



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Reema Griffith, Transportation Commission Executive Director, 360-705-7070  
Judy Lorenzo, WTP Plan Manager 360-705-7274

**Washington Transportation Plan Meetings Kick Off in Yakima -- You're invited to continue planning Washington's transportation future**

OLYMPIA – Yakima is the first stop in a series of 11 statewide open house meetings to gather feedback on the update of Washington's long-range transportation plan. Over the past year Washington's business owners, elected officials, tribes, transportation planners and others have participated in helping to shape the state's 20-year transportation plan. Now the Washington Transportation Commission and Washington State Department of Transportation want to hear from the people who use the transportation system.

The Transportation Commission will kick off its outreach efforts at the Yakima Convention Center, 10 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, in Yakima at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 25. Transportation Commissioners will be available to respond to comments and questions. Representatives from the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments, Benton-Franklin-Walla Walla Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), Southwest Washington RTPO, WSDOT, and Chinook and White Pass Scenic Byway organizations will also be available.

The Washington Transportation Plan Update guides transportation policy and investment decisions at all levels throughout the state and meets federal and state planning requirements. The Draft Washington Transportation Plan Update is the result of a two-year process that involved reviewing data and meeting with transportation interest groups statewide to identify the state's top investment priorities. That collaborative effort will continue to involve transportation interests from across the state to achieve the greatest benefits within limited funding.

The Commission developed five investment guidelines that set overall priorities and form the basis of the plan:

- Preservation – take care of past investments.
- Safety – reduce the societal costs due to collisions.
- Economic vitality – support our states growing economy.
- Mobility – improve travel time reliability and improve the movement of people and goods.
- Environmental quality – support investments that lead to healthier communities.

At these events you will learn about the progress that has been made to improve our transportation system in areas of preservation, safety, travel time reliability for people and freight, environmental enhancements, and economic growth. And, you will learn that there is more work ahead of us. Together, these investments are moving Washington's economy forward and enhancing global competitiveness and quality of life. For more information, visit: [www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/wtp](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/wtp).

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