

Transportation

Department of Transportation

Increase fish passage barrier removal

A 2013 federal court injunction requires the state to significantly increase efforts to remove state-owned culverts by 2030 that block habitat for salmon and steelhead. It will cost an estimated \$3.3 billion to meet the court's order to open 90% of potential fish habitat by 2030. The state has identified approximately 400 barriers that need to be removed by the court's deadline.

The governor's 2021–23 transportation budget prioritizes \$724 million to continue supporting the Washington State Department of Transportation's plan to meet the requirements of the federal injunction. This funding will enable the department to design 136 projects and construct an additional 114 projects.

Funding to support this effort requires revising the state's existing capital project plan. The governor intends to engage the Legislature in developing a specific approach to delaying projects while continuing to meet the state's legal obligations, providing additional resources to address some of the preservation needs of our transportation system and continuing investments that improve overall safety to the traveling public.

Support clean transportation

The transportation sector emits the largest percentage of greenhouse gas emissions in our state. To meet our greenhouse gas reduction

targets, we must aggressively diversify our transportation infrastructure. Electrifying our vehicles, vessels and buses is one of the most effective ways to reduce carbon pollution. And increasing state investments in alternative modes such as transit, cycling and safe pedestrian infrastructure are also important to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The governor's budget prioritizes resources to fund:

- \$190 million (\$318 million over four years) for ferry electrification, specifically to:
 - Convert the MV Tacoma to hybrid electric.
 - Build a second new Olympic-class hybrid electric ferry and begin investments to support a third vessel.
 - Build three terminal charging stations that the state needs to operate a growing hybrid electric fleet.
- \$15 million in additional capital grants to help electrify transit systems.
- \$20 million for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure including:
 - Bike and pedestrian safety grants.
 - Safe routes to school.
- \$5 million in additional funding to the regional mobility grants program.

- \$1.5 million for electric vehicle incentive promotion and outreach to increase electric vehicle adoption, with a focus on outreach and education to low-income residents.

Put a high priority on preservation

The governor’s budget begins an ongoing commitment of \$400 million per biennium to support preserving our state roadways, railways, ferries and bridges. These funds will help the department improve safety and longevity of our transportation infrastructure.

Investing now in preservation avoids more costly transportation construction needs in the future. Funding to support this effort will require revising the existing capital project plan. The governor intends to engage the Legislature to develop a specific approach to delaying projects while continuing to meet the state’s legal obligations, providing additional resources to begin addressing the preservation needs of our transportation system and continuing investments that improve overall safety to the traveling public.

Continue work on high-speed rail

Recent feasibility studies demonstrated a compelling case for an ultra-high-speed corridor that will create jobs, increase affordable housing options, reduce pollution, improve safety and reduce traffic. The budget includes \$3.25 million to establish a coordinating entity with representation from Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. This group will conduct public engagement and integrate a high-speed rail corridor system

with regional transportation plans. This includes developing equity-based goals for the project. This funding is critical to continue the work with our partners in Oregon and British Columbia.

Support career development

The governor’s budget includes funding to continue and expand WSDOT’s pre-apprenticeship program. This program awards groups that provide outreach, pre-apprenticeship training and supportive services to underrepresented populations in the construction trades. With an emphasis on individuals in juvenile rehabilitation and foster care communities, the program will provide organizations funding to support:

- Pre-apprenticeship training in one or more highway construction trades.
- Support services that may include assistance with transportation, child care, basic tools and housing. Typically, women, minorities, veterans, and other disadvantaged individuals need these barrier-reducing supports to enter and succeed in apprenticeships.
- Mentorship and retention training.
- Cultural competency training to foster and encourage a safe and welcoming worksite for every person working Department of Transportation construction projects.

(Total \$3 million: \$2 million Motor Vehicle Account; \$1 million Multimodal Account)

Support telework

As telework became a key part of keeping Washingtonians safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic, a newly created telework assistance grant program will provide assistance to small businesses as they implement employee telework programs. (\$350,000 Multimodal State Account)

Washington State Patrol

Additional trooper class

The budget supports a new cadet class of 60 at the Washington State Patrol Academy, with a continued focus to recruit and train a diverse trooper workforce to promote safety on our roadways. (\$8.9 million State Patrol Highway Account)

Communications infrastructure

The budget invests in the statewide, public safety communications system infrastructure to ensure reliable telecommunications, emergency response and coordination for the safety of all Washingtonians. (\$6.1 million State Patrol Highway Account)

Fire training academy

The budget provides additional resources to maintain the State Fire Training Academy. This will invest in the facilities we need to deliver critical fire training services. (\$928,000 Fire Service Training Account)

Department of Licensing

More accessible services

Many licensing services offices reopened after COVID-19 closures at reduced capacity and through appointment only. DOL offices have operated at reduced capacity and as appointment only. The governor's budget provides \$4.1 million to provide services online so customers can receive services safely, and the agency can address the customer service backlog that COVID-19 has created. The budget provides funds for online enhancements and website improvements as well as funds to support the move from six- to eight-year driver's license and identicard renewals. This will help DOL begin to address the backlog by efficiently providing services while reducing workload. (\$4.1 million various accounts)