

# WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Bothell, Washington  
Local Meeting Summary  
November 19, 2013

## **CHAIRMAN WELCOME AND COMMISSION INTRODUCTIONS**

Vice Chairman Cowan opened the meeting and asked the Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

## **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

*Commissioner Haley moved adoption of the October 15 & 16, 2013 Regular Meeting Summary and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Parker. Vice Chairman Cowan asked that an additional clarification be added to the description of the Road Usage Charge business plan work on page 2 indicating that, “The scenario described is highly unlikely but provides the most objective ability to evaluate the business case”*

*With the clarification, the minutes were adopted unanimously.*

## **TRANSPORTATION 101 – OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND POLICY IN WASHINGTON STATE**

Paul Parker, Deputy Director, WSTC, presented the Transportation 101 overview.

[Transportation 101](#)

## **REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSPORTATION**

PSRC Executive Director Bob Drewel talked about the impact of the aerospace industry in Washington State. The aerospace cluster includes over 1300 businesses responsible for over 250,000 jobs statewide. Only four counties in the state have no aerospace employment. Half of the international trade exports from the state – over \$37 billion in 2012, are aerospace exports.

Between 2004 and 2013, tax investments in aerospace totaled more than \$1 billion – prior to the 2013 special legislative session extending some of the tax incentives. Boeing Commercial is responsible for 11% of statewide gross business income. Combined wages and benefits from aircraft production in 2012 totaled \$9.5 billion. Between 2004 and 2012, Boeing paid over \$3 billion in tax revenue; \$4 billion from the entire aerospace industry.

The Boeing Company is the largest private employer in the state. The current workforce is 84,400. Commissioners asked what transportation investments are most critical for aerospace. Absent access to the ports and better reliability on the road system, Washington will not be as competitive. But Drewel emphasized that for the current competition for the 737, Washington is ahead of the game.

The key transportation improvements that are needed:

- west side of SR 520
- improvements to SR 526 in Everett

- Puget Sound gateway project: SR 509 and SR 167 connections to I-5
- long-term improvements to I-405 help to move parts between Frederickson, Renton and Everett sites
- Port of Everett
- Public transportation
- US 395 North Spokane Corridor
- I-90 improvements to Snoqualmie Pass

[Aerospace Industry in Washington State](#)

*Action/Follow-Up:None*

**CITY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS, CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES**

**City of Bothell**

Erin Leonhardt, Public Works Director, City of Bothell, briefed the Commission on Bothell’s demographics. The 2013 population is 33,000, divided between King and Snohomish Counties. Current employment is 25,000, with room to grow to 68,000 employees. The University of Washington-Bothell and Cascadia Community College campus is growing rapidly; more than \$80 million in new construction is underway to accommodate student body growth from 6,152 today to over 10,000 students by 2015.

SR 522 carries 45,000 vehicles a day and is projected to carry over 62,000 in 2026. Five transit routes on SR 522 also carry 3,370 passengers per day. The corridor also includes the Burke-Gilman Regional Trail parallel and adjacent to portions of the roadway.

Several construction projects have been completed or are underway in the SR 522 corridor between I-405 and Lake Forest Park. The projects include the relocation of SR 522 from the center of downtown Bothell to its edge, improving multi-modal access, including bus access lanes, transit center/park and rides, and sidewalks.

Bothell also is constructing a Multiway Boulevard -- a portion of former SR 527, which the City reacquired from the state several years ago – and rebuilding Main Street, formerly SR 522, as part of its downtown redevelopment. A large part of the funding comes from a \$30 million LIFT (Local Infrastructure Financing Tool) Bond.

Challenges include the following:

- regulatory environment and permitting processes
- transportation projects often become clean-up projects
- timing of redevelopment projects
- loss of public works trust fund as a resource

[City of Bothell](#)

*Action/Follow-Up:None.*

**City of Kenmore**

Rob Karlinsey, City Manager of Kenmore, briefed the Commission on Kenmore demographics. The city is home to Bastyr University and Kenmore Air. Kenmore Air is an important component of

emergency management statewide; it is a beloved part of the community. A big problem Kenmore Air has is that their operations are shut down when the President flies into town; they lose \$50,000 a day.

Kenmore believes there are actually four cross-lake routes; one is SR 522 through Kenmore. Over \$70 million in improvements to SR 522 have been completed: added capacity for cars, pedestrians and transit. The westernmost segment remains unfunded, about \$10.5 million is needed, and most of that is included the House and Senate revenue package proposals.

The Juanita Drive bridges over the Sammamish River are suffering from increased traffic due to tolling diversion. There are actually two bridges; the southbound bridge is rated 2.

### City of Kenmore

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

### City of Lake Forest Park

Mary Jane Goss, Mayor of Lake Forest Park, talked to the Commission about the impacts of tolling on SR 522 and her community. She urged that the I-90 tolling EIS address toll avoidance and impacts on all four cross-lake routes, which she characterized to include SR 522 and I-405, as well as the two floating bridges. She also emphasized that the improvements to SR 522 through Bothell and Kenmore must be continued through Lake Forest Park.

She commented on the challenges of working with other governmental partners, noting that while Lake Forest Park is working on a \$4+ million project to reduce flooding on Lyon Creek, the City's portion of the project will be completed before WSDOT can proceed with its portion, resulting in some inefficiency.

Lake Forest Park is the last suburban city before the Seattle City limits. Forty percent of its residents work in Seattle and the buses are full by the time they reach Lake Forest Park.

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

### City of Woodinville

Richard Leahy, City Manager of Woodinville, identified four main transportation issues and challenges facing his city:

- Failure of the state system causes local problems
- Lack of priority, contributions, incentives, or rewards for local agencies to improve the state system
- State jurisdiction over local streets
- The Eastside Rail Corridor

Traffic, like water, takes the path of least resistance. People cutting through Woodinville to avoid I-405 congestion brings traffic directly through the main access to downtown Woodinville. There are 37,000 average daily trips on a ¼ mile roadway section in downtown Woodinville.

Over the past 10 years Woodinville has expended \$27 million improving SR 202 (66% of its roadway investments). The state has a different purpose for the 3 miles of roadway than the city does. The City offered to save the state \$5 to \$10 million to replace a SR 202 bridge for a \$1 million investment, but the state had no flexibility to invest in the project.

SR 202 is a local street that is the entrance to downtown Woodinville and the entrance to the Woodinville Tourist District. Leahy asked that the state reduce its jurisdiction over operational issues of state highways that are also local streets.

The 42-mile long Eastside Rail Corridor is a former BNSF rail line between Renton and Snohomish. Purchased by the Port of Seattle, there is currently no overall corridor plan. Woodinville supports dual use for passenger rail and trails. Woodinville is considering purchase of a portion of the corridor – to protect itself and to ensure regional benefit.

The Commission asked whether the cities have established Transportation Benefit Districts (TBDs) and whether they are banking property tax levy.

- Woodinville has not established a TBD or enacted property tax increases.
- Lake Forest Park does have a TBD which it uses for road improvements. A recent study estimates an investment need of \$1 million a year to maintain streets. A levy lid lift a few years ago failed; much of the population is low and middle income.
- City of Kenmore has invested
  - traffic impact fees at \$9,000/trip
  - has not increased levy and has banked capacity
  - Has a TBD at \$20 fee
- City of Bothell is funding redevelopment with LIFT bond and impact fees. The City is planning to impose the 1% levy increase this year.

The Commission asked how to tie the state needs and the local needs better. Ms. Leonhardt responded that with SR 522, the project meets a lot of the state goals. Bothell is trying to improve the experience for all users.

Keoko Wright, City Council member from Mountlake Terrace, told the Commission that her city straddles I-5 and will be the first Snohomish County city with light rail. Light rail will reduce congestion and improve mobility on I-5. Has been working with ST on location, but the transit center is already full, 10 years before arrival of light rail. The city is working to connect bicycle commuters from the interurban trail to the transit centers.

Montlake Terrace has created a TBD and adopted the 1% property tax increase. It also has imposed impact fees and uses REET.

### [City of Woodinville](#)

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

## **COUNTY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS, CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES**

### **King County**

Harold Taniguchi, Director, King County DOT, talked about the diversity of the King County Department of Transportation (KCDOT). King County Ferry District ridership has increased over 1/3 since King County took over operations in July 2008. Current total ridership is 427,000 and farebox recovery is 28%. KCDOT Marine Division is working with WSF to ensure water taxi service is retained at Colman Dock. It is a relief valve for surface transportation.

King County International Airport (also known as Boeing Field) is self-sustaining. It provides 4,900 direct jobs and ranks 29<sup>th</sup> nationally in air cargo, ahead of Boston Logan and San Diego International.

The County road system – over 1500 miles of roads and 180 bridges -- is valued at \$39 billion. King County needs to invest \$5 billion in roads and bridges over the next 6 years. 2015 property tax revenue is anticipated at \$85 million; this is a \$165-175 million shortfall of annual need. Last year King County resurfaced only 7 miles of road. With existing revenue, King County will only be able to clear about 10% of snow routes this year.

The County Council has approved a strategic plan prioritizing road services:

1. regulatory compliance
2. core safety
3. preservation and maintenance
4. mobility
5. capacity improvements

King County has created a TBD but has not enacted the funding. It could generate \$15-20 million a year.

The South Park Bridge is nearing completion and is a success.

### [King County Brightwater Mitigation Successes](#)

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

### **Snohomish County**

Steven Thomsen, Snohomish County Public Works Director, emphasized the need to keep looking ahead to develop the shovel-ready projects for tomorrow. PSRC is taking 25% of federal funds and directing to preservation. Road builders need the same thing as other developers: predictability in permitting.

Mr. Thomsen talked about the success of Brightwater mitigation. The King County Metro wastewater treatment project cost \$2.8 billion. About 30% of Snohomish County wastewater is treated there.

Brightwater paid for \$70 million in mitigation in Snohomish County, including over \$25 million in transportation improvements, including 3-1/2 miles of bike lanes and improvement of the 228<sup>th</sup> Street SE arterial as a complete street. The North Creek Trail will be completed, linking Bothell with Mill Creek and other areas to the north.

Recently Snohomish County has not banked its road levy. It has created a TBD, but has not funded it yet.

Troy McLelland, CEO of the Economic Alliance of Snohomish County, a public-private collaboration talked about the need for greater infrastructure investment in Snohomish County. It is the manufacturing backbone of the state and the second largest tech center in the state. There is a biomedical device cluster in Bothell and a clean tech cluster in Lynnwood. There are \$14 billion of transportation projects identified; the short list – for the 2013 transportation package – totals \$1 billion.

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

## **REGIONAL TRAILS**

Steve Dickson, Special Projects Director, Snohomish County Public Works, talked about the network of regional trails. The North Creek trail connects with the Burke-Gilman and Sammamish trails in Bothell and the Interurban Trail that parallels I-5. Most projects of this nature seek federal funds and require a federal Environmental Assessment.

The Eastside Rail Corridor remains an active freight corridor between Woodinville and Snohomish. The right of way is wide enough to add a trail next to the rail line. The Centennial Trail proceeds north from Snohomish almost to the Skagit County line.

A constructability review indicates \$25 million is needed to build the 12-mile Snohomish County portion of the trail. Brightwater is adjacent to the trail.

Wendy Becker, the Director of the Snohomish County Economic Development Office, told the Commission that the County's outdoor recreation system is touted as an asset and as a reason to attract outdoor manufacturers, such as K2 and Outdoor Research. There are linkages and potential connections to the aerospace and biomedical clusters. It also is a key part of the County Tourism Plan.

Eric Rayl, Vice President of Sportsworks Northwest, employs 90 people in Woodinville making bus bicycle racks. They manufacture 95% of the bus bike racks in North America, including inside buses and railcars, and are now making bike racks for fixed installations.

As a promoter of alternate commuting, Sportsworks provides showers and bike storage facilities. Six employees commute by bike more than 40 days a year.

What are the barriers to bike commuting?

1. Perceived and actual safety. Trails and fully separated bikeways are the best answer.
2. Distance from workplace or time involved
3. Perception of discomfort (weather)
4. Adverse to physical exertion
5. Lack of showers, lockers, bike storage, shift flexibility.

Commissioners asked how local officials can be influenced to provide adequate bicycle facilities. Mr. Rayl suggested that skeptics look at Rainier Avenue S. in Seattle. There, the roadway was converted from four lanes to two lanes, a center turn lane and bike lanes. Traffic moves as well or better after the conversion.

[Sportsworks](#)

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bernie Fine spoke against adding a fee for the use of the HOV Lanes by a two-person carpool. He frequently travels with a friend, but never has three people in his car.

Paul W. Locke told the Commission that projects should be prioritized within available budgets.

Bruce Fairchild has lived next to I-405 for 30 years and has about 1000' of frontage. He would like WSDOT to install a noise wall and post signs prohibiting compression braking.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NEEDS, CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES**

Todd Morrow, Community Transit (CT), talked about public transportation needs, challenges and successes. CT has reduced service 37% but retained 95% of weekday riders. CT provides the same level of service as it did in 2000, but carries more riders.

CT built the first bus rapid transit (BRT) line in the state. It is a 17-mile corridor partnership with Everett Transit. Buses run every 12 minutes at peak, and every 20 minutes off-peak. CT also has 23 double-decker buses in operation serving its Seattle routes. Each carries 77 passengers. Seventeen more are on order. CT operates 100 vanpools to Boeing.

Kevin Desmond, King County Metro, briefed the Commission on the impacts of the 2014 Metro funding gap. Metro (and CT) has used its full sales tax authority and has increased fares several times since 2008.

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) T-2040 plan anticipates 90% more transit service to meet future need. Metro should be adding 15% more service to meet demand. Instead, it is proposing systemwide service cuts, along with service reductions due to the loss of AWV mitigation, that is the equivalent of 645,000 annual service hours, or a 17% system cut. Combined metro/ST ridership is 132.5 million annual rides.

Ridership on major corridors has increased substantially:

- Rapid Ride up 33%
- AWV up 42%
- SR 520 service up 40%

Both the House and Senate proposals provide a local option for King County Metro and continue AWV mitigation funding from June 2014 until the tunnel opens. Both Metro and CT have used all of their local option sales tax.

[Community Transit](#)  
[King County Metro](#)

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

## **WSDOT REGIONAL CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES**

Lorena Eng, WSDOT Northwest Region Administrator briefed the Commission on key local highways.

### **SR 522 Corridor**

- extends from I-5 to Monroe
- arterial highway from Seattle to Bothell. Maximizing operations is key, including signalization
- from Bothell eastward to SR 2, it is a controlled access highway (almost)

### **I-405 Master Plan (2002)**

- extends beyond I-405 to include local roads, transit improvements and BRT
- completed 13 parts of the Master Plan since 2002
- Bellevue to Lynnwood ETL is under construction and will open mid-to-late 2015
  - one lane ETL from Lynnwood to Bothell
  - two lanes ETL from Bothell to Bellevue

### WSDOT Regional Challenges and Successes

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

### **CREATING A DOWNTOWN: Background for Commission Tour**

Bob Stowe, Bothell City Manager for nine years, talked about Bothell's downtown redevelopment.

Bothell's revitalization mission is shaped by the Growth Management Act. There are three key strategies:

- Focus
- Outrageous ambition (eye for opportunity and brave actions)
  - city assembled 25 acres
  - investing \$94 million
- Public-Private Partnerships
  - North Shore School District
  - State of Washington
  - University of Washington Bothell/Cascadia Community College
  - private developers

Already \$200 million in private investment has begun or is in the pipeline, including McMenamin's redevelopment of the historic Anderson School as a hotel, restaurant, theater and brewpub.

### Creating a Downtown

*Action/Follow-Up: None.*

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

*ABSENT*

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DAN O'NEAL, Chairman

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TOM COWAN, Vice-Chairman

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ANNE HALEY, Member

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PHILIP PARKER, Member

*ABSENT*

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JERRY LITT, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHARLES ROYER, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
JOE TORTORELLI, Member

ATTEST:

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REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

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DATE OF APPROVAL