Washington State
Department of Transportation

Washington Transportation Plan

In Summary

The three components of Washington's freight system are integrated and support our state's economy:

- International goods enter Washington State gateways and become part of Washington's manufactured output, or are distributed in our retail system. Washington's global gateways also carry national and international goods to and from the larger U.S. market.
- Washington manufacturers and farmers ship products directly to customers and to wholesalers in national and international markets. These industries support hundreds of thousands of jobs and contribute billions of dollars to the gross state product.
- Washington wholesalers and retailers supply consumers with goods from all over the U.S. and the world. They sustain our modern economy.

Freight related issues such as security, safety and the environment are being considered in other parts of the update of the Washington Transportation Plan.

What ideas did we miss?
We want the conversation about freight strategy to involve all parties. We need your help to make good investment choices that will address the needs of freight movement on our state's transportation systems and facilities. Especially when there isn't nearly enough money to do everything that clearly needs to be done.

The Washington State Transportation Commission and the Washington State Department of Transportation are in the process of updating the Washington Transportation Plan. This long range plan is based on data analysis and is focused on ten issues: System Preservation, System Efficiencies, Safety, Transportation Access, Bottlenecks and Chokepoints, Economy and Jobs, Moving Freight, Future Visions, Health and Environment and Funding and Governance. This plan will shape future transportation budget proposals.

For more on this topic: **www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/wtp**

Moving Freight
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Moving Freight

How are the special needs of freight movement to be incorporated into the state's transportation plan?

The three components of Washington's freight system – international gateways, transportation serving Washington's producers and manufacturers, and the retail and wholesale distribution systems – underpin our national and state economies, support national defense, directly sustain hundreds of thousands of jobs, and distribute the necessities of life to every resident of the state everyday.

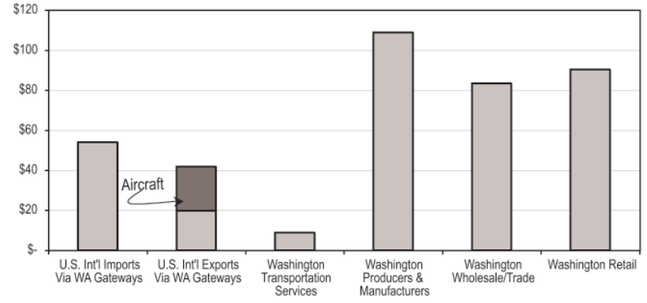
Washington is a gateway state, connecting Asian trade flows to the U.S. economy, Alaska to the Lower 48, and Canada to the U.S. West Coast. About 70 percent of international goods entering Washington gateways continue on to the larger U.S. market. Thirty percent become part of Washington's manufactured output or are distributed in our retail system.

Our own state's manufacturers and farmers rely on the freight system to ship Washington-made products to local customers, to the big U.S. markets in California and on the east coast, and worldwide. Washington producers generate wealth and jobs in every region of the state.

Washington's distribution system is a fundamental local utility, since without it our citizens would have nothing to eat, nothing to wear, nothing to read, no spare parts, no fuel for their cars, and no heat for their homes. In other words, the economy of the region would no longer function.

The value and volume of goods moving in these freight systems is huge and growing.

Washington State Value of Freight Shipments
(2002: Billions of Dollars)



Washington State
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Transportation Commission

International and National Trade Flows Through Washington

Washington Gateways

National and international economies rely on the efficiency and capacity of Washington's transportation systems. In 2002, almost $96 billion of goods entered or departed the U.S. stream of commerce through Washington's global gateways, facilitating international trade with U.S. trading partners. About seventy percent of international goods entering Washington gateways are destined for the larger U.S. market. International and national trade routes run through our state on both east-west and north-south corridors.

Gateways Connect Asia to the U.S. Via East-West Corridors

Washington's Puget Sound seaports move large volumes of imported manufactured goods that are shipped in containers from Asian trading partners. The ports of Tacoma and Seattle, combined, are among the top three marine container cargo complexes in North America, handling 8.2 percent of total U.S. container traffic. About 76 percent of all international containers arriving at these ports are transferred to rail and delivered to the Midwest and/or the East Coast. The annual volume of containers through Puget Sound seaports is expected to more than double from 2002 to 2025 (some 80 percent of this growth will be international).

U.S. Agricultural Exports Rely on Washington's Transportation System

Washington's transportation system is also important for U.S. agricultural exports. In 2002, food and food products totaling almost 20 million tons were, by volume, the largest commodities leaving our seaports. Agricultural products such as wheat, corn, and soybeans, from the Midwest and Eastern Washington travel by barge and rail through the Columbia River ports of Vancouver, Kalama, and Longview to Asian buyers.

Washington Gateways Support National Defense

Washington State gateways are a critical link in the U.S. defense and national security system. Fort Lewis is the only Power Projection Platform on the West Coast. In the event of a major military conflict, inbound cargo needed for mobilization will travel by road and rail across the U.S. for shipment out of the Port of Tacoma. The Port of Seattle is a designated sustainment port, used to ship consumable supplies to troops in the event of a major overseas conflict.

Canadian - U.S. Trade is Trucked on North-South Corridors

Canada has a long history as a significant U.S. trading partner, and Canadian trade is big business in the state. In 2002, $16 billion in U.S. - Canadian trade was imported or exported through Washington. The majority of these goods are transported by truck along the I-5 corridor through the Western Washington border crossings of Blaine, Sumas and Lynden. About half of the trucks deliver goods within Washington State, and half transit the state to link the Canadian and the greater U.S. economies. Blaine is, by far, the busiest truck crossing in Washington State; in 2002 it was the fifth busiest in the nation. Cross-border truck volumes in Western Washington have nearly doubled over the past 11 years.

Washington Links Alaska to the Lower 48 States

In addition to international trade, Washington is a key gateway for trade with Alaska. By tonnage, crude petroleum from Alaska is the greatest waterborne commodity entering Washington State. In 2002, almost 25 million tons of crude petroleum was carried to Washington State from Alaska, using the inland waterways and landing at Puget Sound refineries. In turn, needed consumer products leave Washington seaports for Alaska. In 2002, more than 77 percent of domestic waterborne cargo tonnage entering Alaska originated from Washington State.

Time-Sensitive Freight Travels By Air

Our airports are critical for the fast shipment of goods to and from national and international markets. High-value, time-sensitive products from computer chips to fresh fish and perishable fruits travel through these gateways. Washington's largest volume of air cargo is received at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, which ranks eighteenth in the United States by tons of cargo handled.

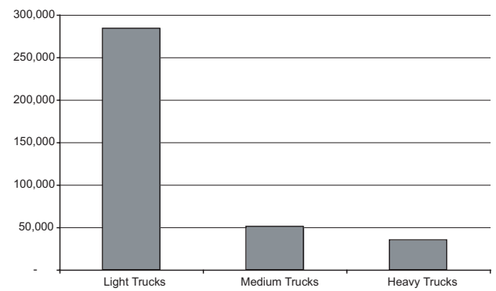
Competitive Advantages

Washington has built on its natural advantages: deep-water ports, proximity to fast-growing Asian and Canadian economies, and a short all-water route to Alaska, to create an enormously valuable multi-modal freight infrastructure. As a result, Washington also gains advantage from the region's "soft" trade infrastructure: human capital that facilitates financial, legal, and other international business issues.

Distribution Systems: Wholesale and Retail

By far, the greatest volume of trucks on our roads and highways serve the daily needs of Washington consumers through the wholesale and retail distribution system. Up to 80 percent of all truck trips operate in the local distribution system.

Number of Commercial Trucks Licensed in Washington State: 2004

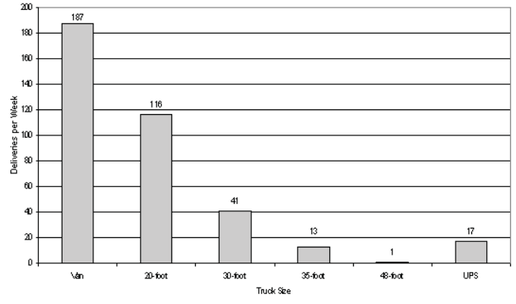


An enormous variety of goods are handled on this system; food and groceries, fuel, pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, retail stock, office supplies and documents, trash and garbage, construction materials and equipment. Without these goods, and the transportation system that moves the goods, Washington citizens would be without the daily necessities of life. High-volume distributors' goals for Washington's freight system are on-time delivery (50 percent), price (38 percent) and reliable trip time (12 percent).
Source: WSDOT survey, 2004.

Grocery, Food Service, Retail, Parcels and Medical Supplies

Final distribution of goods is almost 100 percent by truck. For example, a huge volume of truck trips serves the daily needs of grocery shoppers. Efficient and cost-effective transportation is necessary to keep goods on the shelf at the lowest cost to consumers. A typical large grocery store receives two big semi-tractor-trailer deliveries and ten to twenty other specialized deliveries per day. Specialty markets, such as the Metropolitan Market on Seattle's Queen Anne Hill, may receive 375 van and small truck deliveries per week.

Weekly Deliveries to the Queen Anne Hill Metropolitan Market by Type of Vehicle



High-Value, Time-Critical Deliveries

High-value, time-critical deliveries such as business documents and packages, cash in armored cars, and critical medical supplies and drug deliveries, must move quickly through the freight distribution system. When faced with transportation uncertainty, many companies are forced to add expensive buffer to their inventory stores. The costs of maintaining additional inventory – including space to store it, carrying and handling charges, waste and damage jeopardize the sustainability of these companies and the services they provide.

The Refuse System – Garbage Trucks Take It All Away

In 2001, Washington generated almost nine million tons of solid waste, over eight pounds per person per day. Garbage trucks pick up over 12,000 tons of residential and commercial waste every day and deliver it to transfer stations and landfills. Seventy percent of Washington's solid waste is shipped by railcar to the Roosevelt landfill in eastern Washington and to several Oregon landfills. Three 100-car trains of garbage arrive at Roosevelt every day, full of Washington garbage.

The Fuel Distribution System

In 2001, citizens of Washington State used 17.6 million gallons of petroleum every day. How does all that gas get to the gas station?

First, crude oil is processed at five refineries in Washington State; these refineries produce 89 percent of the petroleum needs for Washington State and 70 percent of Oregon's needs (there are no refineries in Oregon). The Olympic Pipe Line carries 50 to 60 percent of the output of these refineries to distribution centers in Western Washington, and is the sole source of jet fuel for Sea-Tac Airport. Two other pipelines serve Eastern Washington. Fuel that does not move by pipeline gets to distribution centers by barge or small tanker. Tanker trucks then make the final delivery to 2,800 gas stations throughout Washington State. Large gas stations may receive one or two fuel trucks each day, smaller facilities might receive one truckload of fuel per week.

Emerging Directions

Distribution

- Solution to I-5 congestion in urban areas: there is no alternative route to the mainline
- Solution to I-405 and Highway 167 congestion
- Completion of major freight corridors such as Highway 509, Highway 167/ I-5 and Highway 18 to I-90
- Alaskan Way Viaduct risk of closure and freight capacity
- I-90 Snoqualmie Pass
- Local truck route program
- Construction planning on truck routes
- Ferry system freight runs
- Fuel pipeline capacity and distribution alternatives to meet long-term demand