

Public Transportation Division reporting during COVID-19

Statewide data and narratives from the pandemic

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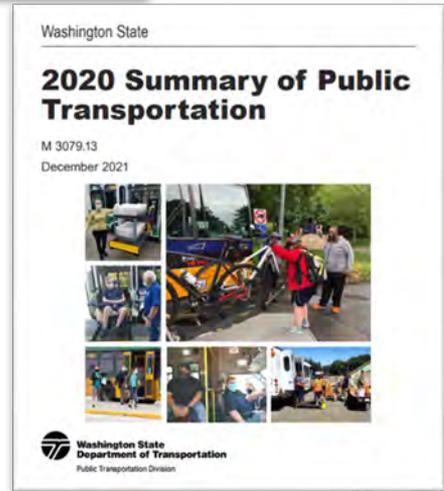
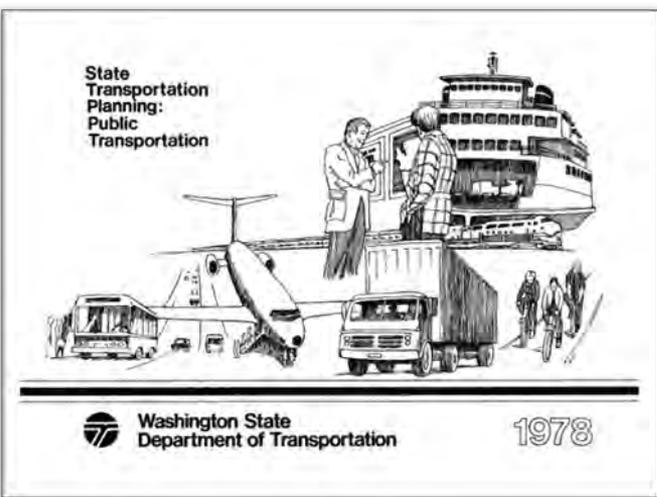
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Part I: Summary of Public Transportation

History and overview of the Summary

- WSDOT Public Transportation Division publishes the Summary Dec. 1 annually.
- Since 1978, the Summary has served as a central document for statewide, public transportation data.
- The Summary fulfills requirements in RCW 35.58.2796.
- The Summary collects data from the previous year (i.e., the Summary we just published collects data from 2020).





Organizations featured

- Transit agencies broken into the following categories:
 - Urban: serving urbanized areas with populations of more than 200,000.
 - Small urban: serving urbanized areas with a population of 50,000-200,000.
 - Rural: serving populations of fewer than 50,000 and areas outside designated urbanized areas.



Organizations featured

- Tribal transportation providers (have the option to participate)
- Community transportation providers
- Medicaid transportation brokers
- Travel Washington intercity bus program
- Ferry systems
- Seattle Center Monorail



Key measures

Operational

- Revenue vehicle hours
- Revenue vehicle miles
- Passenger trips

Financial

- Revenues
- Local tax revenues
- Farebox revenues
- Capital investments
- Operating expenses

Other interesting measures

- Diesel fuel consumed
- Gasoline fuel consumed
- Propane fuel consumed
- Electricity consumed

System performance measures

RCW 35.58.2796 requires WSDOT to measure transit agencies' performance by:

- Operating cost per passenger trip
- Operating cost per revenue vehicle hour
- Passenger trips per revenue vehicle hour
- Passenger trips per revenue vehicle mile
- Revenue vehicle hours per employee
- Farebox recovery ratio

Sources of data

Main data sources

- Washington Public Transportation Data Reporting Portal (managed by WSDOT Public Transportation Division)
- National Transit Database (managed by the Federal Transit Administration)
- Washington State Healthcare Authority

Other data sources

- United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey
- Washington State Department of Revenue
- Washington State Office of Financial Management

Uses of data

The measures in the Summary are best suited for analyzing each public transportation provider individually. Public transportation service varies based on community needs, interests and conditions.

That said, uses include:

- Statewide and local transportation budget considerations
- Statewide and local transportation planning
- State formula grant funding considerations



Effects from the pandemic

For transit agencies (calendar year 2020):

- Passenger trips declined 54.1 percent.
- Revenue vehicle hours and miles for transits dropped 21.7 percent and 27.5, respectively.
- Farebox revenues fell by 65.9 percent.
- State revenues decreased 35.2 percent statewide, from \$118.1 million in 2019 to \$76.5 million.
- Federal revenues increased 179.4 percent statewide, from \$442.8 million in 2019 to \$1.2 billion in 2020.

Part II: Public Transportation Mobility Report

2021 Public Transportation Mobility Report

WSDOT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DIVISION



About the Public Transportation Mobility Report

- WSDOT Public Transportation Division publishes the Mobility Report Dec. 1 annually.
- Topics typically include:
 - State Special, Needs Rural Mobility, Regional Mobility, and Green Transportation Capital grant programs.
 - Any proviso (pilot) state grant programs.
 - Washington State Transportation Plan.
 - Collaborative work between WSDOT's Public Transportation, Regional Transit Coordination, and Management of Mobility divisions.
 - The Statewide and State Agency Commute Trip Reduction Programs.
 - Efforts to engage stakeholders in an evaluation of public transportation grant programs.

Stories throughout the pandemic

- When the pandemic hit, public transportation providers acted fast and adapted nimbly.
- Providers shifted from bringing people to services, to bringing services to people.
- Meal delivery became an integral feature of public transportation during the pandemic.
- When vaccines became available, providers organized often free access to vaccination sites and appointments.





Intercity Transit

June 29 at 9:51 AM · 🌐

T-Rex wants to remind you that face coverings are required on Intercity Transit. The health and safety of our employees, passengers and the community is our top priority. Learn more about the changes we've made for everyone's safety at www.intercitytransit.com/recoveryservice and how you can help. We're all in this together! #MaskUpWA



Stories throughout the pandemic

- Pierce Transit offered free WI-FI to students with limited internet access in both rural and urban parts of the county by staging buses at central locations.
- Some providers, like Columbia County Public Transportation, went fare-free to provide greater access to their service.
- Homage in Snohomish county helped a rider adopt a new cat!
- Providers did all this while not only deploying increased cleaning and health-safety measures, but also encouraging riders to stay safe, keep their social distance, and mask up.

WSDOT's role throughout the pandemic

During the pandemic, WSDOT Public Transportation Division:

- Set up weekly (now biweekly) COVID-19 communications to keep partners abreast of funding opportunities, health-safety requirements, technical assistance, and success stories.
- Allowed flexible spending within its state Special Needs and Rural Mobility grants.
- Awarded \$116 million+ in federal CARES Act, CRRSAA, and ARPA funding, specifically for rural public transportation providers hit hard by the pandemic.
- Helped convene a diverse group of transportation partners in the Rethinking Transit and Mobility workshop series to create a shared vision of how transit and mobility will evolve in the post-pandemic world.

Part III: Rethinking Transit and Mobility

About the Rethinking Transit and Mobility workshop series

- Convened by WSDOT.
- Assessed how the state should respond to the combined effects of the pandemic, climate change, and emerging technology.
- Participants included transit agencies, Washington State Transit Association, local and county governments, transportation demand management professionals, regional/metropolitan/tribal transportation planning organizations, and human services providers.

Themes

- Increase organizational and regulatory flexibility.
- Improve information-sharing and collaboration between providers.
- Renew focus on developing sustainable practices.
- Invest in infrastructure to support transit and mobility.
- Prioritize human services and equity.
- Expand public transportation service.
- Deploy technology and mobility tools to promote access to services.

Advancing themes

Participants also identified and ranked specific recommendations for how WSDOT and the state can advance each key theme. The top five recommendations from stakeholders:

1. Establish a baseline for minimum service and provide funding to ensure this level of service across the state.
2. Apply demographic-equity criteria to funding sources to prioritize projects that serve vulnerable and underserved populations.
3. Ensure people with special needs can access goods, services, and jobs.
4. Develop new revenue models for funding public transportation.
5. Develop policies and funding sources to support all-day transit.

Advancing themes

The Transportation Demand Management Executive Board, chaired by WSDOT Secretary Roger Millar, will review the recommendations and provide feedback to WSDOT.

While some of the recommendations may apply directly to research, programs, and grants at WSDOT, other recommendations regarding policy, funding, infrastructure, and land-use changes will require additional collaboration with other state entities and agencies.

Questions?

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