



JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Evaluation of State –Level Transportation Plans

Presentation October 12, 2010



Consultant Team: Cedar River Group | Lund Consulting | BERK & ASSOCIATES | Wilbur Smith Associates

PURPOSE

The principle objective of this project is to improve the utility and minimize the cost of state-level transportation plans, and to clarify responsibility for their preparation.

Transportation Budget

The legislature has directed the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) to “Evaluate the preparation of state-level transportation plans. The evaluation must include a review of federal planning requirements, the Washington Transportation Plan and statewide modal plan requirements, and transportation plan requirements for regional and local entities. The evaluation must make recommendations concerning the appropriate responsibilities for preparation of plans, methods to develop plans more efficiently, and the utility of statewide planning documents. (ESSB 6381, Section 204, (7)(210))

OVERVIEW

This presentation provides a situation assessment of current

- Planning requirements
- Plan integration
- Plan utilization
- Planning expenditures

Poses questions raised by the assessment

Draft report will

- Review potential changes in federal requirements
- Look at other states
- Recommend state-level plans, responsibilities, and budgets
- Recommend potential legislation

Next presentation – December 8

REQUIREMENTS

State planning requirements are more extensive than federal requirements

- State has extended metropolitan planning requirements state-wide
 - ✓ Plan, improvement program, unified planning work program for RTPs
- Washington requires statewide transportation plan (RCW 41.01.071) and statewide multimodal plan (RCW 47.06.030). Prior to 2007 Commission statutorily required to produce a statewide policy plan. Traditionally, one plan (the WTP) has met all three requirements. Changed reality with WSDOT now a cabinet agency
- Washington requires seven (7) state-owned and state-interest plans

State can decide how to meet federal planning requirements

- Federal law allows the state discretion in meeting planning federal requirements
- State law contemplated integration of plans to jointly meet federal requirements
 - ✓ 2007-26 Washington Transportation Plan met state & federal requirements
 - ✓ 2 plan requirement grounded in a governance structure that no longer exists
 - ✓ WSTC and WSDOT policy roles overlap & there is tension over the two plan requirement

REQUIREMENTS

Federal metropolitan planning requirements limit the state's role

- State does not have to approve the metropolitan transportation plan
- Metropolitan transportation improvement plan incorporated without change into state transportation improvement plan

WHAT ARE THE FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS?

Five Federal Requirements	Corresponding State Requirement
Metropolitan Transportation Plans (11 MPOs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update required every 4 or 5 years • 20 year horizon required 	No requirements for MPOs/there are for Regional Transportation Planning Organizations
Long-Range State Transportation Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update periodically • 20 year horizon required • Can be policy plan, project list • Must follow procedural requirements 	Statewide Transportation Plan - WSTC* Statewide Multi-modal Plan - WSDOT* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State owned components • State interest components
Aviation System Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update recommended 5 years 	Aviation Plan (state interest)
State Rail Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update required every 5 years 	State Freight Rail Plan (state interest) Intercity Passenger Rail Plan (state interest)
Strategic Highway System Plan	No requirement

* State law requires both plans to comply with federal law.

FEDERAL FUNDING: ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

State Transportation Long-Range Planning Programs

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

- Lists every project that is to be federally funded

State Planning and Research Program (SPR)

- List state planning and research activities – use of federal SPR funds
- Two year plan

Metropolitan Transportation Long-Range Planning Programs

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- All projects receiving federal funds and projects of regional significance
- Other requirements same as state

Metropolitan Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- Planning studies and evaluations – use of federal, state, local funds
- One or two year time horizon

WHAT ARE STATE REQUIREMENTS?

Additional State Requirements (Regional Plans and 7 State-Owned/State Interest Plans)

Regional Transportation Plans (14 Regional Transportation Planning Organizations)

Highway System Plan (state owned)

State Ferry System Plan (state owned)

Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan (state interest)

Freight Mobility Plan (state interest)

High Capacity Transportation Planning & Regional Transportation Planning (state interest)*

Marine Ports and Navigation Plan (state interest)

Public Transportation Plan (state interest)

Technical Transportation Workforce Plan (state interest)

*No plan required – planning process

QUESTIONS

Planning requirement questions to be addressed

Federal Requirements

- How should the state meet the requirement for a state transportation plan?
 - ✓ What type of plan should it be and should there be more than one?
 - ✓ How often should it be updated or should the update cycle be ad-hoc?
 - ✓ Who should develop the plan?
- Should there be any changes in how the state is meeting requirements for a state rail, aviation, and strategic highway safety plan?

State Requirements

- Should the state modify requirements for RTPOs?
 - ✓ If modified, what effect would there be on the State Growth Management Act?
- Should the state continue to require modal plans that are not federally required?
 - ✓ What would happen if they were not required?
- How can the statutory requirements be made more clear?

PLAN INTEGRATION

Efforts to integrate planning

- Overarching federal and state goals that help organize planning
- State law requires the statewide multi-modal plan to be developed “under” the statewide transportation plan developed by WSTC
 - ✓ State-owned and state-interest components under statewide transportation plan
 - ✓ State-owned and state-interest component plans to be consistent
- Unified Planning Work Programs: state and federal areas of emphasis and WSDOT coordination efforts help integrate planning

In reality state-level plans are not integrated

- The most important opportunity to integrate plans is when they are updated
- Mode plans are developed on different schedules and independently of one another
- There is no process to synchronize state and metropolitan plan
- Not clear how a statewide multi-modal will reflect being “under” the WSTC plan

QUESTIONS

Plan integration questions to be addressed

- What would be achieved by integrating state-level plans and at what cost?
- Is modal planning integration at the corridor or local level sufficient?
- Should there be a process to synchronize federally required metropolitan plans and state plans?

PLAN UTILIZATION

Focus on how plans affect legislative investment decisions

- Planning sometimes thought as more of a process than a product

Plans useful in biennial capital decision-making – interviews

- Highway System Plan
- Washington State Ferries Long-Range Plan
- Amtrak Cascades 2008 Mid-Range Plan
- Washington State Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero

These plans are useful because they:

- Provide clear, pragmatic, incremental choices
- Prioritize investments
- Provide a financially constrained program of capital investments
- Include operational as well as capital choices
- Are data driven

QUESTIONS

Plan utilization questions to be answered

- How can planning (and resultant plans) be made important to decision-makers?
- How can/should stakeholders or the public know that a plan has legislative endorsement?
- How should the legislature utilize local, corridor, RTPO, or MPO plans?
- What should the balance be between the federal concept of 3c planning “continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated” and a planning product sequenced with legislative decision-making?
- What data must be collected and maintained in order to be able to have data driven planning?
- How should plans relate to performance measures?

EXPENDITURES 2009-11 BIENNIUM

Focus on expenditures for planning (not plans)

- Include research expenditures

Sources of budget information

- State Planning and Research Program
- WSDOT budget
- MPO and RTPPO Unified Planning Work Programs

Federal Funding

- Minimum planning expenditure
 - ✓ 2% of Federal Highway Administration funding for state planning and research, of which not less than 25% of the 2% for research
- State Planning & Research Program and Unified Planning Work Programs required
- Match required for federal funds
 - ✓ 13.5% - Federal Highway Administration
 - ✓ 20.0% - Federal Highway Administration Research and Federal Transit Admin.

EXPENDITURES: 2009-11 Biennium Planning

Area (\$ millions)	Federal Funds	State Funds	Total	% of Total State Funds
State Long-Range Planning	\$1.2	\$0.8	\$2.0	41%
Mode Planning	\$3.1	\$2.7	\$5.8	47%
MPOs/RTPOs WSDOT Admin	\$0.6	\$0.3	\$0.9	30%
MPO/RTPO Grants	\$17.5 (MPOs)	\$4.4 (RTPOs)	\$21.9	20%
Regions Statewide Planning	\$4.2	\$2.6	\$6.8	38%
Travel, Collision, Roadway Data	\$4.2	\$9.7	\$13.9	70%
Other State Level Planning	\$2.2	\$0.8	\$3.0	28%
Total	\$33.0	\$21.4	\$54.4	39%
Excluding MPO Federal	\$15.5	\$21.4	\$36.9	58%

EXPENDITURES: 2009-11 Biennium Research

Area	Federal Funds (\$ millions)	State Funds (\$ millions)	Total - % State (\$ millions)	% of Total State Funds
SPR Participating Research Activities	\$4.3	\$1.4	\$5.6	24%
SPR Funding Contributed to National Programs	\$1.2		\$1.2	0%
Total	\$5.5	\$1.4	\$6.8	20%
<p>WSDOT also has \$4.2 million in federal funds utilized mainly for 100 percent federally funded Transportation Pooled Fund Research Projects which WSDOT leads.</p>				

OBSERVATIONS

More state funds appear to be expended on state-level planning that is minimally required to match federal dollars.

- Research activities appear to be the required 20 percent match

Use of federal funds is flexible

- Federal Highway Administration allows “maximum possible flexibility” in use of planning funds
- Means federal funds could potentially be shifted to legislative priorities
- MPO and RTPO Unified Planning Work Programs

Some states allow MPOs to use state funds to match federal funds

- Washington state requires the use of local funds for federal match

QUESTIONS

Expenditure questions to be addressed

- What is the minimum required state expenditure to match federal funding?
- What should be the priorities for federal SPR funding?
- How can planning expenses be reduced through streamlining or consolidation?