



Washington State Transportation Commission

Olympia Meeting Summary
March 16 & 17, 2021

Day 1: March 16, 2021

Chair Jerry Litt opened the meeting at 9:00 am with introductions by Commissioners and staff, an overview of the agenda, and virtual meeting protocols.

Agenda Item 2:

Clean Energy Meets Green Transportation

Panel Moderators:

Bruce Agnew, Director, Cascadia/ACES NW Network

Matt Morrison, Director, Pacific NW Economic Region

PNWER is a statutory, public-private partnership chartered in 1991 by the U.S. States of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana and the Canadian Provinces of British Columbia (BC), Alberta, Saskatchewan, Yukon, and Northwest Territories. PNWER's goal is to develop clean transportation projects in each state by supporting each utility's territory and regional vision through collaboration. The speakers spoke about "CleanBC" which is a clean transportation strategy in British Columbia with the goals to bring down the price of clean vehicles and speed up the switch to cleaner fuels.

Introduction:

Tom Alberg, Chief Executive Officer, Madrona Venture Group

Mr. Alberg introduced the panel and spoke to the importance of clean emissions.

Panel A Members:

Stephanie Bowman, Commissioner, Port of Seattle

Roei Ganzarski, Chief Executive Officer, MagniX Electric Aircraft Propulsion

Yolanka Wulff, Co-Executive Director, Community Air Mobility Initiative

Ms. Bowman addressed the Port of Seattle's (Port) evolution to becoming a multimodal hub for clean fuels, and statewide electric/ autonomous flight. She provided an overview of activities at Sea-Tac International Airport to reduce the airport's carbon footprint. The Port has partnered with airlines for \$38 million of combined investment, investing in innovation to reduce emissions. Sea-Tac Airport is leading the nation in car charging with fifty-four charging stations

installed in the garage, two fast chargers in the cell phone lot, and ten fast chargers for taxis. The Port has also taken steps to green their operations at the Seattle waterfront.

Mr. Ganzarski provided details on MagniX Electric Aircraft. There are currently nine passenger aircraft being developed in Arlington. The company is focused on commercial aviation that will operate out of commercial airports. Environmental concerns are not the primary driver, but the economic priority of reducing costs. Policy makers need to incentivize the transition to electronic vehicles (EVs) cars and planes by putting policies in place that promoting a change in behavior, such as mandating that flights coming in or leaving Washington State be zero emission. This would establish a new standard in the US and globally.

Ms. Wuluff spoke to advanced air mobility (AAM), integrating “air” as the third dimension of the metropolitan transportation system, connecting with surface and water and being included in planning efforts. Urban Air Mobility (UAM) services provide for shorter distance air-travel within an urban area, and Regional Air Mobility (RAM) services provide for air-travel over longer distances away from the urban core, redefining how we travel locally and regionally. As considerations are given to such localized air travel and planning for them, infrastructure needs must be addressed to enable such services. Planning for these services should happen in the context of a complete and integrated trip.

Panel B Members:

Nancy Bell, Director, Regulatory Affairs & Associate General Counsel, Rivian

Mike Usen, Electromobility and Resiliency, DKS Associates

Rocale Timmons, Senior Vice President of Planning and Development, Southport Renton SECO Development

Karen Morgan, Managing Partner, TESIAC

Scott Kuznicki, Associate Director, ACES NW Network

Mr. Kuznicki introduced the panel with setting the stage for smart cities, smart fleets, and green community mobility.

Ms. Bell provided an update on the status of Rivian’s electric sports utility vehicles (SUVs) and trucks. The range of Rivian’s new SUV and truck models is 200 to 400 miles and can be charged using public network equipment. Amazon’s new delivery van fleet will be Rivian vehicles, making it the first EV mega-fleet with 100,000 vehicles by 2030, saving 4 million metric tons of greenhouse gases. Ms. Bell noted Rivian supports a road usage charge (RUC) for EVs over flat EV fees and believes implementing RUC and removing the flat EV fee will increase EV adoption.

Mr. Usen provided information supporting the electrification of public fleets and incorporating needed infrastructure in the planning processes. He addressed E-mobility hubs which bring together multiple transportation modes in one location supported by electric charging infrastructure. These hubs can be scaled to different sizes for the location and to support many services. Park & ride lots provide great base infrastructure for e-mobility hubs.

Ms. Timmons provided information on the smart city case study in Renton’s “Southport District.” Southport is a seventeen-acre site on South Lake Washington that co-locates retail, office, housing, hotel, and restaurant space. The study sets forth a holistic approach to utilizing smart transportation, retail, and green space, knitting together existing nodes of growth in the area.

Ms. Morgan spoke about bringing infrastructure as a service to the public & private sectors with private equity investment. The technology for smart cities is available; however, infrastructure investments are siloed. There are companies that can help navigate the siloes and identify opportunities in support of community goals such as climate goals, social equity, job creation and sustainable development.

Final Presenter:

Kevin Moss, Policy Advisor, Western Governors’ Association

Mr. Moss provided an overview of the Western Governors Association (WGA) Electric Vehicle Roadmap, an initiative to align western states on electric vehicle infrastructure planning, particularly in support of interoperability of the infrastructure and improving accessibility. WGA is supporting electric grid infrastructure, particularly for rural areas, and is working to identify ways to establish increased fairness in price structures for EV charging in rural areas. They are also working to identify ways to improve and standardize rural permitting and siting of EV charging stations.

Presentations:

[Clean Energy Meets Green Transportation](#)

[Work Session Introduction](#)

[Port of Seattle](#)

[Advanced Air Mobility Initiative](#)

[Mobility Marketplaces](#)

[RIVIAN + Washington](#)

[Smart Cities, Smart Fleets, & Green Community Mobility](#)

[Southport District-A Future City Collaborative Case Study](#)

[Bringing "Infrastructure-as-a-Service" to the Public & Private Sectors](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:04:50, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 3:

Electric Aircraft Feasibility Study

David Fleckenstein, Director, Aviation Division, Washington State Department of Transportation

Mr. Fleckenstein gave an overview on WSDOT's Electric Aircraft Feasibility Study, released in November 2020. The study assesses the projected airport infrastructure improvement needs to accommodate electric aircraft, the demand for electric aircraft, and the environmental and economic impact of electric aircraft.

The study identified six airports to support beta testing of electric aircraft: Grant County; Olympia; Boeing Field/King County; Spokane Felts Field; Yakima; and Chehalis Centralia Municipal. Currently, battery size and distance capability are the limiting factors for electric aircraft. A likely path forward could include powering aviation with sustainable fuel; electric propulsion; and hydrogen fuel cells.

The electric aircraft work group will continue examining how to include electric aircraft in the aviation system plan and will work with airports to include electric aircraft in their master plan updates.

Presentation:

[Electric Aircraft Feasibility Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:01:06, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 4:

Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission 2020 Report

David Fleckenstein, Director, Aviation Division, Washington State Department of Transportation

Mr. Fleckenstein gave an overview on Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission's (CACC) 2020 report released in December 2020, including early recommendation of addressing aviation capacity needs for passenger service, air cargo, and general aviation.

The CACC's mission is to meet future aviation demand and determine how the system will operate, including expanding existing airports and new airports. The 2020 report recommends six sites for possible expansion: Arlington Municipal; Bremerton National; Snohomish County Airport/Paine Field; Sanderson Field (Shelton); Tacoma Narrows Airport (Gig Harbor); and Ed Carlson Memorial Field/South Lewis County Airport. Demand could be met by expanding services to two or three existing airports, while pursuing a new airport as well, noting it will take 20 or more years to develop a completely new airport. The report found that the revolving airport loan program is instrumental to addressing general aviation capacity funding needs and should be continued, encourages the continued development and use of sustainable aviation fuel.

Presentation:

[Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:18:18, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 5:

Washington State Ferries Performance Measures

**Donna Thomas, Performance Measurement Specialist, Washington State Ferries,
Washington State Department of Transportation**

Ms. Thomas gave an overview on Washington State Ferries (WSF) Fiscal Year 2020 Performance Report. The report focuses on safety performance, service effectiveness, cost containment and capital program effectiveness.

In 2011, a statutory requirement was created for WSF to provide annual reports to the Legislature on performance measures. There are seventeen performance measures evaluating such things as capital effectiveness, safety performance, cost containment, and service effectiveness. In 2020, fourteen of these measures were evaluated. Of the fourteen measures evaluated, WSF met eight of the goals.

Presentation:

[WSF-2020 Annual Performance Report](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:44:27, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 6:

Washington State Ferries FY 2020 Diesel Fuel Price Hedging Report

**Rick Singer, Director of Finance, and Administration, Washington State Ferries,
Washington State Department of Transportation**

Mr. Singer gave an overview on the performance of WSF diesel fuel hedging program, established in 2011 to decrease the volatility of fuel costs and save on needed fuel funding. The first fuel financial hedge was in 2014. Hedging secures price certainty, resulting in less price volatility. It cannot guarantee savings but can result in savings depending on the market.

Since March of 2020, there have been no hedges, due to the market falling on fuel prices due to supply exceeding demand, largely due to the impacts of the pandemic. It is expected that the

global fuel market will be balanced by FY 2022. Excess global inventories are being drained and will eventually come into alignment.

Presentation:

[WSF FY2020-Annual Fuel Hedging Report](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:11:21, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 7:

Tolling Financial Update

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

Mr. Barry gave an overview on traffic and revenue performance of Washington State toll facilities of October through December 2020 and initial performance for January through March 2021. The impacts of COVID -19 pandemic were also discussed.

Toll revenues for November 2020 through January 2021 were below the November 2020 state revenue forecast by 2.1% or \$707,000. February toll revenues were below forecast by 8.2% or \$897,000. February. Toll revenues were below the Pre-COVID (November 2019) forecast by 42% or \$7.4 million.

Trips are down on all tolled facilities. Traffic at the Tacoma Narrows Bridge has been impacted the least and recovered the fastest, compared to other facilities. The SR 99 tunnel has been impacted the most and is recovering the slowest.

Presentation:

[Toll Facilities Traffic and Revenue COVID - Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 7, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:29:50, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Chair Jerry Litt reminded the Commission that the meeting will continue Wednesday, March 17, 2021, and recessed the meeting.

DAY 2: March 17, 2021

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

Agenda Item 9:

Secretary's Report

Roger Millar, Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation

Secretary Millar was unable to attend the meeting.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 10:

Puget Sound Regional Council's Equity Strategy

Charles Patton, Ph.D., Equity Manager, Puget Sound Regional Council

Dr. Patton gave an overview on how Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is developing a Regional Equity Strategy that aims to make equity central to all that they do as a regional planning organization.

In 2017, fifteen of the cities within the PSRC region had populations where nearly 50% were people of color. The Regional Equity Strategy has four key components: building capacity to develop a deeper understanding of inequity; data and research to support policies and investments; community engagement to broaden understanding and increase engagement with marginalized communities; and identifying best practices for increasing equity.

The strategy includes the establishment of an advisory committee made up of fifteen members, two from each county in the region. Members will be selected from residents, government, and community-based organizations.

Presentation:

[Vision 2050-Regional Equity Strategy](#)

For more detail on agenda item 13, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:03:49, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 11:

Performance-based Project Evaluation Feasibility Report

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

Ms. Woehler gave an overview of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) report on performance-based project evaluation, aimed at establishing a process in which the state can identify investments that will best help the transportation system meet the policy goals set by the legislature.

Some key findings: how projects are selected is not widely understood; transportation investments should be guided by goals and objectives that represent community values; need to consider factors such as geographic balance, environmental preservation, health and equity during project evaluation; and safety, preservation and maintenance of existing facilities should be emphasized.

The findings of this effort highlight the importance of centering investments around the state policy goals. While equity is not a specific statutorily required transportation goal, it does run through all the policy goals. The project prioritization process should apply an equity lens.

Presentation:

[Performance Based Project Evaluation Feasibility Report](#)

For more detail on agenda item 14, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:45:50, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 12:

**Commission Business
Commissioners, and Staff**

Reflections and Recommendations

- Appreciated hearing that autonomous, connected, electric and shared solutions are not a decade out, but right around the corner at 3 to 5 years.
- The State Ferry system performance reports are important for supporting decisions regarding fare setting and ensuring that the system is operating properly.
- The equity discussion needs to continue. We must remember that one-size does not fit all and be ready to modify and be flexible with how we address equity.
- The key to our collective success will be sectors working together in a coordinated fashion.
- We need to figure out how to localize ideas – one size doesn't fit all – so overly specific policies are not helpful. Equity is a good example of this.
- Technology currently benefits people of privilege. We need to find a way to broaden it.

- Resiliency needs to be a big part of our transition to EVs. The massive power failure in Texas is instructive of how the lack of planning and preparation can go very wrong.
- Planning for smart cities is needed in our urban areas. Renton is a great example, via SECO, of how this can really happen via strong public/private partnerships and coordination and result in real improvements across sectors.
- As we look forward to a future driven by electricity, let's not forget how much power it takes to process and produce fossil fuel. We don't talk about that much, but it's a real cost.

February 2021 Meeting Summary

There were no revisions requested for the February meeting summary.

2021 Legislative Update

Ms. Jones provided an update on the legislative session.

Proposed Schedule for 2021 Toll Rate Setting

Mr. See presented an outline for 2021 Toll Rate Setting.

Naming SR 165 – “The Glacier Highway”

Ms. Griffith informed the Commission that the current Transportation Budget requested the Commission to name a portion of State Route 165 as “The Glacier Highway.” Public notice has been posted on the Commission's web page. The resolution will be brought to the Commission at the May meeting. Chair Litt asked that the resolution notes that glaciers are important to regions throughout the state.

Subcommittee Reports

- The Autonomous Vehicle Work Group is starting a newsletter to support information sharing.
- A Ferry Riders' Opinion Group survey is currently being conducted of ferry riders.
- As part of the Low-Income Tolling Study, the Commission conducted a survey of low-income drivers who use the I-405 and SR 167 Express Toll Lanes, through the Voice of Washington State to gather input from drivers on how they use of the corridor and their preferences for possible low-income toll discounts.

For more detail on agenda item 15, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:10:27, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Next meeting: April 20 & 21, 2021