WASHINGTON STATE: A PATH TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

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Today’s Presentation

- Transportation investments help shape our communities while connecting people with jobs and services.

- A healthy transportation system supports economic growth, preserves the environment, and enhances our communities.

- Today we are going to review how Washington State is creating an efficient 21\textsuperscript{st}-century transportation system; one that is durable, adaptable, and integrated statewide.

- We will begin with a look at how we got here, and then we will discuss why now, more than ever, we need to make responsible and sustainable transportation decisions.
Moving Washington reflects the state’s transportation goals and objectives for planning, operating and investing. State law directs public investments in transportation to support economic vitality, preservation, safety, mobility, the environment, and system stewardship.
Maintain and keep safe: The first priority is to maintain and preserve the safe and long-lasting performance of the existing transportation infrastructure, facilities, and services.

Integrate investments for cost-effective solutions: Moving Washington combines three essential transportation strategies to achieve and align our objectives and those of our partners. The first two strategies help wring more efficiency from the existing transportation system, and can defer or eliminate strategic capacity investments:

Operate Efficiently: Use of traffic-management tools to optimize the flow of traffic and maximize available capacity. Strategies include:
- Installing ramp meters and utilizing other control strategies to improve traffic flow and reduce collisions
- Deploying Incident Response to quickly clear collisions
- Optimizing traffic signal timing to reduce delay
Moving Washington (cont.)

- **Manage Demand:** Whether shifting travel times, using public transportation or reducing the need to travel altogether, managing demand on overburdened routes allows our entire system to function better. Strategies include:
  - Using variable-rate tolling in ways that reduce traffic during the most congested times and balance capacity between express and regular lanes
  - Improving the viability of alternate modes
  - Providing traveler information, through various means including smart signage, to allow users to move efficiently through the system

- **Add Capacity Strategically:**
  - Targeting our worst traffic hotspots or filling critical system gaps through strong partnerships with a shared vision for the corridor
  - Fixing bottlenecks that constrain the flow
  - Upgrading failing on-ramp merges or hard-shoulders
  - Improving rail crossings and ferry service
  - Working with transit agencies to connect communities
  - Building direct-access ramps for carpools and transit
  - Including paths for pedestrians and bicyclists
2013 Transportation Revenue Package

- Package Overview
  - The “Connecting Washington” transportation revenue package would have funded $10.3 billion in projects and programs while creating as many as 100,000 jobs across the State.
  - The package included several high-priority megaprojects across Washington State, over $1 billion in maintenance and preservation, and funding for local governments, public transit, and bike-ped projects.

- Demand Management Elements
  - HOT lanes on major interstate highways
  - Variable tolling on new and existing megaprojects
  - Local funding options for transportation alternatives

- Technology is critical to managing demand, but new investments are necessary to capitalize on such opportunities.
Commute Trip Reduction Program

- Washington State’s 20+ years of trip reduction experience have created partnerships focused on common goals for transportation efficiency and economic growth.

- The Washington State Legislature created the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program in 1991 as part of the Clean Air Act. The program asks employers to implement initiatives that encourage the use of alternatives to driving alone.

- Goals:
  - Improve air quality
  - Reduce traffic congestion
  - Reduce fuel imports and improve energy security

- 2006 Efficiency Act:
  - Built upon the established employer role
  - Expanded responsibility for program success to local governments that work with employers
  - Created the Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC) program
  - Integrated with local land use and transportation plans to align policies and investments
Local governments are the front-line support for CTR employers. Local ordinances outline requirements for employers at the local level. The CTR program encourages local governments to:

- Develop CTR plans and goals
- Provide training and technical assistance for employers
- Provide transportation services for commuters

Employers are responsible for implementing a set of strategies designed to reduce drive-alone commuting and vehicle miles traveled to the worksite

- Businesses can develop and implement a program that fits their organizational culture and land use and transportation context.
- This investment directly supports state and local goals to improve transportation system performance and achieve economic growth.
- Last year, $2.7 million in tax credits were approved for businesses.

The legislature appropriated approximately $6.1 million in the 2013-2015 biennium for the program. Most of this is provided as grants to local governments for technical assistance for employers. WSDOT uses the remainder for technical assistance, measurement, and evaluation.
2006 Efficiency Act Results

- Nine counties and 51 cities are affected by the program.
- Local governments use GTECs to build on CTR in a community-focused way, expanding the target market and beginning to address non-work related trips.
- GTEC brought in about 235,000 more commuters in seven urban centers.
- Employers spent approximately $58 million on their programs in 2011 — a ratio of about $21 dollars for every state dollar.
Overall CTR Performance

- Between 2007-8 and 2011-12, employees at nearly 1,100 CTR affected worksites reduced their rate of driving alone to work by 3.8 percent. Every day, about 16,000 cars are left at home as more employees are commuting to work by bus, train, or vanpool; walking or biking; or telecommuting instead of traveling to the office.

- Average vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per employee at CTR affected worksites declined by 5.7 percent between 2007-8 and 2011-12, with total statewide VMT reduced by 161 million miles annually. This VMT reduction results in 7.9 million gallons of fuel saved annually, saving commuters over $30 million in fuel expenditures.

- Between 2007-8 and 2011-12, CTR affected employees reduced their annual greenhouse gas emissions by 72,000 metric tons, which is equivalent to the carbon found in 310 railcars worth of coal.
Into the Future

Addressing all elements of a robust 21\textsuperscript{st} century transportation system is critical to strengthening our economy and supporting our growing communities.

Programs that manage demand, strategically add capacity, and reduce the number of commuters on the road will all be key tools as we seek solutions to our growing transportation needs.