



Washington State Transportation Commission

Virtual Meeting Summary

February 15 & 16, 2023

February 15, 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: Clean Transportation in Washington

Presenters:

- Deborah Reynolds, Clean Transportation Managing Director, Department of Commerce
- Tonia Buell, Alternative Fuels Program Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Luke Martland, Climate Commitment Act Implementation Manager, Department of Ecology
- Joel Creswell, Climate Policy Section Manager, Department of Commerce
- Jonathan Olds, Senior Policy Specialist, Climate Change, Washington State Department of Transportation

Deborah Reynolds and Tonia Buell, co-chairs of the Electric Vehicle (EV) Coordinating Council, discussed the development of the statewide Transportation Electrification Strategy (TES), a roadmap to ensuring access to charging infrastructure by 2035. Representatives from 10 state agencies, each with a role in electrification, will develop the strategy and support efforts to reach the 100% electrification target for passenger and light duty vehicles sales starting in 2030. The council is supported by a 25-member agency advisory committee that prioritizes coordinating with the Environmental Justice Council to ensure the needs of all Washingtonians are being met.

Luke Martland gave an overview of Ecology's cap-and-invest program, which launched January 1, 2023. The program establishes an emissions cap that declines over time, requiring entities that emit more than 25,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year to participate in reducing emissions or purchasing allowances to offset those emissions at quarterly auctions, with the first one set for February 28, 2023. Proceeds from the auctions, expected to reach nearly \$1 million in the first year of the program, will be appropriated by the Legislature with a portion benefitting overburdened communities and projects with tribal support.

Joel Creswell explained the state’s Clean Fuel Standard, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and expand the availability of low-carbon fuels. The market-based system allows generators of low-carbon fuels to generate credits they can sell to generators of high-carbon fuels. Entities, including electric utilities, can also earn credits by installing low carbon fueling infrastructure for fast charging of electric vehicles or hydrogen refueling stations. Exemptions are in place for some specified suppliers.

Jonathan Olds discussed credits WSDOT is generating from state investments in clean transportation fuels under the Clean Fuels Program. WSDOT is investing in zero emissions charging infrastructure, electrification of the state ferry fleet, and transit investments that generate credits that go back to the operating entities like transit agencies, WSF, and fuel infrastructure operators.

Presentations: [EV Coordinating Council](#)
[Cap and Invest Program Overview](#)
[Washington's Clean Fuel Standard](#)
[2022 Initial Report Clean Fuels Program](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:03:10, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 3: WSDOT Tolling Equity Study

Presenter:

- Mark Hallenbeck, Director, Washington State Transportation Center, University of Washington
The University of Washington and WSDOT are updating a 2019 study of toll equity that centered on the I-405 express toll lanes. Using the state’s toll transaction dataset and location-based services data from smartphones, the new study is comparing 2018 data with data from 2021-2022 while also broadening the study to the state’s other tolled facilities – SR 167 HOT lanes, SR 520 bridge, SR 99 tunnel and the SR 16 Tacoma Narrows Bridge – to find out how household income and tolling approach affect the use of roadways. The updated study has reviewed national toll equity efforts. Initial findings have identified income distribution by toll facilities and indicate that those who use toll facilities generally have a higher income than the state average and that some facilities have higher daily use than others.

Presentation: [WSDOT Toll Facilities](#)

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:31:41, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 4:

Tale of Two Cities: Seattle and Bellevue Autonomous Vehicle Vision and Implementation

Presenters:

- Bryan Mistele, Chief Executive Officer, INRIX
- Daniel Lai, Smart Mobility Manager, City of Bellevue
- Armand Shahbazian, Electric and Automated Mobility Policy Advisor, City of Seattle

As autonomous vehicles arrive in the region, the cities of Bellevue and Seattle have joint technology plans but different approaches based on each city's unique characteristics. When it comes to planning processes and permitting, jurisdictions are developing a shared vision, recognizing vehicles don't see jurisdictional boundaries. Regional goals are to improve safety, increase mobility options, enhance sustainability, and ensure transportation equity while balancing risks like increased congestion, technology obsolescence and lack of infrastructure readiness. Both cities emphasized the importance of state and federal standards and the ability for local agencies to continue to manage the urban context that is unique to each city.

In Bellevue, Waymo is conducting inclement weather testing citywide with five vehicles operating in fully autonomous mode with a safety driver. In Seattle, Zoox is testing four vehicles.

Presentations: [Strategic Vision for Automated Vehicles](#)
[City of Bellevue AV Update](#)
[Seattle DOT AV Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:27:57, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 5:

ACES Northwest Network: Improving Safety through Advancing Connected Vehicles

Presenters:

- Bruce Agnew, Director, Cascadia Center and NW ACES Network
- Franz Loewenherz, Mobility Planning and Solutions Manager, City of Bellevue
- Kirk Neibert, Senior Product Manager, T-Mobile
- Brandon Branham, Assistant City Manager, Peachtree Corners, Georgia

Advancing technology currently being tested can help increase safety for road users, including pedestrians and bicyclists, and address safety concerns with autonomous vehicles.

In Bellevue, technology has allowed the city to identify concerning trends at intersections much earlier. Technology investments – including in cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and video analytics – identify commonalities in crashes and enable the city to take proactive measures when it comes to things like signal timing to improve safety.

Bellevue-based T-Mobile is using 5G technology to enable C-V2X, or Cellular Vehicle-to-Everything. The technology allows cars to communicate with each other and objects around them, enabling vulnerable road user detection, do-not-pass warnings and first responder prioritization. Because not all cities have the capability to build infrastructure and not all vehicles have the same technology features, C-V2X can bridge the gap with 5G, communicating to drivers through a smartphone app, giving them safety alerts and other information to protect all roadway users.

Peachtree Corners, Georgia, is the first “smart city” powered by both infrastructure and next-generation connectivity. It incorporates a variety of technology, including 5G-connected infrastructure, video as a sensor, AV shuttles for public transportation, and C-V2X in fleet vehicles to test many of the concepts of connected vehicles.

Presentations: [City of Bellevue Role of Technology](#)
[T-Mobile Automotive & AV Product Group](#)
[Curiosity Lab](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:23:48, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 6: Washington Autonomous Vehicle Cluster (WAV-C)

Presenters:

- Bruce Agnew, Director, Cascadia Center and NW ACES Network
- Seth Abelson, Program Manager, WAV-C

The Washington Autonomous Vehicle Cluster (WAV-C) was launched by a grant through the Washington State Department of Commerce with the goal of accelerating innovation in the industry for small businesses in the marine sector, equipping workers for the next generation of marine technologies and encouraging collaboration. Applications for AV technology in the marine industry are in search and rescue, in the fishing industry, in environmental remediation, and in transportation. Current initiatives include research and development of autonomous water taxis and partnering with Olympic College and area four-year universities to develop a testing facility for underwater systems.

Presentation: [WAV-C](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:16:38, 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, February 16, 2023, and recessed the meeting.

DAY 2: February 16, 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 8:

Commission Business

- January Meeting Summary
- 2023 Legislative Session Update
- Public Notice: Pending Highway Naming Request to name the I-90/Argonne Overpass the “Deputy Joseph M. O’Connor Memorial Overpass.”
- Initiate Route Jurisdiction Transfer Process: City of Ridgefield Requesting to Transfer SR 501/Pioneer Street from WSDOT to the City of Ridgefield.

Presenters:

- Paula Reeves, Senior Policy Analyst, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Reema Griffith, Executive Director, Washington State Transportation Commission

Paula Reeves presented an update of bills filed in the Legislature, focusing on those that align with the Commission’s priorities in the Annual Report. Bills that the Commission has signed in “pro” for or testified in favor of were reviewed. Bills proposing a Road Usage Charge and one amending the ferry fuel surcharge in the Washington Administrative Code were discussed.

Reema Griffith provided an overview of the highway naming request in Spokane in honor of Deputy Joseph M. O’Connor. A summary of the request and documented support by elected officials and community members submitted to the Commission show broad support for the naming.

Ms. Reeves provided an update about the route transfer requests the Commission has received from the City of Snoqualmie and the City of Ridgefield. A subcommittee of the Commission will be addressing the requests.

Commissioners had no changes to the January meeting summary.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 8, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:03:05, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 9:

Tolling Subcommittee: I-405/SR 167 Express Toll Lanes (ETL) Rate Setting Plan Update

Presenters:

- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission

- Ed Barry, Director of Tolling, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Lisa Hodgson, I-405/SR 167 Program Administrator, Washington State Department of Transportation

Lisa Hodgson and Ed Barry outlined the timeline for the I-405/SR 167 express toll lanes proposed rate-setting and outreach process. The vision for the corridor is 50 miles of managed roadways, with new projects in the area connecting and expanding the existing I-405/SR 167 express toll lanes coming online at various points between 2025 and 2028. A rate-setting schedule outlined would enable the Commission to set toll rates in time to allow for education and marketing ahead of the targeted opening date of the first new project in mid-2025. Discussed was analysis underway as part of an investment grade traffic and revenue study, including a full traffic and revenue stream analysis (2022 through 2056) for potential tolling scenarios, and sensitivity tests of additional policy options with analysis limited to assessment of traffic and revenue impacts in 2030.

Presentation: [I-405/SR 167 ETLs Corridor Program](#)

For more detail on agenda item 9, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:22:27, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

**Agenda Item 10:
Washington State Ferry Fare and Tariff Process**

Presenters:

- Todd Lamphere, Director of Finance and Administration, Washington State Ferries
- Aaron Halbert, Fiscal Analyst, Washington State Transportation Commission

Todd Lamphere gave an overview of Washington State Ferries (WSF) proposed 2023-2024 fare setting and development process, offering background on the Commission’s role in adopting fare rates and the tariff-setting guiding principles as outlined in state law. A fare proposal is expected to be presented by WSF to the Commission at its June meeting in Friday Harbor.

Aaron Halbert presented a proposed Commission fare-setting schedule, which would take place this summer with fare changes taking effect by October 1, 2023.

Presentation: [WSF Tariff Setting Process](#)

For more detail on agenda item 10, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:20:03, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

**Agenda Item 11:
Secretary’s Report**

Presenter:

- Amy Scarton, Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation

The legislative session continues to be a focus, with daily briefings and presentations. WSDOT's strategic plan continues to be front and center, with goals centered on resiliency, workforce and DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion). Staffing numbers (at roughly 7,100 employees) continue to grow, helping to improve staff capacity.

For Washington State Ferries, a new class of mates is graduating in April (second of three cohorts going through the program). Pre-apprentice and apprentice programs have been developed, partnership programs are in place, and pilot programs are being developed to connect the newly housed with training that could connect them with jobs in the state and private sectors.

For WSDOT, one of the biggest priorities is project delivery including safety projects, fish-passage projects and preservation projects. The agency is gearing up for the summer construction season. Another priority is re-engaging with partners and the public through in-person meetings and engagement.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 11, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:49:23, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 12:

Progress Update: Puget Sound Gateway Program

Presenters:

- John White, Puget Sound Gateway Program Administrator, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Brent Baker, Senior Vice President, WSP

John White gave an update on construction phases of the Puget Sound Gateway Program, which includes the SR 509 and SR 167 expressway projects, and an update on the traffic and revenue study analysis for the projects. Different aspects of the projects are in varying stages of development, with parts open to traffic, others under construction and others seeking bids. Recent cost updates show the funding gap to complete the Gateway Program is \$265 million. The gap is a result inflation's effect on construction cost and materials, trade labor availability, and competition from other transportation and development projects.

Brent Baker gave an update on the ongoing traffic and revenue study for the projects, including a review of the study assumptions, methodology, project schedule, draft gross and net toll revenue estimates based on current analysis (base toll scenario).

Under the current schedule, rate-setting with the Commission is expected to begin in 2024-2025 in advance of tolling of SR 509 Stage 1, set to begin in the second half of 2025. Tolling of SR 167 Stage 1 (west of I-5) would begin in early 2027. Stage 2 of the SR 509 corridor would be complete in 2028, commencing full tolling of the corridor. Stage 2 of SR 167 would be complete in 2029, with tolling beginning east of I-5.

Presentation: [Puget Sound Gateway](#)

For more detail on agenda item 12, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:49:17, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 13:

Washington Traffic Safety Commission New Program Update

Presenters:

- Erica Stineman, Communications Manager, Washington Traffic Safety Commission
- Jessie Knudsen, Nonmotorized Program Manager, Washington Traffic Safety Commission

Jessie Knudsen shared projects under development by Spokane, Renton and Clark County, which received National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) grants to address safety and equity challenges. NHTSA grants focus on public education and enforcement, including public education (driver education and campaign materials) youth initiatives delivered through high schools, a Safe Routes map and media campaigns to influence driver behavior through messages in English and Spanish advertised on billboards, TV, radio and social media.

Erica Stineman shared WTSC campaigns designed for multicultural audiences. Public Service Announcements in Spanish were shared that were found in focus groups to make audiences feel more included.

Presentations: [Traffic Safety Commission Transcreation](#)
[Walker Roller Equity Projects](#)

For more detail on agenda item 13, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:25:53, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 14:

Public Comment

John Ley, Clark County – Stated that the financial harm of tolling a new I-5 bridge will be devastating to families and freight haulers, who will pass the costs onto consumers. Claims commuters from Clark County who cross into Portland will divert onto I-205. Tolling doesn't eliminate congestion; it just changes where it occurs. There are better, more efficient ways to pay for transportation than tolls.

Tom Thiersch, Port Townsend – Questioned why the hybridization of the Olympic class of ferries is taking so long. Also said that during the ferry fare development process, there is no testimony received directly from the public. State law includes a requirement to hold public hearings during that process, but he questioned whether the current meetings WSF holds meet that mandate and suggested Ferries should hold route-specific public hearings before the proposal reaches the Commission.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 14, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:05:57 on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 15:

Commission Business

Reflections and Recommendations

Commissioners shared highlights from the meeting:

- It's exciting to see more funding coming for clean transportation projects. In tolling, the comparison of the 2018 tolling study and the update, especially for I-405 and other routes, will be interesting to see. It's positive to see technology connectivity in vehicles and infrastructure evolving.
- The update on the clean energy transition we're making and the policies we're putting in place to get there was informative. It's important to watch how the EV coordinating group progresses to ensure we can get the charging infrastructure into place. For the connected vehicles, there will be important regulatory and policy work to come out of that, and the lessons learned from test sites will be helpful.
- The work going on with autonomous and connected vehicles in Bellevue and Seattle is important, as we can't get to autonomous without connected. I would like to see follow-up from WSDOT about ferry meetings and whether those meet the requirements of the law.
- On the Autonomous Vehicle (AV) front, things are changing quickly, and many people are not tuned in to the development of the vehicles. It's positive to hear about the Road Usage Charge bill and that the Legislature is looking at modern ways to make sure we have funding for the transportation infrastructure of the future.
- It is possible to see the light at the end of the tunnel for both Autonomous Vehicles and Road Usage Charge.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 15, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:15:21 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 2:07 p.m.

The next meeting will be held virtually on March 14 and 15, 2023.