



TRANSPORTATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Keeping People and Goods on the Go Safely and Efficiently

Since taking office in 2005, Governor Chris Gregoire has made investments in transportation, a core link of her strategy for retaining and boosting Washington's economic competitiveness. Also that year, the Legislature made the Department of Transportation directly reportable to the Governor. Exerting uncommon bipartisan leadership, the Governor negotiated a landmark, 16-year transportation revenue package with the Legislature in 2005, which the voters then overwhelmingly approved. The Transportation Partnership Act invested \$8.5 billion raised through a 9.5 cent gas tax increase, reasonable weight fees and small fee increases to reflect the cost of service provided. Proceeds have been invested in 274 projects across the state to fix at-risk infrastructure, make safety improvements, provide congestion relief and improve mobility.



Following its passage, Governor Gregoire ensured the accountable and timely delivery of those transportation projects. In total, the 2003 Nickel and the 2005 Transportation Partnership Act revenue packages supported \$16.3 billion in investments, with 88 percent of projects completed early or on time, and 91 percent projects completed on or under budget. By the end of 2012, 370 of the total 421 projects are completed or under way.

The economic benefit of these packages is significant. Both support an average of 10,000 jobs annually; 74 percent of the funding is contracted to the private sector. In particular, the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement, the State Route 520 replacement, North Spokane corridor, Interstate 405 corridor, I-90 Snoqualmie Pass and the Tacoma high occupancy vehicle (HOV) project created, on average, about 10,650 jobs per year between 2006 and 2013. The current highway capital budget is estimated to support 31,733 direct, indirect and induced jobs in the 2011–13 biennium alone.

SETTING PRIORITIES

Among the Governor's top-tier priorities for Washington's transportation system, and results she has delivered, are the following:

Safety: Boost the safety of transportation users and the transportation system

Virtually every project initiated by the Washington State Department of Transportation is intended to boost Washington's Target Zero safety plan, which combines education, enforcement and engineering to end

traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030. For instance, construction of the SR 500/N.E. 112th Avenue interchange has resulted in a 30 percent reduction in collisions. Operational improvements such as signage and lighting at US 395 near Kennewick have led to an 11 percent reduction in all injury collisions and a 23 percent reduction in serious injury and fatality collisions. In addition, low-cost improvements, such as cable median barriers and centerline rumble strips funded under the Governor's leadership, have reduced serious injury and fatality collisions up to 48 percent. In sum, traffic fatalities have dropped 6.9 percent since 2009. The rate of traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled has dropped 20 percent from 2007.

Preservation: Maintain, preserve and prolong the life and usefulness of transportation investments

The Governor has been committed to getting the greatest value possible from each dollar spent. Over the course of her two terms, she has worked with legislative partners to improve the preservation of current transportation assets such as roads, bridges, rail lines and ferries. The results are impressive. For instance, 92.7 percent of state highway pavement was rated in fair or better condition in 2011, the latest year of an upward five-year trend.

Mobility: Reduce congestion by improving the movement of people and goods

Pressure on Washington's transportation system stems from multiple sources, including population increases, wider employment and more vehicles. The challenge has been to meet these and projected needs to keep the entire system — from roads to rail to ferry vessels — functioning with a minimum of delay and maximum safety.

Here, too, the results are impressive. Congestion on urban highways and arterials in Seattle has fallen six hours from 2006 to 2010. Congestion on urban highways and arterials in Spokane has fallen two hours in the same period.

REPLACING A DETERIORATING SYSTEM

The transportation system requires continual maintenance to remain safe and functional. Projects represent millions — and in some cases, billions — of taxpayer dollars. WSDOT, the state transportation agency, strives to be a prudent and efficient guardian of those investments. Yet over time, infrastructure deteriorates, roadways become unsafe, better technologies are introduced and capacity needs swell.



Among the hundreds of projects undertaken by WSDOT, the following is a sample of mega-projects that are proceeding under the leadership of the Governor and in collaboration with a host of local, regional and federal partners:

Alaskan Way Viaduct

After a decade of analysis and public debate, the Governor negotiated an agreement and advocated for legislation to replace the aging Alaskan Way Viaduct with a deep bore tunnel beneath downtown Seattle. Using a tunnel boring machine allows the viaduct to stay open to traffic while the new SR 99 corridor is built and sustains the economic vitality of the region and the Port of Seattle during construction. The viaduct will be demolished at the end of the project, opening up more than nine acres of new public space on Seattle's waterfront. At 57.5 feet in diameter — roughly as tall as a five-story building — the tunnel boring machine is the world's largest. This project is a significant portion of the Governor's strategy to improve freight mobility.

When it opens in late 2015, the tunnel will connect the new section of highway near Seattle's port and stadiums to Aurora Avenue north of downtown. This will maintain a safe and vital route for motorists, pedestrians and goods.

State Route 520

This 12.8 mile corridor connects Seattle with communities on the east side of Lake Washington, including Bellevue and Redmond. It also serves as a gateway that connects Eastern and Western Washington. One of the state's two floating bridges — the 42 year-old Evergreen Point Bridge — provides the middle segment of this route that accommodates 67,300 vehicles daily. To keep this vital link functioning and safe, the Governor initiated a public mediation effort for the replacement of the SR 520 bridge and authorized tolling to complete the funding plan for the replacement of the bridge's most vulnerable portions as well as connections on both its east and west sides. As a result, construction is under way on a new, safer bridge designed to withstand earthquakes and windstorms.



The project will also replace the entire corridor from I-5 in Seattle to SR 202 in Redmond with two general-purpose lanes and one carpool and transit lane in each direction. In addition, the Governor signed legislation related to SR 520 construction that will prevent the loss of 900 jobs in Grays Harbor, Pierce County and Seattle.

Interstate 90 Snoqualmie Pass

On an average day, 27,000 vehicles travel over Snoqualmie Pass. That number doubles on weekends and holidays. Nearly \$80 billion in cargo traverses this corridor every year. To keep the only direct route for products flowing from Eastern Washington farms to Puget Sound ports open

despite heavy traffic and frequent avalanches, nearly five miles were widened from Hyak to Keechelus Dam in the project's first phase. The second phase expanded four lanes to six from Hyak to Easton. Deteriorated concrete pavement was replaced with pavement specially developed for heavier freight trucks.

North Spokane Corridor

The North Spokane Corridor project includes multiple smaller projects along the corridor from I-90 to US 395 at Wandermere to improve traffic through metropolitan Spokane. The first portion of the new highway has been opened, providing a more reliable trip for both commuters and businesses. When completed, the North Spokane Corridor will be a 60-mile per hour, 10.5 mile-

long north/south limited access facility that will cut travel time, fuel usage and congestion while improving safety by reducing collisions on local arterials. It supports alternative transportation choices by providing park-and-ride lots and vanpooling operations, reserves enough right-of-way for high-capacity transit

and provides a pedestrian/bicycle trail along its full length.

Interstate 5/State Route 16 Tacoma-area high occupancy vehicle lanes

Construction of HOV lanes will improve the flow of traffic on I-5 and SR 16. When completed in 2014, HOV lanes will extend in both directions from Gig Harbor to the I-5 interchange and on I-5 from the I-5/SR 16 interchange north. The new reconfiguration will allow safer movement of traffic through the downtown Tacoma area and help reduce collisions, as will better lighting and new signage.

Interstate 405

Since 2002, WSDOT has delivered 12 projects on the I-405/SR 167 corridor valued at \$1.7 billion. These projects were largely funded by the 2003 and 2005 gas tax initiatives; only two funded improvement projects are currently under construction. The overall program has tackled congestion by addressing the “worst first” as well as improving safety and creating regional jobs.

Columbia River Crossing

The crossing is a long-term project to reduce congestion, enhance mobility and improve safety on five miles of I-5 between SR 500 in Vancouver, Wash., and Columbia Boulevard in Portland, Ore. The northbound lanes were built in 1917 for horse and buggy travel. Today, 135,000 daily trips across the Columbia River are delayed by up to six hours of congestion. Crash rates are more than two times higher than statewide averages for comparable highways in both states. One million more people are expected in the greater Portland-Vancouver area by 2030, and without improvements, congestion will balloon. The project will replace the I-5 bridge, extend light rail to Vancouver, improve closely spaced interchanges and enhance the pedestrian and bicycle path between the two cities. The project will be funded by federal and state sources, as well as future tolls. Under the Governor’s leadership, local officials endorsed a locally preferred alternative for the project, and the Legislature authorized tolling to provide one-third of the funding for the project.

Ferries

The Governor was instrumental in securing funding for five new ferries to replace both the old Steel Electric vessels as well as other ferries that are between 40 and 65 years old. Funding was invested as follows:

- » \$210.2 million for three 64-car Kwa-di tabil class vessels. The boats went into service November 2010, July 2011 and February 2012. The vessels were completed three months early and \$6.7 million under budget.

- » \$279.4 million for two 144-car Olympic class vessels. The first vessel will be in service in spring 2014 and the second in early 2015. Appropriations were initially made in 2007 and are projected to extend through 2015.



ENHANCING ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Our transportation system provides the structure that keeps the state’s economic lifeblood flowing. If people cannot get to work and goods cannot move to market, families and business pay the price. In addition to the Transportation Partnership Act that provided \$8.5 billion in new funding to construct 274 major transportation improvements, the Governor initiated other actions to keep our transportation system safe and efficient:

- » Developed and implemented the Container Ports Initiative to ensure the success of the state’s major trade apparatus and, in doing so, strengthen the economy. As Washington is the most trade-dependent state in the nation, keeping our competitive edge is crucial.
- » Invested \$555 million Washington received from the Federal Highway Administration under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for state and local highway projects. These projects jump-started our economy, created or saved thousands of jobs and addressed long-standing transportation needs. The Governor approved 249 transportation construction jobs within the first 10 weeks after the law took effect.

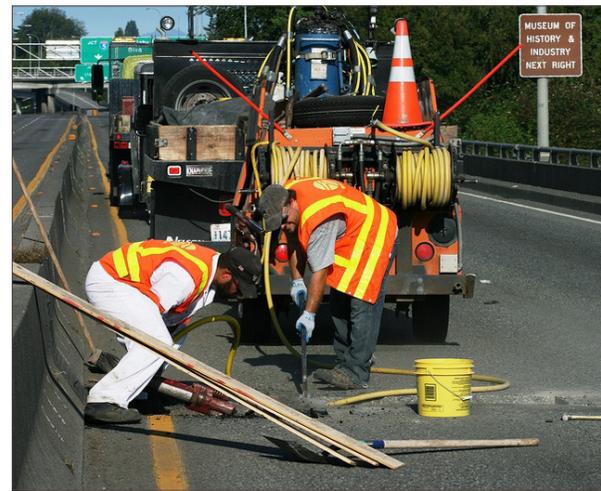
- » Invested \$766 million from other stimulus sources for intercity passenger rail service. This provides two more round trips between Seattle and Portland for a total of six daily.
- » Designed the Washington Jobs Now plan that targeted funds to boost the economy and lay a solid foundation for the future. The Governor proposed using \$390 million for shovel-ready transportation projects.
- » Provided the option for King County to add a congestion reduction charge of up to \$20 per vehicle to avoid a 17 percent cut in King County Metro services.

DEVELOPING A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

A safe and efficient transportation system requires maintenance and upgrades in addition to new construction and projects to remain functional. It also requires vision to anticipate needs and leadership to keep the system managed effectively and with accountability. To these ends, the Governor has taken the following actions:

- » Made the Department of Transportation a Cabinet agency under the direct control of the Governor. This ensures greater accountability and coordination with the executive branch.
- » Created worker apprenticeships for transportation projects. Fifteen percent of labor hours on projects costing more than \$2 million are set aside for apprentices to build a skilled workforce for the future. In addition, returning veterans get help through the “Helmets to Hardhats” program for construction jobs.
- » Established studies examining prospects for tolling and other alternative financing for major regional projects. New business models offer promise for large transportation needs, and the Governor has pursued these alternatives to find better, less expensive solutions.

- » Set the stage for a Puget Sound regional solution to large transportation needs by appointing a short-term reform commission to craft a transportation finance improvement plan. With so many communities in this area, it is critical that all contribute to the discussion and decision over a long-term program.



- » Led the charge toward cleaner transportation with the West Coast Electric Highway, a tri-state network of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations along I-5. Under the Governor’s leadership, a dozen fast-charging stations were opened along Washington’s roadways, giving EV drivers the freedom to drive longer distances with range confidence and zero tailpipe emissions. When complete, the West Coast Electric Highway will cover the 1,300 miles of I-5 from British Columbia, Canada, to Baja California, Mexico, or “BC to BC.”
- » Improved collective bargaining between the state and Washington State Ferry workers ensuring more predictability and giving the Governor a seat at the table during negotiations. This is important as the Governor must approve the proposed settlements before submitting them to the Legislature for an all-or-nothing vote.

- » Took more cars off the road by creating the nation's largest vanpool program, park-and-ride lots, HOV lanes, buses, commuter rail and bicycles through support for the Regional Mobility Grant Program.
- » Supported the development of the [Transportation Attainment Report](#), which describes progress made on six categories of performance measures, including safety, preservation and mobility.
- » Formed the Connecting Washington Task Force to develop a sustainable, 10-year investment and revenue strategy for the state's transportation system. After the 2013–15 biennium, more than 90 percent of the proceeds from the Nickel and TPA revenue packages will cover just debt service on the 421 projects funded. Because no maintenance or preservation funds were provided for new lane miles created through these projects, deterioration will set in. It is crucial too, to invest in projects along important economic corridors.