



November President's Message

It was the ITE mission statement that first spoke to me, "Moving people and goods safely and efficiently."

This mission was clear, something I could believe in. It made sense. Although there have been occasional distractions, keeping the ITE mission statement as a goal has always provided me with a clear purpose and allowed me to maintain balance in the very complicated world of transportation engineering.



David Alm
WA Section President

I am privileged to be your current President, representing you and the Washington Section of ITE. As such I am honored, and I am obligated. I am obligated to uphold the mission statement to which I have pledged my professional honor. And at this moment, there is an important opportunity to make a difference, if we can.

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ITE Washington Section presents:

SR 520 Bridge Replacement Project

Come experience and enjoy this month's program at the City of Bothell's meticulously renovated historic home located on the picturesque Sammamish River's edge in Downtown Bothell!!!

SPEAKER **Lindsay Yamane**, SR 520 Project Team Strategic Advisor, Parametrix

LOCATION City of Bothell
Lytle House Room
Park at Bothell Landing
9929 NE 180th Street
Bothell, WA 98011

DATE Tuesday, November 13th, 2007

COST Payable by cash or check to "ITE Washington Section"
ITE members: \$20
Students: \$5

TIME 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

MENU Sasi's Lunch Box and sandwich choices are:

- 1) Smoked Turkey with Sun-dried Tomatoes and Swiss Cheese
- 2) Roasted Pork Loin with Fig Preserve, Tomatoes and Lettuce
- 3) Albacore Tuna on Sourdough Bread with Dill, Mayo and English Cucumber
- 4) Roast Beef Sandwich with Sweet Peppers and Fresh Horseradish

All sandwiches are served with Caesar salad, Tim's Chips and a cookie.

RSVP By Thursday, November 8 to Iris Cabrera at

ITERegistration@ci.kirkland.wa.us

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The transportation community faces a critical moment on November 6th as the western Washington communities cast votes that will greatly affect their future mobility choices. The long-awaited Proposition 1 Roads & Transit package would produce \$14,112,000,000 between 2008 and 2027 to improve regional mobility.

It is likely that this is the most significant opportunity to help improve the safe and efficient movement of people and goods that we will witness. It may be over by the time our newsletter reaches you, but as I write this I can almost taste the anxiety in the transportation community! If it's not yet too late, get all of your friends, neighbors, and co-workers educated and excited about supporting this Proposition!! The funds are necessary to safely and efficiently move people and goods in future years.

If passed, traffic engineering expertise will be needed to deliver very many new projects. Our help will be badly needed in managing the projects under a very high level of community watchfulness, managing traffic during construction activities, and in continuing to deal with the remainder of the transportation system outside of the new projects.

Sincerely,
David Alm,
President, ITE Washington Section



“The Campus Corner”

By Scott Lee and Megan Powers

Last month's program on the Roads and Transit Package brought five students from the University of Washington. Events like these provide a great opportunity for students to learn about what's going on in our state as well as an opportunity to interact with local professionals. We encourage students to continue to come to meetings put on by the Washington Section.

Fall activities for student chapters are beginning to take shape, a couple of events happening this month include:

- 16th Annual Traffic Bowl – November 15th at McMennamins Edgefield in Troutdale, OR in conjunction with the Fifth Annual TransNow Student Conference. This competition is made up of student chapter teams and is run in a Jeopardy-like tournament with questions relating to the transportation field.
- 2008 Data Collection Projects RFP has been issued. Students chapters interested in submitting a proposal have until November 9th. Grants of \$1,000 to \$2,000 will be awarded based on the number of proposals received. To get more information or see the results of the past grants visit the ITE District 6 web site at www.westernite.org/datacollectionfund/data_collection.htm.

Last year the University of Washington ITE student chapter received a \$1,000 grant to study Coffee Store Trip and Parking Generation.

We would also like to remind jurisdictions within Washington if you have a project going on in your jurisdiction that you think would be interesting for the Student Night, please contact either Scott Lee or Megan Powers.

Student Activities Committee Co-Chairs:

Scott Lee, Transpo Group – (425)821-3665 or scottl@thetranspogroup.com

Megan Powers, DKS Associates – (206)382-9800 or mcp@dksassociates.com

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Regional Concurrency

By Rick Perez, P.E., City Traffic Engineer, Federal Way, WA

The Growth Management Act was a legislative response to rampant growth in the Puget Sound Region in the late 1980's. It is significant that transportation is the only concurrency measurement that GMA requires to be met before development is permitted. This was intended to be a backstop measure to assure that congestion wouldn't get any worse if the desired land use visions didn't materialize.

As the deficiencies in the current legislation have presented themselves, there is broad consensus that transportation concurrency could be improved, but little consensus as to exactly what should be done. An effort that has gained increased attention is to combine a desire to make transportation concurrency more multi-modal with a process that also makes it more regional in perspective. Background information on this topic is available at

<http://depts.washington.edu/trac/concurrency/index.html>.

One of the analyses conducted thus far proposes a two-tiered process: a local concurrency test (probably what we have implemented already), and a regional process, intended to address impacts beyond the permitting agency's boundaries. It is thought that multi-modal aspects can be addressed more easily at a regional level, since most cities do not have their own transit agencies.

Does transportation concurrency need to be more multi-modal? Some believe that concurrency too frequently requires auto-oriented mitigation, when another mode may be a more efficient solution. On the other hand, in much of the region, a reduction in trips from mode split can be overwhelmed by a year's worth of background growth. There are a variety of other complications:

1. Developers can't or won't give a blank check for ongoing operations of transit.
2. Government cannot condition development to provide mitigation that is not reasonably related to the impacts of the development. If a development does not generate a significant amount of pedestrian, bike, or transit trips, government cannot require mitigation for those modes. In *Dolan v. City of Tigard*, Tigard attempted to require right-of-way dedication for an adjacent regional bike/ped path as mitigation for the expansion of a plumbing supply store. The federal Supreme Court rejected this because the City was unable to show that the store's expansion would generate enough bicycle and pedestrian trips to justify the right-of-way dedication.
3. Provision of facilities or services of alternative modes does not assure their use. We frequently hear citizens complain about the waste to the taxpayer of empty seats on buses, infrequently used bike and HOV lanes, and even sidewalks being wider than necessary. But we rarely hear that a street or highway is too wide (except in right-of-way acquisitions and occasionally from anti-auto land use planners and environmental activists).
4. People make their housing location decisions based on a number of factors. We need to recognize that land use / transportation imbalances occur because a large percentage of the population cannot afford or does not want to live in dense urban areas.
5. Verifiable data is needed. There is some basis for altering trip generation rates from development using ITE's *Trip Generation* guidance and other tools, but this also depends on the viability of the alternative modes serving a given site. One cannot expect the same mode split from a condominium development in downtown Bellevue as a site on the edge of the Urban Growth Boundary. Should a new development be approved because a transit agency plans to provide more service to the area, even though that planned transit route won't serve the vast majority of trips that use a particular corridor because the trip ends are too dispersed or because the new development is big-box retail? Even if we could provide adequate transit service to such sites, would the public be willing to pay for it?

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Given these complications, I submit that the appropriate way to address mitigation for auto trips is after the mode split has been determined, based on assumed conditions at the time of opening of the development.

Does transportation concurrency need to be more regional? There are two ways problems arise with the current statutes and case law: impacts in neighboring jurisdictions that supposedly cannot be addressed without an interlocal agreement (which is completely at odds with the intent of SEPA), and the exemption of Highways of Statewide Significance from concurrency.

A regional process could potentially provide mitigation funding for solutions that involve more than a city or county could require of an individual development, and address extra-jurisdictional solutions. However, it would also have the following complications:

1. Permitting agencies are constantly bombarded (generally unfairly) by the development community about the time it takes to process land use applications. Cities have responded by attempting to streamline their review processes. Introducing a regional concurrency process conducted by an outside agency with no direct accountability would undermine these attempts.
2. The allocation of resources from a regional mitigation fund could easily be based on political considerations rather than a defensible analysis conducted by the permitting agency's staff. Indeed, a common theme is the idea of pooling mitigation to fund programs and projects where they would do the most good. This runs counter to the basics of SEPA to mitigate the direct impacts of a given development, and raises concerns that the mitigation would be applied to areas based on political power rather than need, especially when it comes to transit service allocation.
3. There is a significant challenge in getting consensus on a regional LOS standard for each mode of transportation. Each agency has developed its own criteria based on a variety of needs, goals, and values. Few have developed LOS standards for other modes because there is even less consensus on how to measure them. In addition, in the case of transit, the permitting agency has no control over the continued operation of service.

Another alternative to achieve a more regional perspective is to amend the state statute to require all agencies to accept as conditions of approval concurrency mitigation requirements based on each agency's adopted LOS standards. This would give a lot of power to agencies that aren't interested in accommodating new development but it would address concurrency needs on a system-wide basis, and enhance the credibility of the concurrency determination without adversely impacting permit processing times.

In addition, we should remove the exemption of Highways of Statewide Significance from concurrency decisions. Although this would temporarily paralyze development in much of the region, this is what the public wanted and expected when GMA was adopted. This would also highlight the extent to which we have underfunded our transportation infrastructure, and the extent to which we subsidize development.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions of the author do not reflect the opinion of the City of Federal Way.

Newsletter Contact Info

If you have any changes in your contact information, please let us know so you continue to receive monthly ITE e-mail announcements and newsletters. To update your information, click on the "Membership" link on the Washington State Section ITE website: <http://www.westernite.org/Sections/washington/index.htm>

Scribe Report

By Paul Cho, City of Redmond

As the sun began to set across Elliot Bay, we settled into our seats for this month's joint ITE Washington Section and Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) meeting held in the Executive Dining Room of the World Trade Center for a panel discussion on the upcoming Proposition 1 (Roads & Transit) package. WTS Puget Sound President, Dana Hook commenced the meeting. Following brief announcements by ITE Section President, Dave Alm, Ms. Hook called for self introductions of the panel consisting of:

- Joni Earl, CEO, Sound Transit
- Paula Hammond, Secretary of Transportation, WSDOT
- Harold Taniguchi, Director, King County DOT



Rita Brogan, (Pacific Rim Resources) announced the questions as she moderated the panel discussion. The questions ranged from, "What is ST2 and RTID?" to "How does Ron Sims position affect King County projects?" to "Is a Rail and Road package the wave of the future?"

As I listened intently to the well thought out responses to tough questions, I felt rather guilty that I was able to receive a wealth of information that the typical voter does not. Even though radio commentary announced the ad campaigns for Proposition 1, I have exceeded the opposition, myself and my wife received very little information outside of messages left on our home answering machine. Where can the average voter learn that Sound Transit's ability to deliver ST2 will be improved over ST1 now that it's starting with over 300 employees rather than zero? Or that over \$34M and 3 years were spent in environmental analysis, outreach programs, feasibility studies, etc. to get to this package. Or that many roadway projects that have started will need RTID to finish.

The issues that were made clear in my mind were:

- The package took a lot of effort with input from the public.
- It took over three years and \$34M to get the ST2 package together.
- Many of the "Nickel" projects rely on RTID to finish the projects.
- We will never have a perfect package that appeals to every user.
- This package builds choices for future travel.
- We may not take direct advantage of the improvements, but subsequent generations will.
- Higher taxes may hurt spending, but new projects will distribute dollars back into the region.

Many voters may not understand that things will get worse before they get better. In fact, it may get a lot worse with no apparent progress for quite some time. In a time when everyone owns a cellular phone and text messaging is a widespread form of communications, can younger voters endure endless construction zones for up to 12 years before taking advantage of those choices? Are we willing to invest in our region without seeing a return in the time most people move homes once, buy three cars, and see their toddler obtain their driver's license?

Truly this package is a vote for our future. Without it, our transportation future is a dark cloud. A region's economy relies on good transportation. Many say the package costs too much, does too little, and takes too long. However, this package is as close to a comprehensive package we've seen. Many smaller and more focused projects can enhance its effectiveness, but still require an anchor package to build on. Furthermore, if we do nothing, it'll cost at least \$30M and several years to put another package together that has to appeal to the entire region again. Then add \$800M a year in inflationary impacts. In the meantime, our regional congestion grows without a comprehensive solution to address it.

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