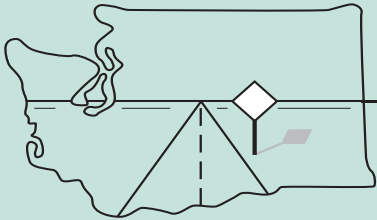


# Good Roads & Transportation



## WSGRTA

Established in 1899

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President: Ken Nelson

President Elect: Bill Garing

Past President: Peter Coates

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Gloria Hix

Editor: Carol Hughs Evans

### 2006 WSGRTA 107th Annual Meeting Wenatchee

September 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>

Wenatchee Red Lion  
1225 N. Wenatchee Ave.  
509-663-0711



Annual Meeting  
Registration Packets  
To Follow

## August 2006

## TRANSPORTATION EFFORTS KEY TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### LOCAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING IN CRITICAL STATE

*It has been an amazing year for advocates of transportation. We are well on the way to significant improvements to our infrastructure. With the nickel package and the more recent transportation package, we are finally addressing some of our most pressing needs. Even with these improvements; however, we are barely scratching the surface of the needs identified in the exhaustive study by Blue Ribbon Commission. For local communities funding has not been significantly changed. There is a crisis looming at the local level that very much impacts local ability to keep up with the necessary infrastructure improvements. The impact of initiatives on the discretionary funding ability of City Councils and County Commissions has been dramatic. Cities and Counties are in desperate straights from a financial standpoint, and with road funds having to compete with other general obligations of government, they are increasingly constrained.*

*For the state economy to continue to prosper, we need strong infrastructure. It was no coincidence that some of the strongest support for the recent package came from the business community. Transportation had the support of Boeing, Microsoft, small businesses and farmers all over the state. As an export state on the Pacific Rim, it is especially important for our economic future that we have our system running as efficiently as possible; and it is a system. If county roads have to be weather restricted, an Eastern Washington farmer can't get his product to the ports, even if the pass is open. If roadway congestion to the ports restricts freight mobility so badly that it makes more sense to use Long Beach, California or Vancouver, BC for shipping, the entire state, indeed the entire Pacific Northwest suffers.*

*We have some huge challenges ahead to be sure; increased congestion on the main rail corridors in the state, increased fuel costs impacting the revenue stream from the gas tax,*

*increased construction costs, increased cost of environmental compliance, increased cost of right-of-way purchases, an aging workforce, etc. We also have some opportunities if our vision and strategies are on target. Alternative energy sources, bio diesel, fuel cells, hydrogen, and ethanol will all play a role in our transportation future. These create economic opportunities for our agricultural producers, our research and development community, and many other businesses.*

*From a local perspective, transportation infrastructure is one of the first things that a site selector looks at when choosing a site for a new business in a community. The Welch's closure in Kennewick was at least partly impacted by the transportation costs to their prime markets in California. Likewise the J. Lieb Foods acquisition of the plant was positively influenced by the local infrastructure serving the plant. As they say, all trips begin and end on local roads.*

*The improvement of local communities transportation funding situations are greatly assisted by economic development. The growth and diversity of the local business community supported by transportation infrastructure "that works" is key to our economic future. Economic Development and local infrastructure funding provide opportunities for a prosperous future. I know that Bill Garing has some great things planned for next year, and he will appreciate your help in the future. I hope to see you all in Wenatchee at the 107th Annual Conference. Thanks for your support during this year.*

**Ken Nelson**



## Ready... Set... STOP!

Red lights mean STOP and a pilot program started in July has targeted select intersections in Seattle to enforce that law. Installation of still and video cameras were installed at four intersections selected because of their high level of accidents. Initially, warnings were issued for people caught running red lights but now the gloves have come off and citations for \$101 will be issued for any red light infractions. (The violations caught by the cameras will be treated as a parking violation and will not be reflected on a driver's record.) City Analyst, Mike Quinn, reported that between 1,800 and 2,000 motorists were caught running red lights during July but states that the numbers are likely to decline as drivers become more aware that cameras are watching. Mr. Quinn also stated that the program is "designed 100 percent as a traffic safety initiative." The City is expected to review the statistics monthly to see how effective the program is.

### INITIATIVE I-917 FAILS RANDOM SAMPLE CHECK

With an invalidation rate of 17.96% of the random sample of 10,819 signatures out of the submitted 266,006 petition signatures, Tim Eyman's initiative failed to qualify for a ballot spot. A random sample process is obtained by using a statistically valid percentage of signatures selected at random checked against voter registration records. A mathematical formula is then applied to the results to obtain a projected rate of invalidation. The invalidation rate includes the number of duplicates. At this point the Secretary of State will now do a complete check of every signature submitted for I-917. The results of the check should be known by the end of September.

Initiative I-917 seeks to repeal weight fees and other taxes passed by the 2005 Legislature as part of an \$8.5 billion transportation package as well as some local taxes. Eyman's measure would remove an estimated \$2.7 billion from state projects and change the way government calculates a vehicle's value for tax purposes.

## FOUR POTENTIAL DESIGNS FOR THE ALASKAN WAY VIADUCT

August 8th state transportation officials made public four potential designs for an elevated Alaskan Way in case the tunnel proposal is rejected.

Still deciding whether to put approval of the tunnel to a public advisory vote, the Seattle City Council must decide by late September if the issue needs to go on the November ballot. Even if the tunnel project does go to a vote, the final decision will still remain in the hands of politicians.

The four potential designs were presented to a City Council committee with an explanation that the designs are only conceptual... that they are sketches without detailed construction plans or engineering cost estimates.

The Transportation Department is expected to deliver more specific information for the four designs next month. A brief description of the four plans are as follows:

- A cable bridge over Alaskan Way. Six towers 140-feet tall with the deck about 100-feet off the ground.
- A 75-foot wide double-decker highway similar, but slightly taller than the current structure with wider lanes and shoulders.
- A pair of separate structures, one for each direction of traffic. They would be adjacent and could be constructed individually to help deal with congestion more quickly.
- The fourth option is the most controversial. At 130-feet wide it would limit access to some of the waterfront areas, but would offer a double-wide viaduct with a deck, and park over an elevated highway above Alaskan Way.

## New Technology Could Decrease Production of Greenhouse Gases

According to the National Asphalt Pavement Association warm-mix asphalt has the potential to allow producers of hot-mix asphalt pavement material to lower the temperatures at which the material is mixed and placed on the road. Dramatic reductions of up to 100 degrees Fahrenheit have been documented and would have the benefits of cutting fuel consumption and decreasing the production of greenhouse gases. Research at the “National Center of Asphalt Technology” has shown that lowering the production temperature can drastically reduce the production of emissions, improving conditions for workers and enhancing relationships with neighbors. For more information on this technology first introduced to the United States from Europe in 2002, check out the full article at:

[www.hotmix.org](http://www.hotmix.org)

## What’s Big, Floats and Costs \$321 Million?

*Why four new Washington State Ferries, of course. With the first ferry scheduled to be in service by the fall of 2009, formal requests for design and construction proposals were issued in early August. The urgently needed new ferries will be able to carry 144 vehicles and 1,500 passengers, the same number of vehicles and 424 more passengers than the existing Super Class ferries. Once the new vessels are in service, four smaller Steel Electric ferries built in 1927 will be retired, the Klickitat, Illahee, Nisqually and Quinault. The new boats will be slightly faster; however no changes in schedules are anticipated.*

## State Transportation Commission Releases Draft Plan

*A group of business owners, elected officials, transportation planners and tribes have been meeting to update the state’s 20-year transportation plan. The WTP guides transportation policy and investment decisions at all levels throughout the state and meets federal and state planning requirements. The Draft WTP update is the result of a two year process that involved reviewing data and meeting with transportation interest groups statewide to identify the state’s top investment priorities. It continues to be a collaborative effort that involves transportation interests from across the state to address Washington’s transportation challenges by making targeted, prioritized investments to achieve the greatest benefit with limited funding. After releasing the draft on July 20th, the Commission has begun a 45-day comment period to gather public input on the plan. Hosting a series of eleven outreach meetings around the state, RTPOs and Scenic Byway leaders will present information about the plan and gather comments from participants. The comment period ends on September 1, 2006. For more information and a list of dates, times and locations check WSDOT’s website at:*

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/wtp/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/wtp/)

## Your Opinion Counts!

**We need your input...**

*Would you prefer to receive this newsletter by mail or electronically? Please send your comments and preference to:*

[carol.evans@ci.kennewick.wa.us](mailto:carol.evans@ci.kennewick.wa.us)

Subject line: WSGRTA Newsletter



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## Ohme Gardens Winery Tour

As an alternative to golf, you may choose to join other WSGRTA members on Thursday afternoon for a tour of the beautiful Ohme Gardens. The approximately mile long alpine style trail is full of flowers, pools, cliffs and beautiful terrain. Details of this excursion have yet to be finalized.

For more information about this alternative program, please contact Gloria Hix at 206-854-5078.

For more information about the Ohme Gardens, visit their website:

[www.ohmegardens.com](http://www.ohmegardens.com)



## 107th Annual WSGRTA Conference

September 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>

### CONVENTION REGISTRATION

\$125 Per Person

### LOCATION

Red Lion Hotel  
1225 North Wenatchee Avenue  
Wenatchee, WA 98801  
509-663-0711

### AGENDA

#### THURSDAY

Golf Tournament

10:00 a.m.

Ohme Gardens/Winery Tour

(to be announced)

Banquet

7:00 p.m.

#### FRIDAY

Breakfast

Business Meeting

7:30 a.m.

Breakout Sessions

8:30 a.m.

Lunch

12:00 p.m.

Adjourn

### *Thursday is Golf Day!*

10:00 a.m. Start  
(be at the course by 9:30 a.m.)  
**HIGHLANDER GOLF COURSE**  
2920 - 8th Street SE  
East Wenatchee  
509-884-4653



\$65 Per Player

Includes:

Green Fees & Cart

Complimentary Range Balls

Box Lunch Including Beverage

Tee Prizes

### *Sign-up Deadline*

### *Friday*

### *September 22<sup>nd</sup>*

**WSGRTA**

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