



Washington State Transportation Commission

Virtual Meeting Summary

February 14 & 15, 2024

February 14, 2024

Chair Debbie Young 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: Michigan's Inductive Charging Pilot Program

Presenter:

- Michele Mueller, Manager, Connected, Automated and Electrification, Michigan Department of Transportation
- Stefan Tongur, Vice President, Business Development, Electreon

Michele Mueller gave an overview of a pilot program by the Michigan Department of Transportation that placed inductive charging coils for wireless vehicle charging in two sections of road in Detroit. The pilot is focused currently on test vehicles for transit, freight, and last-mile delivery, with expansion into passenger vehicles possible. The pilot includes both dynamic (in-motion) and static charging. Electreon is the partner in the pilot, and Stefan Tongur shared how Electreon's wireless charging system transfers energy from the power grid to in-road electric coils and then to a receiver installed on the vehicle. Users must have a subscription.

Presentation: [Michigan DOT Inductive Charging Pilot Program](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:03:01, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 3: Building "Complete Streets" in Washington State

Presenters:

- Ashley Probart, Executive Director, Transportation Improvement Board

- Celeste Gilman, Strategic Policy Administrator, Active Transportation Division, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Gil Cerise, AICP Program Manager, Puget Sound Regional Council

Ashley Probart gave an overview of the development of “Complete Streets” policy and statutes in Washington state, and the role of the Transportation Improvement Board in distributing grants for mobility projects to eligible cities and counties. A total of 130 projects worth \$41.7 million have been awarded through Complete Streets grants.

Celeste Gilman shared four programs administered by WSDOT to improve active transportation in communities across the state. The Complete Streets requirement now in law helps WSDOT advance state highway projects that improve safety and provide for all modes of transportation, and the agency is working to build facilities that people feel comfortable using and that separate users from vehicle traffic in varying degrees.

Gil Cerise talked about regional planning for Complete Streets and how Puget Sound Regional Council incorporates active transportation in its long-range planning. PSRC’s regional growth strategy (Vision 2050), regional transportation plan, and coordinated mobility plan emphasize transit and mobility, which informs local comprehensive plans and transportation projects that receive funding. Project evaluation criteria include active transportation and safety for vulnerable system users, and sources of federal funds come with specific set-asides for pedestrian and bicycle projects.

Presentations: [TIB – Complete Streets](#)
[WSDOT – Complete Streets](#)
[Regional Planning – Complete Streets](#)

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:51:30, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 4: Puget Sound Gateway Project Update

Presenters:

- John White, Puget Sound Gateway Program Administrator, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Brent Baker, Senior Vice President and Managing Director, WSP USA
- Ed Barry, Director, Tolling Division, Washington State Department of Transportation

John White shared progress on the Puget Sound Gateway Program, which completes the State Route 509 and 167 corridors and creates more direct connections to the Port of Tacoma and Port of Seattle, taking freight traffic off local roads. Total funding is \$2.67 billion, with \$180 million budgeted from toll revenue. Ed Barry gave an update on the schedule for rate-setting and the commencement of tolling, scheduled to begin in late

2025 for the first stage of SR 509, with additional segments of both facilities scheduled to come online in 2026, 2027 and 2029. Brent Baker shared results of an update done to a previously completed Level 2 Toll Traffic and Revenue Study. The study confirmed the viability of budgeted toll funding of \$180 million and confirmed the capacity of tolls to support the legislative bond authorization limit of \$340 million. WSDOT will work with the Commission on scenarios for the Level 3 (Investment Grade) Traffic and Revenue Study in 2024. A legislative proviso requires WSDOT to present a scenario incorporating an exemption, discount, or other toll relief for low-income drivers that reside near the corridor to the Commission as part of that study.

Presentation: [Puget Sound Gateway Program](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:46:57, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

**Agenda Item 5:
Advancing Infrastructure for Alternative Fuel Vehicles**

Presenter:

- Anthony Buckley, Director of Innovative Partnerships, Washington State Department of Transportation

Anthony Buckley shared plans for improving the state's electric vehicle infrastructure through the awarding of state and federal grants. WSDOT's Innovative Partnerships Office has seen its budget grow from \$10 million to \$200 million in the past two years with state and federal funding made available to expand access to clean fuel for transportation. The funding from various programs supports initiatives such as developing EV charging infrastructure along state routes, developing infrastructure to support zero-emission commercial vehicles and school buses, and pursuing other clean-energy initiatives for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

Presentation: [Advancing Infrastructure](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:27:58, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 6: Washington State Department of Transportation's 2024 Highway System Plan

Presenters:

- Karena Houser, Multimodal Planning and Data Division Director, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Jeremy Jewkes, Statewide Planning Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation

Karena Houser and Jeremy Jewkes gave an overview of the 2024 Highway System Plan. Policy direction for the plan comes from the Commission's 2040 Washington Transportation Plan. Work on the Highway System Plan has been underway since 2020 and has focused on ensuring equity in the plan so that state transportation budget investments are balanced and protect and improve health, safety, and accessibility for overburdened populations. Scenarios were crafted, and they ranged on a spectrum from current department funding (\$48.9 billion in revenue over 20 years) to funding based on the full vision of the department (\$91 billion in revenue over 20 years). Scenarios blended different levels of repair (preservation and maintenance), improvements to safety and efficiency, and expansion. Public engagement and feedback on those scenarios reflected the most support for preservation and maintenance, strategies that increase safety and efficiency for the existing system while funding some highway expansion, and addressing equity.

Presentation: [2024 Highway System Plan](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:56:08, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 7: Washington State Ferries' San Juan Islands Walk-on Ridership Maximization Study

Presenter:

- Jason Rogers, Planning Manager, Washington State Ferries

Jason Rogers shared results of WSF's Anacortes-San Juan Islands Walk-on Ridership Maximization Study, conducted in 2023 to understand how to better utilize walk-on passenger capacity of the sailings on that ferry route. Challenges vary by user group but include lack of multimodal connections, transporting luggage and goods, parking, mobility challenges, and unreliable ferry service. Preferred strategies identified to encourage walk-on ridership were expanding multimodal connectivity, developing affordable long-term parking solutions, creating baggage support services, increasing

information related to parking and transportation options, and improving terminal accessibility and waiting areas. Specific elements identified to increase walk-on ridership were enhanced trip-planning information on the WSF web page, real-time parking availability, enhanced wayfinding, on-demand shuttle service in the Anacortes, summer shuttle service on San Juan Island, services to connect seniors and mobility-challenged residents, and increased pedestrian access on vessels.

Presentation: [San Juan Islands Walk-on Ridership Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 7, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:30:58, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 8:
Washington State Ferries' Passenger Demographics Study

Presenter:

- Carmen Bendixen, Senior Transportation Planner, Washington State Ferries

Carmen Bendixen gave an overview of WSF's 2023 Passenger Demographic Survey Report, directed by a legislative proviso to collect information on the age, race, gender and income level of passengers by route in the summer and winter seasons, as well as trip purpose. The survey collected key information about ferry riders, and it prioritized reaching historically underserved communities. About 15 percent identified as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Women represented a slightly higher proportion of riders who responded, and half were 55 or older. More than 23 percent reported annual household incomes below 80 percent of the 2023 Area Media Income for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area. The highest percentage of riders reported visiting family or friends (34.5 percent). Commuting came in third, with 23.4 percent, a large drop from the last origin and destination study in 2013, in which 54 percent were commuting. The largest share of riders (40 percent) purchased a regular, single-ride fare.

Presentation: [Passenger Demographics Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 8, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:55:23, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 9:
Washington State Ferries' Vessel Search Report

Presenter:

- John Vezina, Director, Planning, Customer and Government Relations, Washington State Ferries

John Vezina shared an update on WSF's Vessel Search Report, which was directed by the Legislature to study the feasibility of purchasing or leasing a vessel that is suitable for returning ferry service to the Sidney, B.C.-Anacortes international route ahead 2030, the current timeline on WSF's service restoration plan. No vessels were available in the United States. Looking abroad, a vessel in Greece was close to completion, but delivering the ferry to the Pacific Northwest would have been cost-prohibitive. Its parts and systems would have not been compatible with WSF's tools and maintenance systems. WSF is holding out hopes that new vessels coming online will enable service to return to the route sooner than planned.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 9, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:10:13, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 10: Electrification in Freight Mobility

Presenter:

- Keith Wilson, Chief Executive Officer, Titan Freight Systems

Keith Wilson gave background on Titan Freight Systems and its success in removing fossil fuels from its Oregon operations. Through clean fuel incentive programs, Titan has lowered its operating costs using renewable diesel (R99), which produces 60-85 percent lower emissions than petroleum diesel. As it pursues cleaner fuels, Titan is also building its electric fleet and received its first six battery electric Freightliner trucks in 2023. While heavy duty electrification requires an upfront investment, for Titan, Oregon incentive programs have reduced the cost per mile below that of diesel trucks. Titan is looking for expansion opportunities in Washington state as the Climate Commitment Act brings similar possibilities for freight operators.

Presentation: [Titan Fleet Decarbonization](#)

For more detail on agenda item 11, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:20:17, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 11: **Joint Transportation Committee's Local Partnerships Study**

Presenters:

- Tracy Burrows, Executive Director, Municipal Research Services Center
- Steve Gorcester, Principal, Performance Plane

Tracy Burrows and Steve Gorcester gave an overview of a study undertaken to create a formal procedure for when WSDOT partners with local governments to perform preservation and maintenance and construction projects on state highways. Previous partnerships have taken place but have presented challenges, and the study aimed to find process improvements that could improve the outcome for all the stakeholders. Recommendations were shared, along with initial implementation steps for WSDOT. Interfaces between the study and the Commission's ongoing Route Jurisdiction Study were discussed.

Presentation: [JTC Local Partnerships Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 11, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:49:42, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 12: **Maximizing the Potential in State Highway Roadsides**

Presenter:

- Ray Willard, State Roadside Landscape Asset Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Juli Hartwig, State Landscape Architect, Washington State Department of Transportation

Ray Willard and Juli Hartwig gave an overview of Washington state's roadside landscape assets, which help with public safety, stormwater control, and climate resilience. They spoke to the challenge of keeping WSDOT's landscape assets in a state of good repair, just like roads and bridges. The cost of roadside restoration in new highway projects is included in the project budget, and new plants are tended to for three years before the project is turned over to maintenance crews, which in many cases is not enough time for the vegetation to get established. Establishing and maintaining desirable native vegetation takes time and money, and in some cases, safety and resilience is compromised when those projects receive lower priority for funding. A goal is to establish specialized maintenance crews in each region to do technical work of high-maintenance roadsides, which would require an additional 70 FTEs and \$5 million a year in funding on top of \$15 million currently spent annually in vegetation management.

Presentation: [State Highway Roadsides](#)

For more detail on agenda item 12, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 05:16:08, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Chair Debbie Young reminded the Commission that the meeting will continue Thursday, February 15, 2024, and recessed the meeting.

DAY 2: February 15, 2024

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

Agenda Item 14: Commission Business

- January Meeting Summary
- Legislative Update
- SR 520 Toll Rate Setting Update

Presenter:

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

Commissioners approved the January virtual meeting summary and the meeting summary for the final hearing for I-405/SR 167 toll rate adjustments for posting and distribution.

Paula Reeves gave an update on the status of bills of interest to the Commission in the Legislature.

Carl See shared an update on toll-rate setting for the State Route 520 Bridge. Several toll rate options will be presented to the Commission at the March meeting. A public feedback survey is planned for the spring, and a preferred option is anticipated to be selected by the Commission in May. A final public hearing on possible adjustments will be planned for late June-early July, with any changes becoming effective in August.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 14, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:02:49, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 15: Joint Transportation Committee's Study on Incentivizing the Transition to Electric Vehicles

Presenters:

- Paul Neal, Senior Counsel, Joint Transportation Committee
- Jeff Doyle, Project Technical Leader, CDM Smith

Paul Neal and Jeff Doyle gave an overview of a Joint Transportation Committee study on encouraging high consumption fuel users (HCFUs) to use electric vehicles. The top 10 percent of Washington drivers consume 26 percent of fuel in the state, so there are

benefits to giving incentives to these “super users” to switch to make meaningful reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. About 86 percent of such users drive SUVs, pickup trucks or vans, a sector with fewer comparable electric models. Initiatives that could encourage this group of users to buy an electric vehicle are offering more charging stations (particularly Level 2 charging), EV purchase incentives, an electric miles lease incentive, a vehicle loaner program that allows the occasional use of a gas-powered vehicle, and rebates for home chargers and their installation.

Presentation: [Incentivizing the Transition to Electric Vehicles Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 15, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:27:52, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

**Agenda Item 16:
Impacts of Airports on Community Health**

Presenter:

- Kris Johnson, PhD, Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation, Public Health – Seattle and King County

Kris Johnson gave an overview of a study directed by the Legislature to assess the strength of evidence on airport-related pollution’s impact on community health and to look at the health of populations within 10 miles of SeaTac Airport. The study focused on air and noise pollution that comes from airport operations and found causal connections to both for respiratory problems, cardiovascular issues, brain and nervous system dysfunction, metabolic issues, and reproductive health. The study found that people in airport communities in King County face disparities in health throughout their life, with a life expectancy that is two to five years lower than that of other communities. Recommendations include addressing the health disparities of airport communities, continuing to develop strategies to mitigate air and noise pollution, and expanding the monitoring of pollutants in schools and facilities that serve vulnerable populations.

Presentation: [Impacts of Airports on Community Health](#)

For more detail on agenda item 16, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:21:44, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

**Agenda Item 17:
WSDOT Secretary’s Report**

Presenters:

- Mike Gribner, Deputy Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation

Mike Gribner shared that WSDOT is monitoring the release of the 2024 Supplemental Transportation Budget and then will respond to the direction issued in the budget once it is passed. A record number of presentations to the Legislature is a sign of challenges in the budget and interest by lawmakers to understand the issues faced by the agency. A high level of turnover and employees who are new to the agency continues to be a challenge, but the level of delivery of projects despite that is encouraging. Transition at the senior level of the agency continues, with announcements naming two new assistant secretaries on the horizon.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 17, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:53:07, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 18: Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 18, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:01:14, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 19: Commission Business

Commissioners shared the following reflections and recommendations from the meeting:

- The pilot inductive charging program is a game-changer, and it would be great to see Washington state join the research and testing and have more opportunities for charging. The progress on Complete Street projects in the state is exciting and offering more opportunities for all modes of transportation on the state's roads and highways.
- Hearing about electrification in freight mobility and how Titan Freight Systems is making the transition to clean fuels and electric trucks pencil out for the company's bottom-line using Oregon's incentives was interesting.
- The inductive charging presentation brought home the point that infrastructure must be in place to meet the 2035 zero-emission vehicle standard. Drivers must also be able to purchase vehicles that fit their lifestyle. It's encouraging to see the advances in electrifying medium- and heavy-duty freight vehicles. The airport health study was interesting, and it would be good to see more research and clarifications on the limits of the study.

- The presentation on in-road charging was very informative, and it would be good to better understand the user end of the transaction and how payment is taken. The roadside assets presentation provided new insight into roadway landscaping, the function it serves and the cost of preserving it.
- It's good to see multiple presentations addressing all angles of transportation electrification. The costs shouldn't be a reason to delay this historical transition. On the discussion of safety, regional level discussions are putting emphasis on making changes to roads and infrastructure that affect driver behavior and slow down vehicles. That discussion should be given as much weight as discussions about speed enforcement. Efforts to reduce the legal limit for intoxication to 0.05 should continue despite the failure again this legislative session.
- It is disappointing to see that we're not making progress in reducing the number of traffic fatalities, and efforts need to go into incentivizing people to drive safely. There's hope that the 2024 Supplemental Transportation Budget will prioritize maintenance and preservation, and we need to continue to speak to the importance of it.
- It was sad to hear that after an international search, not a single vessel could be recommissioned to serve WSF's Sidney, B.C., route, a sobering reminder of the circumstances in the maritime industry and the difficulty of acquiring new vessels. The airport health study revealed challenges, and though we aren't going to stop air travel or impede economic development, the health impacts show there is a cost and interests that must be balanced.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 19, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:01:57, 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 11:30 a.m.

The next meeting will be held virtually on March 13 & 14, 2024.