



CONNECTING WASHINGTON TASK FORCE

Why did Governor Gregoire form the Connecting Washington Task Force?

Effective transportation is critical to maintaining our economy, environment and quality of life. However, funding for Washington's transportation system is insufficient over the long term. The system needs a 10-year sustainable investment strategy that ties system needs and priorities to new revenue.

The last two transportation revenue packages funded 421 projects across the state. To date, the Department of Transportation has completed 300 of these projects, over 90 percent on-time and within budget. These investments have proven results. Between 2008 and 2009, fatal accidents on Washington's roadways decreased by 6 percent. Between 2007 and 2009 travel delays were reduced by 21 percent. However, after the 2013–15 biennium, more than 90 percent of the proceeds from the last two transportation revenue packages will cover just debt service on the projects funded.

No maintenance or preservation funds were provided in the revenue packages for the new lane miles created from these projects. Without new revenue, state and local roads will deteriorate. In addition, major projects like the SR 520 bridge, the Columbia River Crossing and the US 395 North Spokane corridor will remain unfinished and new, high-priority projects will not be launched.

Funds transferred to the state ferry system in recent years to cover capital shortfalls will no longer be available. Without money to preserve vessels and terminals, the ability to continue ferry service will be at risk. This transportation revenue shortfall also puts support for transit, special-needs transportation and passenger rail in jeopardy.

At the same time, the needs of a growing population and a recovering economy will continue to put strains on our roads, rails and bridges. In this recession, transit agencies' budgets also have been battered just as people need public transportation the most. And, as a leader in exports and trade, Washington must maintain the transportation infrastructure of its ports.

To develop a solution to this critical problem, Governor Gregoire formed the Connecting Washington Task Force.

Task Force Charge

The Connecting Washington Task Force is charged with developing a financially sustainable 10-year funding strategy for the state's transportation system and presenting it to the 2012 Legislature. The task force will:

1. Develop principles for investments, categories of investment, and priorities for those categories. The task force will provide examples of key investments for each category that are consistent with the developed principles, but will not develop a specific project list.
2. Develop principles for revenues to fund investments and identify fund sources consistent with those principles.

3. Present the facts about the transportation funding crisis — and the risks of inaction — to stakeholders, public officials and the citizens of Washington. The task force members' professional networks, the media, public meetings and the continued work of this task force are essential channels for delivering this information.

Task Force Members

Gov. Chris Gregoire, Chair
Bob Adams, Vice President, Guy F. Atkinson Construction
Rep. Mike Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member, House Transportation Committee
Leo Bowman, Benton County Commissioner
Terry Brewer, Executive Director, Grant County Economic Development Council
Rodney Brown, Board Chair, Washington Environmental Council
Bill Bryant, Port of Seattle Commissioner
Rep. Judy Clibborn, Chair, House Transportation Committee
Richard Ford, Chair, Transportation Commission
Mike Fredrickson, Port of Walla Walla Commissioner
Charlotte Garrido, Kitsap County Commissioner
Paula Hammond, Secretary, Department of Transportation
Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
Fred Jarrett, Deputy King County Executive
Jeff Johnson, President, Washington State Labor Council
Sen. Curtis King, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Transportation Committee
Alex McGregor, President, The McGregor Company
Don Meyer, Port of Tacoma Commissioner
E. Susan Meyer, CEO, Spokane Transit/Incoming President of the Washington Transit Association
David Myers, Executive Secretary, Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council
Kirk Nelson, President and CEO, AAA Washington
Laura Peterson, Vice President of State and Local Government Relations, Northwest Region, The Boeing Company
Tom Rasmussen, Seattle City Councilmember
Paul Roberts, Everett City Councilmember
Nick Rocchi, Managing Director Pacific Northwest District, Federal Express
Tim Schauer, Chair-Elect, Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
Mel Sheldon, Chairman, The Tulalip Tribes
DeLee Shoemaker, State Government Affairs Director, Microsoft Corporation
Tom Trulove, Mayor of Cheney
Stan Vander Pol, President and CEO, Peninsula Truck Lines
Barbara Wright, Board Member, Transportation Choices Coalition

Task Force Meeting Dates

Meeting #1 – July 19
Meeting #2 – September 9
Meeting #3 – October 4
Meeting #4 – November 29
Meeting #5 – December 12, Olympia, time to be determined