FREIGHT MOBILITY: Joint Report on Washington State Freight Highway and Rail Projects

1.0 Legislative Directive

1.1 Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an overview of the unique roles the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) play in the funding, design, and construction of key freight mobility projects in Washington and highlight how these agencies collaborate to improve the state's freight systems.
- Describe the criteria and selection processes each of these agencies uses to determine investments in both highway and rail freight projects.
- Provide a summary of highway and rail freight mobility projects in the state that currently receive, or propose to receive, state funding through WSDOT, FMSIB, or both agencies.

This report fulfills the requirements of 2007-2009 Transportation Budget (ESHB 1904, as passed by the 2007 Legislature and ESHB 2878 as passed by the 2008 legislature), which directed FMSIB and WSDOT to submit a joint freight report to the Office of Financial Management and the Legislative Transportation Committees by September 1, 2008.

1.2 2008 Transportation Budget Provisos

Section 207 (2). The freight mobility strategic investment board and the department of transportation shall collaborate to submit a report to the office of financial management and the transportation committees of the Legislature by September 1, 2008, listing proposed freight highway and rail projects. The report must describe the analysis used for selecting such projects, as required by chapter 47.06A RCW for the board and as required by this act for the department.

Section 309 (7) (a). The department shall develop and implement the benefit/impact evaluation methodology recommended in the statewide rail capacity and needs study finalized in December 2006. The benefit/impact evaluation methodology shall be developed using the following priorities, in order of relative importance:

- Economic, safety, or environmental advantages of freight movement by rail compared to alternative modes;
- Self-sustaining economic development that creates family-wage jobs;
- Preservation of transportation corridors that would otherwise be lost;
- Increased access to efficient and cost-effective transport to market for Washington's agricultural and industrial products;
- Better integration and cooperation within the regional, national, and international systems of freight distribution;
- Mitigation of impacts of increased rail traffic on communities.

Section 309 (7) (d). The department and the freight mobility strategic investment board shall collaborate to submit a report to the office of financial management and the transportation committees of the Legislature by September 1, 2008, listing proposed freight highway and rail projects. The report must describe the analysis used for selecting such projects, as required by this act for the department and as required by chapter 47.06A RCW for the board. When developing its list of proposed freight highway and rail projects, the freight mobility strategic investment board shall use the priorities identified in (a) of this subsection to the greatest extent possible.

2.0 Funding Freight Mobility Projects in Washington

Freight mobility is critical to Washington's economy. In 2007 the state's freight systems supported 1.026 million jobs in Washington State freight-dependent industry sectors, which produced $433.9 billion dollars in Gross Business Income.[1]

Three main components make up our state's freight systems:

- **Global Gateways –** International and national trade flows through Washington. Washington is a gateway state, connecting Asian trade flows to the U.S. economy, Alaska to the lower 48 states, and Canada to the U.S. West Coast.
- **Made in Washington –** Movement of goods made in our state. Washington's regional economies are dependent on our state's farmers, manufacturers, construction, mining, and timber/wood companies' ability to ship Washington-made products to local, national, and international markets. These industries generate jobs and wealth for every region in the state.
- **Delivering Goods to You –** Washington's local retail and wholesale distribution system ensures that local grocery stores are stocked, hospitals have medicine, and fuel is available to heat our homes and move our cars.

[1] **Gross Business Income** is a measure of total revenues reported to the state.

The state's public transportation infrastructure: highways and roads, railroads, air and marine ports, and waterways support all of these freight systems.

Funding and delivery of freight mobility projects at the state level is primarily focused in two agencies: Washington State Department of Transportation and the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board.

2.1 Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

WSDOT is the steward of the state's interstate, highway, and ferry systems. WSDOT directly manages planning, design, project delivery, and operations for over 18,000 lane miles of state highway and more than 3,500 bridges, as well as the ferry system. The Department has three primary freight-related functions:

Preserve, maintain, and improve the state's highway and ferry systems to meet both freight transportation and general mobility needs.

The Legislature provided $11 billion to fund 432 total transportation projects in the 2003 "Nickel" Transportation Funding Package and the 2005 Transportation Partnership Account (TPA). WSDOT has determined that over 300 of the highway improvement, preservation, and safety construction projects fully or partially funded by these revenue packages have high- or medium-freight benefits. As of August 2008, the Department has completed 102 of these projects.

In the 2005 Transportation Partnership Account, the Legislature provided $541.1 million for 35 specific freight projects. Three of these projects are WSDOT highway construction projects, one of which is completed.

Manage and direct the state's freight (and passenger) rail programs.

WSDOT oversees the expenditure of funds provided by the Legislature for capital rail projects throughout the state and is responsible for administering both the Freight Rail Assistance Program and the Freight Rail Investment Bank Program. The Legislature authorized $5.85 million in the 2007-2009 biennium and $7.75 million in the 2009-2011 biennium for these freight rail grant and loan programs. The Department also manages the state's Grain Train and Produce Rail Car programs, the operation of the Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad (recently purchased by the state), and the state's investment in the Amtrak system.

Strategic planning and analysis for Washington State freight systems.

By statute, WSDOT produces the Washington Transportation Plan and the state's Highway System Plan. The *2009-2028 Highway System Plan*

update will highlight recommendations for freight system improvements across the state, and feature new statewide freight corridor classification criteria and a freight data program to support project prioritization. It will include a list of high-priority freight highway system projects and operational improvements. The Department also leads the state's freight data and analytic program, and initiatives to improve freight system operational efficiencies, build a data framework to monitor system performance, and develop resilient freight systems.

2.2 Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB)

FMSIB was created in 1998 to respond to specific freight transportation needs on Washington's strategic freight highway, rail, and waterway corridors. The Board is made up of private and public sector members that represent potential funding partners (shipping, trucking, railroads, ports, cities, counties, and the state).

To date, 31 FMSIB projects, and stand alone phases of projects totaling more than $247 million, have been completed. (Of that total, FMSIB contributed $76 million.) The Board has committed $55.03 million in FMSIB funds to another 18 projects that are currently under construction throughout the state—projects which are valued at $535.31 million. (The Board is currently leveraging more than five dollars for every FMSIB dollar invested.) These funds are provided in two ways: FMSIB receives a biennial appropriation ($12,000,000 for 2007-2009) that is awarded through a competitive grant process, and the Board administers funds that are appropriated by the legislature for specific projects. FMSIB also maintains a list of eligible projects for which there is no FMSIB funding yet committed, in the event that additional state or federal funding becomes available or a funded project is unable to proceed. (Of the 44 uncompleted projects on the 1997-2008 FMSIB list, 29 have current or future funding identified, one has partial funding, and 14 have not yet been awarded FMSIB funding.) The Board's next call for projects is scheduled for 2009 to maintain a six-year list of active projects.

FMSIB focuses on local and regional freight projects that:

1. Demonstrate broad public and private support as evidenced by their funding partnerships.
2. Are not limited by jurisdictional boundaries.
3. Improve freight movement or mitigate the impact of freight movement on communities.

Since FMSIB may only fund the freight-related portion of a given project, the Board has developed a qualitative and quantitative selection process and criteria that have proven successful in identifying projects that are ready to go and have clearly identified freight benefits. Once funded,

projects are actively managed to ensure that they stay on time and on budget. Projects can not request additional FMSIB funds after their selection, which protects the state from unanticipated cost increases.

A detailed discussion of FMSIB's mission and qualitative and quantitative approach to freight funding is provided in Appendix 2, Exhibit 1. Project scoring can be found in Appendix 2, Exhibit 2.

Both FMSIB and WSDOT play a role in identifying strategic freight corridors.

> Strategic freight corridors are defined by statute as transportation corridors of great economic importance within an integrated freight system that:
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> a. Serves international and domestic interstate and intrastate trade.
> b. Enhances the state's competitive position through regional and global gateways.
> c. Carries freight tonnages of at least:
>   1. Four million gross tons annually on state highways, city streets, and county roads;
>   2. Five million gross tons annually on railroads; or
>   3. Two and one-half million net tons on waterways; and
>
> have been designated a strategic corridor by [FMSIB]. However, new alignments to, realignments of, and new links to strategic corridors that enhance freight movement may qualify, even though no tonnage data exists for facilities. [RCW 47.06A.010]

By statute, FMSIB designates roadway, railway, and waterway strategic freight corridors every two years. Roadway data compiled by WSDOT provides the basis for adoption of the strategic roadway corridor component identifying those roads that carry an average of four million or more gross tons by truck annually. The Department estimates tonnage values from actual or estimated truck traffic count data that is converted into average weights by truck type. These are classified either as T-1 (more than 10 million tons per year) or T-2 (4 million to 10 million tons per year). Appendix 1, Exhibits 1 and 2 provide maps of the 2007 Washington State Freight Goods and Transportation System (FGTS).

Strategic rail and waterway corridors were established at the inception of FMSIB, and while requests for additional new corridor inclusions have been made, the rail and waterway corridors have not changed due to tonnage requirements.

WSDOT is developing a state Freight Corridor Classification System and companion Freight Data Program that will help state leaders and transportation professionals to evaluate the economic importance of major

freight corridors to Washington State. This analysis will support the Legislature's definition of strategic freight corridors as transportation corridors of great economic importance within an integrated freight system, and is a high-freight priority in the *2009-2028 Highway System Plan*.

3.0 Prioritizing Freight Highway Projects

Both FMSIB and WSDOT use formal project evaluation and prioritization processes. Although these formal processes are not directly linked, current evaluation criteria are consistent and the organizations collaborate with each other, and other industry and local government stakeholders, to create complete funding packages for individual projects. In addition, WSDOT and FMSIB staff actively participate in each other's evaluation and selection processes, which helps to improve consistency in the use of data and evaluation.

3.1 FMSIB Selection and Prioritization Criteria

The Legislature provided specific project selection and prioritization guidance to the FMSIB in its enabling legislation (RCW 47.06). This methodology has proven successful and has been modified only slightly, primarily to respond to emerging policy trends such as providing a greater emphasis on environmental impacts.

FMSIB projects must be sponsored by a public agency and bi-annual calls for projects are issued to all cities, counties, WSDOT regions, and ports in the state. All project proposals received, regardless of mode (rail, road, and waterway), are subject to a stringent evaluation process. Each proposed project is reviewed by a selection and technical scoring team, and is evaluated and ranked based on the following weighted criteria:

- Benefit of freight mobility for the project area
- Freight mobility benefits for the region, state and nation
- General mobility benefits
- Safety improvements
- Freight and economic value to the region and the state
- Environment benefits including diesel emission
- Partnership funding
- Consistency with regional and state plans
- Cost benefit analysis
- Special issues

The selection team recommends, and the Board adopts, the prioritized list of projects, and establishes the appropriate state freight share of the overall project cost. FMSIB funding may not exceed this identified state

freight share. The remainder of the project must be funded by the local sponsor and other public and private financial partners in compliance with FMSIB's charge to leverage the greatest amount of non-program funds possible.

3.1.1 FMSIB Methodology of Project Selection

To maintain a six-year list of active projects the Board issues a call for projects every other year, or more frequently if warranted. Experience has determined that it generally takes six years to get a project through permitting and engineering to go to construction and it is difficult to hold financial partnerships together if projects do not proceed within six years.

- A broad-based project selection technical scoring team is assembled to add state, local, and private sector perspective and knowledge to the Board scoring team's analysis.
- Project sponsors submit responses to FMSIB application (Appendix 2, Exhibit 3).
- An engineering review is conducted and data submitted is verified.
- Individual scores are combined and reviewed by both teams. Projects that score poorly are eliminated from further consideration.
- Evaluation meetings include verification reports from carriers and the development of remaining questions to be answered to determine freight mobility improvements and state benefits.
- Projects that are advanced to the next review are contacted and asked to respond to questions at a face-to-face meeting.
- The selection committee recommends which projects should advance based upon a project's numerical score, fact verification, and determination of benefits.
- Selection committee determines recommended level of state participation based on freight share of project benefits.
- Full Board reviews each recommended project, level of participation, and makes final decision to adopt and funding level.
- Prioritized recommendations are submitted to the Legislature for funding consideration.

A description of the FMSIB method of analysis is included in Appendix 2, Exhibit 4.

Project delivery begins with the selection process but involves years of FMSIB project management to broker agreements, develop partnership funding, and assistance with permitting and securing of right-of-way. A description of the FMSIB project management process can be found in Appendix 2, Exhibit 5.

Appendix 2, Exhibit 6 includes a list of completed, current, and approved but unfunded or partially funded FMSIB projects. Additionally, maps of Washington's strategic freight corridors with FMSIB projects identified are included in Appendix 2, Exhibit 7.

A FMSIB project selection application is included in Appendix 2, Exhibit 3.

3.1.2 FMSIB criteria highlights many of the same priorities set by the Legislature in the 2008 Supplemental Budget ESSB 2878 Section 309 (7)(a).

FMSIB's criteria priorities are established in statute as previously discussed. While not identical to the priorities in Section 309 (7) (a), they reflect the same goals. All priorities, with the exception of the "preservation of transportation corridors that would otherwise be lost," are evaluated in the FMSIB process. Because FMSIB projects must be on a strategic corridor, there is little concern that those corridors will be lost due to the traffic volumes used to identify the corridor.

The full comparison of FMSIB and legislative priorities can be found in Appendix 2, Exhibit 8.

3.2 WSDOT's Freight Highway Project Selection and Prioritization Criteria

WSDOT freight highway project proposals fit into the Department's overall project prioritization and construction program set forth in RCW 47.05, which includes the following simplified steps:

1. Identify a problem or deficiency.
2. Explore possible solutions.
3. Develop a scope for the project, which takes into consideration possible environmental impacts, roadway design issues, and stakeholder concerns.
4. Based on project scope, develop a cost estimate or estimated range.
5. Determine the benefit the project will provide.
6. Compare the costs and benefits of the project with other projects of its type to determine its order of rank and priority.

3.2.1 The 2003 and 2005 State Transportation Packages provided funding for over 300 highway and rail projects with freight benefits.

The following methodology was used to evaluate the level of freight benefits incorporated in highway improvement, preservation, and safety

construction projects funded in the 2003 and 2005 Transportation Packages.

High-Freight Benefits

- Preserves the condition and/or improves safety of the state's highest-volume freight corridors, those carrying 25 million or more gross annual tons of freight per year. These "super" T-1 freight corridors include heavily-traveled segments of I-5, I-90, I-405, I-205, and Highways 18, 167, 512, 522, and 705.
- Improves highway truck performance deficits identified by the Washington Trucking Associations.
- Addresses shippers' and carriers' freight corridor performance gaps that were documented in the *2005 Washington Transportation Plan Freight Report* and the *2009-2028 Highway System Plan*.
- Reduces congestion, increases capacity, provides access, or otherwise improves performance of a T-1 highway segment. The T-1 designation includes all corridors that carry more than 10 million tons of freight per year.
- Replaces low clearance, weight- or height-restricted bridges that currently restrict freight movement on a high-volume T-1 or T-2 freight corridor highway segment. The T-2 designation includes corridors that carry four to ten million tons of freight per year.
- Provides truck-passing lanes on high-volume T-1 or T-2 highway segments.

Medium-Freight Benefits

- Preserves condition and/or improves safety of the state's high-volume freight corridors, defined as all T-1 or T-2 highway segments carrying more than four million tons of freight per year.
- Reduces congestion, increases capacity, provides access, or otherwise improves performance of a T-2 highway segment. Although these projects weren't specifically identified by the state's trucking companies and freight-dependent industries in WSDOT's market research, high truck volumes indicate that improved speed and reliability will provide benefits.
- HOV project that also improves performance of general purpose lanes on a T-1 or T-2 highway segment.
- Replaces low clearance, weight- or height-restricted bridges that currently restrict freight movement on a medium-to-lower-volume freight corridor (T-3, T-4, or T-5 highway segment).
- Truck passing lanes on a medium-to-lower-volume freight corridor.
- Project on a medium-to-lower-volume freight corridor aimed primarily at improving freight mobility.

3.2.2 *2009-2028 Highway System Plan* Freight Project Prioritization Process

WSDOT is producing the *2009-2028 Highway System Plan* (HSP), which provides a comprehensive assessment of existing and projected 20-year deficiencies on our state's highway system, and lists potential solutions that address these deficiencies. The HSP is updated every two years, and guides the Department in the development and prioritization of the Capital Improvement and Preservation Program.

The HSP update will recommend a new freight system analytic method to quantify the economic output associated with freight corridors: a state Freight Corridor Classification System and companion Freight Data Program. It will also provide high-priority, low-cost freight project proposals, and a list of the *2009-2028 Highway System Plan* projects and strategies with freight benefit in the "Freight Mobility and Economic Vitality – Support the Economy" section.

WSDOT analytic method used to prioritize *2009-2028 Highway System Plan* freight project recommendations.

1. **First, WSDOT identified and documented freight shippers and carriers:**
   - Highway corridor performance requirements.
   - Current system performance.
   - Freight system performance gaps.

   To complete the gap analysis, WSDOT interviewed randomly-selected freight high-volume shippers and freight carriers at their places of business across the state, and met with port, other transportation agencies and local and regional jurisdictions. WSDOT particularly wishes to thank the Washington Trucking Associations for their help administering surveys as part of the Department's market research program.

2. **Second, WSDOT documented current freight demand, existing highway bottlenecks and chokepoints, and truck safety issues on the state's highway system.**

   WSDOT accomplished this by reviewing and organizing relevant existent statewide freight data, including highway truck trip counts, Freight and Goods Transportation Systems (FGTS) information, highway corridor studies and plans, truck collision data, and regional freight studies and truck data.

3. **Then WSDOT worked towards predicting future highway demand.**

   This was done by assessing emerging economic opportunities for targeted freight-dependent industries, probability of declining or stable markets, land use and associated freight transportation needs.

4. **When WSDOT had a working understanding of the highway system's performance gaps, current and future demand, the Department developed freight capital and/or operational project solutions.**

   The implementation strategies in the HSP are part of a three-tiered approach to balance low-cost, short-delivery-schedule projects with high-cost, corridor-wide benefit projects. Strategies are developed to address identified congestion, bottlenecks, and chokepoints on the state highway system. WSDOT has a set of criteria for determining these locations, and uses traffic data and analysis models to determine current and future conditions. Appendix 1 provides examples of the freight highway system analysis and resulting project proposals done for the *2009-2028 Highway System Plan;* please see Appendix 1, pages 1-1 through 1-3.

3.2.3 The *2009-2028 Highway System Plan* will list highway projects with freight benefits and include:

- Strategies that address high-priority performance gaps identified and documented in WSDOT's statewide surveys and interviews with freight system customers: high-volume Washington State freight shippers and freight carriers such as members of the Washington Trucking Associations.
- Proposals that address bottlenecks, chokepoints and safety issues on high-volume truck freight corridors.
- Partially-funded and programmed highway projects with high- or medium-freight benefit. The Legislature set the state's priority for future projects and direction for transportation investments when they enacted the 2003 and 2005 Transportation Funding Packages.

Please see Appendix 1, Exhibit 10 for a complete list of new, low-cost freight project proposals ready to be implemented in 2009-2011 in the *2009-2028 Highway System Plan*.

Appendix 1, Exhibit 11 lists highway projects and strategies with significant freight benefits that were included in the *2009-2028 Highway System Plan* for future evaluation and funding.

4.0 Prioritizing Freight Rail Projects

4.1 WSDOT Freight Rail Project Selection and Prioritization

In the 2007-2009 Transportation Budget (ESHB 1094, sec. 309(7)), the Legislature directed WSDOT to develop a benefit/impact methodology for selecting and prioritizing state-funded freight rail projects. The Legislature directed that the methodology be developed using the following priorities, in order of importance:

1. Economic, safety, or environmental advantages of freight movement by rail compared to alternative modes.
2. Self-sustaining economic development that creates family-wage jobs.
3. Preservation of transportation corridors that would otherwise be lost.
4. Increased access to efficient and cost-effective transport to market for Washington's agricultural and industrial products.
5. Better integration and cooperation within the regional, national, and international systems of freight distribution.
6. Mitigation of impacts of increased rail traffic on communities.

The freight rail benefit/impact evaluation methodology and tools developed by WSDOT, in collaboration with FMSIB and other key stakeholders, aligns with these legislative priorities. They use both quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques to document the project's logistics, resources, goals, and support of broad industry sectors.

- A benefit/cost analysis is applied on all projects. The major categories for benefit/cost analysis are transportation and economic benefits, economic impacts, and external impacts. A benefit/cost ratio greater than 1.0 shows that the benefits of a project outweigh the costs; a ratio of less than 1.0 indicates that the costs outweigh the benefits.
- A weighting system is used to rank how well a project meets the priorities.
- In addition, a project management analysis tool is included to help determine if the project can be delivered within known constraints.
- The user benefit level analysis determines which users benefit from the project and at what level.

The development of the state's Rail Benefit/Impact Evaluation Methodology and tools was completed in 2008 and will be used to evaluate all future rail projects. While a completed version of the methodology was not in place for use prior to September 2008, WSDOT rail project recommendations submitted to the Office of Financial Management and the Legislative Transportation Committees in 2008 used completed components as they were finalized.

A complete list of WSDOT freight rail projects, submitted on December 1, 2007 to the Legislature, is included in Appendix 1, Exhibit 12.

4.2 FMSIB Freight Rail Project Selection and Prioritization

FMSIB evaluates rail projects using the same methodology it applies to highway projects, thus allowing the Board to prioritize all proposed freight projects, irrespective of mode. There are projects that provide rail-only benefits, while others like grade separation projects are a combination of truck and rail benefits. Some grade-separation projects provide a rail velocity improvement while others provide a safety improvement. Due to strategic corridor tonnage requirements, FMSIB can only be involved in major rail corridors and not shortline rail projects.

Freight rail projects funded by FMSIB are included in the overall prioritized project list in Appendix 2, Exhibit 6.

5.0 Coordinating State Investments in Freight Mobility

The Governor and Legislature recognize the linkage between efficient freight systems and Washington's economy, and have placed a strategic emphasis on maintaining and improving the state's freight systems. They have set goals and assigned responsibilities to FMSIB and WSDOT so the state may meet the challenges inherent in keeping Washington State's economy competitive on a global stage. The agencies complementary roles support identification and construction of high-priority freight system capital projects and operational improvements.

5.1 Coordinating Highway Freight Investments

Coordination between FMSIB and WSDOT in delivering successful highway freight projects occurs informally. The two organizations employ different approaches to evaluating highway freight projects, but often jointly contribute to individual projects to deliver the project successfully. Because freight projects are costly to complete, project sponsors seek funding from a variety of state sources including WSDOT, FMSIB, the County Road Administration Board, and the Transportation Improvement Board. In fact, FMSIB requires public and private funding partnerships as a prerequisite project selection.

The SR 519 project is a good example where successful participation by WSDOT, FMSIB, and other project partners have contributed to delivering significant freight benefits. Both WSDOT and FMSIB contributed funding to this project. The project provides improved freight access to the Port of Seattle terminals and the Duwamish industrial area from I-5 and I-90. When the project lacked full funding to advance, WSDOT and FMSIB worked to keep the project advancing by dividing

the project into two phases. Each agency provided funding as well as securing funding from other partners allowing the first phase (Atlantic Avenue) to be constructed. Finding a workable solution for the second phase involved both WSDOT and FMSIB to gain support for an agreement to close the at-grade rail crossing at Royal Brougham and construct a vehicle and pedestrian overpass. WSDOT worked to develop a new design and FMSIB worked to develop support for the new alignment.

Please see www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR519/ for additional project details.

Examples of freight highway projects with WSDOT and FMSIB involvement.

- **I-5 – SR 509 Corridor Completion and Freight Improvement Project** www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I5/SR509FreightCongestionRelief/default.htm
- **US 12 – Frenchtown Vicinity to Walla Walla – Add Lanes** www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/US12/FrenchtowntoWallaWalla/ (The Myra Road interchange is part of this project, currently under construction.)
- **Snoqualmie Pass East – Hyak to Keechelus Dam** www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I90/SnoqualmiePassEast/HyaktoKeechelusDam/

5.2 Coordinating Rail Freight Investments

While FMSIB's and WSDOT's rail programs are different, there are times when related projects may allow the agencies to function in a highly collaborative mode, providing the best use of public dollars and system-wide benefits.

Example of current rail project collaboration

Both WSDOT and FMSIB have been involved with the WSDOT Vancouver-Rail Bypass and 39th Street Bridge projects in southwest Washington and the FMSIB Port of Vancouver rail project. Taken together these projects will improve rail movement in Clark County and also improve Puget Sound freight rail traffic flow.

Future rail project collaboration

Early collaboration will deliver projects that are more cost effective and support the statewide goal of developing a freight system that is effective and efficient for the citizens of Washington State. For example, if

WSDOT was developing a rail yard expansion and needed improved multimodal access to the yard, FMSIB could develop partnerships to construct improved access and grade separations to maximize the effectiveness of the project. Both WSDOT and FMSIB continue to develop plans for ongoing communication and project development where appropriate.

Rail Benefit/Impact methodology

In 2007 the Legislature directed WSDOT to collaborate with public and private stakeholders in the state's rail system to develop a methodology for assessing the benefits/impacts of proposed state investments in rail projects. FMSIB has been an active participant in the development of this methodology and provides program expertise and insights on stakeholder needs. This collaboration will ensure that the Department's evaluation methodology is compatible with the project selection criteria employed by FMSIB, and that both evaluation methods continue to adhere to the legislatively established rail freight funding goals.

WSDOT and FMSIB collaborate in a variety of ways to deliver effective freight systems, beyond the coordination of funding.

- The Secretary of WSDOT is a voting member of FMSIB.
- FMSIB has included WSDOT on its technical team to assist in the evaluation and prioritizing of proposed FMSIB projects.
- WSDOT included FMSIB in the development of the state's rail system benefit/impact analysis methodology and related tools.
- Research and data gathered by WSDOT is used by both agencies to inform their project evaluations.
- Both agencies participate in a wide array of policy and technical teams working to improve the state's freight-related infrastructure.