

DRAFT

Transportation Policy, Finance & Planning in Washington State

Key Topic Areas

1. Points of Departure

Introduction to *Key Facts* and *An Overwhelmed Transportation System*

- These are good factual compendiums that also serve as a good introductory overview to transportation issues. One of the dividends we would like to get out of participation in this study effort is a critical assessment of these publications and suggestions for improvements, deletions or additions.

2. The Players

There are more than 450 governmental entities, jurisdictions and agencies that have a role in Washington's transportation system

- State Constitutional Officials: The Governor, the Legislature, the State Treasurer
- State Executive Agencies: WSDOT, Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB), Transportation Investment Board, the Highway Safety Commission, etc.
- Regional Governance: Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs); and the new RTID?
- Counties and Municipalities
- Tribes
- Operators and providers: Regional Transit Authorities, Sound Transit, paratransit, etc.

Revenue and spending choices and policies recently considered by the legislature and now (or shortly) before the voters.

- The Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation – what did it hit, what did it miss, what has been the fate of its recommendations?
- The last legislative session: the tax increase proposal to be voted on as Referendum 51; the “regional bill” now in the custodianship of the county councils.

Fundamental structural issues in state transportation finance

- Today’s transportation subsidies: where are they, what are they? Should they be changed? Can they be changed?
- Revenue Structures: Work of the Tax Policy and Tax Study Committee
- Budgeting Strategies: asset preservation vs. asset development when there are insufficient resources to do either, let alone both

4. Congestion in the Urban Freeway and Arterials System

- Today’s hottest topic: the “Congestion” Debate, Here and Across the Country
- Measuring congestion: shaping the national debate in the flap over TTI; WSDOT’s congestion measures initiative
- Evaluating and implementing congestion “solutions.” Balanced transportation investment. Politics: modes, parties, regions.
- Value pricing and congestion management

people want their children to study piano and play soccer?

- Gender, income, class and race: equity, opportunity and justice in transportation policy
- Mobility access: the young, the aged, and the disabled in transportation policy goals (is anybody paying attention?)

7. The Public Interface: People and Government

- “Public Involvement:” Really?
- The effect of the “anti-tax, anti-government” era
- The changing form of citizen interaction and communication (expectations of immediate, real-time access to government)
- Measuring and communicating performance and accountability: government’s newest, largest challenge
- The Internet: “Faster than a speeding bullet. More powerful than a locomotive. Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound.”
- Where the “Rubber Hits the Road” : the 529 case study

8. Water, Land Use, Habitat and Transportation: What Happens when the Elephants Dance?

- Planning and assessment models: do they work?
- Regulatory conflict and confusion: who is served by regulatory complexity and gridlock?
- The indispensability of values in framing public policy

- New operating paradigms: should the public sector be replaced by the private sector in operating and maintaining today's transportation systems?

12. Transportation Policy in the larger National and Global context

- Energy and pollution
- Transportation security and accessibility
- Connecting communities in real space and virtual space: is transportation a good thing or a bad thing?