Statewide Public Transportation Plan

Working Group Meeting Notes

Tuesday, November 19, 2013
1:00 pm-3:30 pm
WSDOT HQ Building, Mt. Rainier Rm

In Attendance: Michelle Zeidman, Brett Meldrum, Celeste Gilman (UW), Allan Jones (OSPI), Patty McDonald (DSHS), Nick Roach (ECOLOGY).
Staff: Cathy Silins, Stephanie Postier, Steven Abernathy, Kathy Johnston, Judy Lorenzo.
On Phone: Barb Chamberlin, Gil Cerise, Matt Hansen, Justin Bergener, Kevin Futrell.

Cathy welcomed the members of the Working Group and the State Agency Representatives. Stephen did the Safety Briefing for the conference room.

Cathy explained the expectations for the meeting today. She will give an update to the State Agency Representatives on where the Statewide Public Transportation Plan process has taken us, and then will facilitate a discussion on the programs and policies of the state that may have an impact on public transportation into the future.

A. Cathy presented the Draft Mission Statements/Guiding Principles.

"The State of Washington, together with the public, businesses, state agencies and local, regional, tribal, and federal governments, supports an integrated multimodal transportation system that operates effectively, safely and efficiently; meets the needs for mobility and accessibility of the public; balances current and long-term goals of economic growth, environmental quality, health, social equity; and is oriented to communities in our state.

To safeguard Washington State's transportation system for future generations, the state must address multiple challenges in a timely manner. These challenges include meeting growing demand, delayed maintenance, inefficient land use, insufficient and unstable funding, safety, and the evolving needs of a changing society.

The State's interest in public transportation can best be described as tiered:

State Goals:
Economy, Environment, Community

System Focus:
Efficiency, Access, Equity, Social Justice and Quality of Life/Health

Modes/Tools:
Transit, High Capacity Transportation, Ridesharing, Active Transportation, Demand Management, Human Services Transportation, Intercity Bus, Nonprofit Human Service Transportation, Private Transportation Providers, Pupil Transportation Programs"

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Guiding Principle areas:

1. Community
2. Environment
4. Integration/Partnerships
5. Economy

3. Safety 6. Coordination

Cathy commented that additional principles may be added.

B. Discussion regarding the status of the plan included the following comments:
   1. For all people (with or without disabilities) it is critical that Washington create livable communities. Universal design allows everyone better access. It includes accessible sidewalks, bike lanes and other infrastructure to support transportation alternatives. At the current time, 70% of people with disabilities are unemployed. If we had a more accessible transportation system, more people with disabilities could get to a job.
   2. People should be able to get to where they need to go without a car.
   3. We should focus on providing mobility and access to people
   4. We can tell that there may need to be an entire cultural shift.
   5. In some of our communities we are looking at reciprocal relationships, shared or co-op facilities. Sometimes it is difficult to put these partnerships into place because of the desires to have local community identities and ownership.
   6. In our communities, people are living longer and working longer.
   7. There will need to be densification in our neighborhood which will require transit to be quick to react.
   8. Environment issue: "Anti-idling policies" may help save fuel and reduce greenhouse gases. The Department of Ecology is dealing with fuel usage, alternative fuels. As more natural gas becomes available, it is anticipated that it will become more economical for larger fleets to use. Department of Commerce is looking at all things sustainable and working on the energy strategy.
   9. School districts are finding it difficult to purchase new buses when they have to lay off teachers. Even though there are capital funds to replace buses, the districts are not choosing to use those funds. The school bus fleet is about 10,000. The fleet has remained about the same for a number of years. In 2007 the school bus funds paid for 450 new buses – and now it is less than 370 new buses. School enrollment has not changed significantly, and growth is primarily with the smaller, specialized bus fleet.

As we continued our discussion the topic became more focused on what the statewide public transportation plan should include:

- The siting of public facilities including schools was discussed. This has an impact on the ability for public transportation services to provide access to the elderly as well as to school children on established bus routes.
- It is important for all the people to know their transportation options. Then people can choose different options on different days to meet their economic and social needs.
- Look at the pilot projects – what can we learn, what should we encourage to continue/expand
- Look for efficiencies and use them as best practices
- Proposed Vision – Access is seamless from the customer's perspective.
- A roadmap or a call to action regarding the culture of public transportation providers
- In 20-years technology may change our way of delivering services. Technology is also being driven to the passenger providers: communication between the vehicles and the

people, security systems (cameras) GPS systems. Examples of the impact of technology include: GTFS – Google. Opportunities to have the private sector develop tools that are geared toward passenger experiences – inviting private sector investment

- We need a common vision that is SIMPLE, easy to remember and makes a STATEMENT.

Cathy thanked the State Agency Representatives for coming to the meeting.