



Washington State
Transportation Commission



Voice of Washington State

Overview & Update

Presented to the
Joint Transportation Committee
July 25, 2012

Voice of Washington State (VOWS)

Background

The Legislature provided the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) with funding in the 2012 Supplemental Transportation Budget to expand our public outreach and establish a statewide transportation survey panel. WSTC must conduct two surveys on transportation funding and policy issues, with the results of the first survey due by January 2013.

In order to establish a statewide survey panel that can generate statistically valid data that is projectable by each of the 14 Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, we need to actively reach out to Washington State residents and encourage them to sign up.

- To do this, we have launched a PR effort & have created a public input program that gives the public options on how they can participate, with the ultimate goal of motivating people to join the survey panel.

The first statewide survey of panel members will be conducted late fall 2012 and results will be submitted to the Legislature by January 2013. The second survey will be conducted in spring 2013.

Voice of Washington State

Program Overview

Voice of Washington State (VOWS)

Program Overview

The WSTC is using technology to engage the public, improve access to government, and increase participation and input into the development of transportation policies and investment decisions.

The public can now voice their opinions and share their ideas online from the comfort of their home or on their handheld device.

The overarching goal is to get at least 15,000 residents across the state to participate and join the survey panel over the coming year, and to grow that participation over time.

Topics for discussion will focus on all things transportation - highways, mass transit, freight and high-speed rail, ferries, barges, aviation, etc.

Voice of Washington State (VOWS)

Program Overview

The VOWS program has two ways in which people can participate.

1. **The online survey panel** is a way for citizens to communicate their opinions and preferences by taking occasional surveys on transportation policy, funding and tax issues. Surveys are emailed to panel members and taken online. Over 6,000 people are currently signed up.
2. **The online discussion forums** are for citizens to engage with each other and publicly share, vote and comment on regional and statewide transportation ideas. Discussions within in each forum focus on both regionally specific issues and statewide topics. There are seven different regional online discussion forums across the state. Every forum page promotes the survey panel with a link to sign up for it.

The survey panel is similar to the Ferry Riders Opinion Group (FROG) survey panel – but where the FROG’s focus is on ferry issues, the VOWS focus is on statewide transportation issues.

The results from the online survey panel (statistically valid) and the online discussion forums (organic input/ideas) will be submitted to the Legislature and Governor at the start of each year.

Voice of Washington State

Public Relations Effort

Voice of Washington State (VOWS)

Public Relations Effort

A statewide public relations effort is underway to get the word out on the Voice of Washington State in an effort to inform the public of the program and encourage statewide participation. This effort will continue through fall 2012.

We have reached out to over 500 different media outlets, blogs, social media forums, community groups and associations, and public interest organizations and civic groups.

The communications approach:

- Create a user-friendly VOWS web site
- Provide communications materials for Commissioners, public officials, and organizations to use and share with their constituents and the general public.
- Issue a press release to media and blogs and organize editorial board meetings.
- Work with community groups, associations, and public interest organizations to circulate VOWS information to their audiences/members.

Voice of Washington State (VOWS)

Public Relations Effort

We started the statewide PR effort on June 28th and as of Monday July 23, there have been:

- 24 articles written in different papers
- 13 different blogs and/or organizations pushing it to their memberships
- 257 national media outlets published our press release online.
- Nearly 15,000 views of our press release nationally via the PR newswire.

The purpose of this PR effort? To encourage participation in the VOWS program – and most importantly – to grow the statewide survey panel by an additional 9,000 participants.

Special emphasis is being placed in areas of the state where current panel numbers are below our target sample size necessary to ensure the survey data gathered is projectable both statewide and within each Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO).

The counties where we need to do the most work to recruit survey panel members are: Pierce, Snohomish, Walla Walla, Spokane, Yakima, Benton, Clark, Thurston, Franklin, Cowlitz, and Skagit.

Voice of Washington State

Web Site Overview

Voice of Washington State

Speak out on transportation

Sponsored by the Washington State Transportation Commission



Share your transportation ideas and opinions with the State Legislature and Governor

There are two ways to participate in VOWS and you can do one or both of them: 1. through the Online Forum or 2. by joining the Survey Panel. You decide how you want to participate!

1 Participate in Online Forums

Pick your region on the map to start the conversation. You can share your ideas and opinions on transportation issues and vote on other's ideas and comments. There is no limit to the number of forums you can join.



2 Join the Survey Panel

Sign up to join the panel and we will email you online surveys throughout the year. We need your input on topics like tolling, funding, tax options, transportation services and investment priorities.



How will the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) use your information?

We will share the ideas and data with the Governor and State Legislature to help inform their discussions and decision-making on transportation issues. To learn more about the WSTC, go to www.wstc.wa.gov.



Voice of Washington State

Speak out on transportation

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Welcome To The Voice Of Washington State

Joining the panel means you can share your opinions on specific transportation issues and ideas by responding to occasional online surveys that will be emailed to you. Any Washington State resident can join the Survey Panel. There is no cost to join.

➔ **Please Signup using the form to the right.**

What is Voice of Washington State, otherwise know as VOWS? It is a program to gather citizen input on transportation policy, taxes and funding issues. Your input through the VOWS Survey Panel can help shape our state transportation system through our periodic surveys. The [Washington State Transportation Commission](#) will provide survey results to the Governor and the State Legislature to inform their discussions and decision making.

VOWS Online Discussion Forums: You can also share your thoughts and ideas by participating in our online discussion forums that will be going on across the state. You will be able to see all the ideas and comments that get posted by citizens and you can vote for or against them as well as post your own ideas for discussion and voting. To join the online discussion forum please go to [Voice Of Washington State](#) and select the region you are interested in. Like the survey panel, all the ideas and discussions will be presented to the Governor and State Legislature so join the discussion and get your ideas out there and in front of our state's decision makers!

Join Voice Of Washington Survey Panel Now

Email Address *

First Name *

Last Name *

Password *

Verify *

*All fields are required

[Get Started >>](#)

Voice of Washington State

Speak out on transportation

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1. Western Wash. Forum
2. North Puget Sound Wash. Forum
3. Central Puget Sound Wash. Forum
4. Southwest Wash. Forum
5. Central Wash. Forum
6. Northeast Wash. Forum
7. Southeast Wash. Forum

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Voice of Washington State

Speak out on transportation

Search Ideas

Search

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Home

How does it work?



Submitting Your Ideas



Voting & Commenting on Other's Ideas



Joining the Voice of Wa. State
Survey Panel

[Signup for Survey Panel Here](#)

Regional Topics

[ALL Issues and Ideas](#)

[CONGESTION Issues & Ideas](#)

[PUBLIC TRANSIT Issues & Ideas](#)

[FERRY SYSTEM Issues & Ideas](#)

[OTHER Issues & Ideas](#)

Social Web

Like

Bill Young and 7 others like this.



Tweet

1

Welcome to the Central Puget Sound Online Forum

The **Central Puget Sound Online Forum** is sponsored by the [Washington State Transportation Commission](#). This Online Forum is a venue for open discussion where people can publicly share and vote on ideas to improve or change the Washington State transportation system. The Online Forum is open to any Washington State resident and it is free to join and use!

Regional Topics Currently Under Discussion:

- 1) How can **congestion** be reduced on state freeways?
- 2) Given federal and local dollars fund transit services, how should state tax dollars be used to fund **public transportation services**, whether buses, trains or, vanpools?
- 3) The **Washington State Ferry** system is facing a serious funding short fall that could impact service levels. What should we do about it?



[Submit a New Idea](#)

Browse Popular Ideas

Recent (34)

Popular (34)

Hot (21)



I agree

FERRY SYSTEM ISSUES & IDEAS »

More Coordinated schedule between ferries and transit

10

votes

The ferry system and the public transit need to work together to make their schedules match. Sometimes I get off the boat and have to wait in the rain forever for a bus.



I disagree

2 comments

Submitted by Community Member 1 month ago



I agree

PUBLIC TRANSIT ISSUES & IDEAS »

The state should accelerate voter approved transit projects.

7

votes

Electric rail projects like those Sound Transit builds get us not only higher capacity than we can get in our urban centers, but also help the state meet its CO2 reduction targets. State funding for these projects could accelerate them and help us grow our mass transit network faster - as well as encourage other cities to invest to get matching funds.



I disagree

Voice of Washington State (VOWS)

Join the Conversation

To join the Voice of Washington State and participate in the survey panel, online discussion forums, or both – just log on to:

www.voiceofwashingtonstate.org

Questions??

Contact:

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