



Unfunded High Priorities

This chapter is the WTP's approach to meeting the challenges identified in the previous chapters. The approach is strategic—make targeted, prioritized investments to achieve the greatest benefits attainable with limited funding.

We must make wise investments to preserve our transportation system and keep it functioning safely and effectively. We must ensure that the system has the connectivity and continuity needed to address ever-increasing demands for travel and options for travel. In addition we will need new and innovative mechanisms for financing that will sustain transportation revenue requirements in coming years.

In addition, we recognize that other areas will require attention. Strengthened regional partnerships and collaboration will be required to provide regional investments to fund, build, operate, and maintain additional transportation services and facilities. Such investments will be tailored to promote regional economies and improve the quality of life, promote goods movement to and through ports and border crossings, and support programs aimed at developing the state's economic clusters across all modes.

Making Strategic Choices is Critical

Beginning in 2004, through a series of outreach efforts and conversations with transportation professionals, stakeholders, and the public, 85 transportation program options were described as strategic needs. A diverse group of agencies, associations, and entities that are responsible for Washington State's transportation system initially identified these needs. The Washington Transportation Plan recognizes that the need for continued investment in our infrastructure and services remains paramount even with the recent boosts in project funding. Totalling nearly 38 billion dollars (2005 dollars), these 85 unfunded program options are critical to address statewide transportation needs over the next 20 years.

Recognizing that securing revenue at this significant level was not probable over 20 years, the Transportation Commission prioritized the needs into high, medium, and low priorities. The evaluation of each program investment option considered the feedback collected from regional transportation planning organizations, cities, counties, tribes, in addition to public transit agencies and non-profit and private transportation providers, various organizations and associations, as well as people who use or have an interest in the statewide transportation system.

High Priorities

The list of high priority programs totals approximately \$26 billion dollars (2005 dollars). These high priorities were compared to the 20-year vision of the WTP to set the policy framework for future investments and define five areas where emphasis should be placed when additional revenue is available. Each high priority program was assigned to one of the prioritized investment guidelines.

The WTP confirms that most, if not all, of the transportation investments have multiple benefits. For example, ramp meters can smooth traffic flow, reduce congestion, increase throughput, and improve safety, while leading to improved economic productivity. A new passing lane increases freight mobility while enhancing the recreational experience for visitors traveling a scenic byway, both contributing to economic vitality and safety. Most investment in preservation of existing infrastructure also addresses the other priorities by improving safety, economic viability, mobility, and the environment.

In addition, all projects consider environmental issues and nearly all projects improve environmental conditions through collaborative design or mitigation. Environmental issues are considered to be a core part of the planning, design, engineering, and project delivery processes, even when the primary project scope is to improve safety or enhance system efficiencies. Improved accountability is essential.

Local, regional, and state transportation providers must base infrastructure investments on performance measurements and performance-based decision-making. This will ensure the right projects are delivered when needed and maintain the public’s confidence in government’s ability to meet their needs. Stable transportation funding is needed to provide sound plans and programs and to prevent expensive, inefficient project starts/stops/starts. Stable funding also supports the economy and local land use decisions. Innovative financing, public-private partnerships, and toll facilities or system management approaches will provide additional funding capacity and system management tools.

▶ **20-year Transportation Vision**

Washington’s transportation system should serve our citizens’ safety and mobility, the state’s economic productivity, our communities’ livability, and our ecosystem’s viability.

▶ **Prioritized Investment Guidelines**

P Preservation—Preserve and extend prior investments in existing transportation facilities and the services they provide to people and commerce.

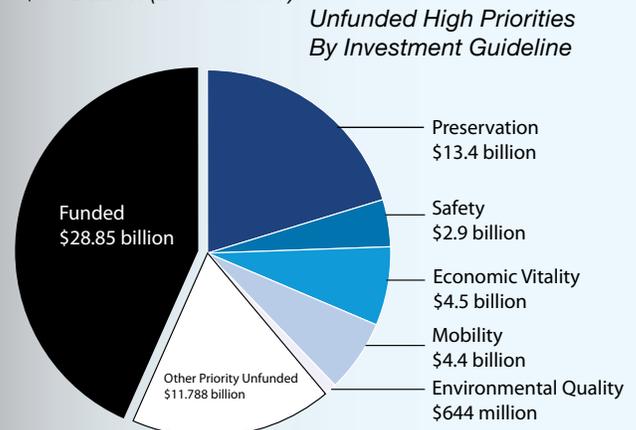
S Safety—Target construction projects, enforcement and education to save lives, reduce injuries, and protect property.

EV Economic Vitality—Improve freight movement and support economic sectors that rely on the transportation system, such as agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing.

M Mobility—Facilitate movement of people and goods to contribute to a strong economy and a better quality of life for citizens.

EQ Environmental Quality and Health—Bring benefits to the environment and our citizens’ health by improving the existing transportation infrastructure.

20-Year Transportation Investment Needs
\$67 Billion (2005 dollars)





Wenatchee—August 2, 2006



Vancouver—August 22, 2006



Mt. Vernon—August 24, 2006

Public Comment Validates and Reshapes the WTP

The Transportation Commission and the Washington State Department of Transportation collaborated with Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) and Scenic Byway Organizations to co-host public outreach events statewide. A list of RTPOs, WSDOT regions, and Scenic Byways is included Part IV. Chapter B. Maps,

Public comment collected in July and August 2006 validated and strengthened the key messages of the WTP. Overall, validation and support for the vision statement and the investment guidelines were frequently mentioned by the public. While not all comments indicated agreement with the high priorities, strong support for preservation and safety as the foremost priorities was evident throughout public comment received. On the following pages the unfunded high priorities are grouped by investment guideline.

The following issues are discussed for each investment guideline:

- Recommended program investment levels
- Desired outcomes and benefits
- A comparison of the investments underway and the unfunded needs
- Key issues identified during the public comment period

▶ *“The Washington Transportation Plan establishes the strategic direction for future transportation investments, shaped by the input from people across the state that use or share the responsibility for delivering the statewide system.”*

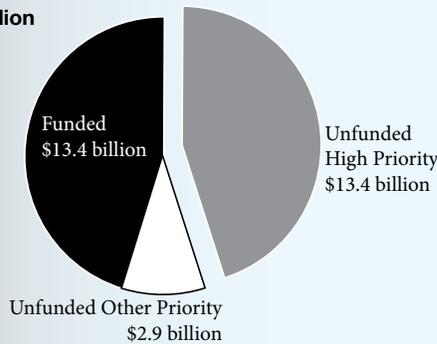
Washington Transportation Commission

► **Preservation**—Preserve and extend prior investments in existing transportation facilities and the services they provide to people and commerce.

Legend:

- (P) Preservation
- (S) Safety
- (EV) Economic Vitality
- (M) Mobility
- (EQ) Environmental Quality and Health

**Preservation
Total Unfunded
\$16.3 billion**



Public Comment Highlights

- Preserving the system is important at all jurisdictional levels and for all modes.
- Preservation of county roads should be of higher priority.
- Investments on state highways benefit communities where the highway also serves a mainstreet function.
- Cities make investments on state highways with non-state dollars.

**Note: All estimates in 2005 dollars*

Preservation—\$13.379 billion*

Highway Pavement Preservation—\$483.5 million

- Rehabilitate concrete pavement on interstate routes—\$483.5 million (P)(EV)(M)

Highway Bridge Preservation—\$6.8 billion

- Retrofit seismically vulnerable bridges in lower risk zones—\$650 million (P)(S)(EV)(M)
- Replace major seismically vulnerable and aging bridges and replace seismically vulnerable bridges on remaining critical highway corridors:
 - Alaskan Way Viaduct and SR 520 Floating Bridge—\$4.8 billion (P)(S)(EV)(M)
 - I-5 Columbia River crossing—\$750 million (P)(S)(EV)(M)
- Replace city and county short-span and high-cost bridges—\$645 million (P)(S)(EV)(M)

Other Facility Preservation—\$6.05 billion

- Preserve electrical systems and drainage facilities—\$50 million (P)(S)(EV)(M)
- Preserve, maintain, and operate city streets—\$6 billion (P)(EV)(M)

Investment Benefits

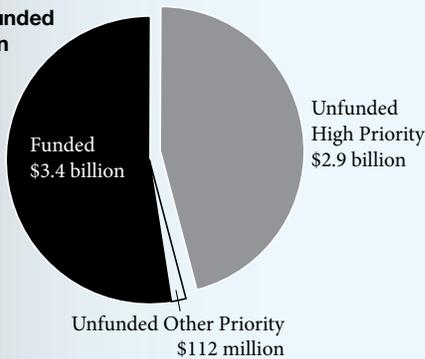
- Extend the service life of the highway system, which leads to increased efficiency, safety, and delay reduction
- Eliminate city street maintenance and preservation backlog
- Extend the service life of bridges in the local road network

▶ **Safety**—Target construction projects, enforcement and education to save lives, reduce injuries, and protect property.

Legend:

- Ⓟ Preservation
- Ⓢ Safety
- ⓔⓋ Economic Vitality
- Ⓜ Mobility
- ⓔⓈ Environmental Quality and Health

**Safety
Total Unfunded
\$3.0 billion**



Public Comment Highlights

- ▶ Safety is paramount.
- ▶ The goal of zero deaths is admirable, but difficult to achieve because driver behavior is a challenge to control.
- ▶ Having access to transportation services for medical appointments is a personal safety issue.

Safety—\$2.921 billion*

Highway Safety—\$620.6 million

- Improve state highway safety by reducing risk on rural two-lane highways by providing passing lanes, intersection improvements, and new interchanges or overpasses—\$275 million ⓈⓔⓋⓂ
- Continue bringing interstate highways up to current safety standards—\$100 million ⓈⓔⓋⓂ
- Address seat belt use, impaired and aggressive driving, and motorcycle safety by providing behavioral programs—\$210 million ⓈⓔⓋⓂ
- Make small-scale safety enhancements on state highways, including warning signs, ramp signal coordination, rumble strips, vehicle detection loops, and collision data reporting—\$35.6 million ⓈⓔⓋⓂ

Local Road Safety Improvements—\$2.3 billion

- Improve rural two-lane county road safety by implementing low-cost safety improvements—\$200 million ⓈⓔⓋⓂ
- Improve safety by addressing accident locations on city streets—\$800 million ⓈⓔⓋⓂ
- In larger cities, improve safety on city streets that are state routes by addressing accident locations and corridors—\$1.3 billion ⓈⓔⓋⓂ

Investment Benefits

Reduce societal costs of collisions on the interstate system, state highways, county roads, and city streets by:

- Separating cross traffic
- Providing safe passing zones
- Improving intersections
- Reducing the incidence and risk of collisions on the interstate
- Reducing fatal and disabling collisions related to behaviors such as driving under the influence, failure to properly use seat belts, and aggressive driving

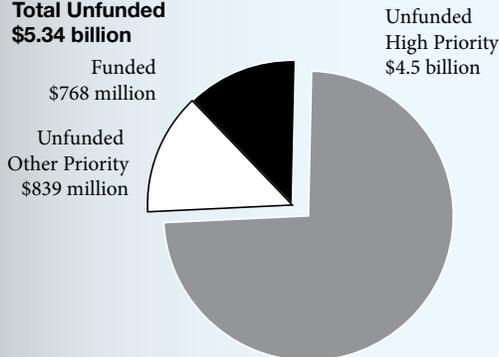
*Note: All estimates in 2005 dollars

▶ **Economic Vitality**—Improve freight movement and support economic sectors that rely on the transportation system, such as agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing.

Legend:

- (P) Preservation
- (S) Safety
- (EV) Economic Vitality
- (M) Mobility
- (EQ) Environmental Quality and Health

Economic Vitality
Total Unfunded
\$5.34 billion



Public Comment Highlights

- ▶ Keeping I-90 open year-round is important to both eastern and western Washington.
- ▶ All-weather roads are critical for mobility, economic vitality, and safety.
- ▶ Statewide, there is high interest in the outcome of the rail study.

**Note: All estimates in 2005 dollars*

▶ **Establishing a Network of County All-Weather Roads**

The proposed \$200 million investment level would establish the program, define criteria for selecting key routes on county roads, prioritize projects, and begin investment in the design and construction of the highest priority projects.

The movement of freight is a key issue in the WTP. The need for a statewide system of all-weather roads was voiced at numerous freight summits, meetings with shippers, manufacturers, growers, ports, and other businesses. Up to two months per year, Washington State agricultural growers and processors, manufacturers, and timber/lumber businesses can not ship their products to market due to weight restrictions on county roads. In a global marketplace, the inability of Washington State producers to meet buyers' requirements causes loss of customers and, ultimately loss of the state's competitive advantage.

Economic Vitality—\$4.504 billion*

Address Freight Constraints in the I-5 corridor—\$3.46 billion

- Complete missing links on the major north-south freight corridor system—\$3.46 billion (S)(EV)(M)
- Replace vulnerable and failing structures critical to freight movement (Funding needs associated with this target appear in the Preservation discussion.)

Freight Rail

- Support growth in east-west main line rail capacity and port-rail connections, and preserve metro rail yards. Cost is unknown and will be examined in the [Transportation Commission's Rail Study](#) (P)(S)(EV)(M)

Weather-Related Constraints on Freight Routes—\$1 billion

- Reduce severe-weather closures and eliminate low-clearance structures on major east-west highway freight corridors (I-90 at Snoqualmie Pass)—\$813 million (EV)(M)
- Develop a statewide core all-weather county road system—\$200 million (EV)(M)

Technology for Freight Movement—\$31 million

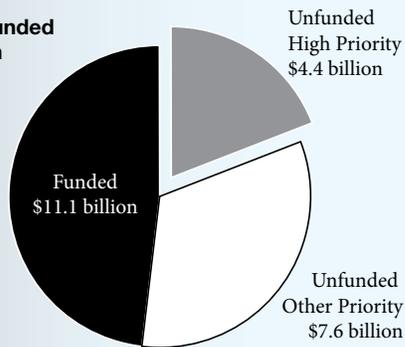
- Complete the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) / Weigh-in-Motion (WIM) system—\$31 million (S)(EV)(M)(EQ)
- Continuously improve traffic management and incident response

Investment Benefits

- Support our state's growing economy, improve safety, maintain freight access to major markets and seaports, lower business costs, and sustain jobs in manufacturing, agribusiness, construction, warehousing, and transportation.
- Complete the north-south freight corridor to ensure market access and connectivity.
- Relieve congestion in the Puget Sound region by improving I-5 and creating better access for freight.
- Ensure freight rail capacity is able to accommodate future demand and remain a viable option for the movement of goods.
- Prevent increased congestion on alternative corridors and support growth of regional and national trade.
- Reduce severe-weather closures on Snoqualmie Pass and other major east-west highway freight corridors.
- Ensure that Washington State agricultural growers and processors, manufacturers and timber/lumber businesses, and freight-dependent industries can ship products to market year-round and support the state's ability to remain competitive.
- Reduce travel delay, safety hazards, and congestion for commercial vehicles and minimize air quality impacts from vehicle idling, while ensuring the state's highway system is protected from overweight and illegal vehicles.

► **Mobility**—Facilitate movement of people and goods to contribute to a strong economy and a better quality of life for citizens.

**Mobility
Total Unfunded
\$12 billion**



Public Comment Highlights

- More emphasis on inter- and intra-city public transportation.
- Increased funding for public transportation is key to mobility.
- Interest in intercity passenger rail statewide was voiced repeatedly. Both increased frequency and more stations are needed for medical, business, and recreational travel.
- Regardless of the traffic volumes in each community, when residents experience increases in congestion, their expectations of system performance are not met.
- Coordinated planning for all modes should anticipate growth and future congestion statewide using advanced technology to shape solutions that are multimodal.

*Note: All estimates in 2005 dollars

Mobility—\$4.446 billion*

Transportation Access—\$890 million

- Distribute operating funds to transit agencies for special needs transportation in order to maintain fixed-route bus service—\$860 million (EV)(M)
- Support the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation’s performance measurement activities and re-establish support for community coalitions of providers—\$30 million (EV)(M)

System Efficiencies—\$1.56 billion

- Address increased maintenance and operations responsibilities with additions to the highway system—\$292 million (S)(EV)(M)
- Add maintenance facilities to support the increased need for maintenance and operations of highway system additions—\$2.1 million (S)(EV)(M)
- Add traffic management centers at high-volume locations to improve throughput and increase real-time travel information—\$16.3 million (S)(EV)(M)
- Integrate, maintain, and operate new technology—\$68 million (S)(EV)(M)
- Complete the 10-year ITS plan (capital and operations, but not security)—\$600 million (S)(EV)(M)
- Address the incident response shortfall—\$8 million (S)(EV)(M)
- Expand the commute trip reduction tax credit program, increasing the number of small employers in the program—\$20 million (EV)(M)
- Complete the Puget Sound high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes to reduce travel delay and increase travel-time reliability for transit and carpools—\$550 million (EV)(M)

Bottlenecks and Chokepoints—\$2 billion

- Reduce or eliminate bottlenecks and chokepoints at over 200 locations on highways around the state—\$2 billion (EV)(M)

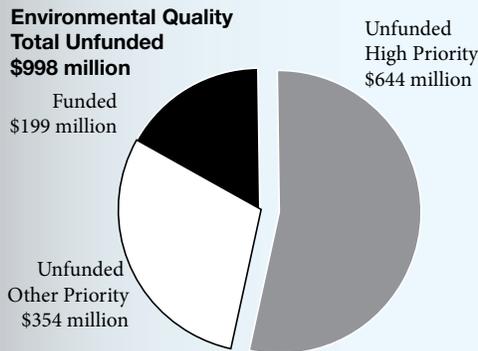
Investment Benefits

- Maintain the current level of special needs transportation service without diminishing fixed-route service
- Increase access to jobs, medical care, education, and communities for people who cannot or do not drive
- Increase numbers of people with access to intercity bus service
- Maximize safety, mobility, and the throughput capacity of the highways
- Improve traffic management and increase traveler information and incident response service
- Encourage more employers to create programs that reduce drive-alone commuting
- Increase travel-time reliability for all lanes
- Ensure that maintenance and operations keeps pace with the expansion of the transportation system

► **Environmental Quality and Health**—Bring benefits to the environment and our citizens’ health by improving the existing transportation infrastructure.

Legend:

- (P) Preservation
- (S) Safety
- (EV) Economic Vitality
- (M) Mobility
- (EQ) Environmental Quality and Health



Public Comment Highlights

- More attention should be given to improving air quality and to the topic of global warming.
- Healthy communities are critical to Washington’s sustainable future. Transportation investments should link communities to increase personal mobility and to encourage walking and bicycling.
- Fish passage barriers exist on the local roadway network in the same watersheds as barrier removal efforts on state highways and are also connected to overall habitat health.

Environmental Quality and Health—\$644 million*

- Provide enhanced tribal transportation planning capacity, to increase staff levels and to provide technical resources, data collection, and analysis to tribes—\$11 million (S)(EV)(M)(EQ)
- Add sidewalks and trails between destinations in communities—\$75 million (EQ)
- Remove nearly 900 remaining fish passage barriers created by state highways—\$188 million (S)(M)(EQ)
- Complete the inventory of stormwater facilities on the state highway system to develop a strategic implementation plan, and begin retrofit installations at selected locations—\$340 million (EQ)
- Retrofit existing state highway shoulders and medians as part of the Integrated Vegetation Management program to improve filtration of stormwater runoff and establish desired vegetation—\$30 million (EQ)

Investment Benefits

- Improve tribal ability to plan needed transportation facilities
- Increase safety, access, and mobility for walkers and bicyclists and increase opportunities for physical activity
- Improve streams for fish habitat and watershed performance, improve fish passage, habitat connectivity, and water quality
- Improve water quality of runoff, improve performance of highway drainage facilities, and reduce damage to the highway system
- Decrease maintenance costs and herbicide use, reduce weeds and invasive species on roadsides, and improve water quality, while reducing runoff volumes by filtering contaminants

*Note: All estimates in 2005 dollars