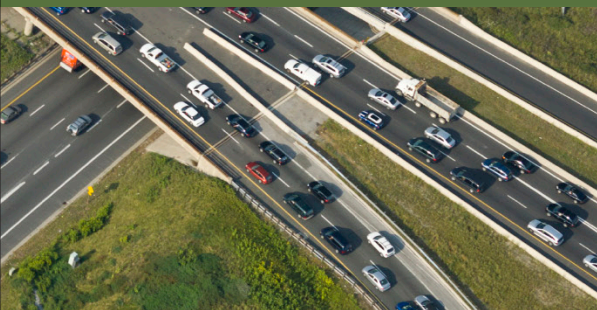


5 Principles of Responsible Transportation Policy



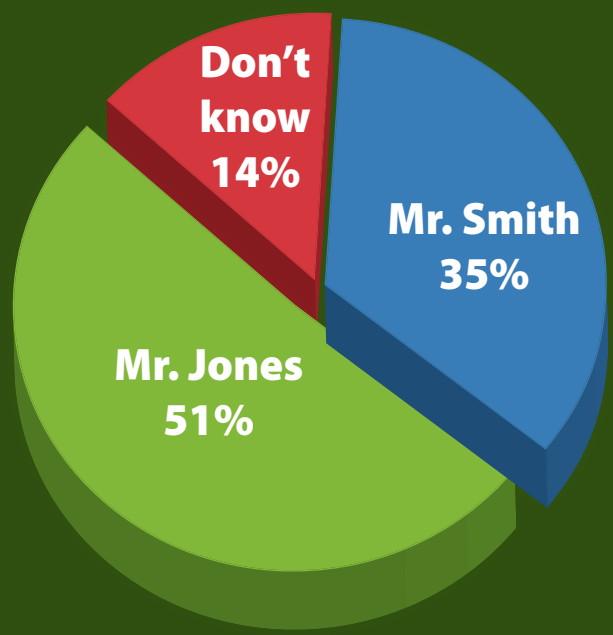
Washington Policy Center encourages five principles of responsible transportation policy to help guide policymakers in returning to a system that improves people's freedom of movement.

Do you agree more with Mr. Jones or Mr. Smith?*

To understand how people feel about government's role in transportation, respondents were asked to consider the following scenarios:

Mr. Jones believes state government should focus on fixing traffic congestion chokepoints. Congestion relief will help commuters get to work, help businesses move their products and help the environment because shorter commutes mean less air pollution.

Mr. Smith believes state government should try to get people out of their cars and that we need to focus tax dollars on public transportation, not building more highways. He says trying to fix traffic congestion with road improvements will result in more people driving more cars, more damage to the environment and more congestion.



*Source: 2011 Washington Policy Center Traffic Congestion Poll

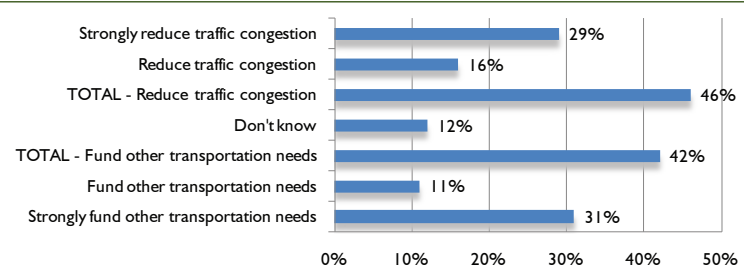
1. Tie spending to performance measures, like traffic relief and economic development

Traffic relief is the most basic goal of any transportation policy, yet it does not exist as a priority in Washington state.

In all cases, mobility should mean traffic relief, but instead state officials define it as a strategy to move people, rather than to improve traffic flows. This means spending shifts from actually fixing congestion to providing alternatives to congestion. This strategy is more expensive, less efficient and ironically, will always lead to greater congestion. According to the Federal Highway Administration, private passenger vehicles represent about 85 percent of all forms of transportation in the Seattle region. This means all other modes, including transit, walking, biking and telecommuting, serve only 15 percent of travelers. Adopting a policy that disproportionately ties spending to only 15 percent of the market will always lead to greater congestion, because the system that supports the remaining 85 percent is left to languish.

In business, measuring performance is a way of life. It is viewed as an indispensable tool that shapes decisions on resource distribution and risk. In the public sector, however, performance measures are treated more like an inconvenience. This is especially true in transportation policy. Across the country and in Washington state, transportation spending decisions are too often tied to political agendas and the wishes of influential constituencies, not objective measures of public need, such as safety, economic development and traffic relief. Performance measures also inherently create accountability among agency officials and their decisions.

Washington policymakers should strengthen the link between spending transportation taxes and specific performance measures like congestion relief. In eastern Washington and other rural areas, economic development should be key.



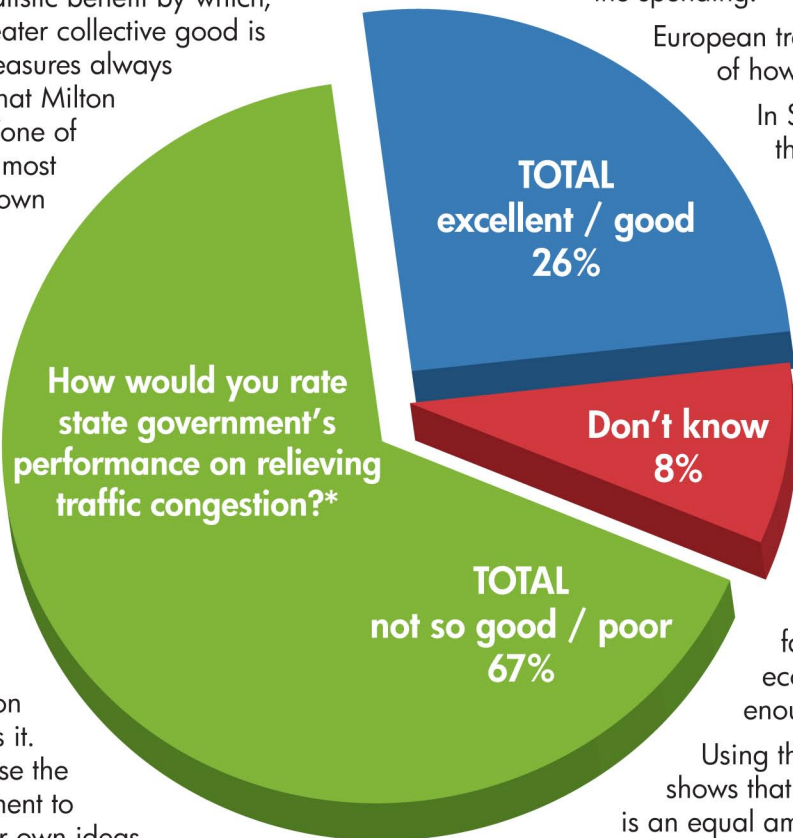
When spending your transportation tax dollars, do you think state government's first priority should be to reduce traffic congestion, or to fund other transportation needs?*

Five Principles of Responsi

2. Respect people's freedom of mobility

Government policies in transportation should be responsive to the market and improve the freedom of citizens to live and work where they choose. Government serves society, not the other way around.

Manipulating transportation policies to force a particular behavior coerces people to abandon their individual liberties in favor of a socialistic benefit by which, supposedly, a greater collective good is created. These measures always fail because of what Milton Friedman called "one of the strongest and most creative forces known to man," rational self interest; or people's desire to do what they believe is best for their own lives. Instead, proponents of social change should work in the marketplace of ideas to persuade others to share their vision and work towards it. They should not use the power of government to force through their own ideas, but should seek to change policy, if that is needed, once reform is broadly supported by the public. Policymakers should respect people's choices and allow for a greater freedom of their mobility.



3. Deploy resources based on market demand

Transportation resources should be distributed based on market demand rather than spent in ways that are somehow meant to engineer demand.

In economics, supply is a function of demand. This means a willingness to use a service must exist before a supply of that service is created. Boeing executives do not make 300 airplanes knowing they will only sell 100. Likewise, governments should not spend a disproportionate amount of taxes in low-demand sectors, where the public's willingness to use the service does not justify the spending.

European transit systems provide a good contrasting example of how these economic concepts apply.

In Switzerland, transit is successful, not because of the amount of service or infrastructure, but because the country has certain demographic and economic characteristics that induce demand.

In other words, there is an existing market with a customer base and Swiss policymakers respond with proportional infrastructure investments. As a result, mode share, ridership and fare box recovery are high. In the United States, transit resources are distributed in just the opposite way.

Under the "build it, and they will come" theory, policymakers think that increasing the supply of transit will somehow create more public demand. This speculative model fails because most U.S. cities do not possess the economic or demographic characteristics that create enough voluntary consumers for public transit.

Using the economic principles of supply and demand shows that building excess transit capacity before there is an equal amount of willingness to use it leads to an underperforming system. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Puget Sound region where Sound Transit officials are spending billions of dollars on a light rail system. Despite this massive spending, mode share, ridership and fare box recovery are very low and below projections.

When prioritizing transportation projects, policymakers should use consumer demand to drive investments, not the other way around.

ble Transportation Policy

4. Improve freight mobility

Freight mobility should play a significant role in transportation policy since that mobility is the key building block to our state's economic strength.

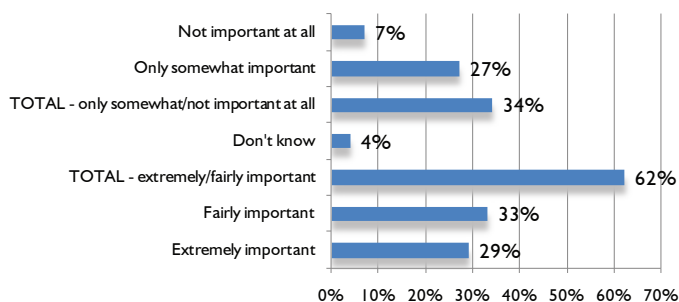
The transport of consumers and goods puts our economy in motion, and improves our quality of life. From trucks, freight trains, aviation and marine shipping, the value of goods that move through Washington state is expected to rise from \$400 billion a year today to \$1.2 trillion within 25 years. And in just nine years, the freight industry will add two million more trucks to our road system.

Our highways, which carry 70 percent of all commercial truck freight, are already congested, and that congestion is expected to double in the next twenty years. The Washington Transportation Commission estimates Washington has up to \$200 billion of unmet transportation infrastructure needs. Yet, local and state leaders spend billions of our transportation tax dollars in areas that do not help.

Replacing the Viaduct with two fewer lanes, replacing the Highway 520 Bridge with no additional general purpose lanes, replacing the center lanes on the I-90 Bridge with light rail, and ignoring the I-5 bottleneck through Seattle are not long-term solutions.

This means the number of general purpose highway lanes connecting the state to its largest employment hub will **decrease** in the next twenty years, despite regional population increases of more than one million new residents.

Policymakers must acknowledge that the freight industry is paramount to Washington's economic health and fund projects that improve mobility, not make it worse.



As you think about the government's role in transportation, how important to you personally is reducing traffic congestion?*

5. Utilize public-private partnerships

Using private investment through public-private partnerships (PPP), lawmakers can fund new projects, shift risk, maintain current transportation infrastructure and increase value to taxpayers.

There are many benefits associated with a PPP. These include leveraging private dollars for public use, shifting risk from taxpayers to the private sector, using competition to create incentives that lower capital and operating costs, and gaining a more efficient distribution of scarce transportation resources.

Other factors like public oversight, asset ownership, long-term maintenance, liability and labor costs, will dictate which PPP is a better fit. In some cases, these issues have been treated as obstacles and have prevented partnerships from forming. Yet other states have solved these problems and have adopted several types of partnerships. Undoubtedly, these concerns are important, but they should not deter us from pursuing the benefits of a public-private partnership. Partnering with the private sector is one way to increase financial resources and get roads built.

Washington state's experience with PPPs has been limited to the design/build format, which is an extremely passive approach and underutilizes the potential of private investment.

Washington state does allow PPPs by statute, but the law contains provisions that effectively prevent them from forming. Washington law requires that debt must be issued by the state treasurer, which eliminates financial incentives for private investment. Washington law also prohibits unsolicited proposals and requires a lengthy and inefficient approval and oversight process.

Public-private partnerships have a proven track record across the United States and should be embraced by public officials in Washington. However, reform is required if lawmakers want to take full advantage of PPPs to fund transportation projects in Washington state.

Bottlenecks

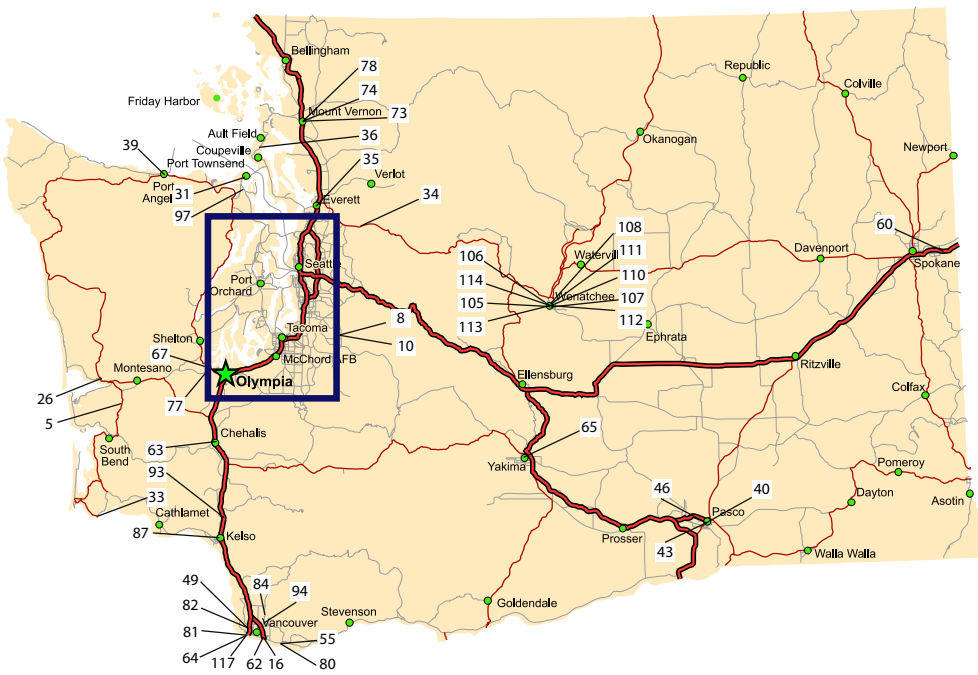
Relieving traffic congestion is a fundamental principle in transportation planning and bottlenecks are a major cause of this delay. When increased traffic volumes combine with narrow roadways, ramp and highway merges, or awkward intersections a bottleneck forms. The second Tacoma Narrows bridge is an example of how fixing these areas can relieve congestion and improve mobility. The following list includes 114 bottlenecks defined in the 2007-2026 Washington Transportation Plan and other notable traffic chokepoints.

Key Description

1. I-5 NB off ramp (EB direction) to Sleater Kinney SB
2. Martin Way Interchange NB off ramp terminal
3. 51st to West Lake Sammamish Parkway
4. Mounts-Old Nisqually Road Interchange to Gravelly Lake Drive
5. US 101 south of the community of Arctic
6. Pioneer Way to Kinman-Big Valley Roads
7. 94th Ave SE On-Ramp to End of WB Climbing Lane
8. Green River to Crest of Hill
9. SR 167 to SR 162
10. SE 383rd St. to Green River
11. I-90 at Front Street
12. Cooper Point Road SW (Mottman Interchange) to I-5
13. SR 410 to 96th Street East
14. Kinman/Big Valley Road to SR 104
15. I-5 at 272nd Street Interchange
16. SR 14 from I-205 to 164th Ave
17. I-5 at Snohomish County Line
18. Kinman/Big Valley Road to SR 104
19. Pacific Avenue Interchange to Martin Way Interchange
20. Fort Lewis to Thorne Lane
21. SR 164 to C Street
22. SR 516 to S. 277th Street
23. SR 161 to SR 167
24. 84th Ave. S. to S. 180th Street.
25. I-5 at Northgate
26. US 101 near Aberdeen Couplet/Levee Street (SR 109)
27. Jackson Avenue to Mile Hill Drive
28. Between Falls View Campground and Spencer Creek Road Vicinity
29. SR 510 to Clark Road SE (SR 507/Manke-Koeppen and SR 507)
30. Hwy 99 at I-5 Interchange
31. SR 20 between SR 19 and Old Fort Townsend Rd
32. Bainbridge Ferry Terminal to Suquamish Way
33. Golf Course Road to Race Street
34. City of Sultan
35. US 2 to SR 9
36. Swantown Rd. to Erie Street
37. 39th Avenue SW to SR 512
38. Intersection of SR 104 and SR 522 (Lake City Way)
39. Race Street to Brook Avenue

40. MP 13.46 to 4th Ave. Interchange
41. SR 106 to SR 300
42. Burnett Road (Yelm WCL) to SR 507
43. MP 37.08 to Edison Street Interchange
44. SR 3 and SR 304
45. Eastgate to Sunset I/C
46. SR 240 to George Washington Way
47. SR 300 to Mason/Kitsap County Line Vicinity
48. Mason/Kitsap County Line Vicinity to Lake Flora Road Vicinity
49. SR 500 to Padden Pkwy
50. Dogwood to Auburn City Limits
51. Elgin Clifton Road to SR 16
52. SR 3 and SR 16
53. 181st Avenue East to 202nd Avenue East
54. I-5 bridge between Sunnyslope Road and SR 16/Gorst Spur
55. From NW 6th Ave to SR 500
56. SR 516 to SE 231st
57. Sahalee Way NE to 244th Ave NE
58. Hwy 99 at SR 104 Interchange
59. SR 522 to I-405
60. I-90, Sullivan Rd. Interchange to Harvard Rd. Interchange
61. SE 231st to 196th Ave SE
62. From SR 14 to Burton Rd
63. Mellen St. I/C to S. of Grand Mound I/C
64. I-5 bridge over Columbia River
65. US 12/16th Ave. Interchange
66. Martin Way Interchange SB off ramp terminal
67. US 101/SR8 Interchange - SB to EB Ramp (Increasing)
68. I-5 NB Off/On Ramp Terminal at Tumwater Boulevard
69. Pacific Avenue Interchange NB off ramp terminal
70. SB SR-167 at exit for 277th Street
71. SR-512 at Canyon Road Interchange
72. Marvin Road Interchange SB off ramp terminal (SR 510)
73. College Way @ I-5 ramp terminal
74. George Hopper I/C
75. SR-512 at Canyon Road Interchange
76. SR 512 at SR 7 (Pacific Ave) Interchange
77. US 101/SR8 Interchange - WB Ramp (Decreasing)
78. Cook Road I/C
79. I-5 at I-90 Interchange

80. SR 14 intersections with SR 500 and 2nd
81. Intersection with St John's Blvd.
82. Ramp from SR 500 WB to I-205 SB
83. SR 509 at I-705
84. Intersection of SR 503 and Padden Pkwy.
85. SR 18 at SR 167 Interchange
86. I-5 at Lake City Way
87. From Talley Way to I-5
88. I-5 and SR 512 Interchange
89. SR 522 at Paradise Lake Road
90. I-5 SB off ramp to N 2nd Avenue and US 101 off ramp to N 2nd
91. Intersection of SR 3 and SR 300
92. SR 410 at SR 165 Intersection
93. Intersection of SR 411 and PH 10 Road
94. Intersection of SR 500 and SR 503
95. Intersection of SR 3 and SR 106
96. Noll Road to Poulsbo City Limits
97. Intersection of SR 19 and SR 116
98. SR 305/SR 307 Intersection
99. SR 303/Riddell Road to McWilliams Road
100. I-5 SB Off/On Ramp Terminal at Tumwater Boulevard
101. I-5 between US 101 and Henderson St. exit
102. I-5 between Trosper Road Interchange and Thurston/Pierce Co. Line
103. Mounts Road to 48th Street
104. Mounts Road to 48th Street
105. Miller Bay to Kingston Ferry
106. US 2/East Wenatchee - Cascade Ave Interchange
107. SR 28/Junction US 2/97 to 9th Street - Stage 3
108. SR 28/Junction US 2/97 to 9th Street - Stage 4
109. SR 28/Junction US 2/97 to 9th Street - Stage 5
110. SR 28/Junction US 2/97 to 9th Street - Stage 6
111. SR 28/Junction US 2/97 to 9th Street - Stage 7
112. SR 28/Grant Road Vicinity
113. West Approach - George Sellar Bridge
114. North Wenatchee Avenue - Study
115. 520 Bridge
116. Alaskan Way Viaduct
117. Columbia River Bridge



Source: Washington State Department of Transportation

CENTER *for* TRANSPORTATION

Congestion relief is not a priority in Washington state. This was confirmed by the Washington State Auditor, and other studies show traffic will double in the next 20 years. This should be a concern for every working mom and dad who worries about being home in time for dinner, for Boeing executives who need to move airplane parts around the region, and for the freight industry that needs to get goods to market.

The Center for Transportation at Washington Policy Center researches and analyzes the best practices for relieving traffic congestion by recapturing a vision of a system based on freedom of movement. It provides policymakers, citizens and the media with access to current research on transportation issues through in-depth studies, regular op-eds, issue forums and legislative testimony. It has been featured in numerous news outlets around the state and across the country, including The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg News, Investor's Business Daily and CNN. Please join our mailing list or consider supporting Washington Policy Center to help us deliver more research and more outreach.




WASHINGTON
POLICY CENTER
Improving lives through market solutions

To learn more about the developing trends in transportation policy and congestion relief, visit us online at:

congestionrelief.org

washingtonpolicy.org

washingtonpolicyblog.org

E-mail: transportation@washingtonpolicy.org | Call: 206.937.9691
PO Box 3643 Seattle, WA 98124