; and discount programs for low-income commuters. If someone suggested use of roads should be free for all, which is the system that we have today; “rich and poor drive for free” but actually pay with time instead of money; congestion and pollution would increase, buses would be slower; pollution impacts would fall heavily on the poor, due to locations of roads; and there would be fewer revenues for mitigation, equity and maintenance. Would we make that switch? We probably would not, because the outcomes would be viewed as negative. We should be examining the fairness of pricing and the fairness of free roads, which tend to favor the rich. The normalcy of the current system keeps us from exploring new approaches.

The structural inequity in our transportation system may be remedied in part by effective, equitable road pricing. Road pricing and smart investment strategies could and should lead to more frequent and affordable public transit; safer pedestrian and bicycle routes; improved health

outcomes for environmental justice communities; and mechanisms for discounts and exemptions for low-income households. Equitable outcomes are greater affordability of the systems; improved access to opportunities; and improvements in community health.

There are five steps to an equitable road pricing program:

1. Identify who, what, and where
2. Define equity outcomes and performance indicators, so that we can measure results
3. Determine the benefits and burdens of road tolling
4. Choose programs that advance transportation equity
 - a. All the best programs, circle back through 1-4 many times
5. Provide accountable feedback and evaluation

Equity in a post-COVID 19 world: COVID 19 isn't over, this is going to be around for a while and transit will be greatly impacted. The future of transit is viable, but we may need to rethink what it looks like. We may see an increase in autonomous vehicles: smaller, more easily cleaned. Any improvement to transit that reduces someone's commute by five minutes daily, results in gaining back 40 hours per year. We have seen many communities reapportion transportation away from cars and give back or create more space for bicycles and pedestrians. We should expect to continue to see this re-ordering of planning.

The basis of this is to increase involvement with agencies and populations that have a great deal of distrust of the "system." How do we bridge this gap of distrust? When the leadership sits down and listens to people and allows people to say how they feel and their perceptions. This will be uncomfortable; but leadership listens.

In Washington State, there are limitations on use of revenue collected from tolls. Currently, they cannot be used for transit, neighborhood projects, local street projects. More broadly, there are limitations from the 18th Amendment about use of transportation revenue sources.

[Steps to a More Equitable Transportation System](#)

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 21](#), which starts at 00:39:27, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Puget Sound Gateway Program Update

**John H. White, P.E. Deputy Program Administrator, Puget Sound Gateway Program,
Washington State Department of Transportation**

Ashley Probart, Executive Director, Transportation Improvement Board

The Puget Sound Gateway Program provided an update on funding for the SR 509 and SR 167 Extension Projects and sought Commission input on the proposed naming of the new facilities. WSDOT and Transportation Improvement Board staff provided the Commission with an overview of a potential Route Jurisdiction Transfer (RJT) process for current portions of SR 509

and SR 167 that will no longer function as a part of those highways once the Gateway projects are complete.

The Gateway Project is expected to receive \$73.6 million from WSDOT, which is 75% of what was requested. This was the third attempt for this grant. WSDOT took a different approach than previous applications, focusing on the national and international trade dependency on these routes and broader partnerships. There are many aspects to the funding: federal, state, and local.

SR 509 and SR 167 construction are broken into different contract phases over ten years, starting in 2019, ending in 2028. These phases are coordinated with other projects in the area; such as Sound Transit's light rail expansion through Federal Way; noise walls on the western side of I-5, through Des Moines and Federal Way; or with the City of Kent and connections between Veterans Way and Military Road.

There is a statutory mandate, related to the toll authority requiring the use of the term "expressway" for the toll facilities on SR 509 and SR 167. In April, the WSTC Toll Subcommittee confirmed use of "expressway." This would apply to SR 509 from 188th Street to I-5 at Highway 18 and SR 167 and Meridian in Puyallup and the 509 spur connecting in Tacoma.

For this project to complete, there are parts of current SR 509 and SR 167 that would no longer be state routes and would convert back to the local jurisdiction through most likely the route jurisdiction transfer process. It is possible that the transfer could happen through an administrative process. Different processes could be used for different sections of the road. The transfers do not need to happen at one time; they can be approached in a prioritized, strategic manner. The current population requirement for local responsibility for all traffic control devices is 27,500. Cities under 20,000 are eligible for preservation funding from Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) for transferred routes. SR 509 potentially affected jurisdictions are Burien, Des Moines, Federal Way, Normandy Park, Tacoma, and Washington State Parks (requirement for state parks to have state highway leading to it). SR 167 potentially affected jurisdictions are Pierce County, Puyallup, and Tacoma. All of these projects, these stretches of road have been flagged so that WSDOT does not reprioritize maintenance of these sections, so that they are properly preserved so that they are in good shape when transfer happens. Currently, identifying other possible hindrances: unimproved fish barrier; bridges, walls, and storm water features.

The current schedule is accelerated, to be completed by 2028. This could revert back to a previous schedule, which would push us outward; which would allow more time for RJT. The goal is for WSDOT to take care of any major obligations before transferring to the local jurisdiction.

Ashley Probart, Executive Director, Transportation Improvement Board, gave an overview and history of the RJT program. The Gateway Program proposal has three points where roads would transfer. This project is the most extensive proposal since 1993. This is going to take some time and it's great that WSDOT has identified this and started the process so early. This is complicated and complex; involving multiple jurisdictions. TIB would like for the Commission to consider a new RJT system, process.

It has been 30 years since the RJT statutes were enacted. Washington has changed a lot since then: added over 2 million residents; state and local transportation investment priorities have changes; etc.

It is estimated that it will take at least two years to work through the RJT process for these projects. If taken by segments, it could take longer. WSDOT is in initial steps of formulating their plan. They will bring that to the Commission to discuss the plan and coordination with local jurisdictions. There is a lot of homework and conversations that need to happen before that. This could be impacted by legislative action.

[Puget Sound Gateway Program](#) [Route Jurisdiction Transfers](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 21](#), which starts at 01:43:32, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: Naming of the Gateway Project will be discussed in October.

Update on Tolled Facilities

Ed Barry, Director, Toll Division, Washington State Department of Transportation

Jason Richter, Deputy Treasurer, Washington State Office of the State Treasurer

Carl See, Senior Financial Analyst, Washington State Transportation Commission

In June, a 2020 transportation revenue forecast was released that included initial projected impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. WSDOT Toll Division provided a preliminary update on each toll facility's traffic and revenue through June 2020 and provided an update on financial planning steps to address possible revenue shortfalls. The Office of the State Treasurer reported on the projected capacity to meet financial requirements for the SR 520 Bridge in the 2019-21 biennium. Commission staff provided an update on the status of meeting the Commission's sufficient minimum balance policy for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge account and next steps to address a possible revenue shortfall.

Ed Barry, Director, Toll Division, Washington State Department of Transportation, *Preliminary* June toll traffic and revenues results continue to show traffic and revenue gradually recovering, since April 2020. Compared to the Pre-COVID 19, November 2019 forecast, preliminary June reported toll traffic and revenues were below the forecast by 44% (for traffic) and 43% (for revenues). Compared to the June forecast described at the July 7 Commission meeting, preliminary reported toll traffic and revenues were *above* the forecast by 10% (for traffic) and 15% (for revenues). FY 2020 preliminary total reported toll revenues were \$178.8 million, 18% below the November 2019 forecast, and 1% above the June 2020 forecast. Final FY 2020 revenue results will be available in August.

Jason Richter, Deputy Treasurer, Washington State Office of the State Treasurer, in February, revenues for SR 520 were healthy. Due to the impacts of Stay Home, Stay Healthy order,

revenues fell steeply. It is currently projected that for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, revenues will be \$19.9 million before projections. For SFY 2021, they fall further to \$33.6 million below. If, due to traffic reductions, the SR 520 system is unable to meet the coverage levels required by the MBR during the FY ending June 30, 2020:

- within 60 days after the end of the fiscal year (a date not later than roughly 8/30/2020) WSDOT would be required to request the recommendations of the Traffic Consultant as to how to increase Toll Revenue in the following Fiscal Year (7/1/2020, to 6/30/2021) to comply with the coverage requirement;
- within 60 days after the date of WSDOT's request (a date not later than roughly 10/30/2020) the Traffic Consultant must provide its recommendations to WSDOT, the State Treasurer and the Tolling Authority; and,
- within 60 days after the Tolling Authority receives the Traffic Consultant's recommendations (a date not later than roughly 12/30/2020) the Tolling Authority takes steps (which may include raising toll rates or other recommended steps) to implement the Traffic Consultant's recommendations and diligently proceeds to substantially comply with the Traffic Consultant's recommendations.

Carl See, Senior Financial Analyst, Washington State Transportation Commission, the sufficient minimum fund balance (SMB) requirement is a WSTC policy that requires the Tacoma Narrows Bridge (TNB) Account to maintain a minimum fund balance. The intent of the SMB is to buffer against unexpected revenue loss, not covered by the TNB insurance policy. The loss of revenue resulting from COVID 19 qualifies. The TNB Account must have an average fund balance of at least \$10 million, over the past three months to remain in compliance. Rolling three month average of fund balance used as measure for SMB compliance to address expected fluctuations of the fund balance.

As intended, the SMB policy has provided a buffer against this unexpected revenue loss, but the fund balance is being depleted. SMB analysis continues, but the account is expected to be out of compliance during current fiscal year (ending June 30, 2021). The fund balance is also at risk of being negative during the current fiscal year.

The SMB policy requires that the WSTC identify measures that may address a projected shortfall. Some combination of measures may be necessary. Projected size of revenue need will be clearer as analysis of revenues and costs continue into the Fall 2020.

Next steps:

Spring-Fall 2020:

- May – August: Assess TNB fund balance compliance against the SMB policy based on the June transportation revenue forecast and preliminary June 2020 data.
- September – November: Report back to the Commission on projected revenue shortfall and options to address it.
- Continue to monitor changes to TNB traffic, costs, and revenues.

Fall 2020 – Winter 2021:

- Develop funding options for the Legislature as part of TNB Loan Report.
- Begin consideration of rate setting process, as needed.

- Rate increase of \$0.25, which is currently assumed for July 2021. This may be impacted, depending on the effects of the pandemic.

Given the current revenue outlook, due to the impacts of changes in travel patterns from COVID-19, WSDOT, the Office of the State Treasurer and Commission staff will continue to closely monitor the revenue outlook for all tolling facilities and regularly report to the Commission the status and changes. Depending on trends, the Commission may need to change its plan on rate increases on tolls.

[Tolled Facilities Update](#)
[SR 520 Toll Facility Model Update and Summary](#)
[Tacoma Narrows Bridge SMB Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 21](#), which starts at 02:40:44, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: Update at the October meeting of toll revenues.

Commission Business

Reflections and Recommendations:

Commissioners offered their reflections and thoughts from the meeting:

- Unfortunate that we have an equity issue in our tolling system; but uplifting to hear that we can reimagine the system.
- COVID 19 has reimaged the system in a lot of ways. However, we still have a major problem about maintenance and preservation of the transportation system
- Would like to continue the conversations about planning and shifting it to more people focused. Need to make sure that we communicate to our communities what we are doing, as well as, how and why, so that we can include them and bring them along.
- Please to hear a planner talk about how we can change our approach to planning (starting with people and bicycles) and how this could improve safety of our transportation system, as well as, address some of our inequity issues.
- Appreciated hearing the State Treasurer's Office explain some "out of the box" thinking and approaches to revenue shortfalls.
- Serious concerns about the tolling shortfalls for FY 2021 and how we are going to get out of it; especially with the Legislative long session.
- Excited about Alan Hoffman's presentation and how we can use process equity recommendations in both Road Usage Charge and the other outreach that we do.

Future of Transportation Post-COVID 19

The Commission reviewed the proposed plan for future topics in the series. Commissioners were extremely interested to hearing about agriculture impacts and rural broadband, in September. If we hear from transportation network companies (Uber/Lyft), would like to include the driver perspectives. Commissioners would be interested in hearing about policing within the transportation system. It was mentioned at a Joint Transportation Committee meeting that the Washington State Patrol is doing a study with Washington State University on this and feel that the Commission should hear more about this. The series should continue into 2021. The issues will be on-going. This information will be included in the 2020 Annual Report

2021-23 WSTC Budget Preparations

Budget preparations are underway. The budget is due to the Governor's office before the September meeting. The Governor's office has asked all agencies to look for suggested reductions. A possible saving measure could be to continue to hold virtual meetings, even after it is safe to meet in person. Shifting three of seven Olympia meetings to virtual would save \$18,000 for the biennium. Other possible saving areas could be a reduction or redefinition of the AV workgroup or the FROG. We are generating savings by not filling the Fiscal Analyst position.

The Washington Transportation Plan is scheduled to be updated in December 2022, with work starting in 2021. Historically, the Commission seeks a budget proviso for funds to contract this work. Given the current fiscal situation, we have discussed the best way to proceed with this. The Chair proposed moving forward with a limited update: focused on (1) increasing social equity, possible hiring someone to examine the plan for implicit bias; (2) updating the areas that have been specifically identified as needing to be updated. Keeping the update limited to the on-line version, as a cost saving measure. Staff will develop options and present pros, cons, so that they can make the decision of how to proceed. Rethinking how we conduct outreach could also help with cost savings. The Commission will need to consult with WSDOT to ensure that we are meeting federal requirements.

Action: Motion by Commissioner Young that the agency budget finalization would be delegated to Chair Litt and Vice-Chair Jennings. Seconded by Commissioner Jennings. Adopted.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

2020 Commission Annual Report

Staff proposed a structure for the 2020 WSTC Annual Report: continuing themes from the 2019 report laid out in the Chair's letter; adding a section dedicated to the Transportation Post-COVID series. Commissioners agreed to the approach.

WSTC Subcommittee Updates

Staff provided updates on tolling, ferries, Road Use Charges (RUC), and autonomous vehicles.

Pending Naming Proposal for SR 902

Indicated a naming proposal to designate SR 902 the "Gold Star Memorial Highway" will be heard at the WSTC September meeting in Pullman.

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording - July 21](#), which starts at 03:51:08, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Next Meeting: September 15-16, 2020; Local Meeting – Pullman & the Surrounding Area

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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HESTER SEREBRIN, Member

KELLY FUKAI, Member

DEBBIE YOUNG, Member

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

DATE OF APPROVAL