Washington State
Transportation Commission

Illuminating Change

Moving Washington Forward, Together



Reflections & Recommendations
January 2025

Message from the Transportation Commission Chair



On behalf of the Washington State Transportation Commission, I am pleased to present our 2024-25 Annual Report, which highlights key policy recommendations based on our discussions and meetings across the state. This year, we emphasize the critical role of partnerships in creating a safer, more efficient, and cost-effective transportation network.

This year's report highlights our top tier policy and financial recommendations in a special Call to Action section at the beginning of the report. We also highlight opportunities to leverage technology to improve project efficiency and safety.

In 2024, we held eleven meetings, with four taking place in communities across the state. The consistent theme heard at all of our meetings was the need for the state to prioritize its focus on maintaining and preserving the existing infrastructure. In a time of tight budgets, increasing congestion and vast unfunded maintenance needs, the importance of collaboration is clear. Strong partnerships between state and local governments, contractors, community groups and innovators will help address the tight timelines, unforeseen obstacles and budget limitations that often constrain projects.

The need for collaboration in bold action and thoughtful planning is clear. This year's report provides our most thoughtful recommendations for sustaining and advancing our transportation system. It is based on the needs and ideas we have heard across the state, and we hope it sparks collaboration, innovation and a better future for Washington.

Sincerely,

Deborah Young, Chair
Washington State Transportation Commission

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Call to Action:
Moving the state forward together

The challenges we face are growing – but are not unsurmountable. Based on our outreach to jurisdictions across the state, the solutions are centered on coming together as partners. To this end, three impactful areas have emerged, requiring action today so that we can begin to build a better tomorrow

Impact Area 1:
Redefine Statewide Partnerships

Traditional approaches limit the delivery of projects in our statewide transportation system, including maintenance and preservation. Firmly established jurisdictional silos constrain efficiency gains and obscure opportunities to evolve and leverage partnerships.

The time is now to institute flexibility and proactive efforts aimed at reducing and streamlining project delivery processes at all jurisdictional levels, merging efforts and resources where possible. The project delivery chain must be transformed from being centralized with one entity, to being spread out among key partners so that delivery can be accelerated.

This begins with requiring active coordination between state, regional, and local project partners so that innovative opportunities for subdividing the delivery tasks of a project can be identified up front, with the goal of accelerating the completion of a project.

Examples of possible opportunities for innovative partnerships include:

- Carrying out a systematic review of current delivery processes and jurisdictional roles to identify opportunities for efficiency gains.
- Authorizing flexible delivery arrangements that begin to blur the lines between who has the money and who builds the project.
- More pooling of jurisdictional staff and other resources to accomplish cross-jurisdictional efficiencies in project development, as well as for maintenance and operations.

Success Story:

An agreement between the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois put in place a preapproved "infrastructure tool kit" that can be deployed without further consultation with the Illinois Department of Transportation on each individual project. This allows efficiencies such as streamlined design and project development, improving relations between local agencies and the state Department of Transportation.

Some Challenging Facts

- By 2050, it is estimated that nearly two-thirds of our state gas tax revenues will be gone *(Source: WSTC Road Usage Charge Assessment)*
- Approximately 29% of public roadways in Washington are in poor condition. *(Source: USDOT)*
- Nearly 2 in 3 road deaths in urbanized areas occur on streets that are also state highways. *(Source: NACTO)*
- Pedestrians and cyclists are facing disproportionate safety risks, with 174 traffic deaths reported in 2023. *(Source: Washington Traffic Safety Commission)*
- Just 38% of the vessels in the Washington State Ferries fleet are in a state of good repair. *(Source: WSDOT)*

Impact Area 2:
Start the RUC Transition Now

The gas tax is declining, and the loss in revenue will be accelerating year over year as our vehicle fleet becomes more fuel-efficient and fuel sources diversify. The time has come to replace the gas tax. But transitioning away from the gas tax cannot be done all at once — it must be done incrementally and slowly to ensure minimal risk and protection of revenue levels that support our statewide system and our financial standing with bondholders.

With 12 years of research completed assessing road usage charging (RUC), the time is now to enact a voluntary RUC program so that our state can begin a methodical transition away from the gas tax, ahead of the 2035 Clean Cars II mandate requiring all new cars be zero-emission.

Charging by the mile, rather than by the gallon of gas or via flat and regressive licensing fees, ensures that all drivers pay their fair share for their use of the roads. And it can be done in a manner that protects privacy and is cost-effective to collect. RUC also increases tax equity for all, including low-income drivers and those who drive long distances.

Impact Area 3:
Increase Funding for Rural Washington

30 of our 39 counties in Washington state are considered rural, with the infrastructure in these areas subject to significant risks including washouts, failing bridges, and prolonged inclement weather, creating the potential of cutting off entire communities for extended periods of time. Ensuring reliable and safe transportation access is a basic need for all communities.

Success Story:

As a result of funding constraints, Spokane County is working with small communities within its borders to perform work funded by state preservation grants through the Transportation Improvement Board, making the most of workforce and equipment to accomplish critical maintenance needs.

While local option taxes are a great tool for mid- and large-sized cities, small towns don't have the populations to result in sufficient revenue being raised.



Spokane County Maintenance

As we face a growing backlog of failing infrastructure, there is a great urgency around prioritizing state investments that address critical rural transportation needs. Without an infusion of state funding, rural needs and their associated risks will only compound, straining the local and state economy which relies in part, on the efficient movement of agricultural goods and safe access for tourism and recreation.

Recommendations

In addition to the Call to Action items outlined in this Annual Report, The Transportation Commission is directed in law to provide the Governor and Legislature with policy and fiscal guidance on seven issue areas including:

- **Transportation finance**
- **Preserving, maintaining, and operating the statewide transportation system**
- **Transportation infrastructure needs**
- **Promoting best practices for adoption and use by transportation-related agencies and programs**
- **Transportation efficiencies that will improve service delivery and/or coordination**
- **Improved planning and coordination among transportation agencies and providers**
- **Use of intelligent transportation systems and other technology-based solutions**

The Transportation Commission has received extensive input from their meetings held across the state. The following sixteen priority recommendations are derived from those meetings.

Invest in Safety

Washington state experienced 810 traffic deaths in 2023 according to the Washington Traffic Safety Commission, the largest number of traffic deaths since 1990. In particular, fatal collisions in urban areas have more than doubled since 2013. Half of the traffic fatalities in Washington state in 2023 involved an impaired driver, and more pedestrians and motorcyclists were killed than in any other year on record. Crash risks increase substantially for drivers with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .05-.079%. The state of Utah lowered its BAC to 0.05% in 2018, and according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, saw close to a 20% reduction in fatal crashes.

In addition to setting forth laws that enforce responsible driver behavior, it is important to start instituting knowledge with young drivers through education. While drivers training was a part of the curriculum of public schools in decades past, today only 30 of more than 300 school districts in Washington state offer driver training at school. Private driver training schools are available but are expensive, costing $600-700 per student on average to complete. This results in many young drivers skipping drivers training altogether and waiting until they turn 18 to get licensed without training.

The following actions are recommended:

- **Re-institute driver training programs.**
  All young drivers should have access to drivers training, regardless of ability to pay. To this end, driver's education classes need to be re-instituted as part of public-school curriculum consistent with the state's Target Zero Plan. To accomplish this, institute the following recommendations consistent with Department of Licensing recommendations:
  - Driver skills modernization including reforming the current driver education program curriculum and driver exam.
  - Phasing the approach to young driver safety including expanding access and affordability of training and opportunities for instructors.
- **Conduct a feasibility study of older driver safety.**
  The study should include a comprehensive review of policies surrounding older drivers and medically at-risk drivers. To accomplish this, include the following provisions:
  - Feasibility analysis of establishing a medical advisory board to advise DOL on policy considerations, impacts on driving privileges, and an appeals process for drivers whose privileges are revoked or restricted.
  - An assessment tool for DOL to better assess a driver's potential risk to themselves or others.
  - An analysis of how the recommendations improve older driver safety while preserving maximum level of older driver independence and privacy.
- **Reduce Washington state's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit from .08% to .05%.**
  The Commission urges passage of legislation consistent with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommendations to lower BAC limit from .08% to .05% to save lives and increase road safety.

[1] Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine. AAAM Position Statement on Blood Alcohol Concentration Limit when Driving. 2022. https://www.aaam.org/blood-alcohol-concentration-limit/.

Provide Low Income Relief

As consumers face cost-of-living increases, expanded use of tolling and increasing ferry fares add to the financial pressures of households. But there are opportunities to bring relief to those who need it most. A recent study by the University of Washington found that 28% of Washington households do not have adequate earnings to meet the minimum cost of living.[2]

The following actions are recommended:

- **Advance the development of a low-income tolling program for all tolled facilities.**
  The Commission conducted a Phase 1 - Low Income Toll Program Study[3] in 2021 that focused on I-405 & SR 167 Express Toll Lanes. The findings of that study included a recommendation that a low-income toll program should be applied to all tolled facilities – not just the express toll lanes – and set forth the needed steps to implement a low-income toll program. But work remains to design and implement a low-income tolling program aimed at providing discounts for qualifying households. The Legislature needs to provide further direction and resources to the WSTC and WSDOT so that the preparatory design work can begin, and the regulatory program structure can be established.
- **Advance a feasibility assessment for a low-income ferry fare program.**
  With ferry fares rising every year, the cumulative impact is reducing access to the ferry system and impacting the make-up of ferry-served communities. The time is now to direct the WSTC to carry out an assessment, in coordination with WSF, to determine possible approaches to establishing a low-income ferry fare program, and determine the system needs and impacts to communities and riders.
- **Direct the establishment of a Statewide Transportation Equity Advisory Panel.**
  Transportation at the state level impacts the public directly on a daily basis. Yet there is no structure in place that would enable the proactive, ongoing gathering of input from underrepresented and BIPOC communities. To support policy evolution that contemplates the needs and perspectives of all communities, the WSTC is in need of a standing Transportation Equity Advisory Panel to inform and help shape transportation policy and fiscal decision-making.[4]

Streamline the Toll Setting Process

The current process for setting toll rates and policies in Washington state is governed by the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which requires a standardized framework for developing regulations and is exceedingly lengthy and inflexible. The rule making process on average takes the WSTC 160 days (over five months) to complete when setting toll rates. Meanwhile, financial requirements for Washington's tolled facilities are largely dictated by strict, legally binding bond covenants, with failure to meet them carrying serious outcomes.



GoodToGo Sticker Pass

The following actions are recommended:

- **Advance work to streamline the toll rate setting process.**
  Building on the Commission's Assessment of Options to Streamline the Toll Rate Setting Process[5], it is recommended that the Legislature exempt the WSTC's rate setting process from the Administrative Procedures Act and establish new, separate requirements in law for setting toll rates.

  This new process should include requirements around public engagement and key milestones for advancing the rate setting process, while still providing the ability to swiftly adjust tolls to meet revenue and performance requirements when unexpected needs arise. All decision making and discussions would continue to be carried out in the Commission's public meetings, in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

[2] Kucklick, A., Manzer L., Mast, A. Overlooked & Undercounted: Struggling to Make Ends Meet in Washington State, University of Washington, School of Social Work. 2023. https://selfsufficiencystandard.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WA2021_Demo_SSS.pdf

[3] WSTC. Low Income Toll Study. 2021. https://wstc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2021-WSTC-Tolling-Equity-Report.pdf

[4] WSTC. Budget Request Decision Package: Statewide Transportation Equity Advisory Panel. OFM. 2024. https://abr.ofm.wa.gov

[5] https://wstc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/2024-07-30-AssessmentofOptionstoStreamlinetheTollRateSettingProcess.pdf

Develop the "Move Plan" - a new strategic plan for tolling

Tolling helps enable travel reliability and efficiency. As Washington's tolling system continues to grow, more highway projects will likely rely on tolling to help fund construction costs, manage congestion, and meet ongoing operations, maintenance, and preservation needs. As we look to the future, the advancement of tolling needs to be supported by a strategic plan that proactively sets forth candidate future tolled facilities in support of creating a thoughtful system of toll roads.



Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll Plaza

The following actions are recommended:

- **Develop the "Move Plan" to advance a proactive, forward-looking blueprint for the planning and development of future tolled facilities.**
  The plan would assess and determine the best candidate projects for tolling. It would also assess the level in which tolling projects can support long-term travel reliability performance, sustainability goals for reducing congestion and providing critical funding for projects and corridor improvements. In addition, the plan would identify cumulative impacts tolling projects may have on specific regions and populations, such as through public engagement and economic impact assessment efforts. The Legislature needs to provide direction and resources to the WSTC to work in partnership with WSDOT in developing this plan.

Phase-Out Studded Tires

According to WSDOT, Washington state owns a transportation system that would cost over $200 billion to replace today, making it critically important to maintain what we have. One simple thing that can be done to save the state between $20-$29 million annually would be to phase out the use of studded snow tires on public roadways. The current fee on studded tires of $5 has generated an average of $315,000 annually over the past five years — a fraction of the damage the tires cause to Washington's roadways. With affordable snow tire alternatives available today that provide an even higher level of safety, the time is now to phase out studded tires and save our pavement.



Snowy Roads Over Snoqualmie Pass, Interstate 90

The following actions are recommended:

- **Phase-out the use of studded tires.**
  Increase the current studded tire fee from $5.00 to $50 per tire and rename the fee the "pavement impact fee". Within five years of this fee increase, studded tires should be prohibited.

Linking Transportation Technology, Programs, and Investments

As cities grow and evolve, the integration of transportation services and technology creates an "ecosystem" of smart solutions. The use of data analytics, artificial intelligence and cloud computing empowers planners, operators and decision makers with insights to support long-term investments and transportation service development. Technology applications in combination with public/private sector partnerships supports and simplifies access to multimodal transportation such as bike and scooter-share services, and micro-transit services that enable on-demand transit from doorstep to destination.

This year, California launched the first state Generative AI Transportation Pilot in the nation. Caltrans is working with INRIX Inc. to develop GenAI tools that would investigate near misses of injuries and deaths on California's roads to identify hazardous areas and find solutions that better protect vulnerable road users. This pilot will develop tools to improve traffic analysis, reduce bottlenecks, and bolster the state's ability to reduce crashes and traffic bottlenecks.

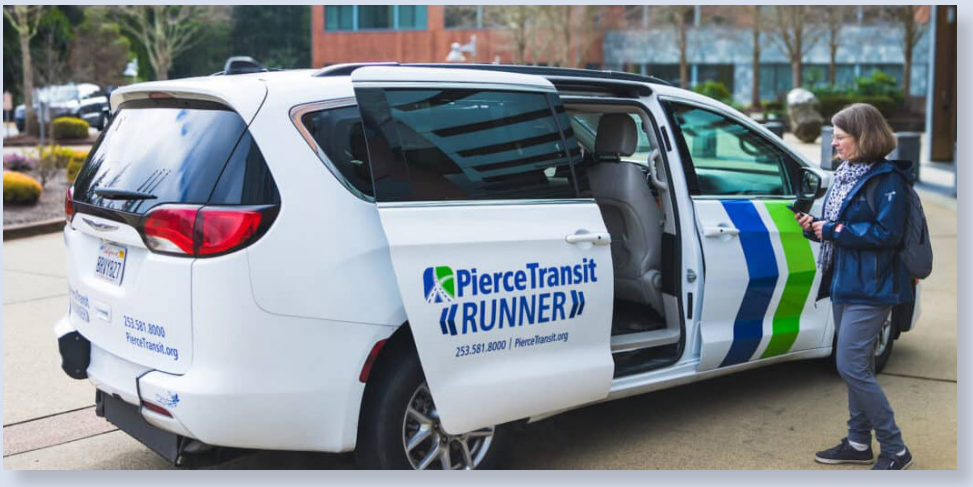
The following actions are recommended:

- **Use Generative AI to improve safety and support transportation investments.**
  Conduct a pilot using GenAI to help identify a limited number of high-risk safety locations statewide and generate an objective set of safety solutions that address known risks, such as speed management, lighting, signage, etc. The results of this pilot will shed light on the benefits of utilizing AI to further inform the impacts of strategic investments long-term across the state.
- **Support technology-driven partnerships between transit agencies and private sector service providers to enable expanded access to micro-transit in underserved communities statewide.**
  Implement a micro-transit model that provides flexible, on-demand rides within a designated area using smaller vehicles and smart-phone technology to enable ease of access and use by customers.

Success Story:

Pierce Transit Runner

With one simple smartphone app and just a few taps, Pierce Transit Runner will pick you up and drop you off in certain areas where a bus may not be available – all for the same low public transit fare. This program puts convenient, fast, and affordable on-demand transportation at one's fingertips.



Pierce County Runner Transit Service

Prepare for Autonomous Vehicles

In 2018, the Washington state Legislature directed the Transportation Commission to establish an Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Work Group to assess and research the development of AVs. The Work Group was made up of over 30 members from various sectors and had seven subcommittees focusing on topical areas. In 2023, the Work Group and the WSTC issued its final legacy deliverable report –Road Map to the Future[6]. The recommendations from that report support next steps for Washington state to prepare for the future of AVs operating on our public roadways.

The following actions are recommended:

- **Identify a lead state agency to be responsible for monitoring AV developments and efforts in other states, with updates due to the Legislature each session to inform the development of polices into the future.**
  - This monitoring effort will ensure Washington state is current with lessons learned and will assist state agencies and policy makers as they continue to engage with driver and industry organizations and representatives.
- **Direct state-sponsored AV pilot projects**
  - The objective would be to pilot solutions such as last-mile accessibility to transit in urban and small city/town settings that provide the public first-hand experience with AVs. The pilot would also enable the exploration of possible operational considerations unique to Washington state in preparation for future AV deployment and identify approaches to harness AV opportunities that increase equity and access while ensuring and maintaining safety.

Six key components serve as the building blocks the AV Working Group's report, Roadmap to the Future:

- **Agency Readiness:** Build state agencies' AV knowledge base.
- **Public Outreach:** Increase AV awareness among public and interested parties.
- **Equity:** Engage with and understand various communities' access, mobility, and health needs to ensure they are addressed.
- **Safety:** Identify and address potential safety implications of AV testing and deployments.
- **Testing & Pilots:** Evaluate AV testing and pilot opportunities.
- **Path to Deployment:** Provide clear expectations of regulatory agencies, supporting entities, and companies.

Additional Tolling Recommendations

In addition to the tolling recommendations included in this section, the Commission has additional tolling-related recommendations in its Annual Tolling Report (please see the Commission's 2025 Tolling Report for further detail):

- **Take steps to improve equity in tolling.**
  - Establish a low-income toll discount program to ensure impacts on marginalized communities are limited.
- **Advance projects that reduce congestion and improve safety when accessing tolled facilities.**
  - Prioritize transportation projects that improve the ease and safety of accessing or exiting tolled facilities and improve interchange operations.
- **Pilot advanced roadside technology systems.**
  - Direct the Commission, in partnership with WSDOT, to carry out a pilot program that tests advanced technologies aimed at increasing safety and supporting HOV and tolling compliance.

[6] WSTC Autonomous Vehicle Workgroup. Roadmap to the Future. December 2023. https://wstc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/AV-WorkGroup-2024-RoadmaptotheFuture.pdf

Update from Regional Partners

The Legislature established Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) in 1990 as part of the Growth Management Act. In larger urban areas, they are integrated with the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

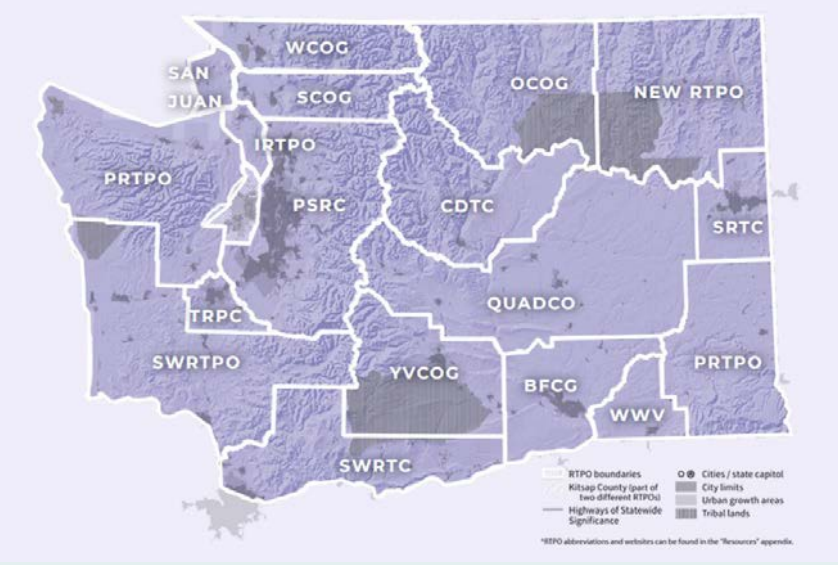
We offered our regional partners this space to convey their thoughts at this critical juncture in our state's transportation evolution. Rather than list specific projects and needs, they chose to come together to offer this combined and focused viewpoint.

For almost 35 years, Washington's Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) have brought together public and private partners to collaborate on planning efforts that support transportation infrastructure in regions across the state. As the state's population grows and the Legislature and WSDOT add more responsibilities for RTPOs, the need to adequately fund our work is more urgent than ever. RTPOs seek a funding increase from the Legislature of $6.8 million per biennium, for a total appropriation of $11.7 million per biennium, with periodic adjustments for inflation. This will ensure every RTPO receives a minimum of $400,000 per biennium, with some receiving more due to their size and complexity.

This funding need is particularly important for rural regions that have fewer revenue sources and options available to them to carry out their work.

Key activities our RTPOs carry out include:

- Ensuring local and state governments, transportation agencies, and tribal governments collaborate and coordinate decision-making on growth, infrastructure, service levels, and investment needs;
- Ensuring regional business groups, citizens, and community advocates have access to the planning and decision-making that impacts their communities;
- Conducting transportation planning, data collection and coordination to ensure the most effective projects are identified and advanced within our respective regions;
- Supporting the development and certification of local comprehensive plan updates that promote land use decisions that align with state goals;
- Maintaining a coordinated regional vision and long-range plan to create a road map for each region's future;
- Providing coordinated representation of regional voices, which state agencies rely on for policy guidance, statewide planning recommendations, and funding priorities.



Each biennium, the Legislature allocates funds to the WSDOT for distribution to RTPOs to support their work mandated under state law. In the original 1991-93 biennium, the Legislature appropriated $3.4 million to fund 15 RTPOs. Thirty-four years later, in the current biennium, the allocation is $4.9 million to support 17 RTPOs. This amount doesn't come close to keeping up with just inflation, much less growing workloads.

RTPOs across the state want to play a stronger planning role in emerging issues including safety, complete streets, implementation of the HEAL Act, and building partnerships among state and local governments for maintenance, preservation, and operations, among other things.

We concur with the Legislature and the Transportation Commission that RTPOs play an important role in ensuring sound planning and project prioritization within each of our regions. We value our work in helping the Legislature, the Commission, WSDOT, and our members address 21st-century challenges we face. We appreciate the Commission's long-time support in highlighting the work of RTPOs and the need for additional funding to carry out our state-mandated responsibilities and look forward to on-going collaboration that supports local, regional, and statewide transportation coordination across the state.

Signed on behalf of the 18 Regional Agencies in Washington state,



Lois Bollenback, Chair
Washington State Regional Coordinating Committee



Marc Daily, Vice Chair
Washington State Regional Coordinating Committee

BFCOG - Benton-Franklin Council of Governments

CDTC - Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council

IRTPO - Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization

NEW RTPO - Northeast Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization

OCOG - Okanogan Council of Governments

PRTPO - Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization

PRTPO - Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization

PSRC - Puget Sound Regional Council

QUADCO - Quad-County Regional Transportation Planning Organization

SAN JUAN - San Juan County

SCOG - Skagit Council of Governments

SWRTPO - Southwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization

SW RTC - Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council

SRTC - Spokane Regional Transportation Council

TRPC - Thurston Regional Planning Council

WWSRTPO - Walla Walla Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization

WCOG - Whatcom Council of Governments

YVCOG - Yakima Valley Conference of Governments

Overview of 2024 Work and Activities

This section provides an overview of the major work efforts the Commission undertook in 2024. It also serves as the required annual reporting to the Legislature on changes made to toll rates, pursuant to RCW 47.56.855.

Further details on the Commission's 2024 tolling work and tolling-specific recommendations are found in the Commission's 2025 Tolling Report, which can be found on the Commission's website.

Tolling and Ferry Fare Actions

As the State Tolling Authority, the Commission is responsible for setting toll rates, ferry fares, and related fees and policies for the state's tolling and ferry systems. As part of this process, the Commission carefully reviews traffic and revenue projections, considers legal obligations, and conducts outreach to gather input from impacted communities.

Tolls and ferry fares are expected to generate a combined $804.3 million throughout the 2023-25 biennium. Looking ahead to the upcoming 2025-27 biennium, revenues from toll rates and ferry fares are expected to reach nearly $923 million. This is a significant and growing portion of the state's transportation budget, helping to fund major capital improvements and system operations, and improving traffic flow on key corridors.

In 2024, the Commission:

- Adjusted the toll rates and hours of operation on the I-405 ETLs / SR 167 HOT lanes on March 1, 2024.
- Adjusted the toll rates on the SR 520 Bridge on August 15, 2024, with increases averaging 10% throughout the entire week.

In support of this work, as well as for upcoming actions that are anticipated for 2025, the Commission conducted the following public engagement efforts in 2024:

- Conducted a survey in April to gather public input on toll rate adjustments options that were under consideration for the SR 520 Bridge. Nearly 20,000 people provided input along with over 7,000 open-ended comments.
- Hosted an online open house via the WSDOT website, for the I-405 Express Toll Lanes / SR 167 High Occupancy Toll Lanes between August and October. The open house provided information on toll rate and policy changes under consideration and gathered public comments. Over 12,000 people viewed the open house and 2,300 people provided at least one comment.
- Conducted an online survey in December to gather public input on toll rate and policy changes under consideration for the I-405 Express Toll Lanes / SR 167 High Occupancy Toll Lanes.
- Conducted two Ferry Riders' Opinion Group (FROG) surveys: the 2024 FROG Winter Performance Survey and the 2024 FROG Summer Recreational and Performance Survey. (see page 15 for more detail).

SR 16 Tacoma Narrows Bridge (TNB)

The Commission did not make any adjustments to current toll rates for the TNB in 2024 and does not anticipate making any adjustments in 2025. Legislation in 2018 enabled toll rates to stabilize by authorizing up to $85 million in loans to the TNB Account through 2030. Toll revenues will pay this debt off. Further details on the TNB can be found in the Commission's 2025 Tolling Report.

SR 99 Tunnel

The Commission did not make any adjustments to toll rates for the SR 99 tunnel in 2024. However, it is anticipated there will be a toll rate increase in July 2025. This increase is part of a series of anticipated 3 percent toll rate increases enacted by the Commission, occurring every three years to support the tunnel's operations and maintenance costs. Each of these toll rate increases are subject to Commission review and approval before they go into effect.

SR 520 Bridge

In July 2024, the Commission adopted a 10% toll rate increase on the SR 520 Bridge which took effect on August 15, 2024[1]. This toll rate increase varied by time of day and day of week, ranging from an increase of 10-cents to 70-cents on weekdays, and from an increase of 10-cents to an increase of 60-cents on weekends. The intent of this increase was to meet long-term financial requirements detailed in the bond covenants for the SR 520 Bridge.

[1] Washington State Register 24-15-035: https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/law/wsr/2024/15/24-15-035.htm

I-405 Express Toll Lanes (ETLs) / SR 167 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes

In January 2024, the Commission adopted a toll rate adjustment on the I-405 ETLs / SR 167 HOT Lanes which took effect on March 1, 2024[2], increasing the minimum toll rate on both facilities to $1 and the maximum toll rate to $15. The hours of operation were also adjusted, from 5am-7pm (7 days a week) to 5am-8pm (7 days a week) on the SR 167 HOT Lanes, and the from 5am-7pm (M-F) to 5am-8pm (M-F) on the I-405 ETLs.

The Commission anticipates considering additional rate and policy adjustments in 2025, which would address future needs for the corridor in advance of the opening of the Bellevue to Renton segment of the I-405 toll lanes, currently expected by late 2025. This could include changes to the maximum toll rate; HOV policies; weekend tolling; duration of peak periods.

Future Toll Facilities

In 2024 the Commission continued to work with WSDOT on the planning of future tolling projects. This includes three facilities that have been authorized for tolling by the Legislature in the central Puget Sound Region: the I-405 ETLs from Bellevue to Renton, and the SR 509 and SR 167 expressway projects that comprise the Puget Sound Gateway Program.

Tolling is currently expected to begin by late 2025 on the I-405 ETLs from Bellevue to Renton, and in 2026 for the SR 509 and SR 167 expressways (Puget Sound Gateway Program). The Commission has begun public outreach and toll-setting preparations for each of these facilities.

The Commission also continued to engage WSDOT, the Oregon DOT and the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) regarding preparations for setting toll rates and policies for the Interstate 5 Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program, authorized in 2023. The two state Commissions entered into a bi-state tolling agreement in early 2024 and continue their work on assessing toll rate and policy options. Pre-completion tolling of the current bridge is currently planned to begin in Spring 2026, following the start of construction of the new bridge.
The new bridge is expected to open in 2033.

Washington State Ferry Fares

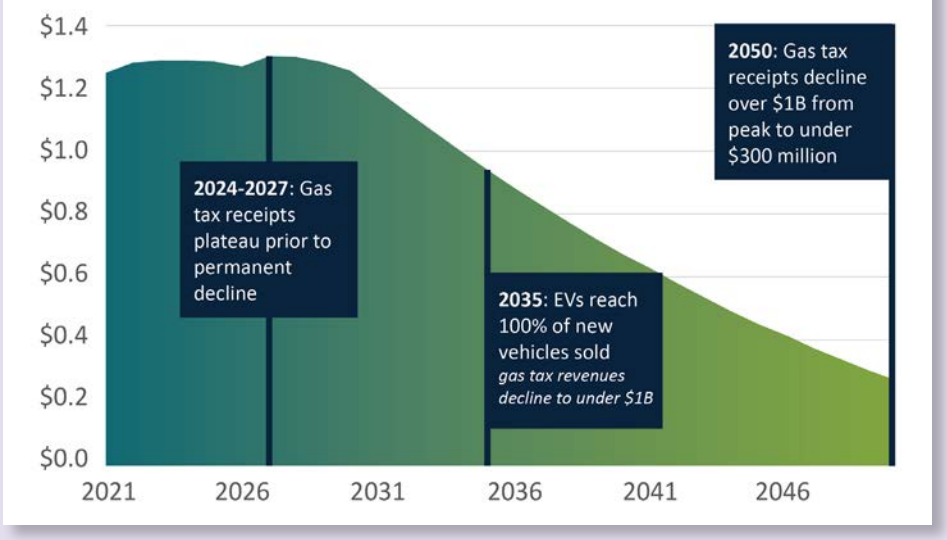
Each biennium, the Commission sets ferry fares to meet the revenue target set forth by the Legislature to support ferry operational costs. The initial 2023-25 biennial budget assumed approximately $419 million to come from ferry fare revenue, which represented about 56% of the expected operating costs for Washington State Ferries (WSF). To meet the Legislature's fare revenue target, the Commission took action in August 2023 to increase ferry fares by 4.25 percent for vehicle and passenger riders on October 1, 2023, and October 1, 2024. The Commission also adopted a temporary 1-percent increase to the discount offered for multi-ride passes, effective October 1, 2023, and expiring September 30, 2025.

The 2023-25 fare revenue target was reduced in the 2024 Supplemental Transportation Budget to $363.6 million, representing about 47% of the expected operating costs for WSF. Ferry fares are currently expected to generate over $365 million throughout the 2023-25 biennium.

Road Usage Charge Assessment

A primary source for funding Washington's roads and bridge is the state gas tax of 49.4 cents per gallon. At the same time, Washingtonians are increasingly opting for cleaner vehicles, including more fuel-efficient car models and zero-emission vehicles. Washington now ranks second nationally among states in adoption rates of zero-emission vehicles, with plug-in hybrid electric and battery-electric vehicles constituting over 20 percent of new cars sold through the first half 2024. As a result of these trends in the vehicle fleet, Washington's gas tax revenues are now in decline.

WA RUC Revenue Loss Estimates



[2] Washington State Register 24-04-020: https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/law/wsr/2024/04/24-04-020.htm

In response, Washington's reliance on gas taxes must evolve. In 2012, Washington became the first state in the nation to impose a flat annual registration surcharge on electric vehicles, currently at $225 per year. Hybrid vehicles also include an additional $75 per year for their registration.

To prepare for the future, the Legislature directed the Commission in 2012 to begin assessing a pay-per-mile road usage charge (RUC) as an alternative to, and eventual replacement for the gas tax and registration surcharges. RUC ensures sustainable transportation funding into the future, regardless of a vehicles MPG or fuel source, removing the reliance of consuming fossil fuels to fund our infrastructure needs.

The Commission's RUC research has proceeded in stages, from feasibility determination to pilot testing to implementation-oriented research. In 2024, the Commission completed its federal grant-funded Forward Drive project and launched a new series of outreach aimed at understanding policy priorities of stakeholders most impacted by a potential RUC. The final Forward Drive Report can be found online.



The Forward Drive research program included the following elements: financial analysis of RUC under a wide range of economic and policy scenarios; analysis of RUC impacts on historically marginalized groups; research into industry trends and technology innovation for RUC; starting the development of RUC standards, in cooperation with partner jurisdictions; design and deployment of a statewide RUC online enrollment simulation.

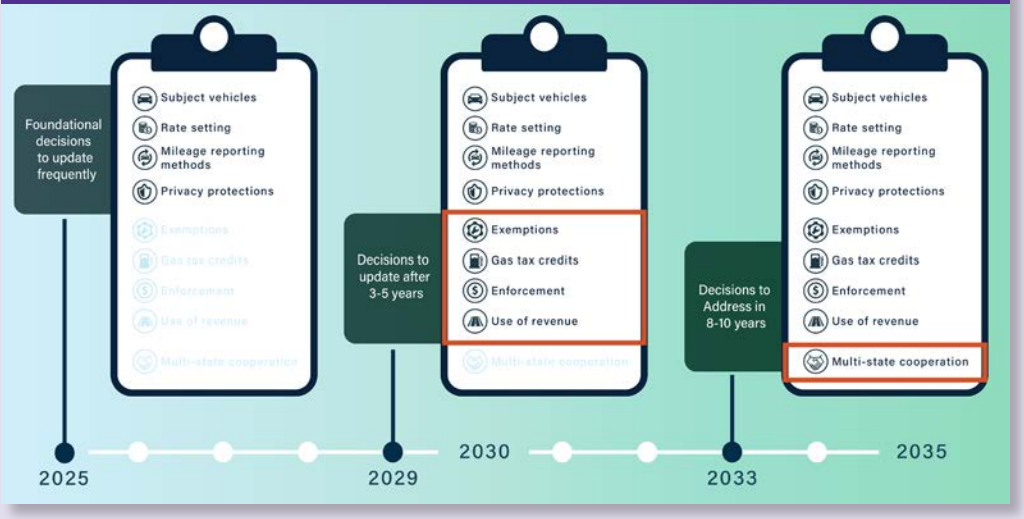
Following the release of the Forward Drive final report, the Commission carried out a broad-based stakeholder outreach effort with over 200 organizations, in the fall of 2024. The purpose of the outreach was to convey the findings of the Commission's RUC research program and invite feedback so that issues and areas of concern could be discussed, in consideration of a possible legislative proposal in the 2025 legislative session.

Looking ahead to establishing a RUC program in Washington state, a few key take-aways from the Commission's research program are noted below:

- Consistent with the Commission's financial forecast and analysis, gasoline tax receipts are now declining with the state's September 2024 official revenue forecast predicting more precipitous declines later this decade.
- Participants in the online enrollment simulation took a survey and results indicated a strong preference for self-reporting their odometer reading - a method that also provides for maximum privacy protection and minimal relative administrative costs.
- A simple, small-scale RUC program can allow the state to refine more complex policy issues and technical options as part of a longer-term, larger-scale transition.

To prepare for the establishment of a RUC program, the Commission as put forth to the Legislature a transition roadmap indicating the key milestone decisions needed to occur over the course of 10 years, noting that current law requires that all new cars be zero-emission/ electric by 2035.

Commission recommendations for a gradual transition to a road usage charge system.



For more information about WA RUC and the Commission's ongoing research and assessment of RUC, visit: www.waroadusagecharge.org

[3] WSTC. Forward Drive. January 2024. waroadusagecharge.org/media/final-report/DIGITAL_WA RUC Final Report January 2024_v2.pdf

Washington Transportation Plan Update

The Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) is a transportation policy plan for all modes and jurisdictions in Washington state, providing an overarching transportation policy framework along with strategies. The WTP also serves as one of our state's tools demonstrating our compliance with federal planning requirements (23 USC Sec 135 and 23 CFR Parts 450, 771 and 49 CFR Part 613).

The 2023 Legislature provided funding to the commission to update the WTP which will be complete by December 2025. The updated plan must align with and support the achievement of current mandates set forth in recent legislative actions including: the HEAL Act, Climate Commitment, 16-year Move Ahead Washington funding package, as well as elevated preservation and safety priority goals for transportation planning and operations.

Ensuring the WTP reflects recent legislative actions, and the priorities of statewide partners and stakeholders will require a broad outreach process. In addition to statewide outreach, the WTP update process is being informed by guidance from the Joint Transportation Committee's Executive Committee and a steering committee composed of Commissioners, the Governor's Office, the Secretary of Transportation, and representatives of metropolitan and regional transportation planning organizations.

The Commission conducted initial engagement on the WTP update effort in 2024. The first phase of outreach included six regional listening sessions focused on gathering information on statewide transportation needs and ideas from a regional perspective, and four topic-focused workshops on key issues that emerged from regional meetings held this spring.



Kent Valley and Mount Rainier

West Coast Transportation Network Plan Scoping Study

The Legislature directed the Commission to carry out an assessment and scoping effort to determine the feasibility of creating a future West Coast Transportation Network Plan that would identify and coordinate transportation improvements and investments across the West Coast states. The WTP update process will inform the scoping of this West Coast Transportation Network Plan intended to leverage and align Washington, Oregon, and California efforts and investments to reduce our collective carbon footprint, improve freight and passenger mobility, and strengthen West Coast resiliency. In September of 2024, the Commission held a meeting with transportation leaders from all three states to discuss the goals and objectives of a West Coast Transportation Network Plan. The scoping effort will be completed by December 2025.

Route Jurisdiction Study

Per RCW 47.01.425, the Commission receives and reviews petitions from cities, counties, or the Department of Transportation requesting any addition or deletion from the state highway system. The Transportation Commission manages the requests, and with technical assistance from the Transportation Improvement Board, provides an evaluation and assessment of each request. Once the evaluation is completed, the Transportation Commission provides its final finding and recommendations to the Senate and House Transportation Committees prior to the legislative session.

In 2023, the Legislature directed the Commission to conduct a Route Jurisdiction Study to assess the current process for transferring the ownership of roads between the state and local entities, and to review current transfer criteria used to make such determinations. The study will be completed by July 2025.

The Commission is actively collaborating with a Steering Committee made of up key partners who are impacted by route jurisdiction transfers including the:

- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
- Transportation Improvement Board (TIB)
- Washington State County Road Administration Board (CRAB)
- Association of Washington Cities (AWC)
- Washington Association of County Engineers (WSACE)

The Commission has and will be gathering input from local agencies and elected officials with targeted outreach to underserved communities, BIPOC populations, and Tribal Nations.

Ferry Riders' Opinion Group

The Commission conducts surveys of ferry riders each year to inform both the Commission's work and the deliberations of the Legislature and Governor. The Ferry Riders' Opinion Group (FROG) is an online survey panel of over 30,000 Washington State Ferry (WSF) riders who participate on the survey panel to weigh in on ferry issues through online surveys and quick polls. This allows for data to be collected over time to understand how reactions to key issues and operations are changing.

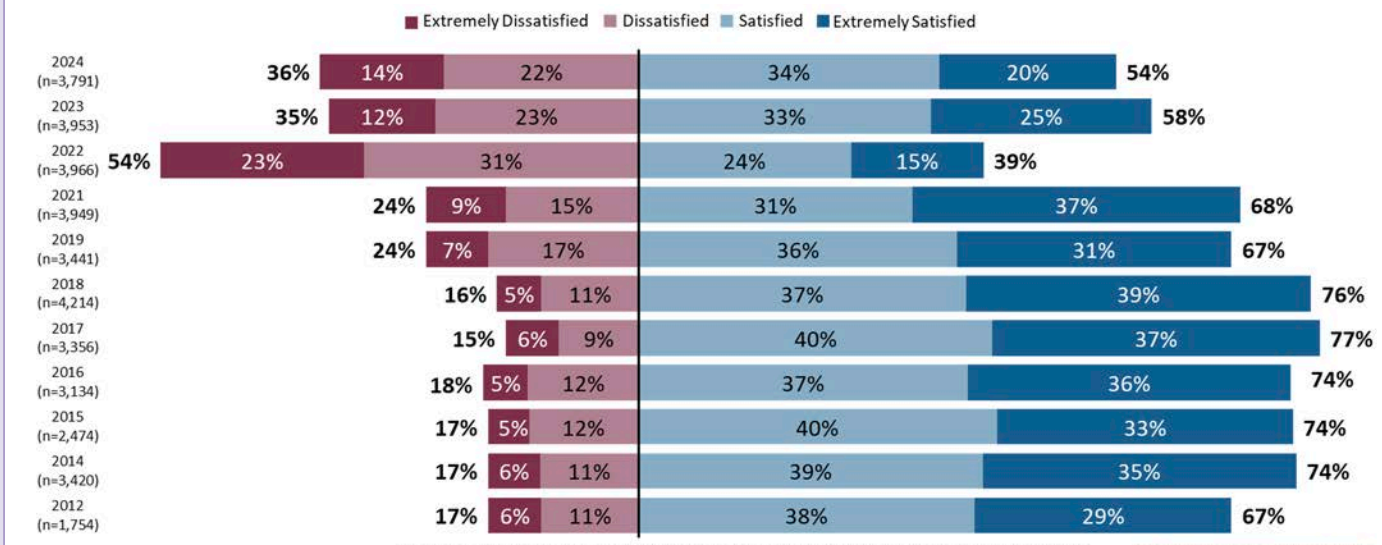
Three FROG research efforts were conducted during 2024:

- A Winter Ferry Performance survey, which gathered feedback from 3,791 riders regarding their travel behavior and frequency between January and March 2024.
- A Summer Ferry Performance survey, which gathered feedback from 4,570 riders regarding their travel behavior and frequency between June and September 2024.
- An on-board Summer Recreational survey, conducted between July 26 and August 29, which gathered feedback from 1,019 occasional / recreational ferry riders. Also, 1,121 new FROG members joined the online survey panel during this effort.

2024 Winter Performance Survey Key Findings

- Overall satisfaction with WSF was 54% in 2024, down 4-points from 58% in 2023, but well above the 39% that were satisfied in 2022.
- Conversely, 36% of respondents were dissatisfied, in line with the 35% dissatisfied in 2023, but a dramatic improvement over 2022, where 54% were dissatisfied (note: see Graphic A).
- Systemwide, 41% were dissatisfied with the timeliness of departures, and 38% were satisfied. Similarly, 38% were dissatisfied with on-time/dependable arrivals, and 39% were satisfied. Passenger comments made it clear that scheduling issues continue to be a concern.

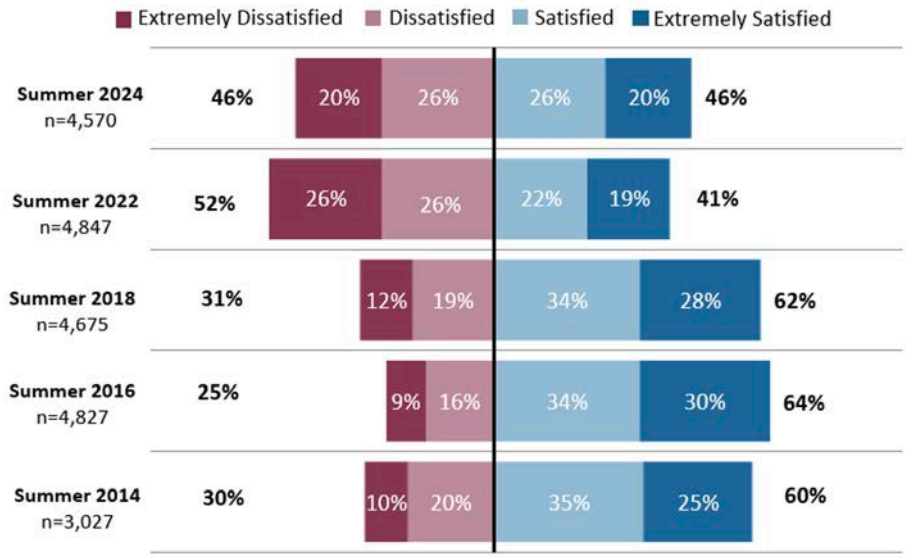
Graphic A - Overall Satisfaction with WSF among Winter Riders



2024 Summer Performance Survey Key Findings

- Overall satisfaction with WSF was 46% in 2024, up 5-points from 41% in 2022, but still well below pre-pandemic levels (62% in 2018).
- Conversely, 46% of respondents were dissatisfied, which was a 6-point improvement over 2022, where 52% were dissatisfied (note: see Graphic B).
- 50% of summer riders say the ongoing ferry constraints led them to ride WSF less frequently between June and September 2024, taking, on average, seven fewer trips. In response, riders tended to leave earlier for their trip, take alternative forms of transportation, not make the trip at all, or consolidated their trips.

Graphic B - Overall Satisfaction with WSF among Summer Riders



Only ratings of satisfaction (4-5) or dissatisfaction (1-2) are shown. (Ratings of 3 or don't know are not shown.)
*The **bold** percentages represents the corresponding total dis/satisfaction*

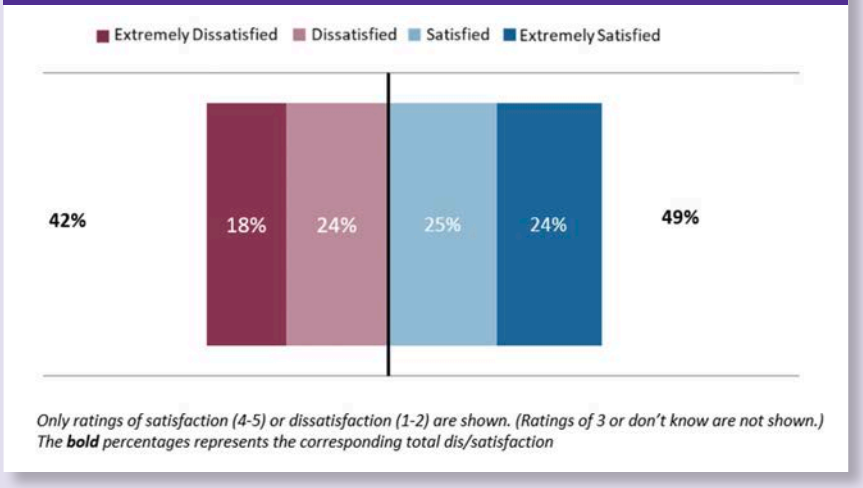
Note: Research was not conducted in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Full survey results can be found on the Commission website at: https://wstc.wa.gov/studies-surveys/

2024 Summer Recreational Survey Key Findings

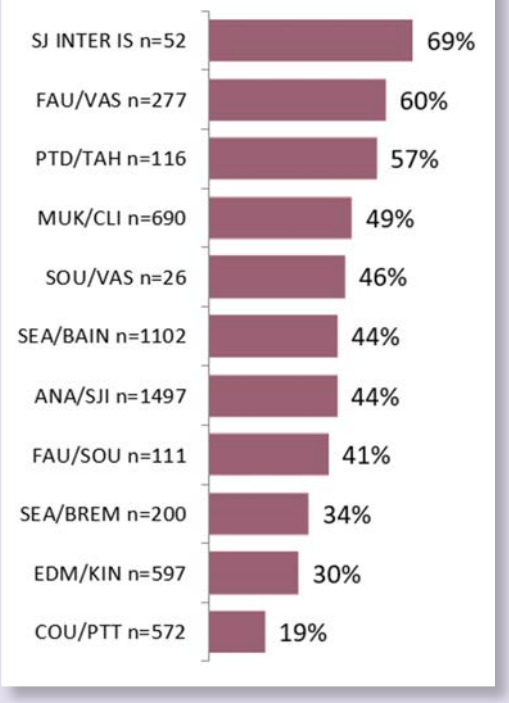
- Overall satisfaction with WSF among recreational riders during the summer months was 49% in 2024, while 42% were dissatisfied.
- Dissatisfaction was highest on the San Juan Interisland (69%), Fauntleroy/Vashon (60%), and Point Defiance/Tahlequah (57%) routes. (note: see Graphic D).
- Visiting family or friends (41%) was the number one reason for riders' most recent recreational trip, while nearly a quarter mentioned attending a special event.
- WSF being "the fastest way" or "the only way" continued to be primary reasons for riders choosing WSF for their recreational trip.

Graphic C - Overall Satisfaction with WSF 2024 Among Recreational Riders - n=5,258



Only ratings of satisfaction (4-5) or dissatisfaction (1-2) are shown. (Ratings of 3 or don't know are not shown.)
*The **bold** percentages represents the corresponding total dis/satisfaction*

Graphic D
Overall Dissatisfaction by Route (Total Dissatisified - 2024)



Naming Transportation Facilities

The Commission is authorized to name state highways, bridges, and ferries. The following naming actions occurred in 2024:

- Naming the bridge above Interstate 82 at milepost 38.11 in the City of Union Gap, 0.2 miles east of the junction with US 97, the "Dan C. Olson Memorial Overpass."
- Naming State Route 6 in Lewis County, from milepost 45 to milepost 51 the "Washington State Patrol Trooper Justin R. Schaffer Memorial Highway."

Route Jurisdiction Transfer

The Commission receives and reviews petitions from cities, counties, or the Department of Transportation requesting any addition or deletion from the state highway system.

In 2023, the City of Ridgefield requested SR 501 (also referred to as "Pioneer Street") be transferred from the jurisdiction of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to the city. The Commission reviewed and recommended this Route Jurisdiction Transfer, which was approved by the Legislature during the 2024 Session and signed into law on March 13, 2024 (HB 2318).

Local Partners in Transportation

The Commission holds four local meetings each year around the state. These meetings focus on hearing the local perspective on transportation from city, county and regional representatives, businesses, transit, tribes, and more. In 2024, the Commission held meetings in Edmonds, Cheney, Chelan, and Aberdeen.

Edmonds



1. The City of Edmonds is challenged with SR 99 and SR 104 serving as part of their main street and with ferry traffic adding to the complexity of movement in the downtown area. They are working to identify opportunities to better accommodate more housing, commercial development, and improving safety and connectivity.

2. The Port of Edmonds is advancing a project to reconstruct the port's boardwalk and seawall to improve waterfront access for the public, provide flood protection and resiliency, and support electrification. This project will strengthen the public boating access in the highly populated 30-mile stretch between Seattle's Shilshole Bay and the Port of Everett.



Edmonds Ferry Arrival

3. The Port of Everett is the third largest container port in the state and the largest public marina on the West Coast, with ongoing expansion. The Port currently supports about 40,000 jobs across the county and contributes $433 million to state and local taxes.

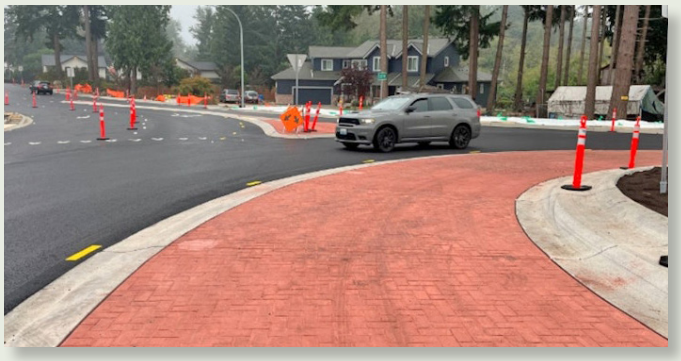
4. Paine Field serves as a vital piece of the region's economic engine. The airport's Master Plan includes plans for future development of roads, parking, airfield improvements and expansion of the existing terminal to further support commercial air travel demands.

5. Snohomish County's top priorities include expanding east-west connectivity for commuters. SR 522 is an increasingly important east-west route connecting communities between Woodinville and Monroe.

6. A recent success for Snohomish County is the completion and opening of a new roundabout in October improving traffic flow and safety for thousands of residents in the south county area. The project, located at the intersection of Larch Way and Logan Road, also includes multi-modal safety improvements.

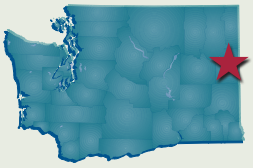
7. Non-motorized access and connectivity will be enhanced with work set to begin in 2025 on the last 12 miles of the Centennial Trail, completing a critical missing link to the regional trail system, connecting the Centennial Trail from the Skagit County line to the King County line and providing 42 miles of separated, shared use trail.

8. Living up to their name, Community Transit provides important connections for 24 communities to ferries, light rail, and the Sounder across Snohomish County. They are working to convert to 100 percent battery-electric buses and working to deploy hydrogen fuel cell buses as part of its zero-emission fleet. Community Transit currently operates 82 low floor buses, 128 articulated buses, and 47 double-decker buses. They plan to transition 30% of the fleet to electric by 2030 and achieve a full transition by 2044.



Larch Way and Logan Road Roundabout

Cheney



1. Strong collaboration among the cities of the West Plains, Cheney, Airway Heights and Medical Lake, is leading change in the region. The West Plains cities are collaboratively planning and identifying shared infrastructure priorities that support commercial growth, particularly for the Highway 2.

2. In an effort to maximize resources, Spokane County has developed an innovative model partnership with its small cities. They are using county crews, at a fraction of the cost if contracted out, to complete work funded by state preservation grants through the Transportation Improvement Board.

3. Spokane County has an estimated $425 million backlog in preservation projects on county roads, and an additional $21 million per year is needed to keep its road network in good condition. Part of this backlog is made up of hundreds of short span bridges throughout the county with no current state or federal funding sources available.



Betz Road and State Route 904 with rail crossing

4. After the 2024 "Gray Fire" that burned over 10,000 acres and devasted Medical Lake, the cities of the West Plains, Cheney, Airway Heights and Medical Lake, have identified critical transportation improvements and removal of bottlenecks at locations where roads cross many of the rail lines throughout the city to ensure wildfire evacuation plans can be implemented rapidly such as the bottlenecks at Betz Road and SR 904.

5. Spokane International Airport continues to innovate and expand contributing significantly to economic growth and development in West Plains. The airport's new truck-rail transload facility along with I-90 are prized regional assets that together allow a business to move freight anywhere in the world conveniently and economically.

6. Eastern Washington University is one of Washington's fastest growing universities. Priorities for Eastern Washington University include decarbonization, focusing growth on density vs. expansion, and broadening its partnership with the Spokane Transit Authority. The university is striving to make its campuses walkable and transit-accessible, with free bus passes offered to all employees and students.

7. This year, Spokane Transit carried nearly 9 million passengers and plays a critical role in providing connectivity and access to the cities of the West Plains, Cheney, Airway Heights and Medical Lake. Spokane Transit is increasing transit service frequency during peak periods to provide a commuting option between Spokane and Airway Heights. They are also laying groundwork for a future Airway Heights High Performance Transit Corridor.

8. The American Aerospace Materials Tech Hub, one of 31 federally designated tech hubs across the US, is located in the West Plains and shares a synergistic relationship with the Airport. The Hub is a consortium of nearly 50 members from throughout the region, bringing together workforce training, small and mid-sized industry partners, global aerospace leaders and research institutions to meet global demand for lightweight aerospace parts that reduce carbon emissions.

9. Development has grown significantly around Fairchild Air Force Base, the largest military tanker base in the world. As a result, Highways 2 and 902 – the main access points to the base – have seen increasing congestion, making it difficult for personnel to quickly access the base and delaying emergency response.

10. The goal of the Kalispel Tribe's property development project in Airway Heights is economic diversification and building a land and tax base that allows for greater self-sufficiency. Their long-term vision includes housing, manufacturing, retail and entertainment, and carrying out transportation projects to support the growth.



Spokane Transit Double Decker Bus

Chelan



1. Tourism in the City of Chelan continues to grow with 650,000 visitors in 2023 elevating the services of a "small" city to those of a metropolitan area and creating pressures on existing transportation facilities.

2. To help address growing needs, the city of Chelan continues to evaluate a Transportation Benefit District, though the proposed 0.3% sales tax measure failed in this November's election. The proposed measure would have generated funding for leveraging state and federal grants, unmet maintenance and preservation needs, and the backlog of sidewalk improvement needs.

3. Geographic constraints impact the Chelan Valley Region and its ability to accommodate growth and demand. The region is one of only eight metro areas in the United States that is disconnected from the national network of interstate highways.

4. In both Chelan and Douglas counties, there are limited funding opportunities to pay for preserving or replacing local access roads and short-span bridges. Both counties face challenges accommodating the traffic increase during peak-tourism season which coincides with fire season, exacerbating concerns over limited emergency evacuation routes.

5. While agriculture is still the dominant industry in Chelan Valley, its share of employment is declining as tourism, technology and business sectors grow. In particular, data warehousing is the largest growth sector with several Microsoft data centers being constructed on property owned by the Chelan-Douglas Regional Port Authority over the next decade in Chelan and Douglas Counties.

6. The Chelan-Douglas Regional Port Authority is unique in that it consolidates two county-wide port districts into one operating entity. Efforts are underway to form a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, which could fund $100 million in public infrastructure projects over 25 years at Pangborn Memorial Airport.

7. Record investments are being made at Pangborn Memorial Airport located in Douglas County, with capital projects totaling $151.4 million. These investments will create new living wage jobs that are vital to the community, stimulate private sector investments, and improve transportation connectivity in the region.

8. The Army National Guard has relocated its operations from Fairchild Air Force base to Pangborn Memorial Airport, bringing in 100 guard members a month for training with plans to expand the current facility.



State Route 150 Roundabout serving Chelan County

9. Link Transit out of Wenatchee serves Chelan, Douglas, and Okanogan counties with fare-free public transit. It has increased service by 20 percent, or 24,000 revenue hours, since 2023, providing critical transportation services including Dial-A-Ride, to remote areas of the region. Link Transit's fleet includes 23 battery-electric buses, with 14 more arriving in 2025 and 2026.

10. A 174-acre property owned by the Colville Tribe in Manson is home to the 12 Tribes Lake Chelan Casino and two RV parks. A master plan for the property envisions an expanded casino and hotel on the property in the future with a traffic study looking at impacts to the existing infrastructure.



Link Transit

Aberdeen



1. The US Highway 12 Rail Separation Project, as visioned by the City of Aberdeen, will help support positive tourism trends by reducing vehicle congestion and vehicle-train conflicts, improving safety for drivers in the area. This project is also critical to supporting the Port of Gray's Harbor's growing operations with anticipated increases in rail traffic coming in the future.



US Highway 12 Rail Separation Plan

2. The Aberdeen-Hoquiam flood protection project is vital to protecting 5,100 properties, 1,354 businesses and 1,292 jobs from the impacts of coastal flooding events from the adjacent Wishkah and Hoquiam rivers. The project would construct nearly 9 miles of levees and spur economic development and would support making more properties insurable.

3. Grays Harbor County has the highest concentration of five movable bridges in the state and all five are in critical condition requiring over $300 million in unfunded repairs.

4. With Aberdeen serving as the gateway to the Pacific coastal and recreational activities, the city often sees lengthy traffic backups on the highway as tourists make their way to their destinations. Efforts are underway to address safety challenges and congestion impacts.

5. While the Port of Grays Harbor's history is rooted in the log and timber industry, its lines of business today have diversified significantly. The port's marine terminals warehouse, export, and import a range of products including soy meal, woodchips, biodiesel and related products, modular housing products, automobiles, and more.

6. The Westport Marina is one of the top 10 commercial seafood landing ports in the U.S specially equipped to accommodate the fishing industry in unloading, processing, and distributing seafood, based on NOAA Statistics. Between 100-150 million pounds of commercial seafood moves through its docks each year to 85 countries around the world, making freight connections in the area critical.

7. Grays Harbor Transit plays a vital role connecting rural communities in the region, providing fare-free bus services, as well as Dial-A-Ride and specialized van service programs. New efforts to use technologies to track buses, provide real-time information for riders scheduling trips is helping to improve efficiency and cut costs.

8. In an effort to support longer commute needs, Grays Harbor Transit will be adding an express commuter route from Aberdeen to Olympia and park and ride lots along Highway 12 to support transit movement to job centers and hubs.

9. Innovative partnerships are emerging among local governments in the region to maximize resources by sharing engineering and design staff expertise and maximizing maintenance and preservation resources.

10. Priorities for the Grays Harbor region include addressing their growing preservation and maintenance backlog, community safety improvements, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and investments aimed at increasing regional resiliency including the creation of alternate routes for evacuations.



Grays Harbor Transit Station, Elma, WA

Commission Roles and Responsibilities

The Washington State Transportation Commission is a seven-member body of citizens appointed by the Governor for up to two six-year terms. The WSDOT Secretary and a representative from the Governor's Office serve as ex officio members.
The Commission provides an open public forum for transportation policy development. It reviews and assesses how the entire transportation system works across the state and issues the state's 20-year Washington Transportation Plan. As the State Tolling Authority, the Commission adopts state highway tolls and sets ferry fares. The Commission also conducts special studies and projects as directed by the Legislature.

Current Responsibilities in Detail

Washington Transportation Plan

Every four years, the Commission recommends to the Legislature a comprehensive and balanced statewide transportation plan, which also addresses local and regional needs. The plan must be consistent with the state's growth management goals and is based upon the six statutory state transportation policy goals: preservation, economic vitality, safety, mobility, environment & health, and stewardship.

Tolling & Ferry Fare Responsibilities

The Commission adopts toll rates and toll policies for all state tolled facilities which currently includes: the State Route (SR) 520 bridge, the SR 16 Tacoma Narrows Bridge (TNB), the SR 167 high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, the Interstate 405 express toll lanes (ETLs), and the SR 99 tunnel. It actively monitors and assesses traffic and toll revenues; reviews and oversees toll collection processes, costs, and operational policies; and serves as a public forum for input on tolling.
The Commission also sets ferry fares and fare policies for Washington State Ferries (WSF). In addition, it reviews the long-range ferry system capital plan and works with WSF in developing operational strategies.

Ferry Customer Survey

The Commission conducts surveys of ferry customers each year utilizing the Ferry Riders Opinion Group (FROG) survey panel that is made up of over 30,000 ferry riders. Data gathered from the FROG panel helps to inform WSF level of service, customer satisfaction, and decisions related to operations, fares, planning, and investments.

Policy Guidance

The Commission provides policy guidance and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature on a multitude of transportation topics and issues, including:

- Transportation finance and funding.
- Preserving, maintaining, and operating the statewide transportation system.
- Transportation infrastructure needs.
- Efficiencies that will improve service delivery and intermodal coordination and connectivity.
- Improved planning and coordination among transportation agencies and providers.
- Use of intelligent transportation systems and technology.

Public Involvement and Outreach

The Commission conducts public outreach through meetings held virtually and in-person in communities throughout the state that focus on local and regional transportation issues and challenges. The Commission also gathers statewide public input through its FROG survey panel, special projects and studies, and its public email and web site.

Transportation Innovative Partnerships Program

The Commission may receive and solicit concepts or proposals for eligible public-private partnership (PPP) projects.

Route Jurisdiction Transfer Program

Cities, counties, or WSDOT may petition the Commission to consider a revision to the state highway system. Once the Commission's review is complete, it forwards a recommendation to the Legislature for final action in law.

Naming State Highways, Bridges, and Ferries

The Commission names state highways, bridges, and ferry vessels. The Legislature, community organizations, local governments, or individuals may submit a naming request. The Commission carefully considers community support and consults with WSDOT before acting to name a transportation facility.

Special Studies

The Commission conducts special studies or projects directed by the Legislature, which result in formal reports and recommendations to the Legislature and Governor. Studies or projects currently underway include:

- The Road Usage Charge (RUC) is being assessed as a replacement to the gas tax. The Commission has provided the Legislature with findings and recommendations each year since 2011. More information can be found on the RUC website.
- The Washington Transportation plan is undergoing an update and will be complete by December 2025.
- The Route Jurisdiction Study is evaluating the current state highway inventory and local roadway designations and reviewing current criteria used to define state highways. The evaluation will be completed by July 2025.

Commissioners



Debbie Young, Chair, San Juan County

Debbie brings 30 years of management, negotiation, and natural resources experience to the Commission. She worked in the utility industry for over 20 years as the Natural Resources Manager for Tacoma Power, leading the federal licensing process for Tacoma's hydroelectric projects. Debbie has served on the National Hydropower Association Board, the Tacoma Land Conservancy, and the Forterra Board of Directors. She also served on the Nisqually River Council for over 15 years, including a term as Chairman. Debbie now resides on Lopez Island where she and her husband operate a small farm providing meat and specialty food products to customers in the Puget Sound region. Appointed by Governor Inslee in 2015 for a partial term, she was reappointed in 2016. Her term expires June 30, 2028.



James "Jim" A. Restucci, Vice Chair, Yakima County

Jim has over 40 years of government service, both as a soldier in the U.S. Army and Army National Guard for 20 years, and as mayor (2010-2018) and city councilor for the City of Sunnyside from 2004-2024. Jim served on the National Association of Regional Councils Board of Directors from 2005-2011. He has chaired the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments and Transportation Policy Board for the past 14 years. He served eight years on the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Board of Directors, including serving as AWC President in 2016, and served as President of People for People Inc. Jim currently oversees the daily operations of a technology services company he co-founded in 2002. Jim was appointed by Governor Inslee in 2018 and was recently reappointed in 2024. His second term expires June 30, 2030.



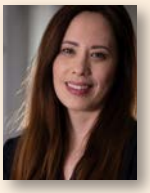
JC Baldwin, Chelan County

JC has served as an elected port commissioner for the Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority since 2005. She is the president and CEO of a tech-support solutions center in Wenatchee that serves clients worldwide, and she has worked in the technology sector most of her professional career. In addition to her experience as a small business owner and elected official, JC has served on the state Community Aviation Revitalization Board, the state Public Works Board (appointed by Governor Gregoire in 2012) and the Washington Public Ports Association Executive Committee. She is past president of both the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce and Cashmere Chamber of Commerce and is an active member of Cashmere Rotary. JC was appointed by Governor Inslee in 2023, and her term expires June 30, 2029.



Shiv Batra, King County

Shiv was a co-founder and President of a U.S.-based engineering company for over two decades. He has held leadership roles in numerous engineering and construction organizations, promoting innovations, value engineering, technology transfer, civic, and professional development activities locally, nationally, and internationally. He also served two terms as a U.S. Commissioner for the Permanent International Association of Navigation Congress (PIANC-USA) and Vice President of PIANC-International. His senior level participation with two notable multi-billion-dollar projects includes design and construction of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Project to protect New Orleans from future hurricanes like Katrina and the latest expansion of the Panama Canal Project to design and build new locks and dams. Shiv and his wife are active in many local and international non-profit organizations. Appointed by Governor Inslee in January 2016, Shiv was reappointed in 2019. His term expires June 30, 2025.



Kelly Fukai, Spokane County

Kelly has spent her career building and cultivating relationships with government, education, business and community leaders. Kelly is the Chief Operating Officer at the Washington Technology Industry Association, where she oversees the day-to-day operations and serves as the organization's leading subject matter expert on policy formation, and oversees all aspects of government and community relations. She brings over 25 years of experience in leading and working with diverse groups with divergent interests in the development of collaborative and comprehensive plans and policy that grow necessary infrastructure, enhance economic and workforce development, and support community interests. She has previously worked at Avista, the Pinnacle Marketing Group, Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories and Spokane International Airport. Kelly is the proud mom of three great kids, Mason, Abbey, and Jack. Appointed by Governor Inslee in June 2020, her term ends June 30, 2026.



Nicole Grant, King County

Nicole infuses her passion for transportation policy with a deep understanding of workers' rights and climate activism. The former leader of MLK Labor and climate activist organization 350 Seattle, Nicole now heads public policy as the political director of her union, IBEW Local 46. Commissioner Grant is a licensed journey level electrician, who spent the bulk of her construction career in the field, building our local transportation infrastructure working on projects like the Washington State Ferries system, Sound Transit, and the Port of Seattle. Her hope is that by bringing together hands-on knowledge of our transportation infrastructure and public policy that is informed by community engagement, she can serve our state as we continue to build a world-class, modern transportation system. Appointed by Governor Inslee in November 2022, her term expires June 30, 2027.



Roy Jennings, Clark County

Roy retired from the United States Marine Corps as a Staff Non-Commissioned Officer after 20 years of honorable service. While in the USMC, he worked on various transportation projects including airports, ports, railheads, as well as building roads. In 1997, he and his family moved to Southwest Washington, where he drove a transit bus for over 20 years. A graduate of the University of Oregon Labor Education & Research Center, Roy has served the citizens of Southwest Washington as the Secretary Treasurer, Southwest Washington Central Labor Council, as a member of the Board of Directors for C-TRAN. Roy also served as the Treasurer of the Labor Roundtable of Southwest Washington. Appointed by Governor Inslee in 2014. Roy was reappointed by Governor Inslee in 2019. His term expires June 30, 2025.



Washington State
Transportation Commission

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