



Washington State
Department of Transportation

WSDOT Local Programs

Serving our local agencies in Washington for over 70 years

Summer 2019

2019–21 State Transportation Budget

The 2019 Legislature adjourned on April 28th, and Governor Inslee signed the [transportation budget](#) May 21, 2019. The budget allows WSDOT to continue the work and services that are important to Washington's residents and businesses. Although, there are still gaps in funding critical transportation needs, such as maintenance and preservation.

Governor Inslee directed WSDOT to ramp up the fish barrier removal program by using budget flexibility allowed by the Legislature. This provides \$275 million for fish during 2019-21 and provides the legislature an opportunity to determine long-term funding strategy to comply with the injunction. WSDOT will be working on converting one ferry to hybrid electric propulsion and funding was added for one new ferry vessel. Also, funding for the I-5 Bridge to reestablish an I-5/Columbia River Bridge office to support the planning efforts necessary for the future replacement of a bridge over the Columbia River.

Local Programs budget summary:

- **Capital** – Additional funding for 21 local projects in the amount of \$36.6 million, which includes three Connecting Washington projects scheduled to move forward this biennium. Also, funding was provided for the Safe Routes to School and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety program totaling ~\$38 million.
- **Operating** – Included \$350,000 for a new passenger ferry study and \$1.1 million to contract with the Washington State Association of Counties regarding county-owned fish passage barriers.

Connecting WA & Practical Solutions

The Connecting Washington transportation package includes identifying project savings that are achieved through practical solutions. WSDOT and local agencies are encouraged to explore innovative approaches by engaging our community partners on multimodal, demand management, and operational strategies, as well as incremental solutions to the problem or problems that the project needs to address.

As a reminder, practical solutions characteristics considers the needs of all users and includes:

- Clear problem statement describing the baseline issues to be addressed.
- Community engagement has occurred, proportionate to the complexity of the issues.
- Multimodal strategies have been explored and partnerships formed.
- Project scope was refined, or there were elements eliminated, to reduce costs without compromising safety or operations.
- Need for additional right of way has been reduced or eliminated.

Reporting – As a reminder, all Connecting Washington projects are required to report the amount expended annually (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019) to benefit transit, bicycle, or pedestrian elements. The report must address each modal category separately and identify all funds utilized (e.g., CWA, FHWA, local, etc.). These reports are due to WSDOT Local Programs by **October 1, 2019**.

FFY 2019 Consolidated Appropriations Act

On February 15th, the Consolidated Appropriations Act was enacted, fully funding the federal government through September 30, 2019. WSDOT will forward details on the discretionary programs once the requirements are provided.

- **Highways:** Omnibus honors the FAST Act-authorized funding levels for the federal-aid highway formula programs, providing \$49.3 billion, which is \$1.8 billion more than the FFY 2018 enacted level.
 - ✓ In March, Washington received new Highway Infrastructure funding totaling \$47 million for roads and bridges eligible under the STBG program and for the elimination of hazards and the installation of protective devices at railway-way crossings.
- **Transit:** FTA funded at the \$13.4 billion, a reduction of \$67 million below the FFY 2018 enacted level. FTA’s Capital Investment Grants are funded at \$2.6 billion. Transit Infrastructure Grants are funded at \$700 million to improve and modernize transit infrastructure.
- **Rail:** FRA funded at \$2.9 billion; a reduction of \$218 million below the FFY 2018 enacted level. Amtrak is funded at \$1.9 billion, \$670 million is provided for rail infrastructure improvements, and the Magnetic Levitation Program is funded at \$10 million.
- **Aviation:** FAA funded at \$17.5 billion, which is \$549 million below the FFY 2018 enacted level. Within this amount, Airport Improvement Program grants receive an additional \$500 million to accelerate infrastructure investments at airports.
- **BUILD:** The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Grants 2019 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is now available. \$900 million is provided for grants; a decrease of \$600 million below the FFY18 enacted level. FFY19 NOFO indicates that both planning and capital grants will be evaluated against the same criteria and that USDOT “will prioritize FFY 2019 BUILD Transportation grant program funding for projects that propose to move into the construction phase within the period of obligation.” USDOT will host five webinars. The funding will be allocated 50 percent to urban areas and 50 percent to rural areas. The deadline for all application materials is **July 15, 2019 at 8:00 pm EDT**. Additional details and links on the new round of BUILD funding are available at:
<https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants> www.transportation.gov/buildgrants/build-nofo.

FFY 2019 Allocations & Program Delivery

Final FFY 2019 allocations for the federal highway programs (e.g., STBG, CMAQ and TA) were provided in January. At the end of May, two-thirds of the way through FFY 2019, local agencies had authorized only **43 percent** of the local federal program. This is significantly lower than the historical average of 64 percent, which is very concerning. As a reminder, the local federal bridge, safety, and NHS asset management projects selected are a significant part of the local federal delivery plan. The plan is developed based upon the local agency schedule provided at the time the projects were selected.

Local agencies are encouraged to coordinate with WSDOT, MPOs, and County lead agencies to update them on the status of their respective projects to ensure that all are aware of the expectations for obligating the federal funds. We are hopeful that agencies are finalizing the documentation necessary to meet, if not exceed, the expected delivery.

The additional transparency and accountability put in place five years ago through the Local Agency Federal OA Policy continues to highlight the need for local agencies to focus on delivery as resources and funding continue to be limited. Additional information can be found on the Local Programs website. WSDOT encourages all of you to contact your respective MPO/RTPO or Jane Wall of WSAC jwall@wsac.org to understand how you contribute to meeting the goal.

2019 BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grants

The FY 2019 Appropriations Act appropriated \$900 million to be awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation for National Infrastructure Investment grants. This program is referred to as the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grants program. Funds for the FY 2019 BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grants program are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. The FY 2019 BUILD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and related information, including FAQ's, webinars, is available on the BUILD website at: <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>. **The application deadline is July 15, 2019.**

2018 BUILD Award

The US Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the recipients of \$1.5 billion in discretionary grant funding for road, transit, maritime, and rail projects through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation grants program. In Washington, Spokane County's **Geiger Boulevard Infrastructure Improvements** project, was awarded **\$14,300,000** for a range of infrastructure improvements to the existing Geiger Boulevard; including interchange ramp terminal roundabouts, illumination, widening to accommodate center turn lanes, installation of a shared use pathway, and extended shoulders. For additional information on the nationwide selections go to: <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>

FHWA Deadlines Fast Approaching

FHWA has notified WSDOT that the following FHWA funding must be obligated prior to the end of FFY 2019, or the funds lapse. Please work with your Region Local Programs Engineer to ensure the funding packages are submitted no later than **September 10, 2019**, for the following:

- Ferry Boat Program (FBP) – funds initially distributed in FFY 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 must be obligated by the end of FFY 2019.
- Repurposed Earmarks – local agencies that requested prior federal earmarks be moved to other eligible priority projects must be obligated by the end of FFY 2019.

Funding Updates

WSDOT staff are in the process of evaluating the applications received. Final prioritization of the projects will occur by the end of the year.

- County Safety Program (~\$25 million) – The goal of this program is to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes on county roads using engineering improvements/countermeasures. Projects are identified through each county's local road safety plan that identifies and prioritizes low cost, widespread, risk based projects. Projects can be at intersection(s), mid-block location(s), and/or on corridor(s) throughout a county or over wide areas within a county. Local Programs received applications from 30 counties with 148 projects submitted for a total request amount of 79 million dollars.
- Local Bridge Program (~\$75 million) – The purpose of the Federal Local Bridge program is to improve the condition of bridges through replacement, rehabilitation, and preventative maintenance. In addition, by incentivizing agencies to use asset management strategies that provide cost-effective solutions to maximize the life expectancy of the structure. Local Programs received 63 applications for a total request of 2701 million dollars.

LAG Manual Updates

Many of the April LAG manual updates include providing clarity and cleaning up web-links based on various federal changes. Several updates worth noting include:

- Chapter 12 – FHWA Funding – provided clarification to the various programs, processes, etc.
- Chapter 22 – Local Agency Agreement & Supplement forms – inserted language with respect to the local agency certifying that they are not suspended and debarred. **Effective June 1, 2019, only the updated agreement and supplement will be authorized.**
- Chapter 23 – Progress Billings – provided updates per 2 CFR 200, requirements, etc.
- Chapter 25 – Right of Way Procedures –
 - Updated Appraisal and Appraisal Review information.
 - Government Acquisitions and Use of WSDOT Property – Implementation of this change eliminates the need for local agencies to certify right of way in certain situations where property rights are needed only temporarily from either a government agency or WSDOT. The acquisition of these rights are generally through mutual consent and agreement between the agencies using a permit or an inter-local agreement. If the project involves additional acquisition of permanent rights, only the permanent rights need to be certified.
 - Possession & Use Agreement (P&U) – This policy change allows local agencies to certify a project under a “Cert 1” when there is a parcel or parcels acquired under a negotiated or stipulated Possession & Use Agreement (P&U). By using a Cert 1, there is no need to go back and re-certify the project prior to project closeout. However, any previously acquired Certificate #2s need to be updated to a Cert 1, prior to project closure to maintain federal compliance.
- Chapter 31 – Using Consultants - updated requirements for submitting DBE information and the negotiated hourly rate consultant agreement has been updated to clarify travel and per diem reimbursement.
- Chapter 53 – Project Closure – updated and clarified Final Billing section.

LAG Manual Aligning with Practical Solutions

WSDOT continues to promote Practical Solutions in project development and delivery efforts. A multimodal technical forum is looking at all of WSDOT's technical manuals used both internally and by others in developing transportation projects. This group recently completed a review of the Local Agency Guidelines manual (LAG). Recommendations resulting from this review included adopting language to make the LAG more multimodal and less roadway centric. Local Programs will be adopting several of the recommendations from this review, providing agencies additional flexibility in their project designs, which will promote a more multimodal approach.

Upcoming Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) Program Training

WSDOT will be conducting trainings for the new requirements on federal DBE Programs and the new Federal Small Business Enterprise (FSBE) Program. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) just granted WSDOT approval for a FSBE pilot program. WSDOT is committed to ensuring small businesses are afforded equal and fair opportunities to participate in contracting, consulting, and procurement. This statewide training will also focus on some of the recent changes in the federal DBE Programs. Both the local agency and their consultant staff are welcome to attend. For more information about this training, please visit the [Local Technical Assistant Program \(LTAP\)](#) webpage.

Outdoor Advertising Control on Locally Owned NHS Routes

Locally managed principal arterials added to the National Highway System (NHS) under MAP-21 are subject to the same outdoor advertising control requirements as all other segments of the NHS. Local Programs and FHWA have started a preliminary review to confirm that these routes are being managed per the federal guidelines. This initial review involves only a few local agency outdoor advertising and signage ordinances for compliance with the Federal Highway Beautification Act and WA Highway Advertising Control Act (RCW 47.42). These RCWs regulate signs visible from interstate highways and most state highways, including the NHS. This preliminary evaluation will serve to establish a baseline for a formal process review by FHWA in the future.

City County Design Standards Committee Meeting

On March 13, 2019, Local Programs convened the City County Design Standards committee to evaluate the current standards that are in the LAG manual – Chapter 42. Overall, there was an agreement to change the matrices, allowing for additional design flexibilities, as long as the AASHTO Green Book minimum design criteria are met. The matrices themselves will remain in the LAG for those agencies that choose to utilize them. Additionally, the group decided to update the design reference guidance materials to include more multimodal considerations. Implementation of these changes to Chapter 42 are anticipated no later than October 2019.

Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Update

Local Programs' Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is increasing its collaboration with other WSDOT Divisions to offer additional training opportunities to local agencies. Annually, WSDOT hosts training for Highway Runoff Manual, Cultural Resource Training, Biological Assessment Author Training, Regional Road Maintenance Program, DBE, Title VI, and Pavement Preservation. LTAP is also continuing to identify opportunities to bring national experts to our state for training, (e.g., Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP), Systematic Safety Analysis, etc.). LTAP has recently increased its capacity to 500 attendees per webinar allowing greater capacity for outreach. This is particularly beneficial for mandatory and popular training sessions that have previously filled quickly.

For More Information

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