



CLIMATE ALLIANCE
FOR jobs & clean energy

Transportation for All

SB 6398 / HB 2688

Washington needs a clean and equitable transportation system that reduces climate pollution, improves community health, increases economic opportunity, and creates sustainable alternatives to congestion management. A majority of Washington's transportation investments are decided without any defined goals or metrics. As a result, larger, more visible projects are prioritized. This selection process leads to negative outcomes, such as increased air pollution around transportation corridors, induced demand that creates additional congestion, and destruction of critical resource lands. These negative impacts do not align with our state's values of creating healthy and safe communities, and a fair and equitable distribution of transportation investments.

Instead, our transportation investments should be selected using a holistic set of desired goals, outcomes, and metrics.

Washington should require that any transportation investments or transportation funding cuts must meet health, equity, and environment metrics and goals. We believe that deciding our transportation infrastructure based on desired goals and outcomes will move us towards a more sustainable and accessible transportation system that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, as well as improve community health, safety, and access to transportation options. Every dollar we spend on transportation should move us toward our state transportation values and desired outcomes.

In 2019, WSDOT scored a proposed project list using a multi-criteria scoring model, which was based on the transportation system policy goals in RCW 47.04.280. This analysis was unconventional, nonbinding, and purely informational; however this type of analysis and transparency is a step toward accountability and reaching policy goals.

This kind of transparency and accountability are just as critical when making cuts to our transportation system. After the passage of I-976, we must be prepared to reduce transportation expenditures across the state, but we must do so in an intentional and methodical way. Using a similar framework of policy goals ensures that we do the least harm as we reduce our spending.

In 2020, Washington must increase transparency and take steps toward developing a process for developing transportation packages that moves the dial on meeting our state goals:

- ▶ Require any transportation project lists (new and in advance of each budget authorization) to undergo an evaluation, guided by the goals in [RCW 47.04.280](#). Analysis should be done by WSDOT (including representatives from active transportation, public transportation, multimodal planning, and ferries) in conjunction with the Department of Ecology, the Interagency Council on Health Disparities, the Department of Health, the Department of Commerce and through a public input process, in advance of consideration of any list by the legislature
- ▶ Require any suite of cuts to undergo this same analysis
- ▶ Project criteria and indicators associated with project review should be updated to reflect any changes to [RCW 47.04.280](#)
- ▶ Qualified projects should also be part of Metropolitan Planning Organization's existing regional plans

In the future, further efforts could include scoring thresholds to ensure only the most impactful projects are funded. Project scoring and funding decisions could also be given to broad oversight boards with community representatives or devolved to local funding bodies, such as RTPs. We may also want to revisit the transportation package process altogether. Most states provide dedicated transportation funding that is directed toward prioritized investments that are laid out in a comprehensive and strategic plan.

Update State Transportation policy goals to achieve better outcomes

Currently, state transportation system policy goals are outlined in [RCW 47.04.280](#). The Office of Financial Management is responsible for establishing objectives and performance measures for the six goals, and for preparing a biennial report to assess the performance of the transportation system and progress toward the goals. Transportation spending should be evaluated against the goals and this evaluation should help guide the decision-making process. We believe that a more holistic set of policies and a process for decision-making that incorporates them will improve overall performance. We propose the following updated set of goals to guide what types of transportation investments are funded:

Accessibility: To improve affordable access to the places and goods Washington residents, organizations, and businesses need to live, work, study, play, and pray

Safety: To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation users, the transportation system, and anyone interacting with the system

Environment and Climate: To enhance the quality of life through transportation investments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, water pollution, and toxics; promote energy conservation; and protect lands and waterways

Health and Resilience: To promote healthy people and communities through pollution-free transportation, multi-modal transportation, integrated land use/transportation projects, clean active transportation, and appropriate infrastructure

Equity and Environmental Justice : To eliminate historic and persistent barriers and prioritize investments meeting these goals to highly impacted communities and vulnerable populations that includes direct inclusion in decision-making

Preservation: To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior transportation systems and service investments that meet current and future needs and goals

Economic Vitality: To promote and develop transportation systems that support and enhance affordability, access to opportunity, and good jobs, as well as enhancing the ability for freight to bring goods to market

The Climate Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy is a coalition of environmental advocates, labor unions, health professionals, businesses, faith communities, and communities of color, working with tribal nations—plus thousands of volunteers from across Washington State—committed building a resilient climate justice movement.

Together, we envision a clean and equitable transportation system for Washington that reduces climate pollution, and improves community health, economic opportunity, and create sustainable alternatives to congestion management. We also believe transportation solutions must be built by those most those most adversely impacted by pollution and economic injustice to ensure we create a transportation system that works for everyone.