

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices

Shaping a New Approach to Regional Transportation and Land Use Planning in Washington State

April 2010

In March 2010, Washington was one of five states selected by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices for a policy academy on developing new ways to implement land use and transportation planning. The project will generate an action plan for integrating state policy goals with regional and local plans and actions and will be piloted by the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council during the scoping of their 2011 metropolitan transportation plan update.

What is the National Governors Association Policy Academy?

The National Governors Association Policy Academy is a highly interactive, team-based process to develop and implement state action plans that address complex public policy issues. Participating states receive guidance and technical assistance from Center staff and faculty experts as well as consultants from the private sector, research organizations, academia, and the federal government. The strategies and policies developed by the selected states are intended to serve as ideas and best practices for all states.

Why is Washington participating in the Policy Academy?

We believe the Policy Academy can help us enhance our existing land use and transportation planning framework to address the challenges of the next 20 years: enhancing the livability of our communities, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting our environment, supporting our economy, strategically investing in and managing our transportation system, and managing and reporting our performance to our citizens. Solving these challenges requires stronger and more effective partnerships between the state, regional transportation planning organizations, and local governments. We are piloting a new approach to these partnerships with the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC), a mid-size regional transportation planning organization in Clark County. This area presents a special challenge in coordination: it spans two states and two metropolitan areas with distinct but necessarily connected ways of solving problems. We believe that transportation and livability coordination is one of our most promising tools for achieving our goals.

What are the milestones and when will they happen?

The Policy Academy began in March with an opening meeting in Washington, D.C. The meeting included educational sessions as well as time for the states to craft their action plans. Policy Academy faculty will visit Washington State in the spring and summer to work with the RTC and may also be available to work with the Governor's Climate Change Executive Order 09-05 working groups and the Governor's cabinet. The closing Policy Academy meeting will be in October 2010 and the final state action plan will be submitted in November 2010.

What are the expected outcomes of the Policy Academy?

Washington's goal for the Policy Academy is to identify strategies that will harmonize different levels of decision-making for transportation and land use so that with smarter decisions and common objectives we can improve the livability of our communities, strengthen our economy, make better investments and better manage the performance of the transportation system.

Who is involved in the Policy Academy?

The core Policy Academy team includes:

- Representative Jim Moeller, Washington State Legislature
- Mark Rupp, Governor's Office
- Brian Smith, WSDOT
- Dean Lookingbill, RTC
- Leonard Bauer, Commerce
- Andy Cotugno, Ex officio member, Metro, (Portland, Oregon)

How do I find out more?

Contact WSDOT:

- Brian Smith, Director Strategic Planning Division, 360.705.7958
- Elizabeth Robbins, Manager Community Transportation Planning Office, 360.705.7371

National Governors Association Policy Academy

How will Washington Benefit from the Policy Academy?

Many states confront a transportation system that is not meeting the needs of its citizens because it is out of date, stressed beyond capacity, financially unsustainable or inefficient. To work against these substantial issues, the NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) has selected five states—Colorado, Maryland, Tennessee, Washington, and West Virginia—to develop and implement innovative solutions through its Policy Academy on Shaping a New Approach to Transportation and Land Use Planning.

As John Thomasian, director of the NGA Center stated “States that begin to adjust their approach to transportation and land use planning have the opportunity to increase mobility and transportation choices, enhance economic growth and competitiveness, lower emissions, improve quality of life, and make smart investment decisions. Through this Policy Academy, the selected states will help confront the country’s most challenging transportation issues.”

Who are the Policy Academy Faculty?

Nancy Kete—Senior Fellow and Director of EMBARQ: The World Resources Institute Center for Sustainable Transport. She has a background in the interface of trade and environmental issues.

Geoff Anderson—President and CEO of Smart Growth America. Formerly at the U.S. EPA where he headed the agency’s Smart Growth Program.

Joe Cortright—President and principal economist with Impresa, a Portland consulting firm specializing in regional economic analysis, innovation, and industry clusters.

Nadine Fogarty—Principal at Strategic Economics where she specializes in evaluating the implications of planning policies on development potential.

Charles (Chuck) Kooshian—Senior Policy Analyst for the Center for Clean Air Policy (CCAP). He has more than 20 years experience in transportation and land use planning for local government.

Robert Puentes—Senior Fellow with the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program where he directs the Program’s Metropolitan Infrastructure Initiative.

Andrew Gottlieb—Former Chief of Commonwealth Development and a Trustee of Cape Cod Community College. He has 20+ years of environmental protection experience in government.

Jack Lettiere—President of Jack Lettiere Consulting, LLC and serves on US Transportation Secretary LaHood’s ITS Advisory Committee, and formerly Commissioner of the New Jersey Transportation Department.

Joshua Schank—Joined the National Transportation Policy Project in 2007. He previously worked with Parsons Brinckerhoff and served as Transportation Policy Advisor to Senator Hillary Clinton.

Peter Calthorpe—Formed Calthorpe Associated in 1983. He has a long and honored career in urban design, planning, and architecture. Internationally his work has demonstrated that community design, with a focus on environmental sustainability, can be adopted throughout the globe.

Sonia Hamel—Independent consultant advising governments and foundations on climate change, energy, and transportation policy. Serves as Senior Associate for the Center for Climate Strategies.

Stephen Burrington—Works with local governments, developers, real estate firms, and nongovernmental organizations. From 2003-2005 he served as undersecretary in the Massachusetts Office for Commonwealth Development.

Peter Skosey—Vice President of the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC). He coordinates the MPC’s legislative outreach to Springfield and Chicago’s City Council.

Stuart Cohen—Co-founder and Executive Director of TransForm, an organization that has built diverse coalitions to promote world class transit and walkable communities.

Harriet Tregoning—Director of the Washington DC Office of Planning. Served as Director of the Governor’s Institute on Community Design and co-founder, with former Maryland Governor Glendening, and Executive Director of the Smart Growth Institute.

Catherine Cox Blair—Program Director of Reconnecting America. She is focused on providing MPOs and transit agencies a range of tools for creating transit-oriented development.

Jerry Walters—Principal with Fehr & Peers, he leads the firm’s sustainability practice. He has over 30 years experience in integrated land use and transportation planning.

Beth Osborne—Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy at the U.S. DOT. She worked in the House of Representatives as a Legislative Assistant and as a Legislative Director.

Diane Turchette—Environmental Protection Specialist with FHWA, where she works on transportation-related air quality issues, climate change, energy use, and alternative fuels.

What will be the Five Elements of our Action Plan?

- 1. A Vision Statement:** where we hope to go long term
- 2. Challenges:** a realistic assessment of fiscal, technical, and political environment
- 3. Goals and Outcomes:** critical areas to concentrate limited time and resources and what we hope to achieve
- 4. Strategies:** approaches to reach goals
- 5. Action Steps:** detail-oriented activities with task assignments and timeframes

The presentations made by the Policy Academy faculty at the opening meeting in Washington, D.C. are linked to the agenda located at the following web site:

www.nga.org/Files/pdf/1003TRANSPORTAGENDA.PDF