



JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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June 6, 2007

TO: Members, House and Senate Transportation Committees

SUBJECT: Joint Transportation Committee: Activity Update

The previous Joint Transportation Committee update in January highlighted six studies completed by the JTC during the 2006 interim. We want to now preview our activities for the 2007 interim.

Enclosed is a brief description of three studies assigned to the JTC this interim in the Transportation Budget and in other legislation. We will be asking several Transportation Committee members to serve on Work Groups/Task Forces to help with these studies involving state ferries, financing freight investments, and special needs transportation.

In addition to participating on studies, we also invite House and Senate Transportation Committee members to attend the JTC's monthly meetings and other activities. Our scheduled monthly meetings include briefings on important transportation issues as well as reviewing progress on studies. For example, our June 14th meeting is being held in conjunction with the Association of Washington Cities Conference, in Tacoma. The agenda will include briefings on freight issues and transportation concurrency. The JTC 2007 interim meeting schedule is enclosed and is also available on the JTC website.

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 first two years of the JTC have been very active. Studies completed last December assisted legislative actions affecting the state ferry system, teenage driving safety, and transportation finance. Those completed studies are also shown on the attached list. We trust our work this interim will be equally productive.

We invite your participation in this interim's activities. 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: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/jtc>



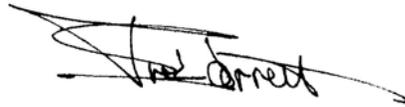
Representative Judy Clibborn
Co-Chair



Senator Mary Margaret Haugen
Co-Chair



Senator Dan Swecker



Representative Fred Jarrett

Enclosures:
JTC studies

JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE STUDIES

July 2005 – 2007 Interim

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 in the 2005 and 2006 interims, 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 are being/were conducted by the JTC, in coordination with the staff of the House and Senate Transportation Committees. Studies #11 and #12 were completed for the 2006 Session, and studies #5-10 were finalized for the 2007 Legislative Session. Each of these studies was mandated in the 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: www@leg.wa.gov/jtc/

2007 CURRENT STUDIES				
STUDY	STUDY ORIGIN	REPORT DUE DATE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	CONTRACT AMOUNT
1. Washington State Ferries—Phase 2	2007 Transportation Budget ESHB 1094, Ch. 518, L 07 Sec 205	In Progress: Progress report: Dec. 15, 2007	This study is an extension of work done by the JTC last interim. A JTC appointed Work Group, which includes legislative members, is to oversee implementation of ESHB 2358 and ferry system program reviews. Members have not yet been appointed. Certain tasks will be done by a JTC consultant, the Transportation Commission, and/or the WSDOT. Issues to be addressed include ferry fares and pricing strategies, levels of service, capital plans for boats and terminals, and financing strategies. The work group is to issue a study progress report by December 15, 2007; however, some work tasks assigned in ESHB 2358 will continue into 2008.	Contract is signed \$500,000 appropriated
2. Freight Investment	Ch. 514, L 07 & 2007 Transportation Budget Ch. 518, L 07 Sec 205	Draft final due: Dec. 15, 2007 Final Report: Prior to 2008 Session	This consultant study, set forth in SSB 5207, will evaluate existing fees paid by the freight industry and potential industry and other fees and taxes to finance freight congestion relief investments. This will include an evaluation of other states and countries' programs and their impact on competitiveness. The study will also examine the structure of a project recommendation body. The study will involve a stakeholder group to be composed of industry representatives and others, including legislators, which will be administered by the JTC. \$500,000 is appropriated for this study. The JTC at its May 9, 2007 meeting approved a request for proposals by consultants to conduct the study, with \$400,000 approved for the effort. Proposals are due by June 5 th , and the Committee's goal is to have the contract in place on July 1, 2007.	Consultant proposals due June 5, 2007 \$500,000 appropriated, \$400,000 approved by JTC for consultant work
3. Agency Council for Coordinated Transportation	Ch. 421, L 07 & 2007 Transportation Budget ESHB 1094, Sec 205	Draft final report: Dec. 15, 2007	This study, mandated in SHB 1694, is to review legal and programmatic changes needed to effectively coordinate special needs transportation services at the regional level. This will include examining non-traditional service providers, facility siting decisions, and strategies for a decentralized broker system. One or more meetings with providers, brokers and the many agencies sponsoring trips for persons with special needs will be held. The JTC will likely retain a consultant to assist with the evaluation. This is an 18 month study, with a final draft report due the House and Senate Transportation Committees by December, 15, 2008.	\$300,000 appropriated

4. Regional Transportation Commission	2007 Transportation Budget Ch. 518, L 07 Sec 205	Unspecified	Although the JTC is not specifically assigned a role in evaluating transportation governance in the central Puget Sound region, a budget note refers to potential activity in that regard. \$400,000 is provided to support activities associated with that activity.	\$400,000 appropriated
COMPLETED STUDIES				
5. 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. An additional \$26,450 was authorized January – April, 2007.	\$200,000 \$26,450 (additional)
6. Teen Driver Safety	2006 Supplemental Transportation Budget Ch. 370, L 06	January 2007	The JTC contracted with René 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
7. 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 the study.	\$317,577 \$243,984 (final total)
8. 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
9. 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

COMPLETED STUDIES

<p>10. WSDOT Budget Methodologies</p>	<p>2005 Transportation Budget Ch. 313, L 05</p>	<p>July 2006</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>\$249,854</p>
<p>11. Passenger-Only Ferry Evaluation</p>	<p>2005 Transportation Budget Ch. 313, L 05</p>	<p>January 2006</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>\$27,885 / \$17,296</p>
<p>12. MVET Depreciation Schedule</p>	<p>2005 Transportation Budget Ch. 313, L 05</p>	<p>January 2006</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Staff</p>

June, 2007