

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6466

C 258 L 94

SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Streamlining the environmental permit processes for the department of transportation.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Prentice, Nelson, Vognild, Hochstatter, Drew, Loveland, Sheldon, Schow, Williams, Erwin and Winsley)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND:

A number of planning and programming efforts are required to complete a transportation project. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) develops a 20-year transportation plan which lays the foundation for the specific projects approved within a given biennial period.

The WSDOT is comprised of six regional transportation districts and a headquarters office. Projects proposed for consideration within the biennial period are first "scoped" by the transportation districts. The districts are responsible for assessing the transportation problems within their respective jurisdictions and submitting candidate projects to the headquarters office, where all projects are then prioritized under RCW 47.05. The criteria used for prioritizing projects are developed internally by WSDOT subject to approval by the Transportation Commission.

Once the projects have been prioritized and approved by the Transportation Commission, they are submitted to the Legislature for appropriation.

Currently, no formal environmental process links the planning, scoping, design, and construction stages of project development.

SUMMARY:

Internal WSDOT processes shall incorporate environmental considerations throughout the entire construction process, beginning with the earliest planning stages and extending through final construction.

The department, in cooperation with environmental regulatory authorities, shall identify and document environmental resources in the development of the statewide multimodal plan.

The environmental regulatory authorities shall be given an opportunity to review the department's environmental plans.

Any changes to the criteria used for prioritizing projects shall be subject to public comment prior to final adoption by the Transportation Commission.

The department, in cooperation with environmental regulatory authorities, shall identify potential environmental impacts, mitigation, and costs during the project identification and selection phase (scoping), to be incorporated into the project prospectus. The project prospectus is to be submitted to the relevant environmental regulatory authorities. The department shall maintain a record of comments, and proposed revisions received from the reviewing regulatory authorities.

The department, in cooperation with the relevant environmental regulatory authorities, shall develop a uniform methodology for submitting plans and specifications to the environmental regulatory authorities which detail those project elements that impact environmental resources, and propose mitigation measures.

Local government coordination of permit approvals for major transportation projects crossing more than one city or county boundary is required. By December 31, 1994, affected cities and counties shall designate a permit coordinating agency to facilitate multi-jurisdictional review and approval of such transportation projects.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Senate	46	0	
House	90	0	(House amended)
Senate	45	0	(Senate concurred)

EFFECTIVE: June 9, 1994