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# Passenger Modes

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## Passenger Vehicles

### BACKGROUND

- In FY 2013, there were approximately 5.3 million licensed drivers in Washington State.
- In FY 2013, there were approximately 4.4 million passenger vehicles registered.
- For FY 2013, gasoline consumption was 2,691 million gallons, a slight increase from FY 2012. For FY 2013, diesel consumption was 666 million gallons, a slight increase from FY 2012.

### GOVERNANCE

- The Department of Licensing administers laws related to the licensing and regulating of vehicles (Title 46 RCW)
- The Washington State Patrol provides traffic law enforcement; investigates auto theft, license fraud, and traffic collisions (RCW 43.43)
- The Traffic Safety Commission coordinates and promotes traffic safety and education programs at the state and local level (RCW 43.59)

### FUNDING

- Passenger vehicle owners contribute to maintaining state roads and highways through user fees.
  - Motor vehicle fuel tax ([RCW 82.36](#))
  - Special fuel tax ([RCW 82.38](#))
  - Vehicle licensing/registration fees ([RCW 46.17.350](#))
  - Vehicle weight fees ([RCW 46.17.355](#) and [46.17.365](#))

### OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES

- Off-road, non-highway, and wheeled all-terrain vehicles ([RCW 46.09](#))
- Certificates of title ([RCW 46.12](#)) and Registration ([RCW 46.16A](#))
- Special License Plates ([RCW 46.18](#))
- Mandatory Liability Insurance ([RCW46.30](#))
- Vehicle equipment requirements ([RCW 46.37](#))
- Size, weight and load ([RCW 46.44](#))
- Rules of the road ([RCW 46.61](#))
- Disposition of traffic infractions ([RCW 46.63](#))

## Roadways (State Highways, County Roads, City Streets)

### BACKGROUND

- Washington State roadways consist of 82,450 centerline miles of highways, roads, and streets
  - 7,054 miles of state highways (includes interstate miles)
  - 39,232 miles of county roads
  - 18,672 miles of city streets
  - 17,490 miles of other roadways, including State Park, National Park, Indian Reservation, and U.S. Forest
- Annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on the state's system of roadways totaled approximately 57 billion miles during 2013. Since 2000, the annual VMT has increased 6% with an annual increase or decrease averaging <1%.
- State highways carry 55% of VMT, while county roads carry 16%, city streets 27%, and other roadways 2%.
- Washington's 764 miles of Interstate highways account for only 1% of roadway miles, but carry 27% of annual VMT.
- The National Highway System (NHS) , designated by federal law, provides an interconnected system of principal arterials and other highways that serve major population centers, international border crossings, ports, airports, public and intermodal transportation facilities, and other major travel destinations; meet national defense needs; and serve interstate and interregional travel. Under MAP-21, the NHS was expanded to include more local roadways. In Washington the NHS consists of 4,561 miles of roadway, of which 78% is state and 22% local roadway.
- The Freight and Goods Transportation System of state highways and local roadways is classified according to the level of freight traffic using the route.
- The Scenic and Recreational Highway System comprises state highways that have exceptional scenic qualities and recreational opportunities along them; they are designated by the Washington State Transportation Commission and identified as State Scenic Byways.

### GOVERNANCE

- State Highways
  - Owned and operated by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
  - WSDOT is a cabinet agency and is managed directly by the Secretary of Transportation, subject to the oversight of the Governor.
  - A route jurisdiction transfer is the conversion of a state highway into a local road or the conversion of a local road into a state highway. Requests for transfers are made to the Washington State Transportation Commission which evaluates the transfer request according to criteria in [RCW 47.17.001](#). The Commission forwards its recommendations to the Legislature for approval. Jurisdiction comes with the responsibility to preserve, maintain, and when necessary improve the facility.
- County Roads
  - Each of the 39 counties is responsible for construction, maintenance, and management of the roads and bridges under its jurisdiction.
  - Six-year construction plans must be adopted before January 1 of each year and submitted to WSDOT and the County Road Administration Board (CRAB).

- Six-year plans pertaining to arterial road construction in urban areas of the county must be submitted to the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) every two years.
- CRAB sets engineering standards and provides oversight for the county road departments in each county.
- City Streets
  - Each of the 281 incorporated cities is responsible for construction, maintenance, and management of the streets and bridges under its jurisdiction.
  - Six-year construction plans must be adopted before July 1 of each year and submitted to WSDOT.
  - Six-year plans pertaining to arterial street construction in urban areas of the city must be submitted to the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) every two years.

## FUNDING

- State Highways
  - 24.46 cents per gallon Motor Fuel Tax (plus Ferries receives 1.08 cents)
  - See *Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax and Special Fuel Tax* on page 68
  - Motor vehicle licenses, permits, and fees
  - Federal highway grants
  - Bond issue proceeds
- County Roads
  - 4.92 cents per gallon Motor Fuel Tax
  - State grants from CRAB, TIB, and FMSIB
  - Dedicated county road property tax levy
  - Local funds appropriated for use on county roads
  - Bond issues for county road purposes
  - Transportation local option taxes (see *Local Taxes* on page 113)
  - Federal aid grants
- City Streets
  - 2.96 cents per gallon Motor Fuel Tax
  - State grants from TIB and FMSIB
  - Local funds appropriated for use on city streets
  - Bond issues for city street purposes
  - Transportation local option taxes (see *Local Taxes* on page 113)
  - Federal-aid grants

## OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES

- [RCW Title 47](#) encompasses the majority of laws pertaining to public highways and transportation.
- Chapter [46.61 RCW](#) governs the Rules of the Road.
- Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) is the current transportation and highways funding authorization program that took effect on October 1, 2012, and has been extended through May 2015.

# Ferries

## BACKGROUND

- In terms of overall ridership, the Washington State Ferries (WSF) division of WSDOT is the nation's largest ferry system:
  - Linking urban areas on the east side of Puget Sound with communities on the Kitsap and Olympic Peninsulas,
  - Linking the San Juan Islands and Vashon Island with mainland, and
  - Linking Washington State with Canada through Sidney route.
- WSF is considered part of the state's highway system and is eligible for 18th amendment funding.
- Ferries are also operated by private businesses and counties.

## GOVERNANCE

### **State Ferries**

- Operated by the WSDOT – Washington State Ferries.
- System includes 23 vessels providing service on nine routes to 20 terminals; in 2013 ferries carried 10.1 million vehicles and 22.5 million riders. Based on the total number of riders carried, WSF could also be considered the third largest public transportation agency in the state.
- Current WSF vessel fleet consists of 9 vessel types: Jumbo Mark II Class (3), Jumbo Class (2), Super Class (4), Olympic (1, with two more funded or under construction), Issaquah Class (1), Issaquah 130 Class (5), Evergreen State Class (3), Kwa-di-Tabil (3), Hiyu (1).
- WSF currently serves 20 terminals in eight counties and British Columbia. WSF owns 14 of the terminals and six others are leased.
- [Chapter 47.60 RCW](#) provides general ferry operating authority
- Some powers and duties of WSDOT relative to the ferry system may also be found in [Chapter 47.56 RCW](#) (Toll bridges, Tunnels and Ferries)
- [Chapter 47.64 RCW](#) governs marine labor relations
- Fares are set by the Transportation Commission and are used to offset operating costs. (See *Ferry Fares* on page 53.)

### **County Ferries**

- Five counties currently operate public ferries:
  - Pierce, Whatcom, Skagit, King, and Wahkiakum counties
  - Largely funded with county road funds (property taxes).
  - Wahkiakum receives state support ([RCW 47.56.720](#))

### **Private Ferry Operations**

- There are 8 private ferry operations regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission ([Chapter 81.84 RCW](#))

### **Other Ferry Operations**

- The Colville Indian Tribe provides a toll-free crossing of Lake Roosevelt (Columbia River)
  - The Alaska Marine Highway (between Bellingham, Washington and Skagway, Alaska)
  - WSDOT Eastern Region maintains and operates the MV Sanpoil on SR 21 in Eastern Washington (toll-free).

## FUNDING

- State Ferries
  - Dedicated Motor fuel tax distribution for ferry operations (0.54 cents of 23-cent gas tax) (RCW 46.68.090 (c))
  - Dedicated Motor fuel tax distribution for ferry capital construction (0.55 cents of 23-cent gas tax) (RCW 46.68.090 (d))
  - Motor fuel tax transfers from the Motor Vehicle Account
  - Combined licensing fee (1.661% of collections)
  - Ferry fares, concessions, and rent
  - Federal Ferry Boat and Terminals Construction Program
  - Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant programs—Section 5309 and Section 5307
  - Federal Surface Transportation Program
  - Federal Homeland Security grant funds from the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) and the Transit Security Administration (TSA)
  - Bond proceeds
  
- County Ferry Districts and PTBA Ferry Operations (See *Local Option Taxes: Ferry Services* on page 121.)

## WEB RESOURCES

WSF website: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/>

History of WSF: [Historylink article for the Seattle Times, June 1, 2001.](#)

## Ferry Route Map



# Transportation Demand Management

## BACKGROUND

Transportation demand management (TDM) strategies improve the efficiency of the statewide system, helping transportation projects and existing facilities perform closer to optimal levels. The tools and techniques of TDM—such as commute trip reduction, telework, vanpool programs and ride-matching services—help cut road-maintenance costs, enhance community safety and livability, and reduce vehicle carbon emissions. TDM also offers low-cost solutions to roadway congestion and capacity needs, allowing resources to be dedicated to other transportation improvements.

TDM is a central component of “Results WSDOT,” the agency’s strategic plan for the next three years. In that plan, WSDOT set its goals for addressing congestion – which incorporates the principles of TDM by using the most cost-beneficial approach for solutions to adding capacity, managing demand, and enhancing operational efficiency.

There are several TDM programs and strategies used in Washington State.

- *Commute Trip Reduction.* In 1991 the Washington State Legislature passed the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law for the purpose of reducing air pollution, traffic congestion, and energy consumption through employer-based programs that decrease the number of commute trips made in single occupant vehicles (SOVs). The state policy targets large businesses (with at least 100 employees) with each participating employer required to establish a program for reducing employees’ SOV trips as well as the vehicle miles of travel during peak commuting periods. The CTR program was modified by the Legislature in 2006 to integrate CTR as a strategy in local and regional economic development and transportation plans, and focus TDM strategies for smaller employers and individual citizens through as the Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC) program. The GTEC program is currently unfunded. For more information on the Commute Trip Reduction program, see the [2013 CTR Board Report](#).
- *Tax Credits.* As part of the CTR program, the state provides private employers a tax credit for certain amounts provided to employees for the purposes of carpooling, vanpooling, transit, walking or biking.
- *Transit Pass Programs.* These programs offer discounted transit fares to certain users for certain time periods. In particular, some transit agencies have teamed with universities and large employers to provide transit passes. One example is Spokane Transit Authority's Employer-Sponsored Bus Pass Program. In this program, the Transit Authority will sell monthly passes to the company or organization at a discount of \$3.00 per pass provided that the company or organization agrees to pass that savings on to the employees and offer an additional discount of not less than \$3.00 per pass. Another example is the U-PASS program through the University of Washington, available to students, faculty and staff. The U-PASS program provides unlimited rides on King County Metro, Community Transit, Sound Transit, Pierce Transit, Kitsap Transit or Everett Transit bus services, Sound Transit’s Link light rail and Sounder commuter trains and paratransit bus services; vanpool subsidies; and discounted annual fees for Zipcar, a shared vehicle service.
- *Shared vehicle services.* Shared vehicle services provide a flexible option to travelers who rely primarily on non-motorized and public transit travel, yet at times require a vehicle for special trips, such as grocery shopping or trips to rural areas. An example of such a service is Zipcar, which offers a network of vehicles to users who pay a membership fee and an hourly or daily rate, depending on the user's plan preference. Such services, while similar to car rental services, are marketed to be more accessible both in proximity and around the clock and flexible.

- *Guaranteed Ride Home.* Guaranteed ride home programs provide rides home for shared transportation participants who, for unplanned reasons, are unable to make connections to normal transit services after leaving work. C-TRAN in Clark County participates in a program called "Emergency Ride Home," in which participants in vanpools are eligible for a free taxi ride home if an emergency occurs while at work, with the cost covered by the employer or C-TRAN.
- *Flexible Schedules and Teleworking.* Many private and public employers offer flexible schedules to encourage employees to manage their commutes. In some cases, the employer may allow different starting and ending times for the work days or a compressed work schedule. Some employers allow employees to work remotely or from home for part of the work week, which eliminates commute trips on those days. It also allows employees to make fewer trips each week to work. These flexible schedules and teleworking adjustments allow commuting flexibility to reduce peak time traffic congestion.
- *Congestion/Variable Pricing.* For tolled facilities, this strategy involves variable charges based on levels of congestion and/or time of day and can be charged over a wide area or a single corridor. In addition, technology has automated the collection of such charges, eliminating delays related to queuing up at a toll booth. In Washington, such a system has been deployed on State Route 520 on the Evergreen Point Floating bridge. At peak times, motorists pay as much as \$3.59 to cross the bridge, while between 11pm and 5am there is no charge. Payment is conducted electronically using transponders or by license plate recognition and prepaid accounts or pay-by-mail.
- *Real-time Traffic Information.* WSDOT, the City of Seattle, and various third-party providers offer tools that allow the traveler real-time access to traffic information. Traffic information includes travel times, congestion levels along major routes, visuals of actual road conditions, real-time transit information, and may also include information about major athletic or other special events, that may create traffic issues. Information is available via the web, television news, smart phone applications, the 511 system, and highway signage.
- *Transit-Oriented Development.* King County has maintained a transit-oriented development (TOD) program since 1998. According to the program's web site, "A TOD is a private or public/private real estate development project that creates, expands, maintains or preserves a mixed-use community or neighborhood within walking distance of a transit center." Transit-oriented development policies are largely a function of local comprehensive planning policies and rules.

## GOVERNANCE

The state policies governing transportation demand management in the state and local government and private sector, and specifically commute trip reduction, are found in Washington's Clean Air Act ([RCW 70.94.521 through 70.94.555](#)). Local CTR plans are also required to be consistent with the transportation element of local comprehensive plans, defined in the [Growth Management Act](#). Tolling policy, including congestion/variable rate pricing is governed by [Chapter 47.56 RCW](#).

*State.* The state, through the Commute Trip Reduction Board (appointed by the Secretary of Transportation and staffed by WSDOT), is responsible for developing the guidelines to implement the CTR law. The Board also reviews and approves local and regional CTR programs and is also responsible for the development of a joint comprehensive commute trip reduction plan for all state agencies. The state, through Legislative budgeting priorities and the WSDOT public transportation division, has established vanpool and regional mobility grant programs to support TDM options. In addition, the WSDOT Traffic Operations program provides support for several TDM approaches, including active traffic management and the provision of real-time traffic data. The WSDOT tolling division is implementing variable pricing on the SR 520 corridor in support of the financing for the replacement of the floating bridge.

*Local Governments.* Transit agencies have led the development and implementation of a number of TDM strategies, including pass programs, guaranteed ride home programs, web-based route planning, and TOD. Regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs), and the cities and counties that they represent, have been required under federal transportation authorization bills to develop short-term and long-range transportation plans that, in part, rely on various TDM strategies to help address urban congestion issues.

## FUNDING

For the CTR program, \$6.4 million in funding was provided through the WSDOT/Public Transportation program budget in 2013-15. Of this amount, \$3.9 million was allotted for grants to local governments for technical assistance to employers. The remaining \$1.8 million was allotted for overall program technical assistance, measurement, and evaluation by WSDOT.

In addition, \$754,000 from the State Parking Account was provided for limited technical assistance and services to state agencies. Such services include the State Agency Rider (STAR) transit pass and the Emergency Ride Home program. Other state agency CTR efforts are funded directly by those agencies.

For private employers, \$3.5 million in tax credits were authorized for payments made by employers to employees for the purposes of reducing SOV trips. It is estimated that for their part employers invested \$45 million directly in CTR programs in 2006.

For the support of vanpools, \$6 million was authorized to purchase additional vans to support local programs.

## ON THE WEB

WSDOT's Demand Management [webpage](#)

WSDOT's Commute and Travel Choices [webpage](#)

[Washington State Traveler Information](#)

[City of Seattle Traveler Information](#)

[Transit real-time information](#) (available for eight transit organizations in Western Washington)

WSDOT's Commute Trip Reduction [webpage](#)

## Buses

### BACKGROUND

- Bus service is the principle public transportation service provided by most transit systems in the state. Transit systems may provide an array of services that include routed bus services, route deviated services (fixed routes with some custom services), light and commuter rail services, ferry services, paratransit specialized services (often referred to as demand response or "Dial-a-Ride"), and vanpooling/ carpooling coordination. The figures presented below address only the bus service provided by those systems.
- In 2012 the public transit systems in Washington provided the following services:  
(in millions)

<u>Service Type</u>	<u>Revenue Vehicle Hours</u>	<u>Revenue Vehicle Miles</u>	<u>Passenger Trips</u>
Fixed Route	6.1	84.1	191.9
Route Deviated	0.23	3.8	2.4
Demand Response	1.9	27.6	4.4
Vanpool	1.1	39.6	8.6

- The majority of the public transit buses that are operated in Washington state use diesel fuel. In 2010, public transit agencies used 25 million gallons of diesel, 4.3 million gallons of gasoline, 1.5 million therms of compressed natural gas, and consumed 33.2 million kilowatt hours of electricity to operate the fixed route, route deviated, and demand response services, and vanpools.
- Bus-rapid transit (BRT) is a type of high-capacity bus service, which adopts many features of rail rapid transit, seeking to achieve faster, more frequent service than traditional bus service. BRT may operate in its own right-of-way, have shorter headways, and longer stop spacing than traditional bus service. In practice, BRT systems around the world may adopt all or only some of these features.
- In the Central Puget Sound region, Community Transit operates the Swift service, on a 16.7 mile line on SR 99 connecting the Aurora Village Transit Center and downtown Everett. King County Metro operates the Rapid Ride express bus network, which adopts some BRT features. Four lines are currently in operation. The Rapid Ride service includes BRT features such as frequent headways during peak commuting hours, low-floor articulated buses, real-time bus arrival information signs, and longer stop spacing.

### GOVERNANCE

- Currently there are 32 operating public transit agencies in Washington State that provide bus service. Okanagan County PTBA is the newest system in 2014.
- Public transit is provided by counties, public transportation benefit authorities (PTBA), county transportation authorities, unincorporated public transportation benefit authorities, regional transit authorities, or cities. For a complete description of the governance models authorized for transit agencies, see the *Local/Regional Jurisdictions section* on page 339.
- Intercity public transportation is also provided by private operators. Washington State sponsors intercity bus services in areas where there has been a deficiency identified. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides 50 percent of the funds for the program. Greyhound Bus Lines provides local matching funds that pay the other 50 percent.
- For more information regarding WSDOT's Intercity Bus program check the web site at:  
<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/transit/intercity>

- Four lines of intercity bus services currently operate within Washington State:
  - Travel Washington: Grape Line between Walla Walla and Pasco
  - Travel Washington: Apple Line between Omak and Wenatchee and Ellensburg
  - Travel Washington: Dungeness Line between Port Angeles and Seattle and SeaTac
  - Travel Washington: Gold Line between Kettle Falls and Spokane

## FUNDING

- Public transit agencies are primarily funded through voter-approved local sales tax (RCW [35.95.040](#), and [82.14.045](#)). In 2012, sales tax contributed \$1,336 million to public transit.
- In 2012 public transit agencies collected \$260.7 million in fare revenues. The majority of this revenue, \$230.9 million, was collected from users of fixed-route bus service.
- The 2012 average farebox recovery rate (the percent of annual operating costs recovered by passenger fares) for fixed-route service offered by public transit agencies was 25.4%.
- In 2012 Washington public transit agencies received \$102.4 million in federal operating and preventative maintenance grants and \$219.2 million in federal capital grants.
- During the 2013-15 biennium, the state transportation budget provided \$93 million in funds to public transit agencies through the Special Needs, Regional Mobility ([RCW 47.66.030](#)), and Rural Mobility ([RCW 47.66.100](#)) grant programs.
- As described above, the Travel Washington Intercity Bus program is funded in part by the FTA. The FTA 5311 Non-Urban Program requires states to set-aside 15% of their federal transit apportionment to support intercity bus service. The federal grant funds require a 50% local match for operating assistance. WSDOT has been granted FTA authority to use the private investment in the intercity system (primarily from Greyhound) as the required match, and therefore is supporting the four Travel Washington routes with only federal funds. The private contractors are allowed to keep fares and fees.

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

- As a condition of receiving state funding, public transit agencies are required to submit an asset management plan to the Washington State Department of Transportation. The plan must include an inventory of all transportation system assets, and a preservation plan based on lowest life cycle cost methodologies. This requirement applies to Washington State transit systems established under the following sections of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW):
  - RCW [35.84.060](#) – City Transit Systems (defined in RCW [47.04.082](#))
  - RCW [36.56](#) – County that has assumed the functions of a metropolitan transportation system (King County)
  - RCW [36.57A](#) – Public Transportation Benefit Areas (PTBAs)
  - RCW [81.112](#) – Regional Transportation Authorities

## OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES

For a more in-depth information on public transit service, see WSDOT's "[2014 Summary of Public Transportation](#)".

For a list of public and private agencies providing any kind of public transportation service, see the [Washington State Public Transportation Directory, 2014](#)

# Special Needs Transportation

## BACKGROUND

- [RCW 81.66.010](#) defines persons with special transportation needs as "people, including their attendants, who are unable, because of a physical or mental disability, income status, or age, to transport themselves or purchase appropriate transportation."
- "Demand-Response" service is a type of transit service where individual passengers can request transportation from a specific location to another specific location at a certain time. Service is not on a fixed route and usually requires advance reservations.
- "Deviated Fixed Route" service is a hybrid of fixed-route and demand-response transit services. A service vehicle will travel along a fixed route, with fixed stops, on a fixed schedule, but may deviate from its course for a pre-scheduled request.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires transit agencies to provide paratransit services (demand response) to individuals that cannot take the fixed-route bus because of a functional disability. The FTA requirements include "complementary" paratransit service to destinations with 3/4 mile of all fixed routes.
- In 2012, public transit agencies provided \$167.4 million in operating costs for demand-response service or just less than 13.7% of total operating costs. Route-deviated service cost public transportation agencies about \$19 million dollars or 1.6% of total operating costs.
- In 2012, demand-response service provided by public transit agencies accounted for about 4.4 million passenger trips, or about 2.0% of all passenger trips. Passenger trips on route-deviated service accounted for about 2.39 million trips, or about 1.1% of all passenger trips.
- In 2012, about 13.6% of the state's population resided outside of the service boundaries of a transit system. For these mostly-rural residents and other populations unable to use transit systems because of age or abilities, Community and Brokered Transportation providers help fill these transportation service gaps.
- Since 1989, Washington State has used a competitively selected brokerage system to provide non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) for eligible Medicaid clients. Transportation brokers link riders to least-cost, most-appropriate transportation providers. Brokers are primarily non-profit organizations that are governed by a Board of Directors. The state is divided into 13 service regions and currently contracts with eight brokers. In 2012, the brokers coordinated just over 2.8 million trips for Medicaid clients. This was a decrease of 1.70 percent from 2011.
- Community Transportation Providers are private, non-profit, or governmental agencies that provide core transportation services for individuals with special needs and the general public in rural and urban areas. With a focus on the transportation needs of low-income, elderly, youth, veterans and their families and people with disabilities, Community Transportation Providers coordinate transportation services for access to health care, nutrition, employment, training, education, social services, and other vital community resources. Community Transportation Providers partner with a network of transportation service providers, employers, and human service agencies that may include health care providers, senior services, veteran services, community colleges, workforce partners, services for people with disabilities, and other social service agencies.

- The Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) is a council of state agencies, transportation providers, consumer advocates and legislators. The Council's mission is to increase the efficiency of special needs transportation services by promoting the coordination of services offered by a myriad of state, local, and private entities. ACCT's enabling legislation expired in 2012, but the federal requirements for coordination of special needs transportation remain. The Council continues to meet.

## GOVERNANCE

- According to the 2008 JTC Study of Special Needs Transportation, as many as 623 organizations and agencies provide some level of special needs transportation in Washington State. There is no typical provider or service offering, but private, non-profits represent slightly more than one half of the identified providers, and vast majority of services are door-to-door demand-response services.
- Transit agency authorizing statutes are described in the *Local/Regional Jurisdictions* section of this manual on page 339.

## FUNDING

- In 2012, the farebox recovery (the percent of annual operating costs recovered by passenger fares) rate for route-deviated service was 4.5%. For demand-response service, the farebox recovery rate was 2.8%. The lower farebox recovery rates associated with these services are due to reduced fares or fare-free policies for the elderly or persons with disabilities.
- For the 2011-13 biennium, the state transportation budget appropriated \$25 million in multimodal funds for special needs transportation services offered by nonprofit providers and public transportation agencies.
- Transit agency operating expenses for route-deviated and demand-response service amounted to \$186.4 million for Calendar Year 2012.

## ON THE WEB

WSDOT Public Transportation Division program information: [WSDOT Accessibility and Special Needs](#)

For a more in-depth descriptions of Community Transportation Providers and Medicaid Transportation Brokers, see WSDOT's "[2014 Summary of Public Transportation](#)".

For a list of public and private agencies providing any kind of public transportation service, see the [Washington State Public Transportation Directory, 2014](#)

Joint Transportation Committee, "Special Needs Transportation Study," [Final Report](#), January 2009.

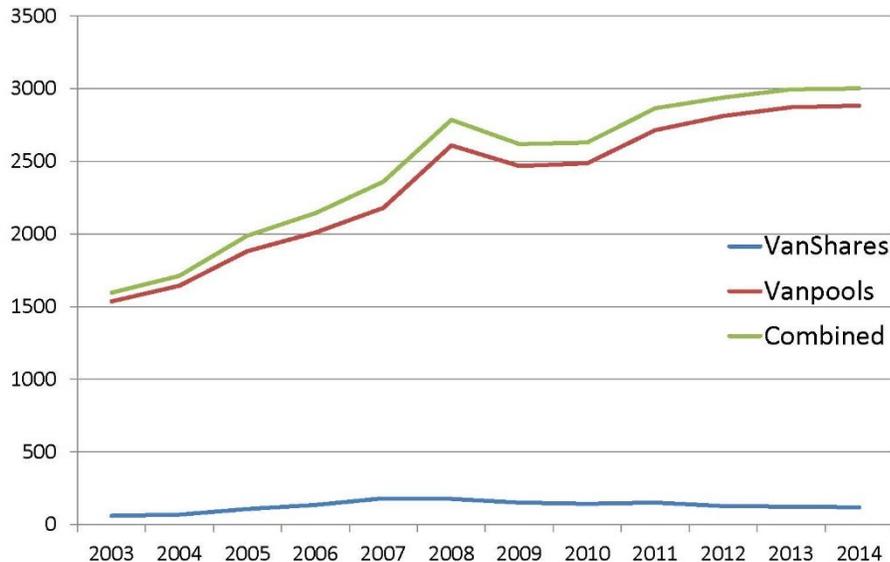
Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation website: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/acct/default.htm>

## Carpooling/Vanpooling

### BACKGROUND

- Filling empty seats on, vanpools and personal vehicles is often a cost effective mobility and congestion reduction strategy.
- Investments in vanpool vehicles, ride-matching technology (e.g. RideshareOnline), park and ride lots, marketing and rider incentives and promotions are tools to capitalize on this asset.
- The State Legislature created a vanpool grant program in 2003 to help public transit agencies expand existing vanpools. Since then, the state has provided more than \$40 million to local transit. Agencies have purchased more than 1,600 vans with an additional 206 vans to be purchased during the remainder of the 2013-2015 biennium.
- In July 2003, 1,508 public vanpools and 52 public vanshares (home-to-transit station van services for commuters) were operating in Washington State and transported over 11,000 employees to work each day. As of June 2014, these numbers grew to 2,884 vanpools and 117 vanshares in operation and transporting 20,000+ employees to work every day.
- Vanpool use is closely tied to economic activity. As the following graph demonstrates, the number of operating vanpool groups began to decrease slightly in 2008 and remained flat until rebounding in mid-2011.
- The majority of vans transport employees to employers participating in the Commute Trip Reduction program.

**Number of Vanpools Operating in Washington State, 2003-2012**



- Carpooling in personal vehicles and vanpooling are both supported by investments in [RideshareOnline.com](http://RideshareOnline.com). Washington supports RideshareOnline.com as part of a tri-state technology partnership with Oregon and Idaho. This system allows commuters to seek carpool/vanpool partners through its ride-matching capabilities. In addition, numerous employers, local governments and other organizations use RideshareOnline.com as a tool to track employee commuting and to provide incentives for employees who make more efficient transportation choices.

- Paid services such as Lyft and Uber which are marketed as “ride share” services are currently subject to regulation by Seattle [ordinance](#) as “application-based transportation network companies.” For more background on this issue see the Seattle City Council’s [webpage](#) on Taxi, For-Hire and Limousine regulations.
- High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes move about 35% of all the people on area highways with HOV lanes in only 19% of the vehicles in the peak commuting periods and directions. The average HOV lane carries 1½ times as many people as the average adjacent lane in the peak commute. Carpools and vanpools may use HOV lanes ([RCW 46.61.165](#)). (For more information on HOV lanes see the *High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes section* on page 383)
- The percentage of people who drove alone to work to Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) worksites declined from 70.9% in 1993 to 62.3% in 2011. In contrast, there has been an uptick in the national and state drive-alone rates over the last few years. (For more information on CTR, see the *Transportation Demand Management section* on page 374.)
- Park and ride lots provide a safe, convenient transfer area for transit, carpool and vanpool passengers, cyclists and pedestrians. There are more than 355 park and ride lots around the state. In most cases, park and ride lots are operated and maintained by local transit agencies. Through the state’s regional mobility grant program and other funding sources, WSDOT, transit agencies and local governments have developed partnerships to construct new park and rides and increase capacity at existing lots. WSDOT and its partners have also developed agreements with property owners, such as churches and community centers, for “park and pool” lots for flexible carpools and vanpools to free up space for transit riders at high demand park and ride lots. Some areas are combining park and ride functions with new residential and commercial development.

## GOVERNANCE

- The direct formation and management of carpooling and vanpooling is conducted by numerous entities, including private individuals and businesses; public transit systems; and city and county governments.
- In Washington State, vanpool vehicles are most commonly available through public transit agencies. A few private employers continue to operate vanpools. In addition, private individuals and employers work to form vanpool groups.

## FUNDING

- The 2014 supplemental transportation budget allocated \$6 million to purchase vehicles to expand vanpooling in the state. The Legislature earmarked some of this amount to meet the transportation system needs in the Joint Base Lewis-McCord (JBLM) corridor. As of June 2014, 25 vanpools transported an average of 95 passengers a day to JBLM. The majority of public vanpool program costs are recovered directly from fares paid by riders. Many employers partially or fully subsidize the cost of vanpools for their employees. Fare policies vary by operator, as determined by the operator’s board or county council.
- Public and private vanpools are exempt from retail sales tax on the purchase of the vehicle ([RCW 82.08.0287](#), [82.12.0282](#), [82.44.015](#)).
- The 2013-15 [Regional Mobility Grant program](#) includes \$6.8 million in new funding for transit agencies to invest in park and ride lots.

## ON THE WEB

WSDOT’s Commute and Travel Choices [webpage](#)

WSDOT Vanpool information: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Transit/Rideshare/Vanpool.htm>

WSDOT Park and Ride [general information](#) and [locations](#)

## High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes

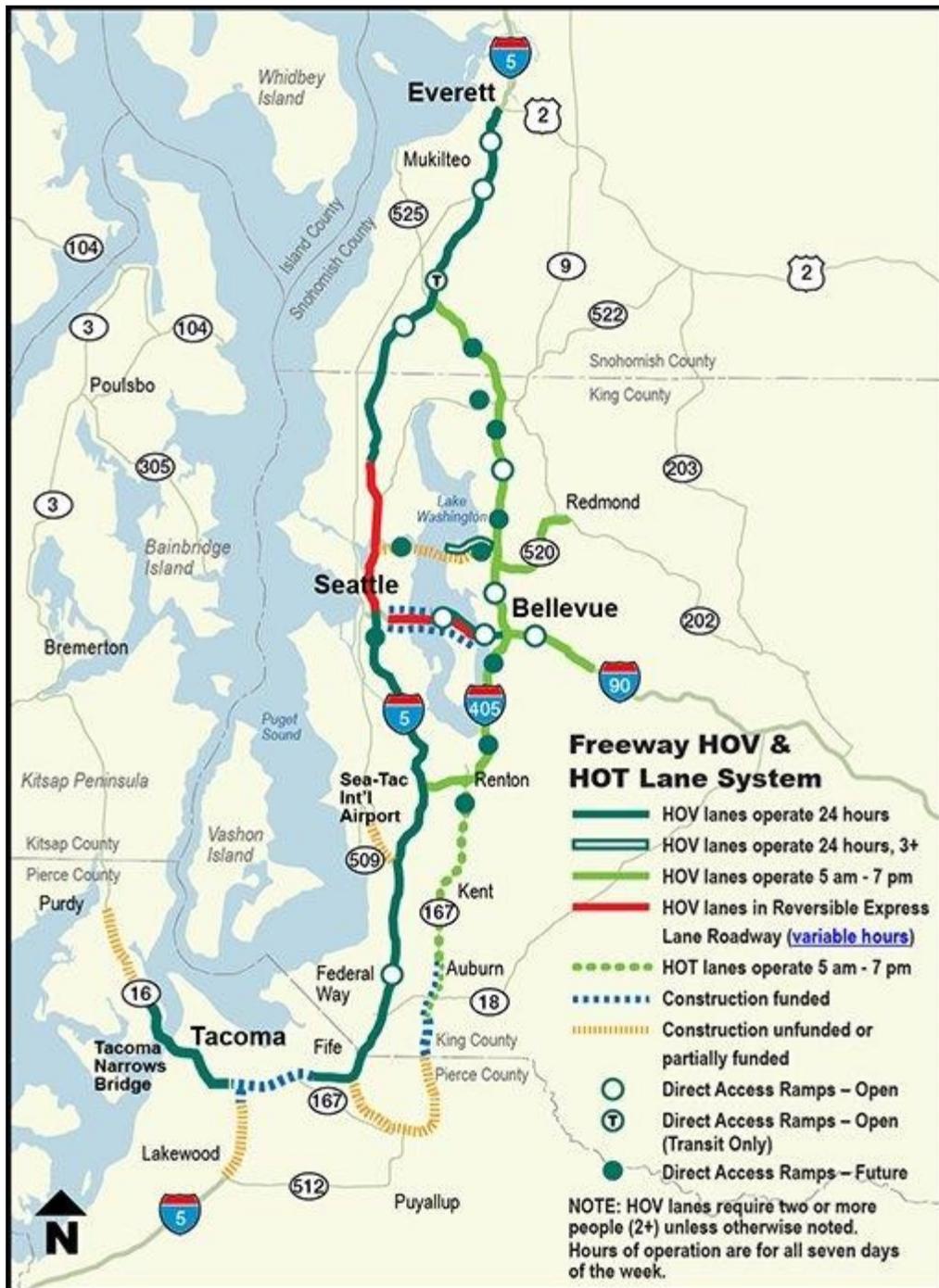
### BACKGROUND

- The HOV system is intended to increase highway efficiency by giving priority to vehicles carrying more people. The HOV system provides increased speed and reliability for buses, vanpools, and carpools compared to the general purpose lanes.
- Elements of the HOV system includes HOV lanes on highways, HOV priority treatments on local streets, park-and-ride lots, enforcement facilities, HOV by-pass lanes at ramp meters, HOV direct access ramps, and the "Guaranteed Loading Program" on Washington State Ferries.
- HOV lanes move about 35% of all the people on area highways in only 19% of the vehicles during peak commuting periods and in the peak direction. The average HOV lane carries 1½ times as many people as the average adjacent highway lane in the peak commute. Transit routes using the HOV lanes carry over 100,000 transit riders per weekday.
- Approximately 250 lane-miles of HOV lanes are currently open on Puget Sound highways. Construction is underway on HOV lanes on I-5 and SR 16 in Pierce County. Design is underway on parts of the remainder, but funding for completion of the system has not been secured. (See the HOV system map on the following page.)
- Puget Sound highway HOV lanes are currently open to buses, vehicles with two or more occupants, and motorcycles. An exception is on the short segment of SR 520 between I-405 and the floating bridge, which has a requirement of three or more occupants per vehicle for safety and operational reasons.
- The two person occupancy requirement applies 24 hours per day, seven days a week on most of the core highway HOV system including the HOV lanes on I-5. Highways east of Lake Washington are an exception to this policy. In the summer of 2003, a demonstration was begun that opened these HOV lanes to general purpose traffic at night between 7:00 pm and 5:00 am.
- Policy changes to increase HOV lane performance may involve increasing occupancy requirements to 3 or more or implementing managed lane pricing via conversion to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. (For more information on HOT lanes, see the *Tolling section* on page 231.)

### GOVERNANCE

- Federal law currently requires HOV operators to consider policy changes if average speeds in the HOV lanes drop below 45 mph for 90 percent of the time over a consecutive 180-day period during the weekday peak periods ([23 USC 166 \(d\)\(2\)\(B\)](#)).
- State law ([RCW 47.52.025](#)) allows WSDOT, cities and counties to limit access to certain highway facilities, including designating lanes or ramps for preferential use by transit agencies and private transportation companies which operate vehicles with a carrying capacity of eight or more passengers.
- WSDOT has the sole responsibility for planning, constructing, and operating HOV and queue by-pass lanes on limited access facilities, but consults and coordinates with the regional metropolitan planning organization. In the Puget Sound region, WSDOT has also committed to consulting with Sound Transit regarding proposed changes to HOV operating policies.
- Chapter [81.100 RCW](#) provides local taxing authority to counties and regional transportation investment districts (RTIDs) to accelerate development of the high occupancy vehicle lane system.
- On state-owned arterials, WSDOT shares the planning, constructing, and operating responsibilities with local jurisdictions.

- WSDOT has shared responsibility for planning and developing HOV direct access ramps with Sound Transit.
- The Core HOV Lane program is included in and supported by the Puget Sound Regional Council's Metropolitan Transportation Plan and by Sound Transit's Master Plan.



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## FUNDING

- The 2003 nickel package funded substantial portions of the core HOV system, including projects on SR 16 in Tacoma, on I-5 in Federal Way and Everett, on SR 167 in Auburn, and on SR 520 in Redmond. The total cost of core HOV system improvements funded through the nickel package is in excess of \$700 million.
- The 2005 transportation funding package (Transportation Partnership Act) also provided funding for core HOV improvements. Specifically, adding HOV lanes to I-5 in Pierce County between SR 16 and the Pierce/King County line and improving the I-5/SR 16 interchange including direct HOV to HOV connections. These projects are finished or currently underway.
- The 1996 Sound Transit plan includes direct access ramps to allow buses to enter and exit HOV lanes without crossing general purpose traffic. These direct access facilities cost approximately \$500 million. The Sound Transit Phase II plan does not include funding for additional direct access ramps.
- King, Pierce and Snohomish counties are authorized to levy, with voter approval, local taxes to accelerate completion of HOV lanes and related facilities on state highways and local arterials and to fund other HOV programs ([RCW 81.100.030](#), [81.100.060](#)). No county has authorized these tax options. For more information on local option HOV taxes, see the *Local Option Taxes for High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Systems* section on page 119.

## Intercity Passenger Rail (Amtrak Cascades)

### BACKGROUND

- The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) along with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) sponsor the intercity passenger rail service known as Amtrak Cascades. The Amtrak Cascades service operates on a 467-mile rail corridor connecting 18 cities spanning from Eugene, OR, through Portland and Seattle to Vancouver, BC. The tracks are owned by the Union Pacific Railroad (Oregon) and the BNSF Railway (Washington and British Columbia).
- The major rail network, on which Amtrak operates, is privately owned by the BNSF railroad company. Freight, national and regional passenger rail, and local commuter rail services use this rail line.
- 300 miles of the corridor are in Washington, 134 miles in Oregon and 33 miles in British Columbia. Each day 11 trains are in service: three between Seattle, WA and Eugene, OR; three between Seattle, WA and Portland, OR; two between Seattle, WA, and Vancouver, B.C.; two between Portland, OR and Vancouver, B.C.; and one between Portland, OR and Eugene, OR.
- Ridership on WSDOT/ODOT sponsored service in the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor (Amtrak Cascades) has risen from 94,000 in 1994 to over 807,000 in 2013.
- In October 2013, Section 209 of the Federal Railroad Administration's Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) was implemented, which eliminates federal operating funding for state-supported trains, requiring states to absorb more costs.
- Two additional Amtrak long-distance lines operate in Washington: (1) Empire Builder, which travels from the Pacific Northwest to Chicago, IL, with service from Seattle/Portland to Spokane, WA; and (2) Coast Starlight, which travels between Seattle, WA, and Los Angeles, CA, with a total of six station stops in Washington State.

### GOVERNANCE

- WSDOT is responsible for developing and implementing Washington State's passenger rail program as specified in [RCW 47.79](#) and [47.82](#). In 2014, WSDOT published the new state rail plan, which incorporates passenger and freight rail into one strategic plan.
- The 18th amendment to the Washington State constitution prohibits the expenditure of state or federal gas tax dollars on rail construction projects or operations. For a more in-depth description of the *18th Amendment*, go to page 25.

### FUNDING

#### **High-Speed Rail Funding -- Multimodal Account Federal**

Washington was awarded a total of \$794.9 million in federal funding to increase the frequency and reliability of the Amtrak Cascades service.

- January 2010 – Washington was awarded \$590 million in federal ARRA grants for High-Speed Rail improvements in the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor.
- April 2011 – Awarded an additional \$145.5 million in ARRA funds.
- September 2011 - Awarded additional \$31.1 million in ARRA funds.
- Other federal funding sources for high-speed rail totaled \$28.3 million.

As a result of this funding, by the end of the ARRA program in 2017 Amtrak Cascades passengers will see:

- Two additional daily round trips between Seattle and Portland, for a total of six round trips
- 10-minute reduction in travel times
- 88 percent on-time performance.

From these amounts, \$426.6 million in federal and local funds from the Multimodal Account in 2013-2015 was appropriated for:

- Creation of an Integrated State Rail Plan which combines and updates Washington's separate freight rail and passenger rail plans as one plan.
- Construction of track improvements near Blaine to facilitate train movements around the Customs inspection facility.
- Purchase and install new tracks, concrete ties and ballast rock in Vancouver, WA.
- Improve safety at grade crossings under the Federal Highway Administration's Surface Transportation Program Sections 1103(f) and 130(f) corridor hazard elimination program.

### **Multimodal Account – State**

The 2013-2015 transportation budget as supplemented in the 2014 legislative session included an appropriation of \$85.3 million from the Multimodal Transportation Account – State, to carry out the following activities:

- Operate two daily round trips between Seattle and Portland; one daily round trip between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C.; and one daily roundtrip between Portland and Vancouver B.C. (A third daily trip between Portland and Seattle is funded by Amtrak.)
- Design station, platform and track at Freighthouse Square in Tacoma.
- Construct main line and bypass track at Port of Vancouver.
- Track improvements between Vancouver and Nisqually, Seattle to Everett, and Everett to the U.S./Canada border.
- Build main line and sidings in the Kelso to Longview area.
- Improve the signal system for controlling train movement.
- Construct new main line at Blaine.
- Design new locomotives that will be used for passenger service starting in 2017.
- Improve track and signal system in conjunction with Sound Transit to improve access to King Street Station.
- Extend the rail siding at Mount Vernon and construct bypass tracks to allow passenger trains to go around freight congestion in Vancouver.
- Construct a new station and platform at Tukwila.
- Overhaul Amtrak Cascades trainsets.

### ON THE WEB

[WSDOT's Passenger Rail website](#)

[Washington State Rail Plan, 2013 - 2035](#)

[WSDOT High-Speed Rail Projects webpage](#)

## Regional Rail Commuter Service

### BACKGROUND

- "Commuter rail" is typically a passenger rail service connecting city centers with their suburbs or nearby cities. Stations tend to be further apart than for light rail. In Washington State, Sound Transit's "**Sounder**" service runs primarily on the same mainline as the Amtrak Cascades service. A small portion of the Sounder line in south Puget Sound runs on line owned solely by Sound Transit. Currently, Sounder service is available during morning and afternoon commuter hours roundtrip between Everett and Seattle and Seattle and Lakewood, via Tacoma.
- "**Light rail**" or "light rail transit" (LRT) is a form of high-capacity rail public transportation that may have a lower capacity and lower speed than heavy rail or subway systems, but higher capacity and higher speed than streetcar systems. Light rail operates primarily in separate rights-of-way.
- In Washington State, LRT is operated by [Sound Transit](#) in the Puget Sound region. "Central Link" service runs between SeaTac airport and Westlake in Seattle approximately every ten minutes between 5AM and midnight. A separate light rail line operates within Tacoma between the Tacoma Dome and the Theater district.
- In November 2008, the voters of the Central Puget Sound approved Sound Transit 2. Sound Transit estimates that they will be running light rail to the University District in Seattle by 2016, north to Northgate by 2021, further north to Lynnwood by 2023 and across Lake Washington to Bellevue and Redmond by 2023. An extension south from SeaTac to Federal Way is expected to be operating by 2016.
- LRT was also considered for the Vancouver area, extending light rail from Portland, Oregon, as part of the replacement of the Interstate 5 bridge over the Columbia River.

### GOVERNANCE

Sound Transit operates as a Regional Transit Authority under [RCW 81.112](#). For more information refer to the *Local/Regional Jurisdictions* section on page 339.

Under the RTA statutes, light rail may be expanded upon approval by Puget Sound voters for the system additions and new taxing authority.

C-TRAN may operate light rail under its authority as a Public Transportation Benefit Area ([RCW 36.57A](#)) and is eligible to seek funding as a High Capacity Transportation Corridor area ([RCW 81.104](#)).

### FUNDING

Sound Transit's capital program and services are not funded by the state transportation budget, however they do frequently receive funds from the state's Regional Mobility Grant Program.

In 2012, farebox revenue paid for 23% of light rail operating expenses ([2014 Summary of Public Transportation, WSDOT](#).)

For more information about Sound Transit's tax sources, refer to the *Local Option Taxes for High Capacity Transportation* section on page 117.

# Bicycles and Pedestrians

## BACKGROUND

- Washington State's current Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan (2008-2027) sets a 20-year goal of doubling the percentage of trips made primarily by biking and walking in Washington while simultaneously reducing bicycle and pedestrian collisions with motor vehicles consistent with the State Highway Safety Plan and the Governor's goals. This plan fulfills both state and federal requirements to have a Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan ([RCW 47.06.100](#)). [2008 Bicycle Facilities and Walkways Plan](#)
- According to the December 2013 issue of WSDOT's "Gray Notebook," if the annual amount of walking and bicycling continues to increase at the rate tracked by WSDOT, Washington will exceed the state goal specified in the Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan before the 20-year target in 2027. [WSDOT Gray Notebook, December 2013](#)
- Overall, bicycling and walking have increased from 7 percent to over 10 percent in the past five years ([Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project, WSDOT](#)).
- In Washington, 13 percent of all trips, 5 percent of commute trips, and 10 percent of all miles traveled were made on foot or by bicycle, primarily in urban areas (US Census and National Household Travel Survey, 2009).
- For the second year in a row, pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities in Washington State have increased and now account for 19% of all traffic fatalities in Washington.
- More than 85 percent of collisions involving pedestrians or bicyclists occurred in urban areas between 2010 and 2013.
- Main Streets which are also state highways account for just 8 percent of the state highway system, yet 60 percent of bicycle and pedestrian collisions on state highways occur in these locations. (These routes tend to have higher speeds, limited pedestrian and bicycle connections, must serve as thoroughfares and also provide local access.)
- There are more pedestrian collisions involving youth 15 to 19 than there are in any other age group. Adults age 65 and older represent 13 percent of the population, yet they make up 25 percent of pedestrian fatalities.

## GOVERNANCE

- WSDOT's Bicycle Transportation Management Program was created in 1991. The program serves as a clearinghouse for bicycle program information and resources, coordinates bicycle safety and bicycle tourism programs in all state agencies, and assists cities and counties and WSDOT with developing bicycle-related projects ([RCW 47.04.190](#)). [www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike) & [www.wsdot.wa.gov/walk](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/walk)
- In 1984 the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) created the Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to advise the department on bike and pedestrian issues. This committee is comprised of citizens, statewide advocacy organizations, cities, and counties. Currently, the committee functions as a task force for WSDOT's Highway Safety Executive Committee, consulting on issues relating to multi-user roadway design, uniform traffic control devices, and interstate access for bicycles.

## FUNDING

- The 2013-15 biennial transportation budget includes \$52.4 million in state and federal funds for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Safe Routes to Schools grant programs, which fund pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements. [www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/SafeRoutes/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/SafeRoutes/)

- The 2014 Supplemental Transportation Budget included \$6.75 million from Highway Safety Account state funding for new Safe Routes to Schools projects.
- In August 2014, the US Congress passed the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014, extending federal surface transportation programs contained in the most recent reauthorization bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century or MAP-21, through May 2015.
- For bicycle and pedestrian programs, the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 continues the Transportation Alternatives program created in MAP-21. For the Transportation Alternatives program, Washington State is expected to receive \$12.5 million for Federal Fiscal Year 2014 for a wide variety of eligible activities, including bike and pedestrian projects.
- The Complete Streets Grant Program was created to construct retrofits of urban arterials in commercial and community centers to provide safe access to all road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users. No funding was provided for the grant program in the 2013-15 biennial budget.
- 0.3% of WSDOT's total construction program (about \$2 million/year) and 0.5% of city and county gas tax revenue is to be used for non-motorized transportation, particularly where highway and roadway projects sever existing paths ([RCW 47.30.050](#)).
- 75% of all money collected by cities and towns for bicycle licenses, fees, and penalties must be placed into the Bicycle Roads Fund ([RCW 35.75.050](#)). Currently, no cities collect bicycle license fees.
- WSDOT, county, and city funds may be used for the planning, constructing, and maintaining non-motorized facilities ([RCWs 47.30.030](#), [35.75.060](#), [36.82.145](#)).
- The Traffic Safety Commission provides grants to local communities primarily for signage and lighting improvements in school zones (\$500,000 annually, funded by state fines on speeders in school zones).
- The Transportation Improvement Board administers the Urban and Small City Sidewalk Programs with an average of \$2 million dedicated annually.

#### OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES

- Required lighting and reflectors ([RCW 46.61.780](#))
- Rules of the road apply to bicycles ([RCW 46.61.755](#))
- Highway designs to accommodate paths and trails ([RCW 47.30.020](#))
- Local and regional comprehensive plans must include a pedestrian and bicycle component, with guidance from regional transportation planning organizations ([RCW 36.70A.070](#) and [47.80.026](#))

# Air Transportation

## BACKGROUND

Air transportation in Washington State is comprised of three primary segments: Commercial Passenger Service, Air Cargo and General Aviation. In 2013, the FAA reported more than one million take-offs and landings from FAA-towered airports across Washington State.

- Commercial Passenger Service is by far the largest segment with nearly 20 million passenger boardings statewide in 2013.
- General Aviation refers to civil aviation operations other than scheduled air services and non-scheduled air transport operations for hire. The [2012 WSDOT Aviation Economic Impact Study](#) identified 17 aviation activities that provide value to users. The majority of these activities fall into the category of general aviation, which includes a wide range of activities, such as flight training, air ambulance, police aviation, aerial firefighting, gliding, and skydiving.

Aviation facilities in the Washington State system include a total of 134 public-use airports serving over 19,000 pilots across the state.

Each public-use airport in Washington has a specific state [classification](#) as identified in the 2009 Long-term Air Transportation Study (LATS):

- 16 Commercial
- 18 Regional
- 21 Community Service
- 33 Local Service
- 37 Rural Essential
- 9 Seaplane

Airport ownership varies across the state:

- 40 City/town
- 32 Port District
- 29 Private
- 16 state-managed
- 10 County
- 5 Joint
- 2 Airport Authority

Sixty-four public-use airports in the state are considered significant to national air transportation and are included in the Federal Aviation Administration's National Plan of Integrated Airports System (NPIAS) making them eligible for FAA improvement grants.

The [16 state-managed airports](#) are strategically located to provide aircraft emergency access and fire suppression bases in remote areas of the state. These airports also serve remote communities and are used for recreation.

According to the FAA's data for 2013, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport had 16,690,295 passenger boardings, ranking 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation. Spokane International Airport ranked 76<sup>th</sup>.

At Washington's public use airports, approximately 3.7 million aircraft landings and takeoffs occur every year and more than 1.2 Million tons of air cargo flow through the state's airports annually.

Each year over 750 lifesaving ambulance missions and over 460 search and rescue missions are flown from public-use airports.

Approximately 12,000 aircraft are registered in the State of Washington of which over 8,000 general aviation aircraft, including piston-powered airplanes, multi-engine turboprops, business jets, helicopters, and experimental and light sport aircraft, are based at public use airports across the state.

Washington's active non-pilot certificates (ground instruction, mechanic, repair, parachute rigger, flight attendant) exceed 18,000.

## GOVERNANCE

- Public-use airports are operated by port districts, cities, counties, and private interests.
- Key programs at WSDOT Aviation include:
  - Airport grants and capital improvement programs
  - Aviation system and land use planning
  - Aircraft registration
  - Aviation emergency services
  - Construction and maintenance of facilities for 16 state-operated airports

## FUNDING

**Funding for WSDOT-Aviation Division** (*see States Taxes Chapter for more information about each of the state taxes and fees*):

- State aviation fuel tax: 11 cents per gallon fuel tax, which applies primarily to general aviation aircraft
- Motor fuel tax transfer: 0.028% of the gross motor fuel tax (less sales tax) (about \$500,000), compensation for unclaimed motor vehicle fuel used in aircraft
- Aircraft registration fee: \$15 paid annually by owners of aircraft operating in Washington State
- Aircraft excise tax: Annual rate levied on a sliding scale depending on the type and size of the aircraft, 90% of the funds are deposited in the General Fund
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Grants - all grants require matching: 90% federal – 10% state/local:
  - State Aviation System Plan projects
  - State's Pavement Management Program
  - Airport master planning
  - Airport Improvement Projects

### **Funding sources for local airport funding:**

- Dedicated aviation funds: from proceeds of leases, hangar rentals, commercial leases, concessions, etc.
- Major airports (e.g., Seattle-Tacoma and Spokane International) impose landing fees on airlines to cover operations and finance capital improvements made with revenue bonds. In addition, passenger facility charges are assessed at commercial service airports for improvement projects.
- Public-owned facilities use several different funding mechanisms, including user fees (such as landing fees and passenger facility charges), voter-approved property tax levies, interest income, federal and state grants, and bond proceeds. Some ports, counties, and cities appropriate general tax revenues to support their facilities.

## WEB RESOURCES

- WSDOT Aviation can be found at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/>
- Washington's [Long-Term Air Transportation Study, July 2009](#), being updated for release in 2016
- Washington's [2012 WSDOT Aviation Economic Impact Study](#)
- [Airport Investment Solutions \(Due April 2015\)](#)
- For more airport data, see FAA's [Airport Program Statistics](#) and [Airport Operations and Ranking Reports](#).

## Miscellaneous Vehicles

- Motorcycles
  - Approximately 224,000 motorcycles are registered in the state
  - Definition of motorcycles ([RCW 46.04.330](#)); motor-driven cycles ([RCW 46.04.332](#))
  - Helmet, goggles, and face shield requirements ([RCW 46.37.530](#) and [46.37.535](#))
  - Special endorsement for driver's license ([RCW 46.20.500](#))
- Mopeds
  - Approximately 9,100 mopeds are registered in the state
  - Definition of mopeds ([RCW 46.04.304](#)); as distinct from motorized foot scooters ([RCW 46.04.336](#))
  - Any person holding a valid driver's license of any class may operate a moped without taking a special examination ([RCW 46.20.500](#))
  - Mopeds must be registered, may not operate on non-motorized trails or fully controlled limited access highways, and must comply with applicable federal motor safety regulations ([RCW 46.61.710](#) and [46.61.720](#))
- Motor Homes & Travel Trailers
  - Approximately 64,000 motor homes and 125,000 travel trailers are registered in the state
  - Definitions of motor homes ([RCW 46.04.305](#)) and travel trailers ([RCW 46.04.623](#))
  - Fees: registration ([RCW 46.17.350](#)), weight ([RCW 46.17.365](#)) and sanitary disposal fees ([RCW 46.17.375](#))
- Campers
  - Approximately 24,000 campers are registered in the state
  - Definition of campers ([RCW 46.04.085](#))
  - Registration fees ([RCW 46.17.350](#))
- Trailers
  - Approximately 90,000 trailers over 2000 pounds and 452,000 personal trailers are registered in the state
  - Definitions of trailers ([RCW 46.04.620](#)) and private-use trailers ([RCW 46.04.422](#))
  - Registration fees ([RCW 46.17.350](#))
- Tow trucks
  - Approximately 1,300 tow trucks are registered in the state
  - Towing and impoundment laws, including definitions ([Chapter 46.55 RCW](#))
  - Registration fees ([RCW 46.17.350](#))
- Electric Vehicles
  - Approximately 8,000 electric powered vehicles are registered in the state: 7,600 are conventional vehicles operating on electricity and 400 are low-speed electric vehicles which operate under 35 mph.
  - As of October 1, 2012, owners of conventional electric vehicles must pay a registration renewal fee of \$100 on vehicles using propulsion units powered solely by electricity ([RCW 46.17.323](#)).
  - Lower speed (less than 35 mph) electric vehicles are defined in [RCWs 46.04.295](#) and [46.04.357](#), are not subject to the \$100 fee, and are subject to road use requirements and limitations ([RCW 46.61.723](#) and [RCW 46.61.725](#)).

- Off-Road and Wheeled All-Terrain Vehicles
  - Approximately 81,000 off-road vehicles and 1,500 wheeled all-terrain vehicles are registered in the state
  - Definitions of off-road vehicles ([RCW 46.04.365](#)) and wheeled all-terrain vehicles ([RCW 46.09.310\(19\)](#))
  - Subject to equipment requirements and road use restrictions ([Chapter 46.09 RCW](#))
  - Registration fees ([RCW 46.17.350](#)); temporary use permits ([RCW 46.09.430](#)), decals ([RCW 46.09.400](#)), metal tags ([RCW 46.09.442](#)).
  
- Collector Vehicles & Horseless Carriages
  - Approximately 143,874 collector vehicles and 8,000 horseless carriages are registered in the state
  - Collector vehicles are over 30 years old ([RCW 46.04.126](#)) and horseless carriages are vehicles which are over 40 years old ([RCW 46.04.199](#))
  - Horseless carriage and collector vehicle plates are valid for the life of the vehicle, need not be renewed, and only need to be displayed on the rear of the vehicle. These vehicles must be operated primarily as collector vehicles. ([RCW 46.18.220](#) and [RCW 46.18.255](#))
  - Special license plate fees apply to both kinds of vehicles ([RCW 46.17.220](#)).
  
- Recreational Boating
  - Motor fuel tax refund to Marine Fuel Tax Refund Account ([RCW 79A.25.040](#))
  - Approximately 220,000 vessels licensed through the Department of Licensing
  - State Parks and Recreation Commission has regulatory authority ([Chapter 79A.60 RCW](#))
  - Registration fees and taxes ([RCW 88.02.650](#) and [82.49.030](#)) are deposited into the General Fund.
  
- Snowmobiles
  - Approximately 25,000 snowmobiles are registered in the state
  - Registration and restrictions on use ([Chapter 46.10 RCW](#))
  - An operating license is not required. However, no one under the age of 12 may operate a snowmobile on or across a public roadway or highway. Persons between the ages of 12 and 16 must have first completed a snowmobile safety education course before doing so.
  - Motor fuel tax refund to the Snowmobile Account in the General Fund ([RCW 46.10.510](#))