

Semi-Annual Project Delivery Report

Federal FY 2020 Quarters 1 & 2 (October 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020) Issue XXVII - May 14, 2020

Washington Division Meets with Bureau/TIFIA staff and TIFIA Recipients

During the second week of October, Division staff met with the USDOT, Bureau/TIFIA (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act) Portfolio Manager, and two TIFIA recipients. Both meetings focused on the discussion of project status, planned TIFIA draws, and debt repayment. On October 8, there was a meeting with the City of Bellevue to discuss the \$100 million TIFIA loan for the BelRed project. The BelRed Street Network includes 12 multimodal roadways planned to support the BelRed neighborhood in the heart of Bellevue. The TIFIA financing will support the construction of critical BelRed projects by linking light rail to the BelRed Network. The City of Bellevue has received \$2.2 million in TIFIA reimbursements to date. On October 9, Division and Bureau staff met with WSDOT to discuss the \$300 million TIFIA loan for the State Route (SR) 520 Floating Bridge Replacement and HOV Program. WSDOT has already received the \$300 million in TIFIA reimbursements. The remainder of the SR 520 program will complete this corridor west of the floating bridge to I-5 in the Seattle area. This work is anticipated to be state-funded only.

RxPave Now Available! Online Pavement Rehabilitation Scoping Tool (<https://rxpave.com/>)

The Washington State Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) has just made available a free online application tool called RxPave. In addition to 20% funding from TIB, RxPave received \$100,000 in FY2018 Federal State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC) funds which are provided annually to each state for innovations through the Every Day Counts (EDC) program. RxPave aims to help TIB and small cities select and prioritize pavement rehabilitation strategies for low-volume roads where expertise or knowledge resources are limited. RxPave provides consultants and engineers with a structured framework to facilitate rehabilitation decisions. This tool determines which paving rehabilitation options are viable using a decision tree established for each treatment. Inputs requires a mix of qualitative and quantitative data to identify the segment, pavement type and level of distress. Based on these inputs, RxPave disqualifies any rehabilitation options (with justification) and summarizes the reasoning behind recommended options in a report. This report includes a summary of recommended and rejected rehabilitation options. Since recommendations are not based on location-specific information, RxPave can be applied to projects located outside of Washington.

Washington Division Approves BUILD Grant for Spokane's Geiger Boulevard Project

On November 22, 2019, the Washington Division approved the FY2018 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant No. 9 Agreement for the Geiger Boulevard Infrastructure Improvements project located in Spokane County. This project received a BUILD Discretionary Grant award in the amount of \$14,300,000. The project consists of a range of infrastructure improvements to the existing Geiger Boulevard, including interchange ramp terminal roundabouts, illumination, widening to accommodate center turn lanes, installation of a shared use pathway, and extended shoulders. With the 10 previous TIGER awards this agreement is the 11th Discretionary Grant awarded to and administered by the Washington Division, WSDOT, and WSDOT Local Programs. This project is estimated to be substantially complete and open to traffic by November 2021.

Olympic National Park Road Safety Audit

The Washington Division participated in the first of two Road Safety Audits in Olympic National Park along Lake Crescent March 3rd through the 5th. On the first day, the Division Safety & Design Engineer joined over 20 representatives from FHWA's Western Federal Lands Highway Division, the National Park Service (NPS), and WSDOT to discuss the context of the National Highway System route (US 101) transecting the park. The final two days were spent observing the behavior of recreational users, commuters, and forest product heavy vehicle traffic. Several recommendations were discussed and presented to NPS including better delineation in curves and establishing a road safety plan that addresses the section of US 101, as well as park service roads.

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With data from Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Quarters 1 & 2 (October 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020)
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WSDOT Approved for "State-funded, Federally-reimbursed" ROW Option

In February 2020, the Washington Division Office approved the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) request to use the "State-funded, Federally-reimbursed" early acquisition option as provided in 23 CFR 710.501(d). This option, which provides for federal reimbursement of all eligible Right-of-Way (ROW) costs when the property was initially purchased with State funds, is limited to those States who have a "mandatory, comprehensive and coordinated land use, environment, and transportation planning project". The Division concurred with the State's determination that the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) meets the stated regulatory requirements and the Governor's authority to certify early acquisitions as consistent with this plan has been delegated to WSDOT. This action adds an additional streamlining opportunity to WSDOT's ROW toolbox and is expected to further expedite project delivery.

"The Division typically receives 15-18 such requests annually. The average processing time for each is 21 days. Under this streamlined process, the request will be processed within 24 hours of receipt, saving 20 days. Assuming an average of 16 requests coming in for approval annually, that would result in 320 days saved."

- Dave Leighow, ROW Program Manager

PCE Agreement Signed in Washington State

On February 4, 2020, a revised and updated version of the 2015 Programmatic Agreement for Categorical Exclusions (PCE Agreement) was executed for Washington State. It will be in effect for five years. The changes to the agreement are clarifying which CEs always require FHWA signature (those not specifically listed in 23 CFR 771.117 (c) or (d)), explicitly allowing electronic signatures, and allowing the agreement to cover any new CEs added to 23 CFR 771.117 (c) or (d) during the life of the PCE Agreement. CEs involving unusual circumstances also come to FHWA for signature. **In 2019, 96% of CEs for Local Programs projects and 99% of WSDOT projects were approved by WSDOT under the PCE Agreement.** As before, FHWA retains the responsibility for compliance with Section 106, Section 4(f), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other regulations. The agreement requires FHWA to provide timely review and response to any request for coordination or consultation. WSDOT Regions are encouraged to consult and work with their FHWA Area Engineer as needed. The Division Office conducts an annual review of CE project documentation to verify compliance with the PCE Agreement and will continue to do so for this new agreement.

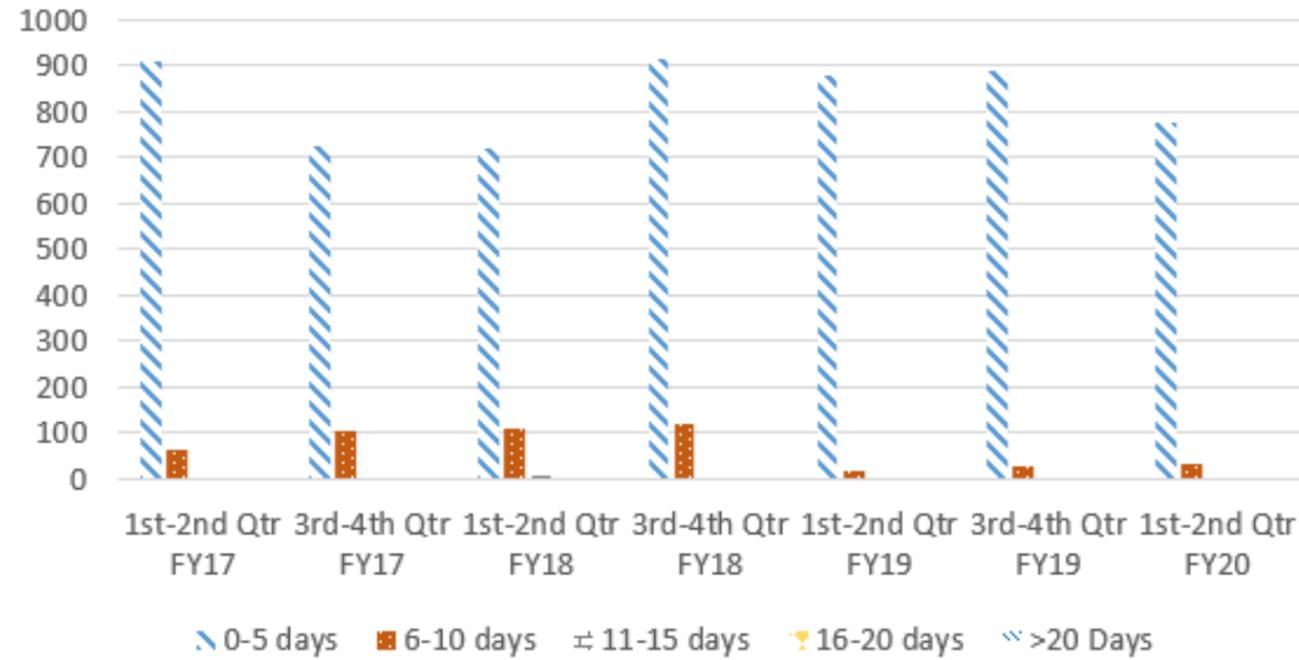


WSDOT's 2020 Noise Policy and Procedures Approved

In March 2020, the Washington Division approved an update to WSDOT's Noise Policy (last updated in 2011). The new policy also received review and concurrence from FHWA HQ. This 2020 update clarified the definition of a Type I project (one which changes the roadway in a way that could affect traffic noise, such as adding a new lane), clarified that all National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decisions, including CEs, are considered "Date of Public Knowledge", updated references to the most current FHWA guidance such as the Noise Measurement Handbook, modified the definition of "Feasibility" and an auxiliary lane, and removed an outdated reference to the FHWA Traffic Noise Model Lookup tables. The new policy will also help to streamline reviews by adding an alternative methodology for screening of low volume/low speed roadway projects where noise impacts are not anticipated. After evaluation of actual costs of noise walls, the average costs for Type I and Type II (noise retrofit) noise walls remain the same as in the 2011 Noise Policy. WSDOT will continue applying this policy to all their projects, both federal-aid and state-funded.

TIMELINESS OF AUTHORIZATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

Timeliness of Auth-mods - Days to Approve



The chart above reflects the number of days taken for the FHWA Washington Division to approve authorizations / modifications submitted into the Financial Management Information System (FMIS) from WSDOT. (Our Stewardship & Oversight agreement states we will turn around at least 90% of all requests within 5 days or less). For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020 as of March 31, a total of 777 approvals out of 811 project transactions in FMIS were approved within 5 days or less which equals 96%.

INACTIVE PROJECT PERCENTAGES AND TOTAL NUMBER OF INACTIVE PROJECTS
 A total of 229 projects were inactive in the first and second quarters of FFY2020 (117 and 112), representing an inactive percentage of 1.3% and 1.0%, respectively. FHWA's quarterly target is under 2% inactivity of total obligated Federal funds. The quarterly inactive percentage is found by dividing all projects inactive (projects with no expenditures processed for 12 months or more) unexpended obligation by each state's total annual apportionments.

APPROVALS / ACTIONS

- Environmental Approvals: 14** (Documented CEs, Endangered Species Act, 4(f), 106, etc.)
- Design Approvals: 6** (Basis of Design, Design Analysis, Project Development Approval, Methods & Assumptions, etc.) for various projects throughout the state.
- Interchange Justification Report Approvals: 5** - Various projects throughout the state.
- Financial Plan Update Approvals: 1** - SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program.
- Project Management Plan: 1** - SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program.
- Miscellaneous Construction Approvals: 1**
- Change Order Approvals: 1**
- Miscellaneous Project Approvals: 7** - Various projects throughout the state.

FHWA TRAINING, WORKSHOPS AND PEER EXCHANGES

FHWA / WSDOT Host Design-Build (D-B) Peer Exchange - On November 19 and 20, WSDOT and FHWA hosted a D-B Peer Exchange in Olympia. Seventy-six participants attended including State DOT and FHWA representatives from Colorado, Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and FHWA Headquarters, the Resource Center (RC), and the Washington Division. FHWA's RC provided travel funding for the out-of-state DOT participants. WSDOT hosted this opportunity to learn of more ways to maximize using D-B contracts for their \$3.1 billion Fish Barrier Removal program that entails removing more than 400 fish barriers between now and spring of 2030 to comply with a Federal court ruling. States shared their implementation strategies on topics such as: Performance Versus Prescriptive Requirements, Quality Verification/Audits and Contract Administration, Expedited Procurement Methods, Pre-NEPA/NEPA and Permitting, Project Bundling, Alternate Technical Concepts, Return on Investment, and Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity Construction Contracts. All participants shared openly pros and cons of their experiences. At the end of the peer exchange several attendees suggested this be an annual event. They found it very useful to get practitioners together to discuss strategies, pros and cons, and innovations.

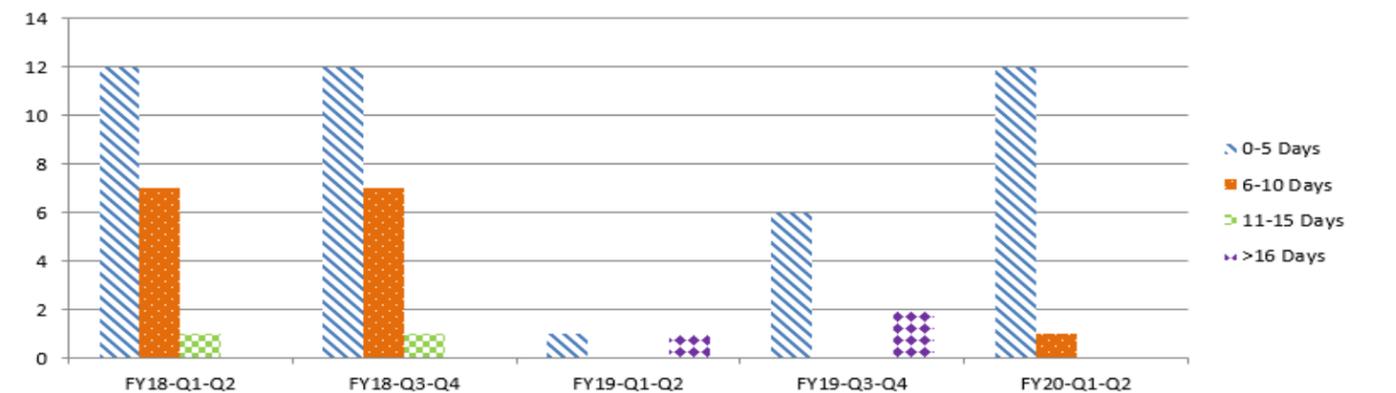
Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Project Delivery Training - In December 2019, WSDOT and FHWA provided Project Delivery Training in Auburn, WA, for city and county staff involved in the delivery of federal-aid projects. Information on the key elements of delivery of a federal-aid project including requirements from planning to construction was presented. Approximately 80 city and county reps attended the training.

Contract Administration Core Curriculum (CACC) Course - On February 25 and 26, FHWA delivered the CACC course to WSDOT Local Programs staff and Local Agencies in Washington State in Tumwater, WA. The CACC course was requested during the listening sessions that Division Office conducts annually with WSDOT Region offices. The Washington Division assisted in delivering the requested training and provided local perspective to the training on contract administration issues and discussed the local Stewardship and Oversight Agreement for Washington State.

2020 ROW Workshops for Local Public Agencies (LPA) and Consultants - The Washington Division Right of Way (ROW) Program Manager assisted WSDOT Local Programs in presenting the 2020 Annual ROW Meetings for LPAs and consultants in seven locations around Washington between February 4th and March 5th. The key workshop items this year included WSDOT's proposed revision of the ROW Project Funding Estimate worksheet; Titles and Encumbrances; and, FHWA's presentation on the current Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for revisions to 49 CFR 24, the regulations which implement the Uniform Relocation Act. There were 248 participants who attended the workshops held in Federal Way, Everett, Vancouver, University Place (Tacoma), Spokane, Yakima, and Wenatchee.

FHWA Supports Washington Truck Parking Meeting - The Washington State Patrol (WSP) formed a Problem Oriented Public Safety (POPS) symposium consisting of WSDOT, FHWA WA Division, private sector, the Washington Trucking Association, and several cities and counties. The group focuses on various issues that pertain to truck parking. The Washington Division invited Ms. Christina Leach from its Resource Center to attend the meeting held in March in Olympia as Ms. Leach has facilitated other truck parking workshops throughout the country. Next steps include the Washington Division bringing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) into this effort and to organize a truck parking workshop that can be brought to Washington in the summer.

TIMELINESS OF ER DAMAGE INSPECTION REPORTS



This chart shows the timeliness of FHWA Washington Division approval for Emergency Relief (ER) damage inspection reports. Our goal is to approve 90% of these reports within 10 days of receipt. ER reports that exceed 16 days are delayed typically due to external permits, need for additional information, and other factors.