

Washington State Freight Rail Plan
Vision/Goals Workshop
Commission Board Room, WSDOT Headquarters
310 Maple Park Lane, Olympia, WA 98504
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., August 5, 2009

Minutes

Introduction and Purpose

George Xu (Executive Manager, Strategic Planning and Research) facilitated the workshop, opening with a brief introduction. George introduced Teresa Graham (Research and Data Specialist), who provided housekeeping instructions, and Scott Witt (Director, WSDOT Rail and Marine Office), who thanked the participants for taking their time to attend the workshop. Scott explained the purpose of the workshop and role of the participants. *See attached agenda and list of workshop participants.*

Progress Report

George provided an overall planning project update that included progress on system capacity, commodity flow, port access, congestion, and abandonment. Lynn Scroggins (Senior Rail Planner) gave an update about the Projects Survey, emailed on July 31, with responses due August 19.

Presentation: Freight Rail and Washington State Economy and Society

As a basis for workshop discussion, George presented statistical information and Scott presented information about the plan's status, function, and roles. *See attached presentation slides.*

Question: In the statistics slides (slides 12-13), what does the term *plant* mean?

George: The term *plant* refers to goods traveling to a plant, such as petroleum traveling through a pipeline to a processing plant.

Question: In the statistics slides (slide 16 and slide 18), why are there missing counties? Snohomish County, for example, has expensive but low tonnage goods shipped via rail to the Boeing plant.

George: These graphics show the counties with the highest freight tonnage. The graphic does not consider freight value.

Comment: The investment slides show state investment, not the cumulative investment of the other partners.

Question: Are the investments, total trackage investments or capital investments only?

George: Capital investments only.

Vision and Goals Development Process and Small Group Discussions and Presentations

Lynn explained the plan for the rest of the workshop. Participants formed three small balanced groups, to discuss vision and goals. WSDOT provided sample definitions and vision/goals as “food for thought” to stimulate discussion. The small groups documented their discussion on easel paper, and then presented key findings to the large group. Lynn facilitated the group process. *See attached small group material: Sample vision and goals, sample definitions, small group easel notes, small group presentation notes.*

Wrap-up

Scott thanked participants again for their help. He explained that stakeholder input is vital to the success of the plan. Comments are welcome throughout this process; several additional comments have been received. He noted that WSDOT is looking into remote access for stakeholders who cannot attend meetings. *See attached comments from stakeholders unable to participate in the workshop.*

George explained the next steps of the vision and goals development process to optimize input from statewide stakeholders. He explained that minutes and synthesized minutes (minutes organized by category in priority order) will be emailed to stakeholders for their input by next week along with a schedule. Progressive drafts of vision and goals will be developed for review/comment. September 30 is the next scheduled Advisory Committee meeting. Another meeting will be scheduled in October-November.

Question: When is the plan due?

Scott: Estimated completion date is December 31, 2009.

Question: Can the Advisory Committee meet sooner and more often? Can stakeholders receive updates more often?

George: Yes. We will schedule more meetings and keep you posted as development occurs.

Comment: Develop a schedule with expectations, progress, and maybe a Web site.

Comment: Address national issues overlaid on state issues. Push on national levels to address freight rail development. Address mandates greater than the state, such as Positive Train Control safety improvements. Coordinate passenger and freight rail development.

Attachments:

1. Workshop agenda
2. Workshop participants
3. Workshop presentation slides
4. Sample vision
5. Sample goals
6. Sample definitions
7. Small group easel notes
8. Small group presentation notes
9. Comments from stakeholders unable to attend the workshop