

Transportation

Keeping Washington's travelers safe, and moving people and freight forward, continue to be Governor Gregoire's top transportation priorities. Washington's transportation system of roads, highways, rail, bridges and ferries offers unique challenges. Yet the benefits are remarkable: Washington's freight systems support 1 million jobs in freight-dependent industry sectors that produce more than \$434 billion in gross business income across the country.

In Washington, the Governor wants to capitalize on the potential to boost our economy with shovel-ready projects that keep people and goods moving safely and efficiently. We will put paychecks in the pockets of Washington's working families and make critical investments in the state's transportation infrastructure. The Governor will launch her economic stimulus package in January 2009 with a number of ready-to-go transportation projects.

The ferry system is not sustainable in its current form. A long-range plan will address the future of the ferry system while cutting runs now to help keep it functioning in the short term.

Due to increasing construction costs and decreasing gas tax revenue caused by volatile oil prices, which made gas prices spike, the Washington State Department of Transportation continues to recalibrate budgets and timelines for a number of projects.

Goals

- » Support and improve transportation system safety.
- » Reduce preventable loss of life, injury or property.
- » Maintain and preserve investments in transportation systems.
- » Improve the predictable movement of people and goods.
- » Provide modal choices.
- » Provide accountability.

What We Invest In

Transportation system maintenance and preservation

We continue to reduce the maintenance backlog by focusing on high-priority maintenance needs such as traffic signals, bridges, regulatory signs, intelligent transportation systems, pavement patching and repair, cable guardrail, pavement markers and culverts (*\$359.0 million multiple fund sources*). Preservation of the transportation infrastructure is also a high priority, with 314 asphalt and concrete pavement projects (*\$393.0 million multiple fund sources*) and 169 bridge preservation projects (*\$233.0 million multiple fund sources*).

Congestion relief

Washington continues to address congestion through a number of activities, including:

- **Making the transportation system operate more efficiently** through installation of ramp meters on Interstate 5 to increase vehicle throughput, improvements to the reversible lanes on I-5 and I-90, and real-time traffic management. (*\$54.0 million multiple fund sources*)
- **Managing demand** through the purchase of approximately 460 vans to expand vanpooling, increase in park and ride lot capacity by about 1,000 spaces and assistance to local governments and employers to reduce the number of commute trips each weekday morning. (*\$70.0 million multiple fund sources*)
- **Adding capacity** strategically through capital improvement projects, such as those listed later in this section. (*\$1.0 billion multiple fund sources*)

Improving pedestrian safety and safe routes to schools

The state provides grant funds for 102 projects to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, provide students with safe routes to schools, and reduce the nearly 400 fatal and injury collisions involving pedestrians and bicyclists that occur each year in Washington. (*\$19.3 million multiple fund sources*)

Using audit recommendations

By centralizing human resource services, the number of employees is reduced with no loss of program quality or responsiveness. This saves an estimated \$935,000 over the next three biennia.

(Puget Sound Ferry Operations Account-State)

Ferries

The Washington State Department of Transportation has accepted a bid for the construction of a new 64-car vessel to serve the Port Townsend-Keystone run. Until it is launched in summer 2010, service is provided by a ferry on loan from Pierce County. The Ferries Division is developing a long-range plan to guide services and investments through 2030. The draft plan is scheduled to be released in December 2008, and will be followed by 10 public hearings in ferry-served communities. A final plan is due January 30, 2009.

Alaskan Way Viaduct and related projects

The Alaskan Way Viaduct could be subject to damage in the event of an earthquake, and its failure could cause injury or loss of life. This aging structure is of enormous economic importance to both the region and to the country as it provides access to Seattle's preeminent port. A partnership among the state of Washington, city of Seattle and King County has reviewed options for the replacement of the center section of the Viaduct. A final decision will be made by the end of 2008.

($\$2.8$ billion total estimated project cost, from multiple fund sources; to date, more than $\$1.0$ billion has been spent or committed)

- **State Route 99/South Holgate Street to South King Street - Viaduct replacement**
This project replaces a portion of the existing Alaskan Way Viaduct and will improve earthquake resistance and maintain or improve the mobility for people and goods. Work includes a new interchange in the vicinity of Royal Brougham Way and a railway grade separation structure at South Atlantic Street. Also included are improvements to local bike/pedestrian facilities, signage, illumination, drainage and utilities. (*\$549.0 million total estimated project cost, multiple fund sources*)
- **SR 519/Interstate 90 to SR 99 intermodal access project – interchange improvements**
SR 519 is an important thoroughfare for cars, freight and pedestrians in Seattle's Sodo (south of downtown) district that connects I-90 and I-5 with the Port of Seattle and Colman Ferry Dock. A railroad crossing here causes congestion. This project calls for additional improvements to reduce pedestrian, car and truck congestion as well as increase safety and freight mobility.
($\$85.0$ million total estimated project cost, multiple fund sources)

State Route 520 bridge

This year, Governor Gregoire reduced by four years the time it was estimated it would take to replace the economically vital State Route 520 bridge that links Seattle and the thriving east side of Lake Washington. At her urging, the Washington State Department of Transportation has designed a way to build a new bridge by fall 2014. The full SR 520 corridor improvements will be complete by 2016. To help accomplish the accelerated construction timeline, a Tacoma facility will jump-start the building of smaller pontoons in 2009. In 2010, a new facility in Grays Harbor will be operating, and by 2011, building the larger pontoons for the new bridge. *(\$239.0 million has been provided in 2009–11; total estimated cost at least \$3.8 billion)*

I-90/Snoqualmie Pass East – Hyak to Keechelus Dam - corridor improvements

This project will increase capacity by adding lanes to I-90 east of Snoqualmie Pass to reduce congestion. It will also improve safety by replacing concrete pavement that is past due for replacement, including some sections that are at least 75 years old. A new snowshed will reduce delays associated with avalanches. *(\$595.0 million total estimated project cost, multiple fund sources)*

U.S. 395/North Spokane Corridor – U.S. 2 to Wandermere and U.S. 2 lowering - new alignment

U.S. 2 will be lowered from the vicinity of Farwell Road to Deadman Creek to accommodate the North Spokane Corridor interchange with U.S. 2. This will include the realignment of Shady Slope Road and construction of eight bridges. This segment is part of a larger Corridor program estimated to cost in the range of \$3.0 billion. *(\$151.0 million total estimated project cost, multiple fund sources)*

SR 500/St. Johns Boulevard - build interchange

The intersection at SR 500 and St. Johns Boulevard in Vancouver has been identified as a high collision location. Removing the intersection and replacing it with an interchange will reduce the number of collisions. *(\$52.0 million total estimated project cost, multiple fund sources)*

I-5/SR 16 Interchange - rebuild interchange

This Tacoma-area project to reconstruct the interchanges at I-5 and SR 16 will boost motorist safety and relieve congestion. The project includes replacing the bridges over Nalley Valley, constructing freeway connections, reconstructing all of the ramp roadways and structures, and preparing for HOV lanes on I-5 and SR 16. *(\$313.0 million total estimated project cost, multiple fund sources)*

How We Achieve Savings

Redirection of regional mobility grants to other commute reduction activities.

(\$30.0 million Multimodal Account)

Redirection of Trip Reduction Performance Program funding to other commute reduction activities.

(\$1.5 million Multimodal Account)

Elimination of the Sidney-San Juans ferry route by the end of September 2009.

(\$9.2 million Puget Sound Ferry Operations Account)

Reduction of ferry service on the Pt. Defiance-Tahlequah runs by switching from a 48-auto passenger vessel to a 34-auto passenger vessel. *(\$1.3 million Puget Sound Ferry Operations Account)*