

RCW 47.06A.020 Board—Purpose—Duties. (1) The purpose of the board is to:

(a) Provide strategic guidance to the governor and the legislature regarding the highest priority freight mobility needs in the state;

(b) Identify and recommend a program of high-priority strategic freight mobility investments;

(c) Encourage policies that support a competitive, resilient, sustainable, and equitable freight system; and

(d) Serve as a forum for discussion of state transportation decisions affecting freight mobility.

(2) The board shall:

(a) Adopt rules and procedures necessary to implement the freight mobility strategic investment program;

(b) After seeking input from local governments, transportation planning organizations, other public entities, and Indian tribes[,], recommend a six-year investment program of the highest priority freight mobility projects for the state across freight modes, jurisdictions, and the regions of the state;

(c) Ensure that the program provides statewide inclusion and maximum federal funding options, projects recommended as a part of the six-year investment program that intend to leverage federal funds must be developed consistent with planning requirements for inclusion in the federally recognized state freight plan;

(d) Monitor the implementation of projects included in the six-year investment program on an ongoing basis;

(e) Identify critical emerging freight mobility issues not yet addressed by investments considered for inclusion in the six-year investment program of the highest priority freight mobility investments required in (a) of this subsection; and

(f) Submit an initial full report meeting the requirements of this subsection to the governor and the transportation committees of the legislature by December 1, 2024. Updated reports may be submitted annually to the transportation committees of the legislature and governor by December 1st of each year; however, a full update must be provided every two years.

(3) The board may:

(a) Provide technical assistance to project sponsors;

(b) Accept any gifts, grants, or loans of funds, property, or financial, or other aid in any form from any other source on any terms and conditions which are not in conflict with this chapter;

(c) Adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW as necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter;

(d) Do all things necessary or convenient to carry out the powers expressly granted or implied under this chapter;

(e) Evaluate and recommend for state sponsorship priority projects eligible for federal grant funding under the nationally significant multimodal freight and highway projects program, also known as the infrastructure for rebuilding America program, established in 23 U.S.C. Sec. 117 and the railroad crossing elimination program established in 49 U.S.C. Sec. 22909; and

(f) For critical emerging freight issues identified under subsection (2)(e) of this section, proactively work with potential project sponsors, impacted communities, and other interested parties to facilitate project development to address these critical issues.

(4) The board shall:

(a) Designate strategic freight corridors within the state. The board shall update the list of designated strategic corridors not less than every two years, and shall establish a method of collecting and verifying data, including information on city and county-owned roadways;

(b) Coordinate with the department of transportation throughout the process of its periodic update of the state's freight mobility plan and review and provide feedback on the plan;

(c) For the purposes of developing the six-year program of highest priority freight mobility investments, utilize threshold project eligibility criteria that, at a minimum, includes the following:

(i) The project must be on a strategic freight corridor;

(ii) The project sponsor must demonstrate a plan for:

(A) Sufficient engagement with overburdened communities impacted by the project; and

(B) The evaluation of project alternatives and mitigation measures addressing the impacts on these communities to the greatest extent possible;

(d) Adopt other evaluation criteria for the six-year program of highest priority freight mobility investments to include, but not be limited to, benefits to the state's freight system, how much funding has already been secured for a project, project readiness for construction, and the regional distribution of projects;

(e) For the six-year investment program, solicit from public entities proposed projects that meet threshold criteria established in accordance with this subsection. The procedures for collecting and validating project information must rely on information project sponsors have already developed to the greatest extent possible; and

(f) Develop and recommend policies that address operational improvements that primarily benefit and enhance freight movement including, but not limited to, policies that reduce congestion in truck lanes at border crossings and weigh stations and provide for access to ports during nonpeak hours. [2023 c 167 § 3; 2013 c 104 § 1; 2005 c 319 § 125; 1999 c 216 § 1; 1998 c 175 § 3.]

Findings—Intent—Part headings—Effective dates—2005 c 319: See notes following RCW 43.17.020.