

Highways & Local Programs Division

Looking to the future

As the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Highways and Local Programs Division look forward, we will continue our solid tradition of working with the cities, counties, tribes, ports and transportation planning organizations throughout the state to develop and implement transportation projects to best serve the residents of the state. Our goals are to keep people and commerce moving and to reduce the number of serious and fatal crashes through targeted investments, while remaining in compliance with federal regulations and respecting the needs and priorities of our customers. We understand that this needs to be done in a way that responds to evolving federal requirements and fluctuations in economic conditions.



Our role in providing training and technical support to local agency staff is also changing as we develop more online training opportunities and assist local staff in meeting new federal requirements in areas such as sign and pavement marking and changes to

the federal Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices. We will continue to work with local communities to improve mobility options that include better and safer bike and pedestrian paths and safer routes to school.

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Accomplishments

Over 400 agencies in Washington actively supported with project funding from H&LP.

In 2010 and 2011, H&LP environmental staff completed the required federal environmental documentation for 361 projects.

H&LP uses less than 2% of its funding to pay for the cost of administering its funding programs and providing extensive technical engineering support to our customers.

H&LP maintains oversight of 3,960 bridges in the state, with over 95% in fair or good condition, and also assists the local agencies in a wide variety of technical engineering issues.



The Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Highways and Local Programs (H&LP) Division assists customers in the successful delivery of transportation projects by providing educational, technical, and financial support to cities, counties, and other transportation partners such as tribal governments, ports, and transit agencies.

Under the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Federal-Aid Stewardship Agreement with WSDOT, H&LP serves as the steward of the FHWA funding that goes to public agencies throughout the state.

• Administering and managing federal funds from project development through construction.

• Preparing and submitting the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to FHWA and FTA for approval.

- Ensuring reasonable compliance with state and federal regulations for FHWA and state funded programs.
- Offering technical assistance and guidance on project development and construction administration issues:

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental documentation requirements (liaison between agencies, FHWA, tribes, and resource agencies to satisfy coordination requirements and approvals);

The process for acquiring property in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: Materials can be provided in alternative formats: large print, Braille, cassette tape, or on computer disk for people with disabilities by calling the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) at (360) 705-7097. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact OEO through the Washington Relay Service at 7-1-1.

Title VI Statement to Public: It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin and sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For Title VI complaint forms and advice, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098.



Program Management and Project Funding

The staff of H&LP works with local agencies to provide prompt and efficient project authorizations and reimbursements of qualifying transportation projects that are funded by either federal or state appropriated resources. After a project has been approved in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the federal funds can be authorized with the required local match, typically 13.5% of the total project cost. Technical support and instruction is also provided for grant applications, project documentation, and required project reporting. In addition to managing the local agencies' portion of FHWA's program, the State Legislature relies on H&LP to manage several grant programs. These include the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program, the Safe Routes to School Program, the Highway Safety Improvement Program, and the Local Agency Bridge Program. H&LP also provides support to four county operated ferry systems.



Engineering Services and Technical Assistance

H&LP provides engineering services support and technical assistance for transportation project development so that local agencies can better design, manage, and maintain their transportation projects with optimum ease and efficiency. H&LP's staff has the expertise to provide support in all areas of transportation improvement and maintenance with experts in the specialties of bridge, pavement, traffic, environmental, and community design. In addition, H&LP provides guidance in contract administration and coordinates training and local staff development in all aspects of transportation through their Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). Agencies that can demonstrate proficiency in management of federal highway projects are able to obtain Certified Acceptance status, allowing the agency to deliver federal aid projects with less oversight. Guidance to assist agencies in complying with federal requirements is found in H&LP's Local Agency Guidelines Manual.



Highway Safety Improvement Program

In 2010 there were 236 fatal and 1,465 serious injury crashes on local agency managed roadways. The highway safety program provides funding assistance to local governments to implement improvements to the roadway network. These improvements reduce the number and the severity of crashes that occur. For program implementation and management, available funding is split into two subprograms: Urban Safety (cities) and Rural Safety (counties). This program is divided because the serious crashes that occur on county roads are primarily run-off-the-road crashes that occur over a large network while those in cities are concentrated at intersections and include bicycle and pedestrian crashes. The projects funded by this program range from low cost area-wide improvements, such as signing and striping upgrades, to higher cost improvements such as curve re-alignment and major intersection reconstruction.



Local Agency Bridge Program

H&LP is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the inspection, maintenance, repair, and replacement of approximately half of the nearly eight thousand bridges in the State of Washington. The Local Agency Bridge Program provides funding for bridge maintenance in the form of steel bridge painting, scour mitigation, seismic retrofit, and for movable bridge electrical, mechanical, and deck or joint repair. Following a regimen of inspection and bridge condition assessment, bridges are selected based on their condition ratings for repair or replacement. H&LP keeps a thorough record of bridge inspection data and provides training in bridge inspection and certification of inspectors. H&LP also provides guidance and direction for completion of various reports and studies to qualify projects for available funding.



Safe Routes to School Program

This program helps fund cost-effective projects within two miles of primary and middle schools (K-8) to provide children a safe, healthy alternative to riding the bus or being driven to school. The program provides technical assistance and resources for engineering, education, encouragement, and enforcement improvements that will get more children walking and bicycling to school safely. H&LP works with communities to develop walk route plans as a way of helping them identify locations that need improvements. Successfully implemented, these projects provide improved walk routes that increase the number of children walking and bicycling to school. They also create a healthy, safe alternative to children riding the bus or being driven to school and will promote enforcement efforts to address traffic safety.



Main Street Highways Program (Pending)

This program was developed to respond to the growing need for improvements to the 500 miles of Washington State Highways that also function as a community Main Street. Projects anticipated to be funded from this program are intended to encourage street designs that safely and effectively meet the needs of all users including bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists and public transportation users. The program is also intended to support economic vitality, protect and preserve community environment and character. Priority will be given to projects with strong community support established through an outreach process to a broad coalition including business and economic development interests. Those agencies receiving grants through this program must have a complete streets ordinance, resolution or demonstrated equivalent ordinances or resolutions and related standards in place in order to receive funding.