



Washington State Transportation Commission

Meeting Summary

March 13 & 14, 2024

March 13, 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: Increasing Truck Parking Availability

Presenter:

- Jason Biggs, Director, Rail, Freight, and Ports Division, Washington State Department of Transportation

Jason Biggs gave an overview of a three-state effort to provide real-time parking availability information to commercial truckers traveling Interstate 5 between the borders of Canada and Mexico. The I-5 Truck Parking Information Management System is an effort by WSDOT, the Oregon Department of Transportation, and Caltrans to share parking availability on 54 locations through websites, apps and variable messaging signs. In Washington state, the system will allow the deployment of vehicle detection technology and the installation of dynamic message signs, with a target of completion by 2027. Other initiatives to expand public and private truck parking throughout the state also received funding in the 2023-25 Transportation Budget.

Presentation: [Interstate 5 Truck Parking Information System](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:02:54, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 3:

Preparing for Increased Electrification and Autonomous Vehicles

Presenters:

- Brenda Wiest, Vice President and Director of Government Affairs, Teamsters 117
- Mark Riker, Executive Secretary, Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO
- Micah Mitrosky, International Representative for Renewable and Clean Transportation, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

In a panel discussion on the transition to electrification and autonomous vehicles and the workforce, Brenda Wiest shared the potential impacts of driverless vehicles on professional motor vehicle operators. Strategies to put into place before a broad shift to driverless vehicles are developing an industry-wide approach for worker advancement and stability, building strong career pathways, and creating safety net programs to support worker transitions.

The Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council represents between 15,000 and 40,000 construction workers involved in building projects that contribute to the transportation system, according to Mark Riker. The growth of multimodal transit systems with transit stations, maintenance and operations centers, and other facilities has broadened the categories of workers needed to deliver projects. The composition of the construction workforce is evolving to better match the composition of the population, a goal of the council.

Micah Mitrosky discussed how the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers' (IBEW) members have been involved in clean transportation since testing for electrical vehicles began. A national network of training programs and centers support apprenticeship training and continuing education and ensures an adequate supply of certified personnel to properly install all components of an electrified transportation system.

Presentations: [Workforce Impacts of Autonomous Vehicles](#)
[International Brotherhood Electrical Workers](#)

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:25:59, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 4:

WSDOT Public Transportation Update

Presenters:

- Don Chartock, Deputy Director, Public Transportation Division, WSDOT
- Coby Zeifman, Deputy Project Manager, Public Transportation Division, WSDOT
- Kate Bunge, Data Analyst, Public Transportation Division, WSDOT

- Monica Ghosh, Project Manager, Public Transportation Division, WSDOT
- Emily Geraldts, Capital Projects Planner, Public Transportation Division, WSDOT

Don Chartock and members of WSDOT’s Public Transportation Division shared the work the division is doing to strengthen and support transit systems across the state. The division is focused on meeting the goals of the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) and the HEAL (Healthy Environment for All) Act. An infusion of \$3 billion in funding through CCA and Move Ahead Washington over 16 years will further allow the state’s transit agencies to transition to zero-emission fleets and create and sustain critical mobility transportation services. Of the \$50.7 million in 2022 Move Ahead Washington supplemental funding, 95-97 percent of total investment was directed to vulnerable populations and overburdened communities defined in the Washington State Department of Health’s Environmental Health Disparities Map. The division is researching using the concept of “ALICE” (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) to broaden its measure of financial hardship as it works to improve access through its grant programs. Free rides for low-income riders, frequent and weekend service, and regular intercity and rural service are among potential solutions to increase access to public transportation for those who face barriers.

Presentation: [WSDOT Public Transportation Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:19:44, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 5: 2024 Current Conditions in Washington Cities

Presenter:

- Lindsey Hueer, Government Relations Advocate, Association of Washington Cities

Lindsey Hueer discussed public safety, the top concern for cities polled by the Association of Washington Cities as part of its State of the Cities survey report, and its nexus with the transportation system. The costs associated with addressing increased crime rates and bolstering resources to improve public safety are taking up a growing percentage of cities’ general funds, the same source relied upon to pay for the operations, preservation and maintenance of the transportation system.

Presentation: [Public Safety & Criminal Justice](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:27:46, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 6: Performance Update on Washington's Tolled Facilities

Presenter:

- Ed Barry, Director, Toll Division, Washington State Department of Transportation

Ed Barry gave an overview of traffic and revenue on the state's tolled facilities from October 2023 to December 2023. Traffic and revenue were close to forecast for all the facilities, with total transactions (15.6 million) coming in at 3.2 percent above the November 2023 forecast. Toll revenue during that time frame (\$50.7 million) was 3.5 percent above the November forecast. The biggest deviation from the November 2023 forecast came on the State Route (SR) 99 Tunnel, where toll transactions were 9.7 percent above forecast and revenue was 17.3 percent above forecast.

Presentation: [Toll Traffic Revenue Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:51:41, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 7: Legislative Updates on Tolled Corridors

Presenters:

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

Carl See, Ed Barry and WSDOT project leaders provided an update on legislative action for projects on tolled corridors. The Legislature provided WSDOT \$500,000 to study tolling on SR 520 with additional direction to initiate planning work regarding updated tolling on the corridor in coordination with the WSTC, and \$75,000 to perform an actuarial study to assess self-insuring the bridge. A financial plan that funded current projects and moved out delivery of some improvements on the Interstate 405/SR 167 corridor was adopted. There were no substantial changes for the Commission in planned rate-setting in the 2024 Supplemental Transportation Budget.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 7, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:00:52, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 8:

Possible Adjustments to SR 520 Toll Rates – ACTION

Presenters:

- Ed Barry, Director, Toll Division, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Brent Baker, Senior Vice President and Managing Director, WSP USA
- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission

Carl See gave an overview of tolling requirements on the SR 520 Bridge, and Ed Barry explained that analysis by the Washington State Office of the State Treasurer (OST) based on the November 2023 traffic and revenue forecast showed that toll revenues are not expected to be sufficient to meet financial obligations beginning in fiscal year 2025. The SR 520 master bond resolution requires the Commission to take rate-setting action to address this shortfall. Brent Baker shared the proposals put forth by the Tolling Subcommittee:

- A uniform 10 percent toll rate increase (rounded to the nearest \$0.05) applied to all toll rates for all times of the day and day of the week, during the week (Option A) and the weekends (Option C).
- A tailored toll rate increase averaging 10 percent overall (rounded to the nearest \$0.05) that also decreases the number of toll-rate variations throughout the day for both the weekdays (Option B) and weekends (Option D).

Commissioners were asked to combine the weekday and weekend options into two proposals to carry forward for public input and financial analysis.

Presentation: [State Route 520 Toll Rate Proposals](#)

For more detail on agenda item 8, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:20:01, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Commissioner Shiv Batra moved to combine Options A and C and Options B and D for further analysis and public input; Vice Chair Restucci seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

Follow-Up: A public input survey will take place in April to help inform the decision-making process, and further financial analysis will be undertaken. The Commission will select a final toll rate proposal for public comment at the May meeting.

Agenda Item 9:

WSDOT's Unpiloted Aircraft and Commercial Drone Program

Presenter:

- Ann Richart, Aviation Director, Washington State Department of Transportation

Ann Richart discussed WSDOT Aviation's uncrewed aircraft and commercial drone program and shared how the division is working to prepare the state for advanced air mobility and the future of aviation. The Legislature requires WSDOT to provide coordination on drone systems throughout the state and serve an advisory role. WSDOT is also a drone operator, using drones in a variety of applications that range from

infrastructure inspections to emergency response. Advanced air mobility will bring new opportunities through electric or alternatively propelled aircraft, vertical take-off and landing aircraft, and crewed and autonomous aircraft. WSDOT Aviation's role is to plan for future uses of technology and develop the infrastructure to support it.

Presentation: [Unpiloted Aircraft & Commercial Drone Program](#)

For more detail on agenda item 9, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:54:16, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 10: Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Using Traffic to Guide Proactive Solutions

Presenter:

- Bryan Mistele, President and Chief Executive Officer, INRIX

Bryan Mistele shared background on how INRIX is using generative AI to improve transportation. New data technology contains the potential to provide local governments with a broader picture of traffic conditions when undertaking traffic management. Connected vehicles and devices collect traffic data that can be harnessed by AI, in addition to reports, projects and other materials in the public domain. Generative AI technology allows that data to be leveraged to be accessible to an audience beyond traffic engineers and traffic consultants, and it makes data-driven recommendations to solve issues related to planning, traffic management, safety, emergency response and more.

Presentation: [AI in Transportation](#)

For more detail on agenda item 10, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:41:19, 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, March 14, 2024, and recessed the meeting.

DAY 2: March 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 12: Commission Business

- February Meeting Summary
- Legislative Wrap-up
- Staff Subcommittee Update

Presenters:

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

Commissioners approved the February virtual meeting summary for posting and distribution.

Paula Reeves provided an overview of the recently completed 2024 legislative session, sharing the final status bills of interest to the Commission.

Commission staff gave an update on Commission subcommittees, including those working on the Washington Transportation Plan, the Route Jurisdiction Study, and tolling.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 12, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:02:40, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 13: Naming SR 6 the “Washington State Patrol Trooper Justin R. Schaffer Memorial Highway” – ACTION

Presenters:

- Sen. Jeff Wilson, 20th District, Washington State Senate
- Chief John Batiste, Washington State Patrol
- Glenn Schaffer, father of Trooper Justin Schaffer

The Legislature passed Senate Joint Memorial 8008, sponsored by Sen. Jeff Wilson, calling on the Transportation Commission to designate a portion of SR 6 in Lewis County as the “Washington State Trooper Justin R. Schaffer Memorial Highway.” Trooper Schaffer was struck and killed while laying out spike strips to stop the high-speed chase of a robbery suspect on Interstate 5 in Chehalis in March 2020.

Washington State Patrol Chief John Batiste shared that Trooper Schaffer had a promising career with the state patrol, and during his tenure put in for several specialty assignments. He was a narcotics recognition expert and a canine handler. SR 6 runs through the community Schaffer lived in and served.

Glenn Schaffer said family and friends of his son are honored and grateful for the sentiment of the highway naming and that it honors his son's dedication to the Washington State Patrol.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 13, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:10:06, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: Vice Chair Restucci moved to approve Resolution 752 naming SR 6 between mileposts 45 to 51 the Washington State Trooper Justin R. Schaffer Memorial Highway. The motion passed 7-0.

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 14: Route Jurisdiction Study Update

Presenters:

- Rob Fellows, Project Manager, WSP USA
- Steve Gorcester, Principal, Performance Plane

Rob Fellows and Steve Gorcester gave an update on the status of the Commission's Route Jurisdiction Study, with work completed on examining the history of the state highway system, how the transfer process has been used, and how the process compares with other states. Interviews have also been conducted with a variety of stakeholder groups to understand different perceptions of the route jurisdiction transfer process.

Presentation: [Route Jurisdiction Study Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 14, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:21:12, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 15: February State Transportation Revenue Forecast

Presenters:

- Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Todd Lamphere, Director, Finance and Administration, Washington State Ferries

Carl See shared highlights from the February 2024 Transportation Revenue Forecast, noting that it is nearly a no-change forecast from the November 2023 forecast. Forecasted declines in revenues from ferry fares are largely offset by forecasted increases in revenues

from tolling; vehicle licenses, permits and fees; rental cars; vehicle sales tax; and driver-related fees. Revenue and fees for toll facilities are up slightly in the February 2024 forecast (\$12.2 million, or 2.5 percent over the November 2023 forecast).

Todd Lamphere shared the February 2024 ferry revenue and ridership forecasts update. Ridership from January 2024 to February 2024 continues to lag pre-pandemic levels, with most routes operating on reduced service compared with 2019. Ridership is continuing to grow, but performance falls short of the forecast. The initial 2023-25 Biennial Budget assumed 56 percent farebox recovery, while the 2024 Supplemental Budget assumes a 48 percent farebox recovery. A scheduled 4.25 percent fare increase adopted by the Commission in August 2023 will go into effect on Oct. 1, 2024, but no further fare increases are expected to be needed this biennium.

Presentations: [February Transportation Revenue Forecast](#)
[WSF Revenue and Ridership Forecasts Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 15, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:07:15, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 16: WSDOT Secretary's Report

Presenter:

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

Mike Gribner shared that the end of the legislative session brings the delivery of projects and work in the budget. That includes moving forward with work on the Portage Bay Bridge and Roanoke Lid Project. The Legislature included \$100 million in the Supplemental Budget for maintenance and preservation and \$150 million more for work on fish passages. Steve Nevey will come on board as the Assistant Secretary for Washington State Ferries on March 16.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 16, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:46:25, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 17: Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 17, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:57:54, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time.

Agenda Item 18: Commission Business

Commissioners shared the following reflections and recommendations from the meeting:

- Seeing how the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) awards are helping transit agencies serve marginalized communities was eye-opening, as well as looking at poverty through the lens of “ALICE.”
- Members of the workforce panel did a good job of painting a picture of who the members of their labor organizations are, including immigrants and women, and what needs to be done to keep them safe, secure and working in their fields.
- The work WSDOT is doing with companies to encourage drone delivery of goods and keep up with changes to aviation technology was great to hear.
- The presentation about the \$12 million grant awarded to West Coast states to increase truck parking and safety for truckers was an important reminder of the importance of keeping traffic moving freely for freight, which provides vital goods and services.
- It was an honor to name a portion of State Route 6 for Trooper Justin Schaffer.
- It’s great to see the Route Jurisdiction Study progressing and it will be exciting to see the conclusions. It’s hoped that the study results in a more modern process that works for all.
- The death of Trooper Schaffer and another Washington State Patrol trooper this month highlight the ongoing concern over roadway safety.
- The Association of Washington Cities’ presentation showed there are a lot of competing needs for General Fund money when public safety takes up such a large portion.
- The potential for generative AI to play a role in planning and choosing the most important road and traffic projects is an exciting vision.

Presentation: There was no associated presentation.

For more detail on agenda item 18, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:58:32, 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 p.m.

The next meeting will be held in Edmonds on April 16 & 17, 2024.