

# **Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board Strategic Plan Narrative 2009-2011**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board is to create a comprehensive and coordinated state program to facilitate freight movement between and among local, national and international markets, which enhances trade opportunities. The Board also is charged with finding solutions that lessen the impact of the movement of freight on local communities.

Washington's economy is very dependent upon trade and reliant on our ability to compete in a global economy. To remain competitive, we need to move our products and goods efficiently. The State's economic competitiveness depends on the efficiency of the multimodal transportation system for the movement of freight.

The Board will propose policies, projects, corridors, and funding to the Legislature to promote strategic investments in a statewide freight mobility transportation system. The Board will also propose projects that soften the impact of freight movement on local communities.

## **LISTING OF STATUTORY AUTHORITY REFERENCES**

RCW 47.06A	Freight Mobility
RCW 47.06A.001	Findings.
RCW 47.06A.010	Definitions.
RCW 47.06A.020	Board--Duties.
RCW 47.06A.030	Board--Creation--Membership.
RCW 47.06A.040	Board--Administration and staffing.
RCW 47.06A.050	Allocation of funds.
RCW 47.06A.060	Grants and loans.
RCW 47.06A.070	Records.
RCW 47.06A.080	Port district development plans.
RCW 47.06A.900	Severability--1998 c 175.

## **GOALS**

The Board is committed to the goal of keeping Washington State's businesses, manufacturers and agricultural producers competitive in the global marketplace. To enhance competitiveness, the Board's goals include: reduced congestion on freight corridors, improved safety in the movement of freight, and reduced cost of moving goods. In working toward these goals, the Board proposes policies and projects to the Legislature and the Governor that will improve freight mobility for cargo and pursues project funding for the state's partnership share from state policymakers. The Board provides a project management oversight role to keep projects advancing, brokers agreements, and assists in securing partnership funding. The Board and staff continue to seek a better public understanding of the importance of freight mobility to the state's economy.

## OBJECTIVES

To achieve the mission of improving freight mobility, the Board will pursue the following policy objectives, subject to available funding.

- Optimize freight mobility by reducing barriers on Washington's strategic freight corridors and lessen the impact of freight movement on communities.
- Employ existing and develop new techniques for anticipating future freight mobility requirements. Work with other agencies and partner modes to share data & projections.
- To the greatest extent possible, leverage state dollars with financial support from other public and private partners.
- Take a leadership role of informing the public regarding freight mobility transportation needs and issues.
- Bring public and private partners together to identify and help fund strategic projects and their most cost effective solutions.
- Measure improvements or deterioration in freight mobility against project completions and identified barriers.

## MAJOR STRATEGIES

**1)** The Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) will designate strategic freight corridors within the state, select strategic freight mobility projects for possible funding, leverage state funds to the greatest extent possible by assisting sponsors in securing partnership funding, brokering agreements, demonstrate the importance of projects to the public & policymakers, bring the public and private sectors together to identify and help fund freight mobility solutions, and develop biennial budget requests for legislative consideration.

***Strategy** - Will facilitate lower freight costs and improve delivery time, which will influence the goal of enhancing competitiveness and removing barriers to freight movement.*

***Statewide Result** - POG#6 - Improve the mobility of people, goods, information, and energy. All of the Board's efforts are targeted to improving the mobility of goods and improving the ability of businesses to compete economically. (Result POG# 5 - Improve the economic vitality of businesses and individuals would also be impacted by removal of barriers to movement of commerce.)*

***Activity Inventory** – By statute, the Board is charged with developing a comprehensive and coordinated state policy that facilitates freight movement within the state to enhance local, national, and international markets. The Board designates the State's freight corridors every 2 years, a call-for-projects is issued every other year to maintain an active list of projects, and the last call was issued in 2007. Twenty-nine FMSIB projects*

*have been completed, twenty funded projects are in various phases of construction, and the Board will authorize at least five more projects to begin construction in 2009-11. Projects funded in the 2007-09 biennium will leverage more than \$5 in partnership match for every state FMSIB dollar invested.*

**Attainment Benefits** – *By removing identified chokepoints and barriers on strategic freight corridors, the travel time for freight movement and trip reliability will improve which will be reflected in attainment measures #3.1 & #3.3. The Board project selection process always evaluates the hours of delay with and without improvements to measure cost effectiveness of project investments prior to selecting projects to be added to the agency project portfolio. The reduction in hours of delay is reflected in attainment measure #3.2. Measure 1.2 – collision reduction and safety benefits are also measured for each project the board considers.*

**2)** The Board will monitor the implementation of current freight mobility laws and programs, propose new legislation if deemed necessary, broker agreements between partners, develop funding alliances and act as an advocate for freight mobility. This will enable Washington to quickly maximize opportunities and construct safety and capacity improvements that will reduce the cost of moving goods.

**Strategy** - *Requires the Board to analyze new and proposed federal regulations that are included in Federal Authorization proposals and make state policy and funding recommendations that maximize the state's ability to access new funding. The Board also provides input to the Congressional delegation on specific freight investments and policies that would improve Washington's freight corridors. Creating public understanding of the importance of aggressively pursuing improvements to the freight delivery system will be a key in developing the necessary support for changes. The current publicity on increased fuel costs provides an opportunity to relate the cost & importance of transportation to the delivery of goods. The Board's outreach video to educate the public on the importance of maintaining a strong freight mobility system continues to be aired around the state and nation.*

**Statewide Result** - *POG# 6 -Improve the mobility of people, goods, information, and energy. All of the Board's efforts are targeted to improving the mobility of goods and improving the ability of businesses to compete economically. (Result POG# 5 - Improve the economic vitality of businesses and individuals would also be impacted by removal of barriers to movement of commerce.)*

**Activity Inventory** – *The 2007-09 budget funded many FMSIB projects, and the Board continues to work aggressively with sponsors to keep projects advancing. To provide accountability on project commitments the Board has removed funds from projects that can not advance and reprogrammed them into projects that can advance so money is not dormant. Additional funding will be requested for the emerging high priority freight projects that are ready to go to construction during the 2009-11 budget cycle as well as accelerating some projects that are funded in the future, but ready to go to construction now. These locally sponsored projects include safety and air quality elements.*

*The current SAFETY-LU federal funding program identified freight as a priority but earmarked everything in the budget eliminating the ability of Washington's freight projects to compete for much needed federal partnership funds. The Board has organized annual advocacy trips to D.C. accompanied by project sponsors to help elevate the importance of freight project funding in the federal budget. Many FMSIB projects have benefited from the advocacy trips by receiving budget grants after our meetings with the Congressional delegation. The Board will provide input to the delegation on what would be helpful to freight mobility for inclusion in the next authorization. The Board may advocate for a portion of the state's discretionary funds to be allocated to freight mobility corridor projects if there is not a significant freight program identified in the next authorization with new funding available.*

***Attainment Benefits:** Securing more partnership funding and coordinating efforts will allow projects to advance more rapidly and avoid the additional inflationary cost increases caused by delays. Funds saved from one project, allows additional projects to advance helping to remove more barriers to freight movement –Attainment measure #3.4.*

**3)** The Board will form partnerships with the Governor, the Legislature, the Transportation Commission, the Washington State Department of Transportation, Transportation Improvement Board, County Road Administration Board, U. S. Department of Transportation, Ports, railroads, trucking interests, the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, local governments, the private sector, as well as other freight and transportation interests to promote an effective freight mobility transportation system for Washington State.

***Strategy** – Leveraging dollars and bringing public and private interests together will maximize Washington's overall efforts to increase trade and the state's competitiveness.*

***Statewide Result** - POG #6 -Improve the mobility of people, goods, information, and energy – All of the Board's efforts are targeted to improving the mobility of goods and improving the ability of businesses to compete economically. (Result POG# 5 - Improve the economic vitality of businesses and individuals would also be impacted by removal of barriers to movement of commerce.)*

***Activity Inventory** – Staff meets with various partners in an ongoing basis to keep projects advancing, broker deals, provide quarterly reporting and accountability for project commitments. Staff also conveys changes and trends within the private sector to local and state governments to encourage knowledgeable planning efforts. The ratio of program dollars to partnership match funding is better than five partnership dollars to each FMSIB dollar invested.*

*The agency partners with other agencies to see that costs are kept to a minimum by utilizing an interagency agreement rather than duplicating services that are available at a lower expense, and works with other private and local governments to keep projects on schedule avoiding inflationary increases. The increased involvement in project management and oversight over the last decade has been possible by contracting certain activities out. Increased contracting and additional demands for staff involvement now require an increase in the budget to pay for either additional contracting or the addition of one staff member.*

*The State is protected by statute from unanticipated project increases because each project is assigned a fixed dollar amount and percentage that FMSIB has determined to be the appropriate freight share of a project. If costs go up, the state share is capped at the fixed dollar amount; if costs go down, the FMSIB share is capped at the assigned percentage so the state benefits from any project savings. While the state is protected, increasing project cost for petroleum products and steel require us to secure additional funding partners and sometimes employing creative solutions. The Board also facilitates a coordination of efforts and communication between partners.*

***Attainment Benefits:*** *Projects require coordination, oversight and committed funding partners to deliver the improvements to the statewide freight system. Delivering freight project solutions are beyond the ability of individual jurisdictions to support a multi-jurisdictional freight corridor development that supports state and national interests. Attainment Measure: #3.4*

## **APPRAISAL OF EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT, CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS**

Washington State is uniquely positioned as a gateway to the global economy. As the most trade-dependent state in the nation, per capita, Washington's economy is highly dependent on an efficient multimodal transportation network in order to remain competitive in the world market. The 1998 Legislature established the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board to implement a program focused solely on freight movement. The federal transportation program, TEA 21, also recognized the importance of freight by adding a National Corridor and Border Development program. Unfortunately, Congress did not continue this highly successful competitive program, but instead earmarked all the funds for the duration of the act. This is a significant blow to the local freight projects that had been able to compete well based upon their merits. The loss of anticipated federal funding has created a new challenge for project sponsors.

In 2005, the ports of Seattle and Tacoma handled over 4.3 million TEU containers about a 20% increase over the previous year stimulating increased employment opportunities. The current dredging of the Columbia River to allow ships to be loaded more efficiently will also improve freight transport from eastern and central Washington. A recent study by the Columbia River ports estimate that more than 40,000 local jobs with an average annual wage of \$46,000 are dependent on the river's commerce, and 59,000 more Northwest jobs are affected by such activity. The ports are making record investments in their dockside infrastructure to meet the extraordinary demand of increased freight flows that are arriving on our shore daily and are anticipated to grow in the next decade. The challenge for the state is how to assure that freight is not impeded once it leaves the docks. The ports are counting on the state to make complementary investments in the infrastructure to move cargo once it leaves port property. Government investment in port transportation improvements is being made in Canada, Mexico and many U.S. states, like Georgia, to improve their ability to compete and handle a growing volume of freight. Some states, like California, are imposing fees on freight movement assuming that because they do not handle discretionary cargo they will not see a decline in volume. Washington may see an increase in discretionary cargo depending upon cost considerations.

Steamship operators are looking for more efficient ways of moving discretionary cargo and have begun diverting cargo previously coming to Puget Sound ports to the newly opened Port of Prince Rupert Canada and to other ports along the west coast including Lazaro Cardenas and Manzanillo, Mexico. The Panama Canal is being expanded to transport larger ships providing an all-water option of moving freight from China and S.E. Asia directly to Gulf and S. E. ports bypassing the west coast. Currently, the largest container ship calling in Washington carries about 6600 TEU's (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units), but there are plans on the drawing boards for the next generation of ships that will carry 12,000 TEU containers. The ports of Seattle and Tacoma are currently reporting a decrease in imports but an increase in exports.

The mainline railroads make private investments to improve their operations on a systemwide basis, considering where they will be able to maximize the return on their investment. A potential rail investment in Washington State competes with those across the country. Washington needs to foster an environment to attract additional investment in rail routes benefiting our economy. To create a more balanced two-way flow of containers, the railroads have diverted some returning empty containers to California ports cutting down on the available capacity in Washington for low cost exports destined for China and S. E. Asia.

Washington has consistently ranked in the top five states in exports during the last decade and was listed as fourth in 2007. The weak US dollar globally may translate into even more exports.

#### Value of Washington Exports

(\$ Millions)

Industry	2006	2007
Total	\$53,075	\$66,258
Transportation Equipment	\$33,677	\$42,665
Agricultural Products	\$4,576	\$6,548
Computer & Electronic Products	\$3,097	\$3,347
Machinery, Except Electrical	\$1,935	\$2,098
Food & Kindred Products	\$1,562	\$2,097
Petroleum & Coal Products	\$1,243	\$1,122
Primary Metal Manufacturing	\$930	\$1,172
Paper	\$885	\$912
Chemicals	\$683	\$790
Fish & Other Marine Products (06) Misc. Mfg Commodities (07)	\$910	\$888

(World Institute for Strategic Economic Research –WISER Foreign Trade Database)

In 2005, the Union Pacific Railroad employed 347 employees in Washington with an annual payroll of \$25 million and invested \$40 M in Capital improvements on their 558 miles of track and at their terminals. In 2007, UP employed 542 employees with an annual payroll of \$49.1 million and made \$87 million in purchases. Union Pacific's top

customers are Peavey, American President Lines and Cargill. The BNSF Railway employed 3,300 employees in Washington with an annual payroll of \$175 million and invested \$100 million on their 1721 miles of track, terminals and equipment in 2005. In 2007, the BNSF Railway employed 3333 employees with an annual payroll of \$191 million and paid \$22, 137,817 in Washington taxes. BNSF increased its system-wide workforce by 10% in 2006 and in 2007 added 2,400 employees (5%) largely to replace retiring workers.

The trucking industry's most current statistics (2005) reported that there were 8,083 trucking companies in Washington State and they transported about 70% of freight that moves by surface transportation. The industry is also experiencing increased demands and a shortage of qualified drivers. Urban congestion and federally imposed size restrictions as well as weight restrictions that are lower than Washington's weight limitation are creating additional inefficiencies. In 2005, trucks transported 89.79%\* of manufactured goods in the state employing 181,263\* people or 1 in 14 jobs. As an industry, trucking paid \$763 million in federal & state roadway taxes and fees.\*\* This equates to 35.1% of all taxes and fees paid by Washington motorists despite trucks representing 9.5% of vehicle miles traveled in the state.\*\*

New large distribution centers will change some traffic flows and may necessitate additional satellite truck dispatch centers to accommodate volumes. In addition, traffic congestion is requiring the industry to open additional terminals outside of the King County area; some companies that make daily deliveries in King County have relocated as far away as Yakima. Urban land costs keep moving terminals farther away from population centers

Increasing fuel prices are impacting ships, planes, trains and trucks. In some cases rising fuel costs can be passed on to consumers while others cannot completely pass on the added costs. Truck demonstrations are taking place around the nation and here in Washington to call attention to the impacts of high fuel prices on transportation.

Railroads, ports, ships and trucks are all making improvements to environmental emissions but need regulators to work with them in adopting policies that improve the environment without crippling the freight delivery system.

When the Freight Board was created 10 years ago it had \$100 million per biennium to invest in needed freight projects. After losing funding due to an initiative, the Legislature developed a revenue package that is providing about \$12 million per biennium to freight projects. The Board needs additional predictable dedicated capital funding to address emerging needs, and system deficiencies that local governments cannot address on their own. Until additional ongoing funding can be found, the Board will continue to submit projects on a case by case basis for state funding to leverage other project partner dollars.

All of the FMSIB freight projects leverage other partnership funds to assure that needed projects can advance and our competitive position is not compromised. Each project has a different set of beneficiaries leading to diverse financial partnerships. The projects currently under construction represent a state FMSIB investment of \$70 million, but will realize freight mobility improvements amounting to more than \$400 million.

The Board will work with the WSDOT, regional transportation planning organizations, local governments, the private sector, other freight transportation interests and the public to encourage participation and involvement in identifying and developing unobstructed freight corridors for implementation.

\*American Transportation Research Institute

\*\*Source: Highway Statistics: US Department of Transportation (2005 statistics)

## **TRENDS IN CUSTOMER CHARACTERISTICS**

Strategic freight corridors are becoming increasingly congested which results in freight movement delays. As wait-times increase, the state risks a reduction in its vitality as a trade driven economy. Many agricultural producers and manufacturers in Washington benefit from lower cost backhaul opportunities created because Washington has been able to attract discretionary import cargo.

World trade will continue to grow, especially with our Asian trading partners. We are seeing an increase in trade from China in particular. Most goods are transported in containers now, and the ports of Seattle and Tacoma have been identified as the third largest container load center in the United States. The ports are making significant infrastructure investments and are streamlining cargo handling on their property but remain hampered by delays once cargo leaves their facility. These delays are a negative when trying to entice cargo to use Washington State as their gateway.

Washington's agricultural products benefit from low back haul rates for containers due to the imbalance of imports and exports in Washington's ports. The ports need to remain competitive to keep inbound freight coming into Washington State so our agricultural; food processing and manufacturing businesses can transport their products at the lowest possible cost, and thus compete in an international market. Increased security requirements are being developed which could alter the amount of time needed to handle each shipment and could cause additional delays which would add to transport costs and negatively impact scheduled deliveries. Increased environmental regulations need to be developed in consultation with the freight carriers input so that improvements are realized without damaging our competitive position.

More businesses are relying on just-in-time delivery to receive needed parts or stock retail shelves. The Boeing Company, as an example, now moves parts directly from transport to the shop floor for faster assembly. Many companies now "warehouse" their goods on trains and trucks moving through the freight corridor system. Major distributors and other companies demand deliveries and pick ups in specific narrow time lines. Carriers need to be creative in finding ways to avoid delays that could jeopardize their on time deliveries. Transportation delays impact productivity and availability of goods.

Citizens are demanding more products through traditional "brick and mortar" outlets as well as via the internet and other e-commerce sources. Numerous new large distribution centers have recently located in Washington State to serve the region. To keep up with

the public demand, producers and suppliers need to move products into stores and deliver directly to homes and businesses. Freight movement by air, rail and truck delivery has been increasing annually and is projected to double by 2020.

It is important to note that businesses regularly make decisions about shipping routes and facility location. Part of the business consideration is transportation costs. Congestion is a large factor in those costs. Ships, trucks and rail will adapt their business plans to continue to operate, and freight will be delivered, but some of the changes will be reflected in higher shipping costs for the consumer and a decline in productivity. Unfortunately, the Puget Sound area has developed a national and international reputation for congestion problems. However, offsetting that image is the nationally well-known fact that the State and Puget Sound region have given specific focus on improving freight mobility. The Freight Mobility Board provides visibility for the commitment. The small dedicated funding stream of \$6 million a year that was approved in 2005, while short of the needs to address freight chokepoints has been able to bring some limited predictability to project advancement. The 29 projects completed and 30 projects underway as well as our ongoing well publicized commitment to improving freight mobility are essential to changing reality and perceptions. The state and region still have much work ahead in order to reach commercially satisfactory freight mobility objectives. This public demand requires additional capacity in our strategic freight system and removal of choke points.

## **STRATEGY AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT**

In keeping with the Board's philosophy of keeping operational costs low, the Board has not increased its staff in a decade and has opted to contract for additional services needed. The time has now come when either additional funding will be needed for additional contracting or to fund a third agency FTE to carry out the agency's mission. The agency has one director and a confidential secretary shared-work position. Agency services needed by the agency are purchased through an interagency agreement, or from the private sector, whichever is more cost effective. Any changes in civil service laws will not affect the agency, as all staff members are exempt employees.

## **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

**Output: Number of barriers to freight movement mitigated by closure or separation of "at grade" crossings.**

*FMSIB has worked aggressively to keep partners committed and projects advancing. Our projects have been completed on time or early and within budget. The projects that are currently proceeding to construction face numerous cost increases due to increased steel, cement and petroleum product charges as well as impacts of increased fuel costs.*

*FMSIB will continue to work with the project partners to secure additional funding when necessary to remain on schedule and will report quarterly on the progress of our project. The agency's performance can be favorably compared to any other transportation agency's performance.*

**Output: Number of barriers to freight movement by removal of chokepoints.**

*FMSIB has worked aggressively to keep partners committed and projects advancing. Our projects have been completed on time or early and within budget. The projects that are currently proceeding to construction face numerous cost increases due to increased steel, cement and petroleum product charges as well as impacts of increased fuel costs. FMSIB will continue to work with the project partners to secure additional funding when necessary to remain on schedule and will report quarterly on the progress of our project. The agency's performance can be favorably compared to any other transportation agency's performance.*

**Output: Participation in public outreach meetings and forums.** *Participation in outreach efforts have expanded beyond just the meetings and forums involving the Executive Director to now include Board members who also regularly provide a voice for freight issues in statewide forums. Additionally, the Board authorized and created a freight documentary in the fall of 2005 called "Freight Mobility: Creating Jobs – Strengthening our Economy" which continues to be viewed both in and out of the state to explain the importance of freight mobility. FMSIB staff and Board members will continue to seek opportunities for outreach meetings and forums to inform the public of the importance of freight mobility to lives and livelihoods.*

## **FINANCIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT**

The administrative budget being proposed by the Board is consistent with the Board members desire to minimize administrative overhead, but will include a request for additional funding for either expanded contracting or an increase of one FTE. The budget proposes funding for the Executive Director and a shared-position Confidential Secretary, an interagency agreement that provides part time technical assistance and the necessary level of goods and services to implement legislative and board direction as well as needed funding for additional support to help the Board fulfill its mission. It has reviewed our expenditures and there are some contracting tasks that can be eliminated by employing an additional staff person who could perform the tasks in house.

Board and agency staff will continue to seek opportunities to engage the public in dialogues advancing freight mobility issues and encouraging public policymakers to include freight priorities in local, regional and national planning and funding decisions.

The Board has developed a capital project construction plan that maximizes the state's investment while moving projects forward on a methodical corridor approach that will continue to improve our freight and trade corridors. The Board will continue to advance projects as quickly as possible to eliminate freight chokepoints and at grade crossings within the funding provided, but the Board believes that a sustained program requires additional dedicated funding to address emerging needs and to be able to respond more quickly to the pressures created by the dramatic increase in freight movement. The Board has demonstrated their commitment to delivering projects on time and as planned by removing projects that are not advancing. It has also demonstrated its nimbleness in reprogramming funds as project delivery schedules can be accommodated.

In keeping with the Board's goal of minimizing administrative overhead, it will continue to use WSDOT Highways and Local Programs as our administrative and project "banker" rather than duplicating this function with an in-house staff.

The construction for the current list of locally sponsored projects is spread out to the 2019-21 biennium due to the timing of state funding. If funding was available sooner the projects could advance more rapidly. The Freight Board plans to issue the next call for projects in 2009 to maintain a list that reflects emerging freight corridor needs so momentum in corridor development would not be lost. Additional funding would be needed for the FMSIB share of the newly selected projects.

Conclusion: The partnerships, coordination, oversight and outreach endeavors listed above are currently carried out by a two-person staff with support from Board members collectively and individually. The result is a highly levered, low out of pocket cost achievement of the reality and perception of greater freight mobility in this state. Even with the addition of an additional staff position or additional contracting the agency would remain an extremely efficient operation.

## **DESCRIPTION OF COST REDUCTION STRATEGIES**

The Freight Board has aggressively worked to hold administrative costs down over the past decade by limiting all office purchases, seeking reduced rate meeting space and having staff assume more duties previously contracted out to other agencies. The agency has lived within its budget without requesting supplemental increases for the last ten years. The Board works with project sponsors on ways to save on construction costs where possible and the agency's cap on the state's financial participation protects the state from incurring additional expenses if project costs increase. An analysis is being done to weigh the costs and benefits of increased contracting versus eliminating some of the contracting tasks by employing and additional in-house staff member.

## **DISCUSSION OF MAJOR PARTNERS**

Operating: The agency actively partners with WSDOT for technical assistance through an interagency agreement. The office also works with WSDOT's efforts to identify and improve the State Freight Corridors and access Federal funding assistance with projects. WSDOT, CRAB, and others are engaged in our project selection process and FMSIB is collaborating with WSDOT to develop a scoring mechanism for rail projects.

The agency works closely with the Transportation Improvement Board in coordinating efforts on joint projects.

The Country Road Administration Board is another major partner where coordinated efforts on projects as well as identification of county freight and goods needs are gathered to create a comprehensive map of overall state freight requirements. CRAB manages the Freight Board website through an interagency agreement.

The agency staff works directly with project sponsors and partners assisting in project development, brokering agreements, quarterly reporting, partner funding arrangements, accountability and cash flow requirements. The staff also provides information and counsel to local governments who either have a project that is part of the FMSIB list or

prospective partners who wish to be considered. That guidance effort saves money and time for all parties and provides coherence and consistency in the development of freight corridors. The Board is working with the WSDOT Rail office to help develop a project selection process and will continue to engage their participation in our project selection process. It is prepared to also provide whatever other evaluation or assistance is desirable to support the WSDOT highway freight projects. The RCW 47.06A statute assures that all projects identified as significantly improving freight are measured by uniform standards.

Railroad, port, trucking, steamship and other private sector partners are engaged routinely to maintain an open dialogue, identify impediments to the movement of freight, assist in project selection, determine priorities and secure financial participation in projects. They are also consulted to try and resolve design conflicts whenever possible between project sponsors and carriers. The rail, port, truck and steamship operators consider the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board as their voice into state freight policy.