

Washington State Freight Mobility Plan: Public Outreach Plan

BACKGROUND

State and Federal Policy Basis

State law requires the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to develop a State Freight Mobility Plan: “The state-interest component of the statewide multimodal transportation plan shall include a freight mobility plan which shall assess the transportation needs to ensure the safe, reliable, and efficient movement of goods within and through the state and to ensure the state’s economic vitality” (Washington State RCW 47.06.045).

The Washington State Legislature has established transportation policy goals (RCW 47.04.280) and the Plan will address:

- **Economic Vitality:** To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.
- **Safety:** To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.
- **Mobility:** To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State.
- **Environment:** To enhance Washington’s quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.

The Plan will support policies adopted in the 2030 Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) including:

- Continue the evolution to performance-based programs.
- Improve Washington’s economic competitiveness.
- Support the coordinated, connected and efficient movement of freight and goods.

On July 6, 2012 the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) became federal law. MAP-21 includes a number of provisions designed to enhance freight movement in support of national goals. One of these encourages states to develop individual freight plans (Section 1118). The Washington State Freight Mobility Plan will meet the requirements that have been set for Freight Plans by MAP-21.

Goals and Objectives

The Plan will develop and prioritize freight transportation system improvement strategies that support and enhance trade and sustainable economic growth, safety, the environment, and goods delivery needs in Washington State. The Plan will:

- Make a strong case for funding Washington State freight priority projects under MAP-21 and in future state transportation packages.
- Guide capital and operating investments in the state’s freight systems.

The main objectives of the Plan are to:

1. Prioritize freight system improvement strategies to support the plan's three objectives:
 - Urban goods movement systems that support jobs, the economy, and clean air for all, and provide goods delivery to residents and businesses.
 - Washington's competitive position as a Global Gateway to the nation with intermodal freight corridors serving trade and international and interstate commerce, and the state and national Export Initiatives.
 - Rural economies' farm-to-market, manufacturing and resource industry sectors.
2. Integrate the findings and recommendations of state plans with freight elements into a single state freight plan to address all freight modes in the state system: truck, rail, waterway, and air freight.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

Throughout the planning process WSDOT has relied on a number of stakeholder groups across the state for advice and input on the goals, objectives and interim deliverables of the Plan. These groups have included the technical advisory committees of all 15 MPOs and RTPOs in the state, Tribal transportation leaders, many ports, cities and counties, three Freight Plan Technical Teams with over 60 members drawn from representative shipper and goods receiver firms, freight carriers, air quality associations, workforce, university experts, local and regional governments, and other freight stakeholders.

PUBLIC OUTREACH & PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Objective

Take input on the Draft Freight Plan and revise as necessary based on public comments.

Target Audience

WSDOT will send an electronic link to the draft Freight Plan and request comments from groups such as:

- The Washington State Agricultural Commissions
 - Apple Commission
 - Beef Commission
 - Fruit Commission
 - Grain Commission
 - Potato Commission
 - Tree Fruit Research Commission
 - Wine Commission
 - Washington State Farm Bureau
- Local Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Boards
- The Washington Association of Cities
- League of Women Voters
- Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs
- The Washington Association of Counties

- Environmental Associations
 - Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
 - Washington Environmental Council
 - Environment Washington
 - Northwest Earth Institute
- Freight Stakeholders
 - MPO's and RTPOs
 - Tribes
 - Ports
 - Freight Plan Technical Teams
 - University of Washington, Washington State University, Western Washington University
- General Public
 - Reached through press release and website
- Industry Associations
 - Northwest Pavement Management Association
 - Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
 - Transportation Choices Coalition
 - Washington Airport Management Association
 - Washington Highway Users Federation
 - Washington Pilots Association
 - Washington Seaplane Pilots Association
 - Washington State Intelligent Transportation Society
 - Pacific Northwest Economic Region
 - Northwest Fisheries Association
 - Northwest Marine Trade Association
 - Northwest Mining Association
 - Northwest Pulp and Paper Association
 - Association of Washington Business
 - American Planning Association Washington Chapter
- State Agencies
 - Washington State Patrol
 - Washington State Transportation Commission
 - Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board
 - Transportation Investment Board
 - County Road Administration Board
 - Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
 - Employment Security Department
 - Washington State Department of Commerce
 - Washington State Department of Ecology
- Tribal Transportation Groups
 - Washington Indian Tribal Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (WTIPAC)
 - Tribal Transportation Planning Organization

Meetings

WSDOT will hold public meetings in Seattle and Spokane in February 2014

Key Messages and Meeting Agenda

WSDOT will present the purpose, objectives, findings and recommendations of the draft State Freight Plan and ask for comments. The overview will follow the structure of the Plan:

1. Strategic Goals
2. The Economic Context of Freight
3. Washington's Freight Policies and Institutions
4. Inventory State Freight Transportation Assets
5. Freight System Conditions and Performance Measures
6. The 20-year Freight Forecast
7. An Overview of Trends, Needs, and Issues for the State's Freight System
8. Strengths and Challenges for the State's Freight Transportation System
9. The Decision-Making Process
10. The State's Freight Improvement Strategy
11. Implementation Plan

WSDOT will also provide information about how to access the complete Draft Plan and how to submit written comments.

Comment Period for Draft Washington State Freight Mobility Plan (Written Document)

WSDOT plans to release the Draft Plan for public comment on WSDOT's website in January 2014. The public comment period will be a minimum of 45 calendar days. Formal notice of the public comment period will be communicated to Tribes, other freight stakeholders, and the target audience through a press release, WSDOT's website, and by email. WSDOT will provide clear instructions about how to comment on the Draft Plan with the announcement.

Following the conclusion of the public comment period, WSDOT will analyze comments to identify key themes and will publish a written response to these key themes as part of the Plan. Finally, WSDOT will make any necessary revisions to the Plan based on comments received and provide a summary of these changes.