

RCW 47.17.001 Criteria for changes to system. In considering whether to make additions, deletions, or other changes to the state highway system, the legislature shall be guided by the following criteria as contained in the Road Jurisdiction Committee Phase I report to the legislature dated January 1987:

(1) A rural highway route should be designated as a state highway if it meets any of the following criteria:

(a) Is designated as part of the national system of interstate and defense highways (popularly called the interstate system); or

(b) Is designated as part of the system of numbered United States routes; or

(c) Contains an international border crossing that is open twelve or more hours each day.

(2) A rural highway route may be designated as a state highway if it is part of an integrated system of roads and:

(a) Carries in excess of three hundred thousand tons annually and provides primary access to a rural port or intermodal freight terminal;

(b) Provides a major cross-connection between existing state highways;

(c) Connects places exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics:

(i) A population center of one thousand or greater;

(ii) An area or aggregation of areas having a population equivalency of one thousand or more, such as, but not limited to, recreation areas, military installations, and so forth;

(iii) A county seat;

(iv) A major commercial-industrial terminal in a rural area with a population equivalency of one thousand or greater; or

(d) Is designated as a scenic and recreational highway.

(3) An urban highway route that meets any of the following criteria should be designated as part of the state highway system:

(a) Is designated as part of the interstate system;

(b) Is designated as part of the system of numbered United States routes;

(c) Is an urban extension of a rural state highway into or through an urban area and is necessary to form an integrated system of state highways;

(d) Is a principal arterial that is a connecting link between two state highways and serves regionally oriented through traffic in urbanized areas with a population of fifty thousand or greater, or is a spur that serves regionally oriented traffic in urbanized areas.

(4) The following guidelines are intended to be used as a basis for interpreting and applying the criteria to specific routes:

(a) For any route wholly within one or more contiguous jurisdictions which would be proposed for transfer to the state highway system under these criteria, if local officials prefer, responsibility will remain at the local level.

(b) State highway routes maintain continuity of the system by being composed of routes that join other state routes at both ends or to arterial routes in the states of Oregon and Idaho and the Province of British Columbia.

(c) Public facilities may be considered to be served if they are within approximately two miles of a state highway.

(d) Exceptions may be made to include:

(i) Rural spurs as state highways if they meet the criteria relative to serving population centers of one thousand or greater

population or activity centers with population equivalencies or an aggregated population of one thousand or greater;

(ii) Urban spurs as state highways that provide needed access to Washington state ferry terminals, state parks, major seaports, and trunk airports; and

(iii) Urban connecting links as state highways that function as needed bypass routing of regionally oriented through traffic and benefit truck routing, capacity alternative, business congestion, and geometric deficiencies.

(e) In urban and urbanized areas:

(i) Unless they are significant regional traffic generators, public facilities such as state hospitals, state correction centers, state universities, ferry terminals, and military bases do not constitute a criteria for establishment of a state highway; and

(ii) There may be no more than one parallel nonaccess controlled facility in the same corridor as a freeway or limited access facility as designated by the metropolitan planning organization.

(f) When there is a choice of two or more routes between population centers, the state route designation shall normally be based on the following considerations:

(i) The ability to handle higher traffic volumes;

(ii) The higher ability to accommodate further development or expansion along the existing alignment;

(iii) The most direct route and the lowest travel time;

(iv) The route that serves traffic with the most interstate, statewide, and interregional significance;

(v) The route that provides the optimal spacing between other state routes; and

(vi) The route that best serves the comprehensive plan for community development in those areas where such a plan has been developed and adopted.

(g) A route designated in chapter 47.39 RCW as a scenic and recreational highway may be designated as a state highway in addition to a parallel state highway route. [1993 c 430 s 1; 1990 c 233 s 1.]