



Washington State Transportation Commission

Virtual Meeting Summary

January 18 & 19, 2023

January 18, 2023

Chair Roy Jennings opened the meeting at 9 a.m. with introductions by commission members and staff, an overview of the agenda, and meeting protocols.

Agenda Item 2:

Columbia River I-5 Bridge Replacement Program Update

Presenter:

- Frank Green, Assistant Program Administrator, Washington State Department of Transportation

Frank Green provided an overview of important milestones necessary to keep the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program on track to be completed in 2025, highlighting completion of the environmental impact statement. Mr. Green also provided a review of important steps taken in 2022 including endorsement of the locally approved preferred alternative by local partners, funding included in the Move Ahead Washington Package, and receipt of federal funding. The new cost estimate for the locally preferred alternative that includes updated inflation assumptions was given at \$5-\$7.5 billion. A tolling traffic and revenue study will begin in 2024.

Presentation: [Interstate Bridge Replacement Program](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:03:23 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 3:

Next-Gen Tolling Technology - Moving Beyond the Transponder

Presenter:

- Francisco Torrealba, Chief Executive Officer, Blissway

Blissway CEO Francisco Torrealba briefed the Commission on next-generation tolling technology that could be applied on Washington's tolled highways to reduce violations by ensuring citations and civil penalties are assessed and eliminating missed tolls, or leakage. Mr. Torrealba described the technology and showed examples of video tolling that no longer requires transponders or tags on vehicles and discussed the use of in-vehicle telematics to advance tolling technology. Blissway's system enables cost savings by reducing the infrastructure installation and maintenance requirements of traditional toll collection facilities.

Presentation: [Next-Gen Tolling Technology](#)

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:46:34 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 4:

Local Transportation Partners: A Look Ahead at 2023 Legislative Priorities

Presenters:

- Axel Swanson, Managing Director, Washington Association of County Engineers
- Brandy DeLange, Government Relations Advocate, Association of Washington Cities
- Chris Herman, Senior Director, Washington Public Ports Association

Axel Swanson briefed the Commission on the 2020 County Transportation Revenue Study. Counties own about half of the infrastructure in the state, both roads and bridges. Property tax is the largest funding source for county roads, and it is capped at 1 percent, which is challenging because costs are increasing faster than the 1 percent cap. The recent county revenue study indicates counties are falling behind by about \$1 million each year. Also contributing is the declining share of gas tax counties are receiving. Fully funding the Public Works Assistance Account as well as funding County Road Administration Board and Transportation Improvement Board are top priorities for counties.

Brandy DeLange presented city priorities. Washington cities now have about a billion dollars in unmet transportation maintenance and preservation needs. There are 25,000 miles of city transportation assets that are roadsides/streetsides, and these assets include sidewalks, lighting, technology interface as well as 750 bridges. Seventy-six percent of funding for transportation needs in cities come from local funding sources. Only 16 percent comes from state sources, and the 8 percent federal funding that comes to cities can be difficult to access with match and other requirements. Fully funding the Public Works Assistance Account, implementing a federal fund exchange program, truck parking for safety, and implementing the Road Usage Charge to establish a reliable revenue source for city transportation needs top the list of city priorities this legislative session.

Chris Herman shared the priorities of Washington public ports. Ports partner with cities, counties and the state to ensure streets, roads and highways are maintained and improved to support goods and freight mobility. The primary mission of port districts is economic development as the public sector link to trade in the state. The need to remain competitive is of vital importance. 2023 legislative priorities include the tax increment financing tool, which needs technical corrections to be most useful to ports; reform of the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board to enable the board to remain an independent and effective voice for freight transportation; low carbon energy siting and regulation; port electrification and alternative fuels program dedicated funding as part of the Climate Commitment Act to allow the ports to transition to zero-emission equipment; freight modal shifts; and other efforts to meet zero-emission goals.

Presentation: [A Look Ahead - 2023 Legislative Priorities](#)
[City Transportation Priorities](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:43:48 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 5: **State Transportation Agency Partners: A Look Ahead at 2023 Legislative Priorities**

Presenters:

- Ashley Probart, Executive Director, Transportation Improvement Board (TIB)
- Jane Wall, Executive Director, County Road Administration Board (CRAB)

Ashley Probart briefed the Commission on TIB's legislative priorities, explaining that its primary interest this session is in ensuring that the electric vehicle fee continues to be a revenue stream for TIB. Three cents of the state gas tax provides the funding for TIB. Seventy-five to 85 percent of funding is for urban arterials improvements.

Jane Wall briefed the Commission on current priorities for CRAB including continuing to invest in maintenance and preservation of county roads, and continued support for CRAB-provided information and data technology services. CRAB is conducting a study to review its programs to ensure responsiveness to county needs.

Ms. Wall also provided a briefing on the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) explaining that FMSIB is recruiting for a new director and has called on CRAB in the interim to provide administrative support. Ms. Wall explained that Washington is among the most freight dependent states in the nation due to location. A primary legislative priority for FMSIB is truck parking. The recent WSDOT study as well as the Inland Intermodal Study indicate that preservation may not be included in regional planning processes, so FMSIB also supports creation of a regional preservation program. Ms. Wall

also explained that House Bill 1084, currently in the House Transportation Committee, would modify FMSIB's duties, specifically focusing the Board on providing strategic guidance to the Governor and Legislature rather than being a granting agency.

Presentation: [State Transportation Agency Partners](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:36:44 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 6: Hood River Bridge Traffic & Revenue Study – Approval of Eight (8) Alternatives - *ACTION*

Presenter:

- Timothy Boesch, AICP PMP, Principal and Senior Project
- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission

Carl See and Timothy Boesch provided an update on the Hood River Bridge Traffic and Revenue Study. The purpose of the study is to inform the toll funding capacity for a replacement Hood River Bridge. As a first step, eight preliminary toll scenarios have been developed for further study: four pre-completion tolling scenarios for the current bridge (with rate increase starting as soon as July 1, 2023) and four post-completion scenarios (starting as soon as July 1, 2030). Those scenarios will inform the development of two for final analysis. In the analysis, current toll-free exemptions and agreements will remain unchanged. New low-income or high-frequency discount plans may be appropriate.

The scenarios vary, ranging from no change to current tolling rates to a 50-cent increase every year for cash users (or 25-cent increase for transponder users) in pre-completion years through 2030. Post-completion (where options to pay are transponders or video tolling), the scenarios range from a 2.5 percent annual increase to a 15 percent increase every five years between FY 2031 and 2051.

Presentation: [Hood River Bridge Tolling Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:24:22 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Commissioner Debbie Young made a motion to advance eight preliminary scenarios for consideration, with a modification of scenario 2 for a set differential for post-completion video tolling. Commissioner Jim Restucci seconded the motion. Motion carries 6-0, with Commissioner Jerry Litt not present.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 7: Multimodal Transportation Needs and Strategies Along state Route 167 Corridor

Presenter:

- April Delchamps, Planning Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Amy Danberg, Senior Director of Strategic Communications, PRR
- Chris Breiland, Director of Research and Development, Fehr and Peers

April Delchamps, Amy Danberg, and Chris Breiland discussed work to date on the SR 167 Master Plan Update. In 2021, the Legislature reauthorized \$2.88 million for the Master Plan Update to identify short- and long-term multimodal transportation needs through community engagement. The master plan aims to prioritize the needs of vulnerable communities, support the region's growth strategy, facilitate both transit and active transportation, accommodate freight movement and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It will be complete in June 2023.

The project team has identified three scenarios to date as it works to present a final recommendation. Among its conclusions thus far: expanded transit is key to serving vulnerable communities, with transit ridership growing strongly with increased service levels; more capacity on SR 167 reduces delays on arterials and improves reliability for freight and regional trips as do interchange improvements; express toll lanes benefit all modes of transportation (a low-income tolling program is among the recommendations); filling gaps in the transportation network is aligned with the needs expressed by vulnerable and overburdened communities; and increasing capacity will also increase per-capita vehicle miles traveled and could shift bottlenecks to other adjacent facilities, which is not desired.

The project team talked about how it is balancing the goals of the master plan with community priorities and the constraints of overall transportation goals when it comes to reducing vehicle miles traveled and emissions. The data gathered and recommendations of the master plan can help inform tolling discussions for the SR 167 HOT lanes and the I-405 express toll lanes.

Presentation: [SR 167 Master Plan](#)

For more detail on agenda item 7, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:31:46 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 8: Update on the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission's Work

Presenter:

- Robert Hodgman, Transportation Planning Specialist, Commercial Aviation, Coordinating Commission

Robert Hodgman gave an update on the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission's (CACC) work in providing a recommendation to the Legislature by June 15, 2023, to solve a forecasted shortage of capacity for commercial air passenger, air cargo and general aviation services.

The CACC has narrowed its proposed sites from six airports and 10 greenfield sites to one airport (Paine Field) and three greenfield sites (Pierce County Central, Pierce County East and Thurston County Central). Challenges identified with the sites include congested airspace, limited airspace expansion potential, widespread opposition from local governments, negative impacts to watershed quality, and an impact to tribal treaty rights.

A 3,100-acre, two-runway airport is estimated at 2023 pricing to cost \$13.8 billion. Three consistent responses from the public are the desire to meet capacity in an environmentally sustainable way, a preference to expand existing airports, and a maximizing travel potential by rail.

Technical analysis continues along with community engagement. At the CACC meeting in May, a final vote will be taken, and a report will be forwarded to the Legislature by the June deadline

Presentation: [Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission](#)

For more detail on agenda item 8, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 05:22:34, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 9: Washington State Freight Plan

Presenter:

- Ron Pate, Director of Rail, Freight Rail and Port Division, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Wenjuan Zho, Multimodal Freight Systems Planning Engineer, Washington State Department of Transportation

Wenjuan Zhao gave an overview of the 2022 Washington Freight System Plan. The plan, first required by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, includes a freight investment plan for Washington state that includes priority projects. New requirements were also added under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, including an inventory of commercial ports' needs. The plan also includes a safety truck parking assessment and an evaluation of key freight supply chains across the state for sectors like wheat, food manufacturing, forestry and aerospace.

Freight tonnage in Washington is expected to increase by 45 percent between 2022 and 2050. Such growth will continue to exacerbate freight challenges, which include the preservation of infrastructure and facilities, a lack of truck parking, and capacity constraints and congestion.

WSDOT will continue to collaborate with freight partners to advance policies that include using new technology to improve the safety and efficiency of freight movement, reduce roadway deterioration, decrease the community impacts of freight movement, and enhance freight reliability.

Presentation: [Washington State Freight Plan](#)

For more detail on agenda item 9, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 05:48:29 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Chair Roy Jennings reminded the Commission that the meeting will continue Thursday, January 19, 2023, and recessed the meeting.

DAY 2: January 19, 2023

Chair Roy Jennings opened the meeting at 9 a.m. with introductions by commission members and staff, an overview of the agenda, and meeting protocols.

Agenda Item 11: Commission Business

- December Meeting Summary
- 2023 Virtual Meeting Schedule
- 2023 Legislative session Overview
- Initiate Route Jurisdiction Transfer Process & Appoint Subcommittee:
City of Snoqualmie Requesting to Transfer Snoqualmie Parkway to
WSDOT - ***ACTION***

Presenter:

- Paula Reeves, Senior Policy Analyst, Washington State Transportation Commission

Paula Reeves presented an update of bills filed in the 2023 Legislature that are relevant to the Commission's priorities and business.

Ms. Reeves also shared a request from the city of Snoqualmie that would transfer a section of Snoqualmie Parkway between the terminus of SR 18 at Interstate 90 and SR 202/Railroad Avenue to the Washington State Department of Transportation. A rundown of the process of the transfer was presented.

Because the meeting was running ahead on Jan. 18, Commissioners addressed the 2023 virtual meeting schedule after Agenda Item 5. The Commission's first in-person hybrid meeting in Olympia is scheduled for May.

Commissioners had no changes to the December meeting summary.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 11, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:02:51, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action:

Commissioner Debbie Young made a motion to create a subcommittee made up of Commissioners Young and Restucci to monitor the current request to transfer a portion of Snoqualmie Parkway. Commissioner Jim Restucci seconded the motion. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the motion, with Commissioner Jerry Litt and Commissioner Nicole Grant not present.

Follow-Up: Staff will contact Commissioners Jerry Litt and Nicole Grant (not present) to see if either would like to serve on the subcommittee, for a maximum of three members on the subcommittee.

Agenda Item 12: **Highway 20 Naming - *ACTION***

Presenter:

- Arnie Marchand, American Legion, Hodges Post No. 84

Arnie Marchand discussed the history of the effort to rename SR 20 to honor Vietnam veterans, noting that a petition supporting the change collected 325 signatures. Commissioner Jim Restucci read Resolution 746, which discussed the history of the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War. A total of 1,134 Washington state residents were killed in action between 1965 and 1975 in the Vietnam War, and over 44 known men went missing in action or were held as prisoners of war. The WSTC recognizes the service and commitment shown and expresses its appreciation to all the veterans by renaming SR 20 in Okanogan County the "Vietnam War Veterans' Memorial Highway," and it requests WSDOT to provide signage and implement the naming designation so future generations will recognize the war service of Vietnam War veterans.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 12, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:31:26, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Commissioner Jim Restucci made a motion to rename SR 20 in Okanogan County the "Vietnam War Veterans' Memorial Highway." Commissioner Debbie Young seconded the motion. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the motion.

Follow-Up: WSDOT will make signage, and Mr. Marchand plans to organize ceremonies in Twisp and Tonasket.

Agenda Item 13: **Governor's supplemental Transportation Budget**

Presenter:

- Erik Hansen, Senior Budget assistant, Office of Financial Management

Erik Hansen gave the Commission an overview of the Governor's 2023-2025 transportation budget proposal, with more than \$12.3 billion budgeted to state transportation agencies during the biennium.

Included in the Move Ahead Washington implementation is \$82 million for a medium-heavy duty vehicle decarbonization program and \$15 million for a transportation carbon emissions reduction demonstration grant program. Safety initiatives included in the proposed budget are automated traffic safety cameras in work zones, bike/pedestrian safety projects and pedestrian signals, as well as safe truck parking. Workforce investments include money for training staff for Washington State Ferries, investments in pre-apprentice programs as well as compensation boosts for existing employees. The governor

proposes investing in programs that provide driver licenses to foster youth as well as mobile licensing units.

The governor's budget includes capital investments to improve fish passage barriers, construct new ferries, and replace the I-5 bridge over the Columbia River.

Presentation: [Governor's Supplemental Transportation Budget](#)

For more detail on agenda item 13, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:48:20 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 14: Tolling Facility Financial Update

Presenter:

- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State, Transportation Commission

Carl See presented the 2023 loan update summary for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, which is an annual report given to the Legislature on the loan amounts needed for each biennium.

With a \$30.3 million loan to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge account for the 2021-23 biennium in addition to \$15.7 million in federal funds through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the fund balance meets the bridge funding needs for the 2021-23 biennium. The estimated loan needed for the 2023-25 biennium is \$6.6 million, which is \$2.9 million less than estimated in 2022.

The Commission also ensures the Sufficient Minimum Balance does not fall below \$10 million. Projections show the balance will remain at the policy target until May 2025.

Bridge loan repayment is now projected to be consistent with original estimates, with loan repayments being made in FY 2031-FY 2032.

Presentation: [Tacoma Narrows Bridge Loan Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 14, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:58:28 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 15: Secretary's Report

Presenter:

- Amy Scarton, Deputy Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation

Amy Scarton mentioned Secretary Roger Millar’s State of Transportation updates to both the House and Senate Transportation Committees. The strategic plan for the year centers on three goals: workforce, resiliency, and DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion.)

Ms. Scarton discussed WSDOT reaching the milestone of staffing above the 7,000 mark in December 2022, a number not seen since FY 2019. An increase in transportation funding at the state and federal level means more projects, and that means staffing levels will continue to be a focus.

Key issues for the legislative session will be safety, including updating the state’s Target Zero plan, and implementing the “Complete Streets” program in the state’s communities.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 15, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:16:34, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 16: Public Comment

John Peeples, Kenmore – Called on the Commission to discontinue all work on the proposed Road Usage Charge, saying the best way to raise funds for the state’s highways is through the existing gas tax.

Dave Rowe – Commented that a regional passenger rail system could be built for one-sixth of the cost of the Columbia River I-5 Bridge replacement project and that expansion of the bridge would not be necessary if auto trips were diverted with a passenger rail system.

John Ley, Clark County – Takes issue with facts and numbers presented as part of the Columbia River I-5 Bridge replacement project, and said claims that inflation raised the cost substantially are incorrect, and that it is the result of adding road and bridge components. Mr. Ley claims that mass transit projections are false and that the proposed bridge is too low for marine traffic. Mr. Ley said a replacement bridge could be built for \$1 billion or less, citing the cost of replacing the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and the Hood River Bridge.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 16, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:31:25, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 17:

Commission Business

Reflections and Recommendations

Commissioners shared highlights from the meeting...

- Enjoyed hearing updates on the Columbia River I-5 Bridge Replacement project, the Blissway next-generation tolling technology presentation, the Hood River Bridge Traffic and Revenue study, the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission's update, and the Highway 20 renaming.
- Appreciated finding out where our partner agencies are at and their policy and funding needs. The breadth and depth of the challenges each agency is facing are significant. An area of particular interest is the SR 167 Master Plan and how the team is prioritizing the competing goals and priorities of different agencies.
- In the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission update, it's interesting to hear all the complexities and difficulties we're going to have in solving air transportation challenges.
- It's great to hear about the I-5 Bridge Replacement project. Whenever project team members talk to us, it's very informative and raises a lot of questions in my mind. It's great to see the next-generation tolling technology and our partners' priorities in the Legislature. The Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission faces a lot of challenges. The re-naming of the highway was outstanding, and we need to do more of that type of thing.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 17, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:44:16 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Chair Jennings adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

The next meeting will be held virtually on February 15 and 16, 2023.