



# JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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January 17, 2007

TO: Members, Senate and House Transportation Committees

SUBJECT: Joint Transportation Committee: Reports and Update

Noted on our website are six studies recently completed by the Joint Transportation Committee. Five of those studies were directed by the Transportation Budget, and all are intended to assist the Legislature this session. A summary of all studies completed by the JTC this biennium is attached.

For members new to the House and Senate Transportation Committees, the Joint Transportation Committee consists of four members, the Chairs and the Ranking members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees. The JTC was created July 2005 to conduct studies as directed by the Legislature and provide support for transportation related activities of the Legislature.

The recently completed studies address the following subjects:

- Washington State Ferries Finances;
- Teen Driver Safety;
- Long-Term Transportation Financing;
- Federal Surface Transportation Program--Transportation Enhancement Grants;
- Alignment of Transportation Goals and Benchmarks; and
- Department of Transportation Budget Development (completed July 2006).

The attached sheet provides a summary of each of those study efforts, including study origin and study cost. The sheet also lists two additional studies completed by the JTC for the 2006 Legislative Session, addressing passenger-only ferries and restructuring the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax. Studies are posted on the JTC website: [www1.leg.wa.gov/jtc/](http://www1.leg.wa.gov/jtc/)

This has been a very busy 18 months for the Joint Transportation Committee. The JTC met monthly during legislative interims. In addition to completing each of these studies, the Committee also sponsored a two-day ferry tour in conjunction with the Ferry Finance Study, supported Legislators with participation on NCSL and other study efforts, and retained ownership of the Transportation Executive Information System. This system provides support for the Legislature in developing the Transportation Budget, as well as for DOT Management and for OFM.

We would like to thank JTC members who served this past year: Senator Ed Murray, Senator Brad Benson, and Representative Beverly Woods. Their efforts on behalf of the Committee were tireless, and they provided valuable guidance to Committee studies. Senator Haugen is the only returning member to the Committee this year.

At the end of Session, we will develop a work plan based on legislative priorities for the Committee, and a monthly meeting schedule and interim work plan will be provided to Senate and House Transportation Committee members. Those members are invited to attend and participate in activities of the JTC. In addition, all Transportation Committee members receive regular updates on JTC activities. We trust you will find our interim work useful and we welcome your involvement in future studies and activities of the Committee. If you have any questions you may contact JTC staff, Diane Schwickerath at (360) 786-7312 or Gene Baxstrom at (360) 786-7398 or visit the JTC website for Committee information: [www1.leg.wa.gov/jtc/](http://www1.leg.wa.gov/jtc/)



Senator Mary Margaret Haugen  
Co-Chair



Senator Dan Swecker



Representative Judy Clibborn  
Co-Chair



Representative Fred Jarrett

# JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE STUDIES

## July 2005 - January 2007

The 2005 Legislature created the Joint Transportation Committee to provide resources for transportation studies identified in the transportation budget and by the JTC, and for other on-going transportation activities. The four-member Committee consists of the Chairs and the Ranking Members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees. Senator Haugen and Representative Murray served as Co-Chairs this past interim, and Representative Clibborn and Senator Haugen are the Co-Chairs for 2007. The JTC has met monthly during Legislative interims since its inception in 2005. The Committee's work has focused primarily on conducting the studies assigned by the Legislature, in cooperation with the House and Senate Standing Committees on Transportation.

The following studies were conducted by the JTC, in coordination with the staff of the House and Senate Transportation Committees. Studies #7 and #8 were completed for the 2006 Session, and studies #1-6 were finalized for the 2007 Legislative Session. Each of these studies was mandated in the Biennial Transportation Budget or the 2006 Supplemental Transportation Budget, except for the "Transportation Goals and Benchmark" project, which was authorized by the JTC. Copies of these studies are on the JTC website: [www1@leg.wa.gov/jtc/](http://www1@leg.wa.gov/jtc/)

Study	Study Origin	Report Due Date	Short Description	Contract Amount
1. Washington State Ferries Finance	2006 Supplemental Transportation Budget Ch. 370, L 06	January 2007	The study examined the State Ferry System's future operating & capital costs, as well as patronage & revenue estimates. This study was guided by an Advisory Committee consisting of Senators Spanel and Benson, Representatives Woods and Flannigan, Victor Moore of OFM, and Transportation Commissioner Bob Distler. The JTC contracted in June with successful bidder, Cedar River Group, to provide expert consulting services for the study including capital cost assessments, revenue and patronage forecasts, and analysis and implementation of past study recommendations. The consultant and JTC and House & Senate Transportation Committee staff coordinated their activities on the study. It is likely that many recommendations, if adopted, will be incorporated in the biennial Transportation Budget.	\$200,000
2. Teen Driver Safety	2006 Supplemental Transportation Budget Ch. 370, L 06	January 2007	The JTC contracted with Rene Ewing and Associates, after a competitive bid process, to review existing research on programs and policies which decrease accidents by teenage drivers, and assess the cost effectiveness of programs. The evaluation recommended changes to the intermediate drivers license program and administration of driver education programs. Interested organizations and agencies were included in the evaluation, legislators were interviewed regarding policy issues, and Transportation Committees' staff provided insight. Staff have drafted legislation to implement study recommendations for consideration by the Legislature.	\$67,375
3. Long-Term Transportation Financing	2005 Transportation Budget Ch. 313, L 05	January 2007	The study charge examined the long term viability of the state's transportation financing methods and sources, with attention to reliance on fuel tax, alternative sources of user-based revenue, implications of debt financing, and effectiveness of state-distributed funds for local governments. The study included a survey of approaches to local and regional government finance; \$450,000 was appropriated to contract for the study. However, the JTC contracted the study at \$317,577 because of other work on transportation finance already done around the country and because of a more limited look at local financing. The JTC competitively contracted with Cambridge Systematics in May 2006, for the study. A group of DOT, OFM and Committee staff reviewed consultant activities during conduct of the study.	\$317,577

Study	Study Origin	Report Due Date	Short Description	Contract Amount
4. Surface Transportation Program Enhancement Grant Program	2006 Supplemental Transportation Budget Ch. 370, L 06	January 2007	This evaluation was conducted by Transportation Committee staff, addressing the use of Federal Transportation Enhancement funds monies for non-traditional transportation related activities. The evaluation addressed the process for identifying projects, and the type of grants funded by the DOT with regard to project type application, scoring, and allocation of funds. It also reviewed other states' processes. Study recommendations which are implemented will likely be reflected in the Transportation Budget.	Staff
5. Align Transportation Goals and Benchmarks	JTC Action (July 2006)	December 2006	The JTC contracted with Lund Consulting, Inc. in August to assist the Governor's, Legislative, and Transportation Commission staff to conceptualize and reach concurrence on: proposed transportation goals for consideration during the 2007 legislative session; periodic performance reporting by WSDOT that meets the needs of the Governor, the Legislature and the Commission; and modifications to existing RCWs. Legislative staff have drafted needed legislation. This effort builds on a recently completed Transportation Performance Audit Board "Study of Transportation Goals, Benchmarks, and Ten-Year Investment Criteria and Process" completed by Lund Consulting.	\$17,700
6. WSDOT Budget Methodologies	2005 Transportation Budget Ch. 313, L 05	July 2006	This study, accepted by the JTC at its August meeting, examined the DOT budgeting process and program structure to improve the budget methodology and improved communication of the budget. Following a competitive bid process, Cambridge Systematics was contracted in December, 2005. Committee members and staff, and OFM and DOT staff provided study input. The study was completed in July 2006 so that certain study recommendations could be assimilated into the DOT budget consideration for 2007-09. The study recommended simplification and better identification of budget categories, an improved process for tracking project expenses, and improved methods and tools for improved budget communication.	\$249,854
7. Passenger-Only Ferry Evaluation	2005 Transportation Budget Ch. 313, L 05	January 2006	The charge was to recommend the most cost effective means of providing passenger-only ferry service. The study was guided by an 18-member steering committee of stakeholders, including four legislative members--Senators Spanel & Oke and Reps. Woods & McDermott. JTC contracted for a facilitator to help organize meetings and develop recommendations, and a financial consultant to review POF service alternatives considered by the Task Force. The Task Force's final report set forth mutual interest recommendations, findings, and criteria for setting priorities for POF service. The JTC contracted for a facilitator for the Task Force and a financial consultant to evaluate the costs of alternative POF services.	\$27,885 / \$17,296
8. MVET Depreciation Schedule	2005 Transportation Budget Ch. 313, L 05	January 2006	The study requirement was to determine the feasibility of a statewide uniform MVET including an MVET depreciation schedule that more accurately reflects vehicle value, but does not hinder outstanding contractual obligations. Staff working groups, including interested parties, evaluated legal and contractual issues and methodologies for setting vehicle value and alternative depreciation methods. Recommended to the House and Senate Transportation Committees in January 2006 was a more lengthy depreciation schedule combined with initial vehicle value being set at 80% of the Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price, instead of the current 100%. Senate Bill 6247, which embodied many of the recommendations of the MVET report, was enacted by the Legislature in the 2006 Session.	Staff

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