



March 2007

House Transportation Budget

Building a Better Washington

Building a better Washington by keeping the promises we made to voters with accountability and smart investments in roads, transit and ferries.

House Transportation Budget Highlights



Financial overview

The 2003 and 2005 project lists started out with a \$2 billion shortfall – extraordinary inflation is the primary cause. We keep many projects on their current schedule, rather than stretching them out over a longer period and delaying them.

How did we pay for it?

The House budget meets this challenge by using unallocated revenues (federal bridge money, multimodal funds), increasing bonding from existing funding sources by \$1.1 billion, and by requiring the state Department of Transportation (DOT) to make project efficiencies.

Keeping Promises

This budget keeps promises we made to taxpayers in 2003 and again in 2005. It focuses on priority projects, keeping the mega projects on track and keeping DOT focused on efficiency and accountability.

Keeping Projects on Track

The longer plans sit on the shelf, the more expensive they become. The House budget uses money originally designated to cover inflation costs to put projects back on schedule.

Accountability

Project cost estimates by definition are not one hundred percent accurate – some projects wind up costing more, some projects will cost less. The House budget cuts the 2007-09 project budget by 5 percent, takes half of that money to put projects back on track, and uses the other half to fund the Management Reserve Account.

Management Reserve Account

\$78 million 2007-09

This account is set up to give DOT enough flexibility during the 2007-09 biennium to pay unexpected expenses but keeps those expenditures accountable to the Office of Financial Management and the Legislature.

Mega-Project Risk Pool

\$1 billion

A concept similar to the one used in the Management Reserve Account is applied to the Mega-Project Risk Pool. Money originally designated to cover inflation and risk costs for the Viaduct and other projects, and funds set aside for future unnamed bridge projects, are instead deposited in a risk pool for the Viaduct and SR 520 projects to share.

Mega Projects

Alaska Way Viaduct

Funding is allocated for six projects that are design neutral, some of which address immediate safety concerns and all of which will be required under any design. These are the same projects presented by the Governor on Wednesday, March 14, 2007.

520 Floating Bridge replacement

\$120 million

\$120 million in new money is allocated to the project. Included in this amount is \$12 million to site the pontoon construction facility.

Targeted Investments

Multi-Modal Projects

We maintain the commitments made in 2003 and 3005. These projects are key to developing an interconnected transportation system that moves people from place to place in the most appropriate ways. Multi-modal projects include special needs and rural mobility grants, regional transit grants, commute trip reduction funding, van pools, rail and freight mobility, and grant funding for safe routes to schools, and bike & pedestrian safety.

Tacoma Narrows Bridge Tolls

It is important for commuters to use transponders to keep traffic moving across the new bridge when it opens. The House budget provides funding to cut tolls to \$1.50 for transponder users for the first year the bridge is open to traffic. The toll is \$3 for those without transponders.

Freezing Ferry Fares

The ferries are an important part of the state highway system, especially for peninsula and island residents. Fares have increased over 62 percent during the past 6 years. This budgets freezes ferry fares for a year while recommendations in the ferry finance study are implemented.