



Washington State Transportation Commission

Olympia Meeting Summary

October 17 & 18, 2023

October 17, 2023

Chair Debbie Young opened the meeting at 9 a.m. with introductions by Commission members and staff and meeting protocols.

Agenda Item 2: Statewide Maintenance Needs and Challenges

Presenters:

- Pasco Bakotich, Director, Maintenance Operations, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Jay Drye, Director, Local Programs, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Jane Wall, Executive Director, County Road Administration Board (CRAB)
- Billy Hetherington, President, Good Roads and Political Director, LIUNA! Local 242

Pasco Bakotich described Washington state's transportation infrastructure as the "economy's backbone" and said that continued prosperity is tied to the health of the state's transportation system. Maintenance and preservation keep pavement in good condition by applying treatments to extend its service life, but they must be done at the right point in pavement's lifecycle to be cost-effective. Almost 11,000 lane miles – or 60 percent of the system – are due or past due for preservation.

Jay Drye highlighted similar challenges for local transportation partners (cities, counties, tribes) in the state. Of the funding sources administered by the Local Programs division of WSDOT, few are dedicated to maintenance and most go to capital projects.

At the county level, Jane Wall highlighted funding challenges: local access roads and short span bridges are not eligible for existing maintenance resources, the 1 percent property tax cap, declining gas tax proceeds for local jurisdictions, and less state support for county system maintenance. CRAB is advocating for the Legislature to fully invest in the Rural Arterial Program and County Arterial Preservation Program as well as expand existing funding sources and explore new funding sources.

Billy Hetherington discussed the Washington State Good Roads Association and its history of advocating for roads, including spending on maintenance and preservation.

Presentations: [WSDOT Preservation & Maintenance Challenges](#)
[WSDOT Local Programs](#)
[Maintenance Challenges and Opportunities for County Roads](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:03:46, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 3: Secretary's Report

Presenter:

- Amy Scarton, Deputy Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation
While WSDOT has more state and federal funding than ever before, most of that money is directed to new-build projects. Maintenance and preservation are a priority for the department. Summer construction season has wrapped up and the agency is pivoting to the season of snow and ice removal. The ribbon-cutting for the Seattle Ferry Terminal at Colman Dock is planned for Oct. 23. The terminal project is an example of not adding capacity but fixing and preserving a current asset. The first ferry of the Jumbo Mark II class, the M/V Wenatchee, is undergoing its mid-life overhaul and adding engine hybridization during its systems upgrade.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:13:26, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 4: NextGen Highways – Efficient Energy Transmission Development

Presenter:

- Matt Prorok, Senior Policy Manager, Energy Systems, Great Plains Institute
Matt Prorok provided an overview of NextGen Highways, a nonprofit that is working to promote highway infrastructure corridors that support the electric and communication needs of the EVs and autonomous vehicles of the future. The growth of clean energy sources, such as solar and wind, and the intermittent nature of those sources require a more regional electrical transmission system than fuel-based power generation sources. In addition, fleet and highway electrification have unique transmission needs with higher loads required. Electrification trends are driving big investment into infrastructure, and NextGen believes that coordinated planning between the owners of highway rights of ways and utilities is needed to site electric and communications infrastructure strategically and

safely. NextGen Highways is working with several states, including Minnesota, Wisconsin and Washington, to devise ways to overcome barriers to utility co-location. Key objectives in Washington are to undertake public opinion research, develop a policy on transmission siting prioritization, and advocate for the consideration of co-locating transmission infrastructure in highway rights of way.

Presentation: [NextGen Highways](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:23:20, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 5:

Commission Business

- 2024 Commission Meeting Schedule – ***ACTION***
- Appoint Commissioners to the I-5 Bridge Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee – ***ACTION***

Presenters:

- Paula Reeves, Senior Policy Analyst, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission

Paula Reeves presented a draft of the 2024 Commission meeting calendar. Commissioners adopted a schedule with four virtual meetings and seven in-person meetings:

Virtual meetings:

- January
- February
- March
- May

In-person meetings (with locations):

- April – Edmonds
- June – Cheney
- July – Chelan
- September – California (for Tri-State Meeting with California, Oregon and Washington state transportation commissions)
- October – Olympia
- November – Aberdeen
- December – Olympia

Carl See briefed commissioners on the need to develop a bi-state tolling subcommittee composed of members of the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) and the WSTC to move forward on rate-setting for the Interstate 5 Bridge over the Columbia River. Two members of the WSTC will join two members of the OTC. Vice Chair Jim Restucci and Commissioner Roy Jennings were nominated and accepted the nominations.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:14:53, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Commissioner JC Baldwin made a motion to appoint Vice Chair Restucci and Commissioner Jennings to the bi-state tolling subcommittee; the motion was seconded by Kelly Fukai. The motion passed 6-1, with Commissioner Jennings opposed.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 6: Transforming the Heavy-Duty Transportation Sector

Presenter:

- Michael Ganny, Manager, Grants & Proposals, WattEV

Michael Ganny discussed WattEV's mission to accelerate the transition to all-electric transportation in the heavy-duty trucking industry. It has begun by securing locations and beginning to build four charging sites strategically located around California (the first, at the Port of Long Beach, opened in July 2023). It is purchasing a fleet of vehicles offered through the state's incentive programs to offer to small fleets interested in transitioning to zero-emission vehicles, including offering truck-as-a-service model with full-service leases. It is also developing its own product of rapid charging. It has a goal of 50 charging depots by 2026, with a long-term goal to electrify all of Interstate 5.

Presentation: [WattEV Transition to Zero-Emission Transportation](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:33:00, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 7: SR 167 Master Plan Update

Presenter:

- April Delchamps, Planning Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation

April Delchamps gave an overview of the SR 167 Master Plan Report, which was issued in June 2023. Work on the plan was undertaken in coordination with other transportation initiatives in the region by WSDOT, local municipal partners and transit agencies. Stakeholders were engaged through a Technical Advisory Committee, Policy Advisory Committee, and Equity Advisory Committee; robust public outreach was conducted through in-person events and online open houses. The report has 22 final recommendations that advance the goals of equity, improving traffic congestion, safety, freight reliability,

environment, transit, and active modes of transportation with a cost of \$5.5-6 billion. Recommendations highlighted during the presentation include adding an express toll lane on SR 167 from I-405 to SR 512; improvements on eight interchanges; new auxiliary lanes; enhanced transit routes; improved sidewalks, bicycle, and crossing improvements to access transit; added lighting; and improved access to new and existing transit stops and stations. Topics identified for ongoing collaboration include the policy for high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes; a low-income toll program; planned transit routes on the SR 167 corridor that may not be able to secure stable operating funding; and land use considerations, such as responding to needs for more affordable housing around transit hubs.

Presentation: [SR 167 Master Plan – Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 7, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:28:13, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 8: I-405/SR 167 ETL Tolling Scenarios

Presenters:

- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Ed Barry, Director of Tolling, Washington State Department of Transportation

Carl See gave an overview of a proposed two-phased approach for adjusting toll rates and toll rate policies on the I-405 express toll lanes (ETLs) /SR 167 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. The first phase will adjust toll rates for the current I-405 ETLs and SR 167 HOT lanes, which could take effect as soon as Q1 2024, and the second phase will adjust toll policies for the I-405/SR 167 corridor in preparation for the opening of the Renton to Bellevue ETLs and the SR 167 toll equipment upgrade in 2025.

The need for the first phase comes after bids for recently awarded projects in the I-405/SR 167 corridor came in significantly over cost estimates and planned funding. In addition, congestion on the corridor is increasing, challenging current performance metrics. State law directs the Commission to evaluate options to ensure average vehicle speeds remain above 45 miles per hour for 90 percent of the time during peak hours, and maximum toll rates are becoming a frequent occurrence during peak periods on both facilities. Commissioners were asked to confirm the rate-setting timeline for Phase 1 toll-rate setting and to forward rate-adjustment scenarios for further analysis:

- Increase the minimum toll rate from 50 cents on SR 167 and 75 cents on I-405 to \$1 on both facilities
- Increase the maximum toll rate from \$9 on SR 167 and \$10 on I-405 to \$15 on both facilities
- Increase the maximum toll rate from \$9 on SR 167 and \$10 on I-405 to \$12 on both facilities

Ed Barry shared current policies on the express toll lanes on I-405 and SR 167 and explained the goal for future consistency of policies in the corridor. He gave an overview of policy options and toll-rate scenarios discussed by the Commission's Tolling Subcommittee for Phase 2. The three scenarios developed by WSDOT through direction by the Commission's Tolling Subcommittee for consideration during Phase 2 are:

Scenario A:

- HOV occupancy of 3+ along the entire corridor during peak periods
- Maximum toll rate of \$15 and minimum of \$1
- Extended peak hours (9-10 a.m. and 2-3 p.m.), tolling to 8 p.m.

Scenario B: Same as A, except:

- Weekend tolling to HOV 2+ (5 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

Scenario C: Same as B, except:

- Maximum toll rate of \$18

Tolling scenarios adopted by the Commission will move forward for an investment grade analysis by WSDOT and the Office of the State Treasurer.

Presentations: [I-405 / SR167 Express Toll Lanes Rate Setting Considerations](#)
[I-405 / SR167 ETLs Corridor Program Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 8, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:53:37, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Prior to Action, Commissioner Jennings asked for additional analysis of Scenario A with an \$18 maximum rate. Mr. See replied that he would discuss options with WSDOT for this additional analysis.

Action: Vice Chair Restucci made a motion to advance two scenarios for Phase 1 of rate-setting on the I-405/SR 167 corridor: a scenario raising the minimum toll rate to \$1 and the maximum toll rate to \$12, and a scenario raising the minimum toll rate to \$1 and the maximum toll rate to \$15; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Shiv Batra. The motion passed 6-0, with Commissioner Nicole Grant excused.

Commissioner Batra made a motion to advance three scenarios for Phase 2 of rate-setting on the I-405/SR 167 corridor for investment-grade analysis; the motion was seconded by Vice Chair Restucci. The motion passed 6-0, with Commissioner Grant excused.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 9:

Driving Washington's Future: Connecting Regional and Statewide Planning

Presenters:

- Lois Bollenback, Executive Director, Spokane Regional Transportation Council
- Marc Daily, Executive Director, Thurston Regional Planning Council

- Matt Ransom, Executive Director, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
- Thera Black, PRTPO Coordination, Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning

Four executive directors representing Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (MPOs and RTPOs) from across Washington state discussed their successes in building regional partnerships. MPOs and RTPOs play a critical role in supplying regional data and building consensus that helps local leaders make collective decisions about major regional transportation investments. Looking ahead, they see important opportunities for regional transportation planning agencies to support electrification, health equity, housing and compact urban development, climate resilience, safety, and continued public outreach and engagement to streamline transportation improvements. MPOs and RTPOs face significant funding challenges. They have not seen significant funding increases since they were originally established in the 1990s. However, the planning mandates they are responsible for continue to increase.

Presentation: [Connecting Regional & Statewide Planning](#)

For more detail on agenda item 9, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 05:18:30, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

DAY 2: October 18, 2023

Chair Debbie Young opened the meeting at 9 a.m. with introductions by Commission members and staff and meeting protocols.

Agenda Item 11: Commission Business

- September Meeting Summary
- Route Jurisdiction Transfer Moratorium – **ACTION**
- Special Meeting – November 13: Review possible I-405/SR 167 Toll Rate changes – **ACTION**
- Annual Report Work Session
- Tolling Report Work Session

Presenters:

- Paula Reeves, Senior Policy Analyst, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission

Commissioners approved the September Meeting Summary for posting and distribution.

Paula Reeves explained that Resolution 751 is proposed to establish a moratorium on Route Jurisdiction Transfer requests until Dec. 31, 2026, to allow completion of the Commission's statewide Route Jurisdiction Transfer Study.

Carl See presented a proposal to hold a special virtual meeting on Nov. 13 from 3 to 5 p.m. to allow the public to give input on two options put forward for Phase 1 of toll rate-setting on I-405/SR 167.

Ms. Reeves presented possible themes, "Big Ideas," and policy and fiscal recommendations for the Commission's 2023 Annual Report, which will be issued in January 2024.

Mr. See gave an update on the 2024 Tolling Report, which will be submitted to the Legislature by Jan. 5, 2024. The report provides an update to the Legislature on the Commission's toll-setting activities over 2023, sets forth expectations for 2024, and provides tolling recommendations for Legislative consideration. The report also includes an updated annual assessment of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge (TNB) loan status and the ability of the current loan plan to sustain toll rates at current levels through the life of the TNB debt service.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 11, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:02:27, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Vice Chair Restucci made a motion to adopt Resolution 751; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Baldwin. The motion passed 7-0.

The proposal to amend the Commission's schedule and hold a special virtual meeting on Nov. 13 was adopted without objection.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 12:

Naming SR 411 the “Cowlitz County Deputy Sheriff Justin DeRosier Memorial Highway

Presenters:

- Rep. Ed Orcutt, 20th District, Washington State House of Representatives
- Sheriff Brad Thurman, Cowlitz County
- Katie DeRosier, Family

Rep. Ed Orcutt, Sheriff Brad Thurman and Katie DeRosier described the life and career of Cowlitz County Sheriff Justin DeRosier, who was fatally shot while serving on duty in April 2019. A House Joint Memorial that passed the Legislature recommended naming a section of State Route 411 after the fallen deputy; the stretch includes the location of sheriff’s office and leads to Castle Rock, the DeRosiers’ home. Deputy DeRosier was a graduate of Washington State University and served in law enforcement agencies in Washington and Alaska. He was posthumously awarded the state Medal of Honor for his service, and he is honored on the National Law Enforcement Memorial Wall.

Presentation: [State Route 411 – Naming](#)

For more detail on agenda item 12, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:11:56, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Vice Chair Restucci made a motion to adopt Resolution 750 naming State Route 411 from milepost 1.5 to 12 the as the Cowlitz County Deputy Sheriff Justin DeRosier Memorial Highway; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Baldwin. The motion passed 7-0.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 13:

Final Findings – 2023 Route Jurisdiction Transfer Requests: Cities of Ridgefield and Snoqualmie

Presenter:

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

Paula Reeves recapped the process the Commission has undertaken to consider two Route Jurisdiction Transfer Requests. She gave an overview of the request by the City of Ridgefield to transfer State Route 501, known as Pioneer Street, from the state to the city. The Commission’s Route Jurisdiction Transfer Subcommittee recommends the transfer to the city’s jurisdiction and removing it from the state highway designation list in state law.

Ms. Reeves gave an overview of the request by the City of Snoqualmie’s request to transfer Snoqualmie Parkway from the city to the state and explained that there is disagreement among stakeholders on important issues that may be addressed in the Commission’s upcoming Route Jurisdiction Study. Therefore, the subcommittee recommends the transfer

request be deferred to allow for the state and the city to discuss the matter further and until the study is completed.

Presentation: [Route Jurisdiction Transfer Requests](#)

For more detail on agenda item 13, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:32:35, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Commissioner Baldwin made a motion to approve the final findings and advance the City of Ridgefield Route Jurisdiction Request to transfer Pioneer Street to the city to the Legislature for action; the motion was seconded by Vice Chair Restucci. The motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Baldwin made a motion to approve the final findings and defer the City of Snoqualmie Route Jurisdiction Transfer Request to transfer Snoqualmie Parkway to the state until the completion of the statewide Route Jurisdiction Study; the motion was seconded by Vice Chair Restucci. The motion passed 7-0.

Follow-Up: The Washington State Transportation Commission will issue agency request legislation regarding the transfer of SR 501 to the City of Ridgefield.

Agenda Item 14:

Kickoff of the Legislatively Directed Advanced Transportation Technologies Study

Presenter:

- Craig Baxter, Project Manager, CDM Smith

Craig Baxter discussed the study objectives of the Commission’s Advanced Transportation Technologies Study, which will focus on advanced roadside and vehicle-based technologies, providing a foundation for policy decisions on deploying a technology-based system to improve safety and compliance at transportation facilities. The technology evaluated must be able to be operated independently, have a limited physical footprint, and have a 95 percent or greater license-plate reading accuracy. Technology categories to be evaluated include smart devices and apps, portable road systems, software, hardware, and vehicle-embedded applications. Legal reviews will consider privacy implications of technologies, current obstacles, impacts to implementation and cost. The final report to the House and Senate Transportation Committees will be delivered in June 2024.

Presentation: [Advanced Transportation Technologies Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 14, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:57:12, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 15:

Kickoff of the Washington Transportation Plan Update & West Coast Transportation Network Scoping Effort

Presenter:

- Jonathan Overman, Senior Associate, Cambridge Systematics

Jonathan Overman discussed the approach and tasks with the Washington Transportation Plan Update, the state's long-range transportation policy plan. Updating the plan will include a state of transportation assessment; an equity assessment; public and stakeholder engagement; identifying a new framework for strategies and actions; and identifying short-, medium- and long-range actions. Also included in the work is the scoping of a West Coast Network Plan aimed at envisioning a transportation network across the three states that increases clean transportation and strengthens resiliency against natural disasters.

Presentation: [Washington Transportation Plan Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 15, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:25:26, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 16:

Kickoff of the Legislatively Directed Statewide Route Jurisdiction Study

Presenters:

- Rob Fellows, Project Manager, WSP USA
- Steve Gorcester, Transportation Policy Expert, WSP USA

Rob Fellows introduced the Commission's Route Jurisdiction Study, and Steve Gorcester gave background on the current Route Jurisdiction Transfer process and the last statewide review, which was more than 30 years ago. Mr. Gorcester discussed new laws and policies in place since the last review, including the Growth Management Act, Complete Streets and others. The study will evaluate transfer criteria and recommend jurisdiction changes. A mapping inventory will be part of the study to apply evaluation criteria and identify transfer candidates, with considerations of fiscal and safety impacts, agricultural and rural access, system continuity, freight connectivity, and system continuity.

Presentation: [Statewide Route Jurisdiction Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 16, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:37:13, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 17: Public Comment

Arvia Morris, Seattle – Glad to see that passenger rail is a key component of Washington Transportation Plan and would like to request outreach to all rail advocate groups in the state. There is concern over whether there is enough being invested in infrastructure to support WSDOT’s goals to increase Amtrak trips between Seattle and Portland and that the state is falling behind others in increasing and improving intercity passenger rail service.

John Ley, Clark County – Deliberations on tolling don’t show concerns for common citizens, who are paying for transportation costs through gas taxes and other pass-through costs. He said tolls are inefficient when the cost of collection is factored in. Road maintenance should be prioritized over other initiatives, such as the study of high-speed rail.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 16, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:01:45, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 17: Commission Business

Commissioners shared the following reflections and recommendations from the meeting:

- Honoring Deputy Sheriff DeRosier for giving his life serving the people of Cowlitz County was a highlight.
- Learning that there is anticipated to be \$11 billion in preservation and maintenance needs for the state transportation system over the next 10 years was eye-opening.
- It was good to hear about the potential for collaboration to site energy and communications infrastructure in highway rights of way. You can build for the future while doing preservation.
- Maintenance needs are critical. We need to work with our legislators to take action to address our maintenance and preservation needs.
- Hearing about port electrification in Long Beach, California, is important and transferable to our ports in Washington, especially in the Puget Sound, with adjacent communities that experience harmful health effects from emissions.
- The Route Jurisdiction Study is important, and the Commission has a great team of experts working on it.
- The RTPO/MPO panel was a highlight with such an outstanding group of speakers who shared important information about their work.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 17, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:09:52, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Chair Young adjourned the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be a special virtual meeting on Nov. 13, 2023, followed by an in-person virtual meeting in Pasco on Nov. 14-15, 2023.