



JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 40937 · 531 15th Avenue S.E. · Olympia, Washington 98504 · (360) 786-7313 · <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/jtc>

January 10, 2008

TO: Members, House and Senate Transportation Committees

SUBJECT: Joint Transportation Committee: Activity Update

The previous Joint Transportation Committee update in June, 2007 outlined the Committee's work plan for the 2007 interim. We want to update you on activities in the 2007 interim, and progress made on studies assigned to the Committee.

The JTC met seven times during the 2007 interim. This included a June meeting held in conjunction with the Association of Washington Cities convention in Tacoma, and a September meeting in Wenatchee held jointly with the Transportation Commission as part of a tour focusing on transportation/growth management related issues.

Attached is a listing of three current transportation studies now being conducted by the JTC, as directed by the Legislature. Policy groups have been established to guide the ferry and freight investment studies and several members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees have been serving on these groups. We will be appointing another policy group to direct the special needs transportation study which is just beginning. The attachment also includes a summary of the first two years of the JTC activities/studies. Studies completed during that period assisted legislative actions affecting the state ferry system, teenage driving safety, transportation project prioritization, and transportation finance. We will be providing another update on Committee activities shortly after session, including the 2008 interim meeting schedule.

Thanks to all the legislators who have joined us at our 2007 interim meetings and who have served on our ferry and freight investment study policy groups. Also, we want to extend a sincere thank you to Representative Jarrett for his service as a member of the JTC. His insights and contributions to the Committee have been invaluable. Since the JTC consists of the Chair and Ranking Minority of the House and Senate Committees, we look forward to working with his successor, Representative Doug Ericksen, who joins the JTC on January 10, 2008.

Lastly, the JTC's first and only Staff Coordinator, Diane Schwickerath, is retiring January 31st. We want to thank her for a job well done. We also want to extend a hearty welcome to David Forte, the new Coordinator. Some of you may know David from his work at the Urban Planning Office at DOT. If you have any questions you may contact JTC staff, Diane Schwickerath, until January 31, at (360) 786-7329 or David Forte at (360) 786-7312, 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 Doug Ericksen

Enclosures:
JTC studies

JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE STUDIES

January 2008

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 2007-08. The JTC has scheduled monthly meetings 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. Studies #1-4 were identified in the 2007-09 Transportation Budget (ESHB 1094). 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: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/jtc>

| 2007-08 CURRENT STUDIES | | | | |
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| 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 during 2006. A JTC appointed Work Group, which includes legislative members, is overseeing implementation of ESHB 2358 and ferry system program reviews. Certain tasks are being done by the JTC consultant, the Cedar River Group, the Transportation Commission, and/or the WSDOT. Issues being addressed include ferry fares and pricing strategies, levels of service, capital plans for boats and terminals, and financing strategies. The work group issued a study progress report December 15, 2007; however, several 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 | Initially: Draft final due Dec. 15, 2007 Modified: Final Report: Prior to 2009 Session | This consultant study, set forth in SSB 5207, is evaluating existing fees paid by the freight industry and potential industry and other fees and taxes to finance freight congestion relief investments. This includes an evaluation of other states and countries' programs and their impact on competitiveness. The study is also examining the structure of a project recommendation body. The stakeholder group is composed of industry and public agency representatives and others and is administered by the JTC. \$500,000 is appropriated for this study. In May 2007, the JTC approved \$400,000 to proceed with the study. A contract was signed with Cambridge Systematics in July, 2007. The study was to have been completed in January, 2008; however its duration has been extended through summer, 2008 to coordinate study efforts with WSDOT freight project analysis work. | Contract is signed \$500,000 appropriated, \$420,000 approved by JTC for consultant work |
| 3. Agency Council on 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. Four meetings with providers, brokers and the many agencies sponsoring trips for persons with special needs will be held. The JTC retained Nelson\Nygaard to assist with the evaluation. A final draft report is due to the House and Senate Transportation Committees by November 15, 2008. | \$300,000 appropriated |

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| 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. (No expenditures to date). | \$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

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| <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> |

January, 2008