

2017 Washington State
FREIGHT SYSTEM PLAN

APPENDIX E
PLAN DEVELOPMENT

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Washington's first-ever freight plan, the *2014 Washington State Freight Mobility Plan*, created a framework for freight transportation planning in the state. New requirements and opportunities were established in 2015. This plan builds upon the 2014 plan and included new networks, strategies, and investments. Outreach for this plan supplemented the relatively recent outreach performed for the *2014 Washington State Freight Mobility Plan*.

1. State freight advisory committee

The Washington State Freight Advisory Committee (WAFAC) was established as a standing committee of the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) and consists of members that represent the range of freight modes and other interests across the state.

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) encourages states to establish a state freight advisory committee, to consist of a representative cross-section of public and private freight stakeholders. USDOT guidance states that "State Freight Advisory Committees, with comprehensive representation by public and private freight interests, are a highly effective means of gathering information on system needs and potential solutions to be included in State Freight Plans and for other planning processes at interstate and local levels." Per federal requirements (49 USC §70201), the role of a state freight advisory committee is to:

- advise the state on freight-related priorities, issues, projects, and funding needs;
- serve as a forum for discussion for state transportation decisions affecting freight mobility;
- communicate and coordinate regional priorities with other organizations;
- promote the sharing of information between the private and public sectors on freight issues; and
- participate in the development of the freight plan of the state.

WAFAC serves these roles in Washington.

WAFAC includes members representing the private sector, airports, cities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, maritime businesses, ports, and railroads. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and FMSIB expanded WAFAC in 2016, based

on USDOT guidance which "strongly encourages states to establish, continue, or expand membership in State Freight Advisory Committees". The new members added to WAFAC after this guidance included federal agencies, additional ports, shippers, freight forwarders, freight carriers (i.e., short line railroads, trucking companies, and barge operators), third party logistics providers, safety partners, environmental agencies, academic organizations, and additional freight-related associations.

Five WAFAC meetings were held in 2017: February 3, April 21, June 20, July 21, and October 3. The committee discussed all components of the plan including the purpose, requirements, policy goals, system components, roles and responsibilities, investments, and strategies. Earlier meetings focused on the trends, issues, and needs as well as investments. In later meetings, discussions focused on project validation requirements and the freight system benefit evaluation tool and results. WSDOT summarized the comments received from review of the draft plan at the October WAFAC meeting, as well as the results of project benefit analysis.

2. Technical work groups

In addition to WAFAC, WSDOT reached out to other existing transportation work groups to solicit input on the *2017 Washington State Freight System Plan*. Staff working on the 2017 plan gave presentations at the quarterly meetings of WSDOT's internal freight working group. The WSDOT freight working group includes staff from all the regions around the state and headquarters staff whose work involves the freight system. At the January 2017 meeting, staff shared the scope of work for the new plan and provided an overview of freight issues and trends from 2014 to get feedback. At the March 2017 meeting, staff shared the draft issues and trends for the 2017 plan.

WSDOT gave presentations to the WSDOT/Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)/Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) Coordinating Committee, the PSRC FAST Freight Advisory Committee, and the Seattle Freight Advisory Committee.

3. Outreach meetings

To supplement the extensive outreach performed during development of the 2014 plan, WSDOT conducted outreach to specific organizations as staff prepared the 2017 plan.

Exhibit 3-1: Outreach meetings by region

Agency	Date
QUADCO RTPO	6/1/2017
Thurston Regional Planning Council Policy Board	6/14/2017
Palouse RTPO	7/11/2017
Whatcom Council of Governments	7/12/2017
Benton-Franklin Council of Governments PAC	7/13/2017
Spokane Regional Transportation Council	7/13/2017
Yakima Valley Council of Governments	7/17/2017
Skagit Council of Governments	7/19/2017
Northeast Washington RTPO	7/26/2017
Island County RTPO	7/26/2017
Cowlitz-Wahkiakum County Council of Governments	7/27/2017
Walla Walla Valley Policy Board	8/2/2017
Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council	8/10/2017
Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council – TAC	8/18/2017
Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council – Policy Board	9/5/2017
Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council	9/7/2017
Puget Sound Regional Council	9/14/2017
Peninsula RTPO	9/22/2017

Source: Washington State Department of Transportation

To learn about current freight issues and trends around the state, WSDOT reached out to policy boards and technical committees of the MPOs and RTPOs across Washington. WSDOT staff working on the *2017 Washington State Freight System Plan* gave joint presentations with WSDOT staff working on the *Washington Transportation Plan 2035*. Exhibit 3-1 shows the outreach conducted to date, and future outreach planned, by region and date. Common comments and questions were related to the development of the Freight Investment Plan, freight forecasts, and truck parking.

WSDOT gave presentations on the *2017 Washington State Freight System Plan* to the 2017 Washington Public Ports Association Spring Meeting in May and the 2017 Pacific Northwest Waterways Association Summer Conference in June. WSDOT met with FHWA Washington Division staff regularly during development of the 2017 plan to discuss how WSDOT was developing the plan and to clarify USDOT requirements and expectations. WSDOT staff also met with several freight system stakeholders to supplement and expand

upon the interviews done during preparation of the *2014 Washington State Freight Mobility Plan*.

- USDOT Maritime Administration (MARAD)
- Northwest Seaport Alliance
- Port of Seattle (air cargo)
- Boyer Towing (a barge towing company based on the Duwamish River in Seattle)

4. Tribal outreach

WSDOT staff provided a brief overview of the *2017 Washington State Freight System Plan* to the Washington Tribal Transportation Planning Organization at their quarterly meeting in January 2017 and solicited feedback from tribal representatives. In June 2017, WSDOT staff gave a presentation to the Washington Indian Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (WITPAC) and requested feedback. WSDOT distributed the draft plan to Washington tribes for their review.

5. Minority and low-income populations outreach

WSDOT distributed the draft plan to organizations that support minority and low-income populations for feedback on how the freight system affects their constituents.

6. Document review

WSDOT released the draft plan on Aug. 15, 2017, for a review period ending on Sept. 14, 2017. Reviewers representing 17 organizations provided more than 470 comments on the plan. WSDOT addressed these comments in the final version of the plan. Prominent themes among the comments are shown below.

Economic Vitality:

- Highlight recent successes and discuss strategies to address port competitiveness
- Explain land use and freight transportation compatibility issues in more detail

Preservation:

- Discuss oversize/overweight freight movement and its effect on the economy
- Include more discussion of strategies to address infrastructure funding needs

Safety:

- More work needed to identify and prioritize truck parking solutions
- Expand at-grade crossing and road-rail conflict discussion

Mobility:

- Update air cargo information and discuss factors influencing demand for air cargo services

Environment:

- Consider safety rest area truck parking electrification

Stewardship:

- Improve freight transportation data

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