

# Transportation Performance Management Webinar Series

Webinar 29

## Linking Performance to Strategy – Advancing Performance-Based Planning

Sponsored by FHWA and AASHTO



February 18, 2026

# Transportation Performance Management Webinar Series

- Today is the **29th** webinar in our bimonthly series.
- Webinars are held every two months, on topics such as communications, data, and other performance management topics.
- We welcome ideas for future webinar topics and presentations
- Use the webinar chat during the webinar
  - Submit questions for today's presenters
  - Submit ideas for future webinar topics



Find us on the AASHTO TPM Portal  
<https://www.tpm-portal.com>

# Webinar Objectives

- **Explore** different types of measurements to accurately track progress, including outcome-based, output-based, and efficiency metrics
- **Identify** ways to incorporate essential factors like risk management, asset management, and financial planning into your performance framework
- **Highlight** strategies for effectively communicating performance results to transportation stakeholders and the public
- And as always, **share lessons learned, ideas, and knowledge!!**



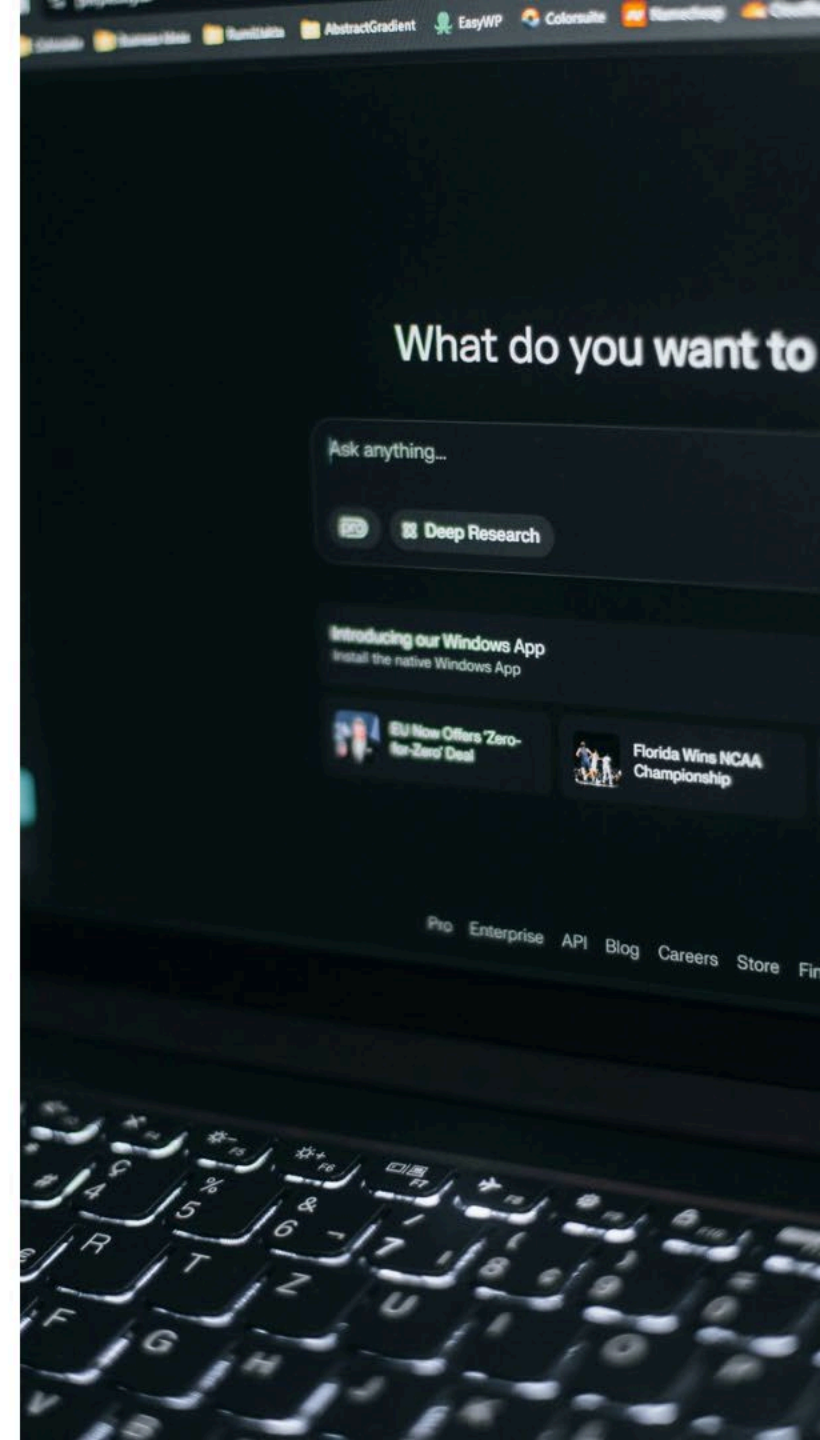
# Webinar Agenda

- 2:00**      **Welcome, Overview, and Agenda**  
Christos Xenophontos, CPBM Chair and Rhode Island Department of Transportation
- 2:05**      **FHWA Welcome**  
LaToya Johnson, FHWA
- 2:10**      **AASHTO Welcome**  
Anna McLaughlin, AASHTO
- 2:15**      ***The People Side of Data, Information, Knowledge Management, and AI***  
Lorri Economy, Utah Department of Transportation
- 2:35**      ***Data Governance and AI: Key Takeaways from TxDOT***  
Ben McCulloch, Texas Department of Transportation
- 2:55**      ***Performance Management: Connecting Today's Data to Tomorrow's Outcomes***  
Kerri Woehler and Sreenath Gangula, Washington State Department of Transportation
- 3:00**      **Panelist Discussion and Wrap Up**  
Hyun-A Park, Spy Pond Partners



# THE PEOPLE SIDE OF DATA, INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & AI

Exploring the human factors in leveraging data, knowledge, and artificial intelligence for organizational transformation





# PEOPLE

Today's session centers on the most critical element of integrating data, information, knowledge management, and AI: **THE PEOPLE** who make these systems work. This isn't a talk about technology; it is a discussion about the behaviors, expectations, culture, and leaders required for meaningful transformation.

# WHY UTILIZING AI MATTERS NOW



## Workforce Shortages

Organizations are struggling with workforce shortages, retirements, and the need to do more with less



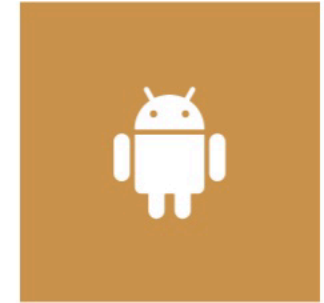
## Increased Complexity

Organizations are facing growing complexity in their operations and decision-making



## Explosion of Information

The volume and velocity of data and information is increasing exponentially, creating challenges in finding and using relevant insights



## AI Reshaping Work

AI is not replacing work, but rather reshaping how people do their work, requiring new skills and approaches

**Integration of data, knowledge, and AI is essential for organizations to navigate increased complexity, workforce challenges, and the explosion of information, enabling people to make better, faster, and more confident decisions.**

# THE COST OF IGNORING THE PEOPLE SIDE

When organizations treat AI and KM as IT projects rather than change initiatives, the chance for failure becomes predictable:

- 👎 low adoption,
- 👎 lack of trust,
- 👎 shadow systems,
- 👎 burnout, and wasted investment.
- 👎 People fall back on old habits unless culture, clarity, and communication lead the change.



# CULTURE, TRUST & PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



## Psychological safety is the #1 predictor of adoption

People must feel safe to ask questions, challenge outputs, and admit mistakes. This is the foundation for successful AI and knowledge management initiatives.



## Leaders must model transparency and curiosity

Trust doesn't come from the tool; it comes from the environment we build around the tool. Leaders set the tone and shape the culture.



## Cultivate an environment of openness and learning

When people feel safe to experiment, provide feedback, and share knowledge, the organization can truly leverage the power of AI and knowledge management.

**Establishing a culture of trust and psychological safety is essential for people to fully embrace and benefit from AI and knowledge management initiatives.**

# TRUST IS THE #1 PREDICTOR OF ADOPTION



## Safe to ask questions

Employees must feel comfortable asking questions about AI outputs and capabilities without fear of being seen as incompetent.



## Safe to challenge AI outputs

Employees should be able to provide feedback and challenge AI-generated results without negative consequences.



## Safe to admit uncertainty

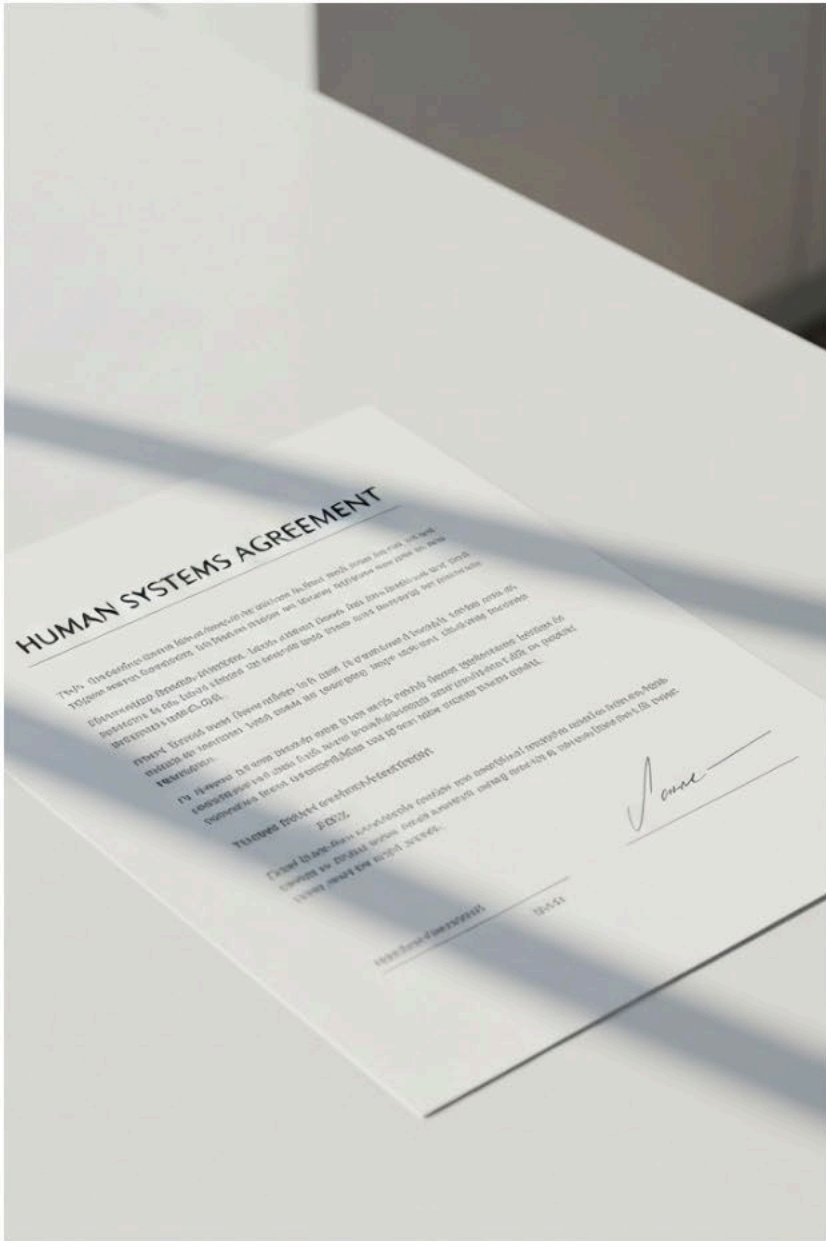
Employees should feel empowered to acknowledge when they are unsure about AI-related decisions or outputs.



## Safe to learn and experiment

Employees should be encouraged to experiment with AI and learn from their experiences, without fear of failure.

Psychological safety allows people to engage meaningfully with AI. Employees must feel comfortable questioning results and surfacing concerns without fear of being seen as resistant or incompetent.



# DATA GOVERNANCE AS A HUMAN SYSTEM

Data governance is not just a technical exercise, but rather a human system of agreements - agreements about data quality, standards, definitions, responsibilities, and accountability. For AI to function effectively, these shared behavioral commitments are essential.

# DATA GOVERNANCE = SHARED HUMAN AGREEMENTS



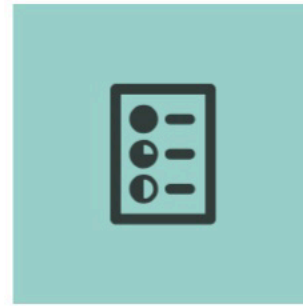
## Common definitions

Shared understanding of key data terms and concepts



## Clear data ownership

Defined roles and responsibilities for data stewardship



## Quality standards

Agreed-upon processes for data validation and improvement



## Accountability for use

Transparency and oversight around data access and application

**Data governance is not just policies and tools. It is a set of agreements about how people create, manage, and use data. AI depends on these behaviors to function effectively.**

# THE KNOWLEDGE-DATA-AI NEXUS



## Data Governance

Data governance establishes the policies, procedures, and accountabilities for managing an organization's data assets, ensuring data quality, security, and compliance.



## data quality

Establishing a robust data governance structure to ensure data quality, security, and compliance is critical to launching effective KM and AI and efforts.



## AI-Powered search for Internal Audience

Robust data governance will allow the power of AI to derive valuable insights from data, driving innovation and improving business outcomes.



## Organizational Knowledge Management

Effective knowledge management strategies to capture, organize, and disseminate critical organizational insights.

**By aligning organizational knowledge management, data governance, and AI-powered search, UDOT can unlock the full potential of knowledge and data-driven decision-making.**

# THE KNOWLEDGE—DATA—AI NEXUS

The sweet spot is where knowledge, data governance, and AI intersect. When these systems align, an organization becomes more capable than the sum of its parts.

But the real nexus is people - the people who steward data, share knowledge, challenge AI outputs, and make decisions.

This is not a technical transformation, it is a capability transformation.



# UDOT Knowledge Management Initiative

Connecting people to the right information at the right the time.



## CONNECT

Connecting people and knowledge across the organization



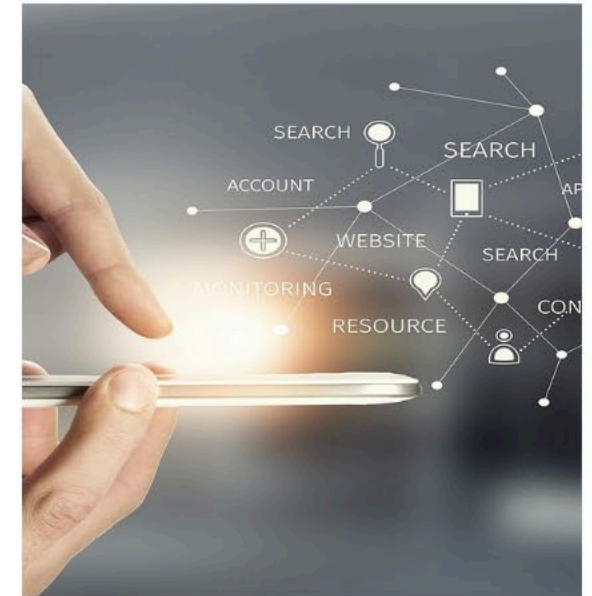
## SHARE

Preserve knowledge, sharing consistent knowledge, information, training, and mentoring



## LEARN

Learning organization, employee development virtual libraries, learning & knowledge portal



## INNOVATE

Agile and nimble organization, DOT of the future, improved decision making

# UDOT GUIDE TO USING AI



## AI STRATEGY

Smarter Tools. Stronger Teams. Safer Roads

Your Guide to Using AI the Right Way

Artificial Intelligence is already part of nearly everything we do - every piece of software we use contains an element of AI. It's not replacing us; it's empowering us. Think of AI as a capable partner that helps you research, organize, and communicate more effectively - freeing you to focus on engineering, safety, planning, and innovation.

### AI Guiding Principles

Trust, Risk, Privacy and Security, Balance between Human Judgement and AI, Accuracy and Reliability, Transparency and Accountability, Constructive Use

### AI Strategy Implementation Roadmap

Phase 1 - Foundations,  
Phase 2 - Growth and integration,  
Phase 3 - Scale and optimize

### AI Functions and Categories

Provide standard definitions of AI types, Everyday Tools approved for use, and describe UDOT use cases.

### Concepts and Resources

Provide Education and information regarding the AI concepts and resources available to UDOT employees. Using a communication strategy and Google Sites to drive a deeper understanding of AI and how it works.



# AI Guiding Principles

## Trust as the Cornerstone

Build and preserve public trust through transparent, accountable AI systems and trustworthy outcomes

## Consider Risk

Identify, evaluate, and mitigate risks to ensure AI remains safe, effective, and trustworthy

## Privacy & Security

Protect personal data and ensure the safeguarding of sensitive information

## Accuracy & Reliability

Ensure AI systems provide precise and consistent results

## Transparency & Accountability

Be open about how AI works, its limitations, and its impacts

## Balance Between Human Judgment & Artificial Intelligence

Maintain meaningful human oversight and ultimate decision-making authority in all AI-supported processes

## Constructive Use

Apply AI in ways that serve public needs and deliver meaningful benefits



## Governance & Responsible Use

Responsible AI use centers on transparency, data protection, fairness, and human oversight to ensure safe, ethical, and trustworthy outcomes

• [Enterprise Generative AI Policy](#) • [Executive Director's AI Memorandum](#)

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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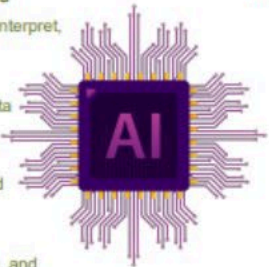
# AI Functions and Categories



## AI Types

AI technologies enable UDOT to understand information, generate content, recognize patterns, and automate decisions to improve accuracy and efficiency.

- **Generative AI**  
Creates new content based on patterns learned from data
- **Natural Language Processing**  
Allows computers to understand, interpret, and respond to human language
- **Machine Learning**  
Teaches systems to learn from data and improve over time
- **Computer Vision**  
Enables machines to interpret and understand visual information
- **Robotic / Agentic AI**  
AI systems that can sense, decide, and act in the physical or digital world



## UDOT Use Cases

AI strengthens transportation operations through smarter traffic management, predictive safety tools, automated inspections, and improved public engagement.

UDOT has implemented [9 use cases](#) which can be viewed by visiting our Innovation Catalog

Innovation Catalog  
[Click Here](#)

## 2026 AI Activities Include:

- Traffic Flow Optimization
- Smart Operations & Public Engagement
- Predictive Maintenance & Asset Management
- Engineering AI
- Asset Condition Classification
- Bid Price Prediction
- AI Design Specification Checker



## Everyday Tools

**Gemini** enhances daily workflow by helping staff draft, analyze, organize, and communicate more effectively within familiar Google tools including: Docs, Gmail/Chat, Sheets, and Slides

- **NotebookLM**  
Lets you upload your own documents and use AI to get summaries, insights, and ideas from your trusted sources - [NotebookLM Site](#)
- **Policy Bot**  
The generative AI agent for UDOT policy search

# AI LITERACY



Engagement and Dialogue



Training and Education



Policy and Procedure



Recognize where AI is being used



Recognize when it is appropriate to use AI



Consistent Definitions and Language

# AI Functions and Categories



## AI Types

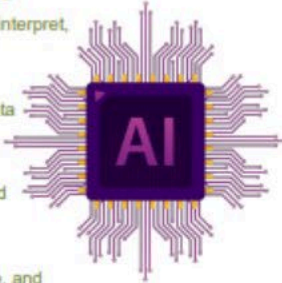
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## Everyday Tools

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# AI LITERACY

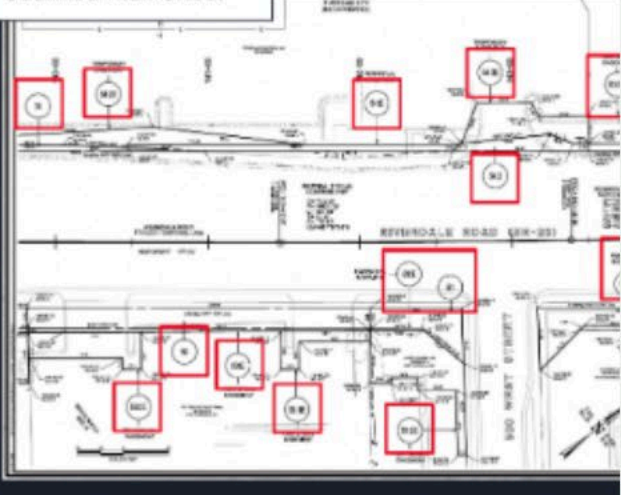


- Engagement and Dialogue
- Training and Education
- Policy and Procedure
- Recognize where AI is used
- Recognize when it is appropriate to use
- Consistent definitions and language

## Process Overview

- Because the parcel information (around the text) and plan sheets

Scanned Plan Sheet



## Results

Matched results against existing  
Added a County column to the re

## Parcel Detection

- The Right of Way GIS group needed to identify parcels on thousands of plan sheets stored in ProjectWise.
- The UDOT GIS team and DTS used Google Vision AI Tool to search plan sheets for the standard marking of parcel numbers
- Used OCR to extract parcel text to a sheet
- Reviewed 90,000 plan sheets & Identified 56,000 parcels

## Policy Search

- Utilize Google generative AI tools to create a comprehensive knowledge base for employees, providing a one-stop shop for valuable agency informat
- Limit AI search to UDOT policies housed on the UDOT Employee Resource Sit
- Initial user testing returned varied answers
- Trained LLM to return refined search

## Gemini, Notebook LM and Google AI

- Utilize Google generative AI tools to create a comprehensive knowledge base for employees, providing a one-stop shop for valuable agency information
- Limit AI search to UDOT documents housed on the UDOT Employee Resource Site
- Access to Gemini, Notebook LM and Google LLM AI search tools

# HOW TO BUILD CULTURE OF KNOWLEDGE



## Listen & Learn

Ask employees what they need.



## Clarify Roles

Establish stewards, owners, and guidelines.



## Pilot & Prove

Pick one workflow to improve visibly.



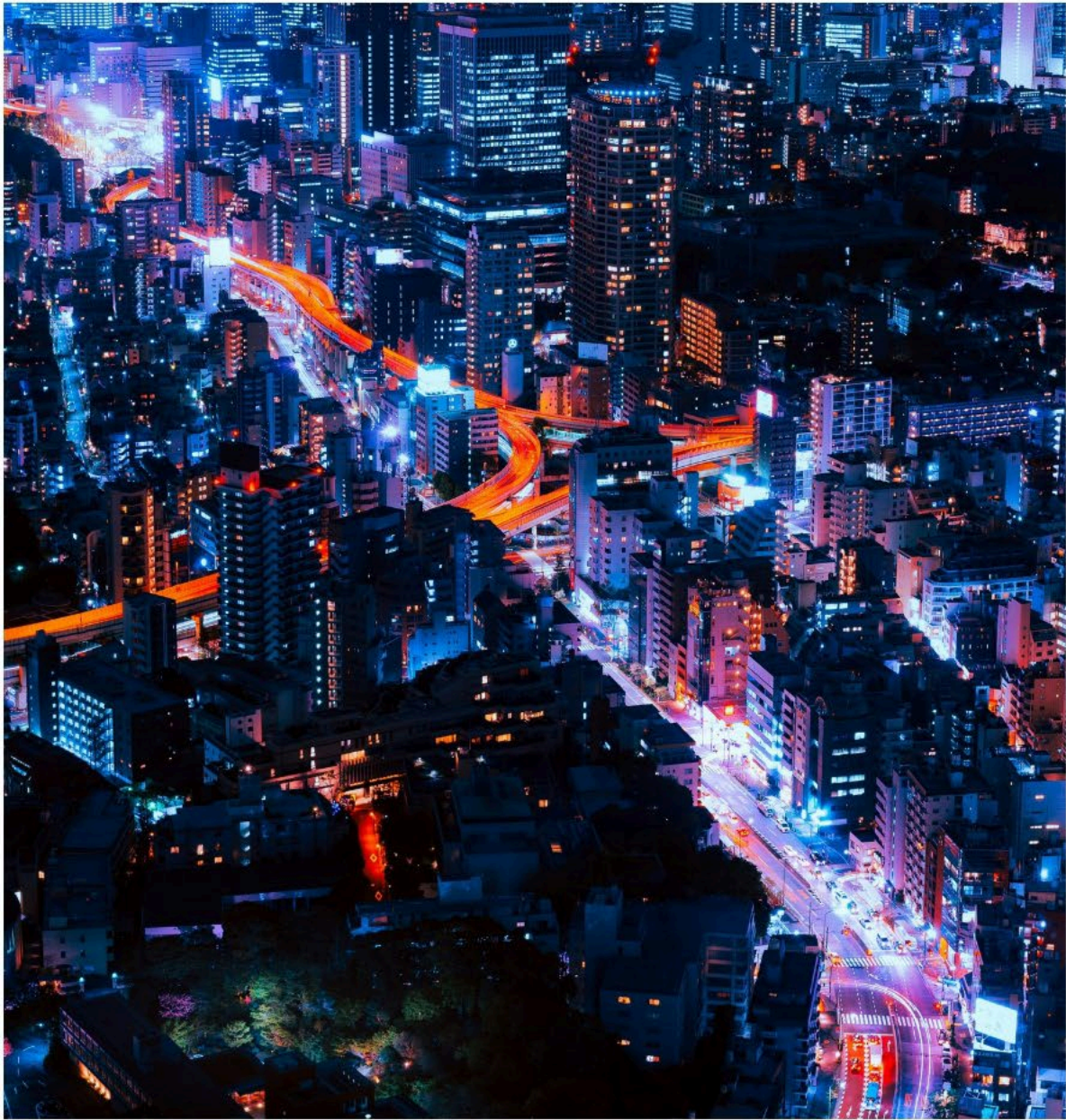
## Build Trust

Communicate openly, model transparency, and show early wins.



# AI AND DATA INITIATIVES' SUCCESS ULTIMATELY DEPENDS ON:

- The strength of the underlying human systems - the culture, clarity, and capabilities that already exist within the organization.
- Strong governance, shared knowledge, and high trust enable AI to amplify and scale what people can do.
- Conversely, weak human systems are simply magnified by technology, leading to low adoption, a lack of trust, and wasted investment.



Organizations that prioritize investing in people, fostering trust & psychological safety, developing skills, & maturing their knowledge management systems will be poised to thrive in the future.

When the human elements are addressed, the technology will seamlessly enhance and empower the workforce.

# UDOT CONTACTS



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# RESOURCES

Alison Coleman, Forbes, People, Culture and Customers: The Real AI Adoption Challenge. November 2025, Accessed digitally at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisoncoleman/2025/11/02/people-culture-and-customers-the-real-ai-adoption-challenge/>

Aaron J. Barnes, Yuanyuan Zhang, Ana Valenzuela, AI and culture: Culturally dependent responses to AI systems, Current Opinion in Psychology, Volume 58, 2024, 101838  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352250X24000514>

Gartner's Top Strategic Predictions for 2025 and Beyond: Riding the AI Whirlwind: <https://www.gartner.com/doc/reprints?ct=241223&id=1-2JS03OWR&st=sb>

How AI & Culture Intersect: 5 Principles for Senior Leaders. Accessed digitally at <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/how-ai-culture-intersect-5-principles-for-senior-leaders/>

How Organizational Culture Shapes AI Adoption and Success: Q&A with Jessica Kriegel of Culture Partners. Accessed digitally at <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/flagships/ai-hi/how-organizational-culture-shapes-ai-adoption-success>

Culture of AI Benchmark Report State of AI Adoption and Culture Readiness in Europe. Access digitally at <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/652784/culture-of-ai-and-adoption-report.aspx?thank-you-report-form=1>



# Data Governance and AI: Key Takeaways from TxDOT



2/17/2026

## TxDOT Data Governance Goals



Establish a strong data governance and procurement framework.



Ensure high-quality, accurate, and trusted data.



Standardize data and improve interoperability across systems.



Modernize data tools, infrastructure, and practices.

## Making Data Available at TxDOT

- TxDOT's enterprise data platform (EDP) built on Snowflake.
- Includes data from 30+ key systems: financial, project development, construction, pavement, consultant contracts, crash reports.
  - In progress: average annual daily traffic count, bridge, traffic management center, utility, and maintenance data.
- **Unified datasets help unlock AI capabilities.**



## Agency Challenges

- 25 districts and 32 Divisions statewide using a variety of tools or purchasing data to meet their needs.
- As legacy systems are replaced there is inconsistent quality of data and metadata in the new systems.
- Business rules are not consistently applied during data entry.



## Lack of Data Governance Leads to AI Risks

- Misinformed asset and safety prioritization.
- Incorrect predictions for costs and schedules.
- Dependence on vendors, no ability to audit AI models, lack of transparency.
- Higher risks due to unjustifiable or biased decisions.
- Pilot projects failing to scale, low adoption



Image by DALL-E 3

## Key Takeaway

AI is not a software deployment,  
it is a data maturity program.

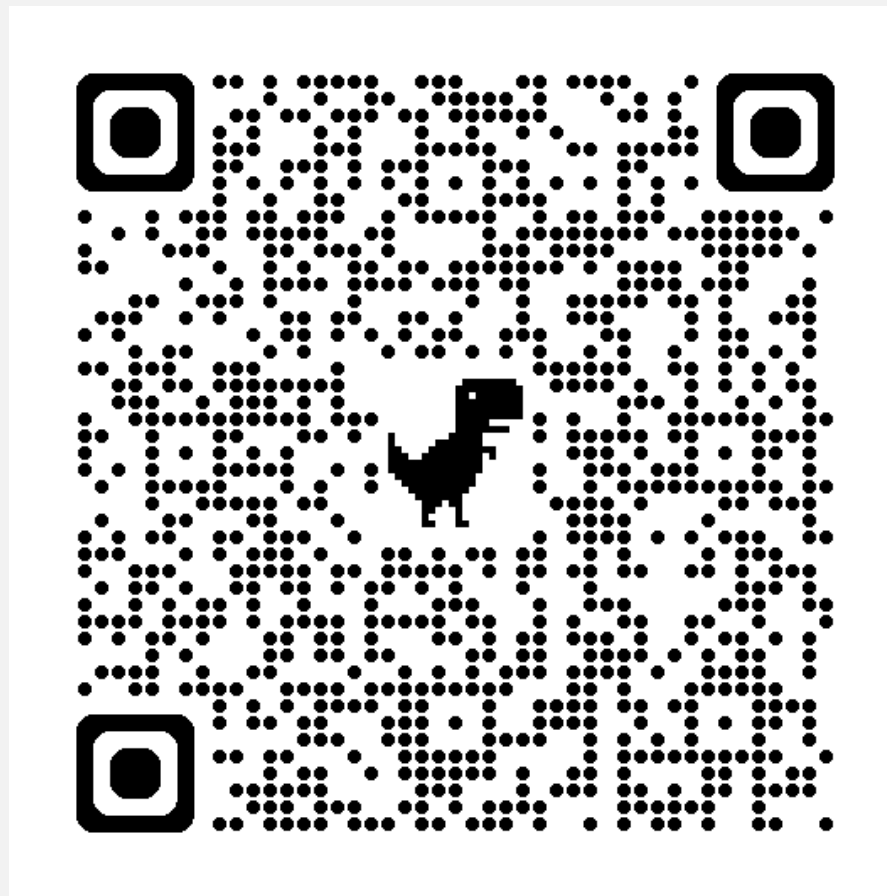
# Thank you!

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# Performance Management

*Connecting today's data to tomorrow's outcomes*

Kerri Woehler

Assistant Secretary, Multimodal Development and Delivery

Sreenath Gangula

Assistant Director, Performance Management Office

February 18, 2026; TPM Webinar#29: Linking Performance to Strategy — Advancing Performance-Based Planning

# NCHRP Project 20-44(57) Implementing Scenario Planning Across Transportation Agencies

**The project aims to make scenario planning easier to integrate into transportation work.**

1. Advance scenario planning as a practical, widely used approach for managing uncertainty in transportation decisions.
2. Share transferable examples showing how agencies have integrated scenario planning into routine decision-making.
3. Clarify what agencies need for scenario planning to work in practice.
4. Develop and test practical approaches and resources that fit existing transportation workflows.



<https://engage-dewberry.com/transportation-scenario-planning>

# Washington's challenge

The state highway system is in the early stages of critical failure due to lack of funding. WSDOT is a national leader in asset management and has stretched Preservation as far as possible.

Preserving the existing highway system:

- Is fiscally responsible with billions of dollars at stake
- Is mandated by state law
- Requires significant additional investment ***to keep up with failing assets and begin proactive work***

# Translating vision into actionable, financially feasible plans

Adequate preservation and maintenance, then, balanced investment is **\$2 in safety and efficiency programs** for every **\$1 in highway expansion**.

Next step – explore options to connect to capital delivery plan, implementation of performance-based project evaluation.

## Recipe for: Resilient Highways

There is not enough funding to meet all highway needs, therefore WSDOT recommends the following recipe to spend our limited funds.

### Serves:

All Washingtonians

### Ingredients:

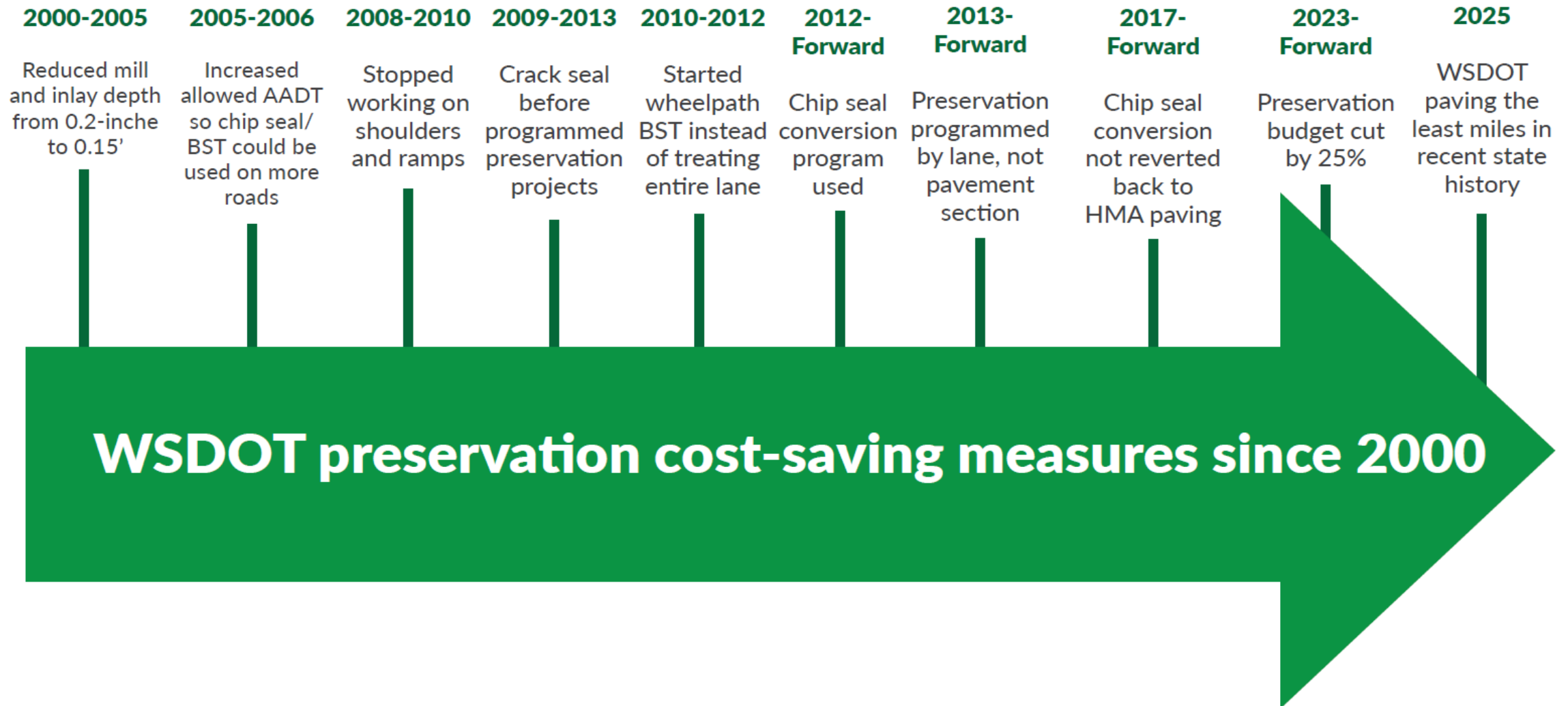
- Baseline funding
- Move Ahead Washington funding
- New revenue

### Preparation:

1. First fund operations maintenance, capital preservation and critical programs such as required fish passage projects and program support.
2. Then for any remaining funds, \$2 should be spent on safety and efficiency strategies for every \$1 spent on highway expansion projects.

**Chef's note:** Keeping the existing system open depends on two programs that work together. Preservation in the capital budget addresses large fixes. Maintenance from the operations budget keeps the roads open in between preservation fixes through more than two dozen separate activities.

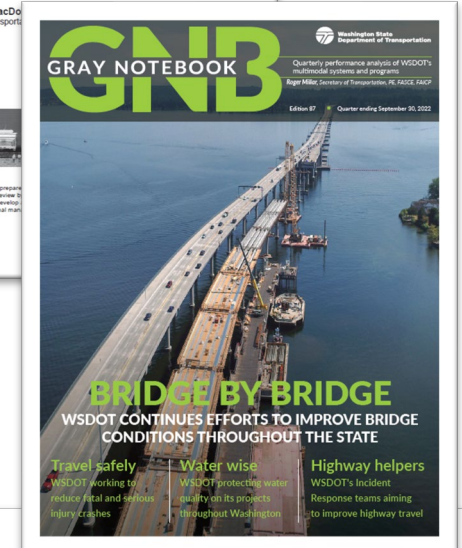
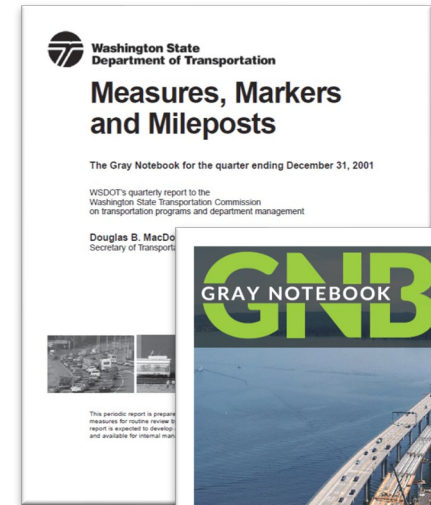
# A history of belt tightening - pavement



**WSDOT preservation cost-saving measures since 2000**

# WSDOTs evolving its approach to performance

- **2001-2024:** Quarter century of retrospective reporting (Gray Notebook) achieved accountability, credibility and transparency helping secure several funding packages
- **2025 onwards:** Forward-looking, risk-based storytelling linking funding to outcomes.
- **Goal:** A single, unified narrative on the *health of the transportation system*.



### Turning data into outcomes

WSDOT's System Health Analysis translates complex planning data into a clear picture of what Washington needs to remain strong, reliable, and responsive to growing demands. It connects today's conditions to tomorrow's outcomes, showing how key investments now save money long-term and how deferring action creates bigger risks. By framing choices in terms of public safety, economic vitality, and community well-being, it helps decision-makers see both the challenges and opportunities ahead – powered by performance intelligence.

- Agency top-line stories
- Project Delivery
- Statewide Transportation Policy Goals
- Federal and state compliance

# Chronic underfunding erodes system health

- Impacts are accumulating in preservation, maintenance, safety, ferries, and fish passage.
- Traditional reporting shows *what happened* but not *what happens next*.
- Without a future-focused view, legislators and the public cannot see the consequences of deferred investment.

**Our solution:** *Evolve from performance reporting to **performance intelligence** by connecting today's data to tomorrow's outcomes.*



# Moving towards Performance Intelligence

Stating the facts from the data is **performance reporting**.

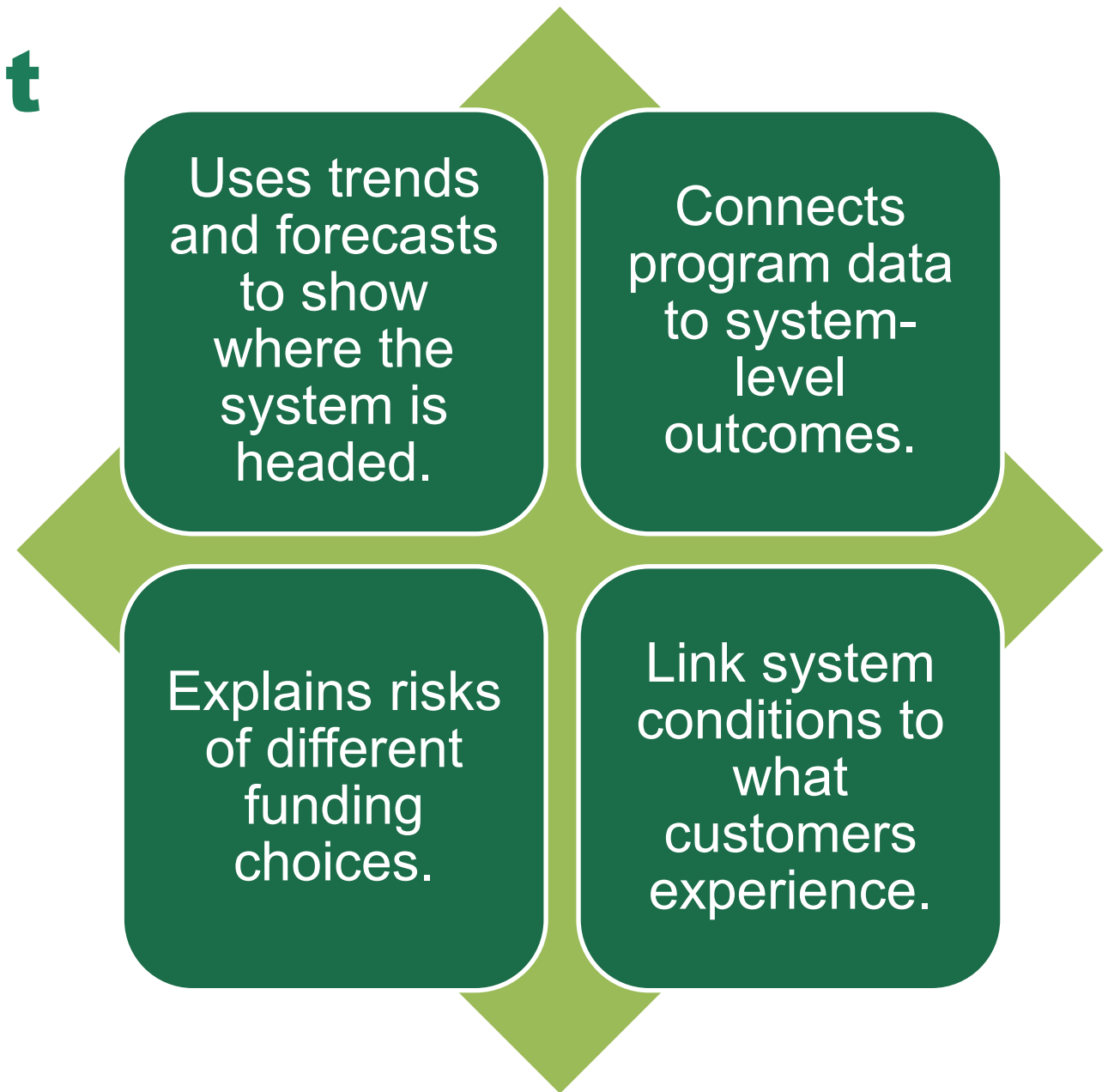
Framing those facts within a meaningful narrative is **performance journalism**, (which often includes the “why”).

Describing where we’re heading based on predictive trends is **performance forecasting**. And (by connecting the dots)...

Explaining why we believe we’re heading there is **performance intelligence**.

# How this is different

To strengthen how *transportation system health* is communicated, WSDOT is evolving from performance reporting to ***performance intelligence***.



# Transportation System Health framework

## Why Preservation matters to Washington's Transportation System



d 10/2/2025

### Preservation overview

WSDOT manages around 18,700 lane miles of highway and more than 3,400 bridges. These assets are the backbone of safe, reliable travel for the public and freight. Preservation is the how we keep those assets in a serviceable condition. Like preventive healthcare, preservation means proactive capital treatments, such as resurfacing pavements or rehabilitating a bridge deck, applied before failure instead of waiting until costly full reconstruction is required. Timely preservation work allows us to:

- Preserve structural integrity
- Extend asset life
- Minimize lifecycle cost

### Agency policy and direction

- State law (RCW 47.06.0509 a) directs WSDOT to use the right fix, at the right time. Without this we face
- LLCC is not a luxury, it is essential to keep the system. It only works when preservation is applied early in t
- Preservation ensures safe, reliable travel and protect

### Current funding reality

- Annual funding needed to keep the system at the FHWA 90% performance target: > \$1.52 billion (pavement + bridges + other assets)
- Annual spending: > \$540 million
- Annual shortfall: > \$980 million

Because of the funding gap, the backlog (also called the not spent today can cost \$4-6 in future reconstruction, failures today leading to higher costs, rougher roads, mo

### Risk of deferral

- Higher costs are already being incurred
- Safety and reliability risks are increasing today, mean
- Freight and economic disruptions are real and growi
- The health of the transportation system is already d

### Preservation vs. Maintenance

Maintenance (day-to-day operations ensuring safety and like paving and bridge replacement) go hand in hand. Th funded to keep Washington's transportation system in a item threatens mobility, Washington's economy and pu

### Bridges overview

Washington's bridges are essential lifelines for communities, commerce and emergency response. Timely preservation keeps bridges safe and reliable, while delaying work leads to expensive replacements, disruptive closures and greater risks to public safety. Based on current standards, bridges have a service life of 80 years. As of June 2024, the average age of WSDOT owned bridges was 51 years and 315 bridges were 80 years old or older.

Timely preservation helps ensure structural integrity, extend bridge life and minimize life-cycle costs. Preservation work keeps bridges safe and reliable, while delaying work leads to expensive replacements, disruptive closures and greater risks to public safety.

### From lifeline to dead end: one inspection away from crisis

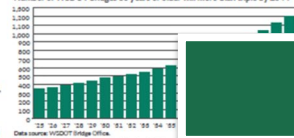
In April 2025, inspectors closed the 103-year-old Fairfax Bridge after finding advanced steel deterioration. Overnight, the only road to Mount Rainier's Carbon River entrance became a dead end, cutting off Carbonado and Wilkeson, draining local businesses, and leaving residents anxious about emergency access.

Fairfax is not an exception; it is a warning. Washington's 3,427 bridges carry our people, freight, and economy. The underfunding and resource limitations that led to the closure of the Fairfax Bridge will lead to more closures.

### Key planning considerations

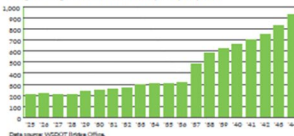
- State law (RCW 47.06.050) requires WSDOT to apply the Lowest Life Cycle Cost principle – The right fix, at the right time.
- The Bridge Management System is WSDOT's decision support tool that integrates inspection data, structural element performance, and deterioration models to forecast future needs. It identifies when and where cost-effective interventions should occur, ensuring bridges remain safe, reliable, and preserved at the lowest life-cycle cost.
- The Transportation Asset Management Plan is Washington's long-range strategy for managing highway assets at the Lowest lifecycle cost. It establishes performance targets, forecasts future needs, and prioritizes investments to keep critical infrastructure safe, reliable, and resilient, ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent where they deliver the greatest long-term value.
- Federal Transportation Performance Management rules require Washington to keep bridge deck area in poor condition below 10%; a threshold we're currently pushing at 9.9%.

Number of WSDOT bridges 80 years or older will more than triple by 2044



Notes: WSDOT defines the service life of a bridge as 80 years. Once a structure passes this threshold, the risks of deterioration, costly repairs, and safety concerns increase substantially. The "aging cliff" shows that in 2025, more than 340 bridges already exceed their service life. By 2044, the total climbs to over 1,200 bridges, representing a 253% increase. This shows WSDOT's bridge system is aging out faster than it is being renewed, creating an unavoidable backlog that demands strategic investment now.

Bridge backlog count set to more than quadruple by 2044



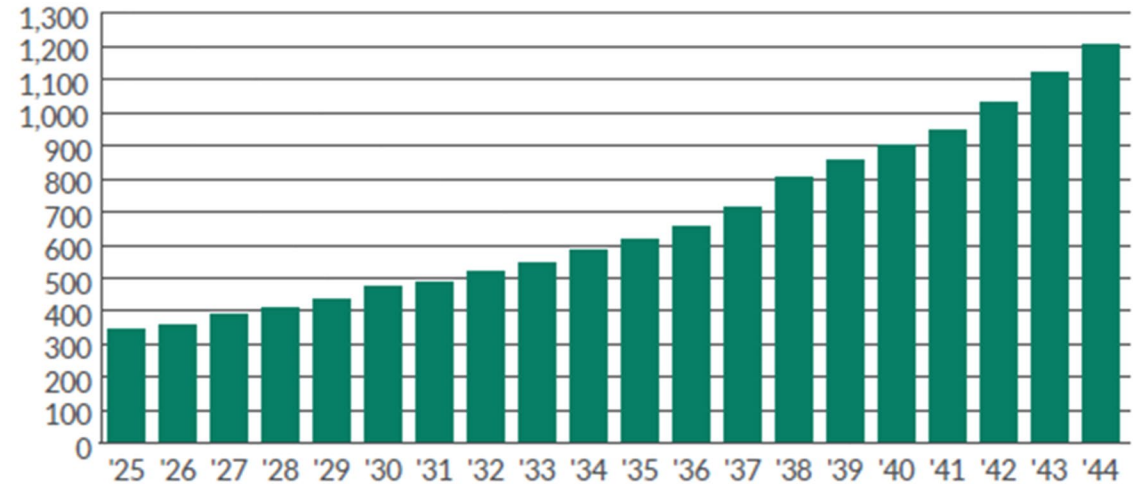
Notes: The backlog chart shows how quickly needs accrue under current funding levels. About 200 bridges are already overdue for preservation, and without additional investment this number will climb to over 100 by 2044. Each year of deferral compounds costs and risks, turning effective repairs into a wave of expensive rehabilitation projects, without action, communities and freight will face more restrictions, more closures, and higher costs.

### Benefits of strategic funding

Investing in timely bridge preservation delivers clear, measurable returns:

- Lower taxpayer costs - Timely preservation avoids expensive rehabilitations or replacements.
- Reliable travel - Keeps people, emergency services, buses, and freight moving without disruption.
- Economic resilience - Protects jobs, commerce, and tourism across the state.
- Accountability - Meets federal standards and shows measurable progress.
- Community safety - Ensures lifeline routes are ready in emergencies.

## Number of WSDOT bridges 80 years or older will more than triple by 2044



Data source: WSDOT Bridge Office.

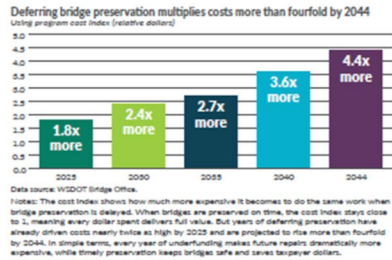
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# Consequences of deferred investments

## Risk if not funded

Deferring bridge preservation does not save money – it multiplies costs and risks:

- **SkYROCKETING COSTS** – Modest repairs turn into expensive major rehabilitation or replacements.
- **STRANDED COMMUNITIES** – Closures cut off residents, businesses and emergency access.
- **ERODED PUBLIC CONFIDENCE** – Frequent restrictions and emergency fixes undermine public trust.
- **FEDERAL PENALTIES** – Exceeding the 10% poor deck threshold risks sanctions and reduces funding flexibility.



## Tradeoffs: stretching dollars, losing ground

Washington has already cut preservation to the bone for 25 years. Without a reset, bridges will continue to deteriorate and each tradeoff will cost taxpayers more while delivering less.

- **New vs. old** - Every dollar that goes into new capacity projects instead of preservation shifts hidden costs into tomorrow's bridge failures.
- **Emergency vs. planned work** - Unfunded preservation forces crews into reactive work, draining dollars from scheduled improvements to cover surprise shutdowns.
- **Seismic vs. surface fixes** - Pushing off seismic retrofits to modern standards fund other work gambles with earthquake readiness and risks losing vital lifelines when we need them most.
- **Short-term savings vs. long-term bills** - Deferring painting and deck rehab may look like savings today but guarantees more costly reconstructions tomorrow.



## Path forward / Legislative communication

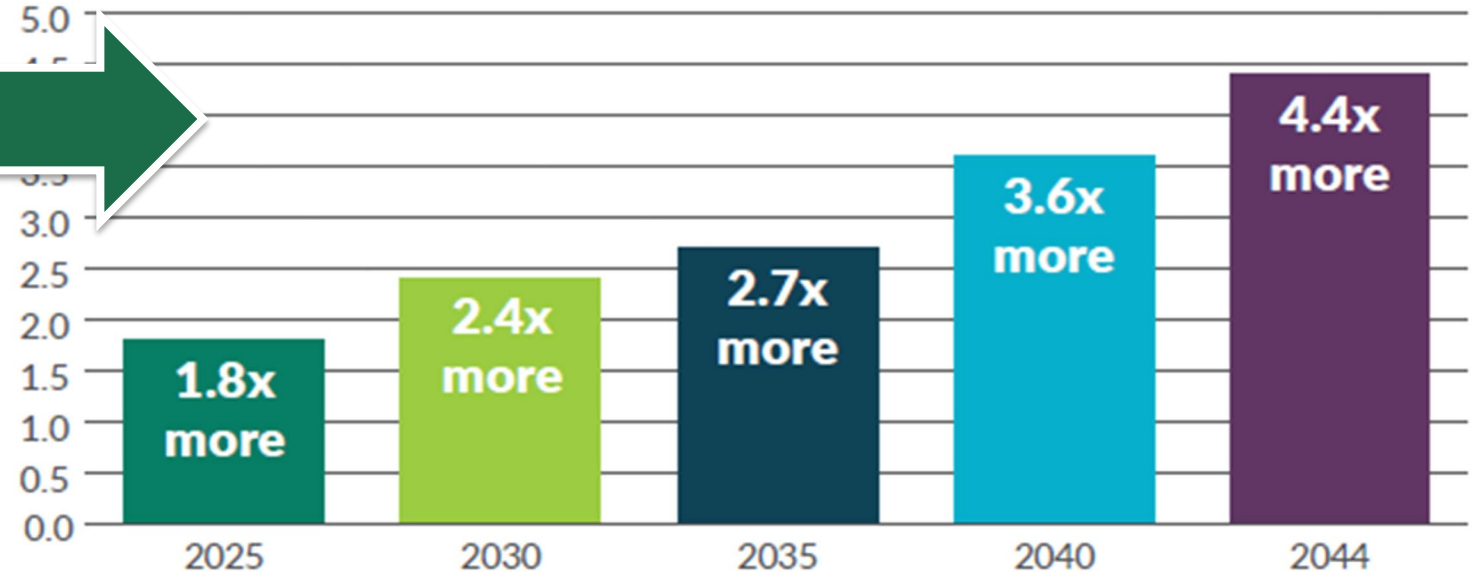
Washington's bridge system is at a tipping point. If funding stays flat: nearly 930 bridges will be in poor condition by 2044. The consequences are stark: every deferred repair multiplies costs, reaching four times more expensive within 20 years. These are not abstract numbers, but real dollars lost to taxpayers.

To address these conditions WSDOT will continue to share these preservation needs:

- **Stabilize the backlog** – Add about \$400 million/year, on top of current funding, to eliminate overdue bridge work by 2035 and prevent the backlog from growing out of control.
- **Protect against federal penalties** – Keep poor bridge deck area under the 10% federal red line to avoid sanctions and preserve funding flexibility.
- **Maximize taxpayer value** – Fund low-cost, high-benefit preservation actions like painting, deck rehabilitation and seismic retrofits while bridges are still in serviceable condition.
- **Deliver reliability and safety** – Ensure lifeline routes remain open for communities, commerce, and emergency response.
- **Show progress with transparency** – Report publicly on measurable outcomes

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## Deferring bridge preservation multiplies costs more than fourfold by 2044 Using program cost index (relative dollars)

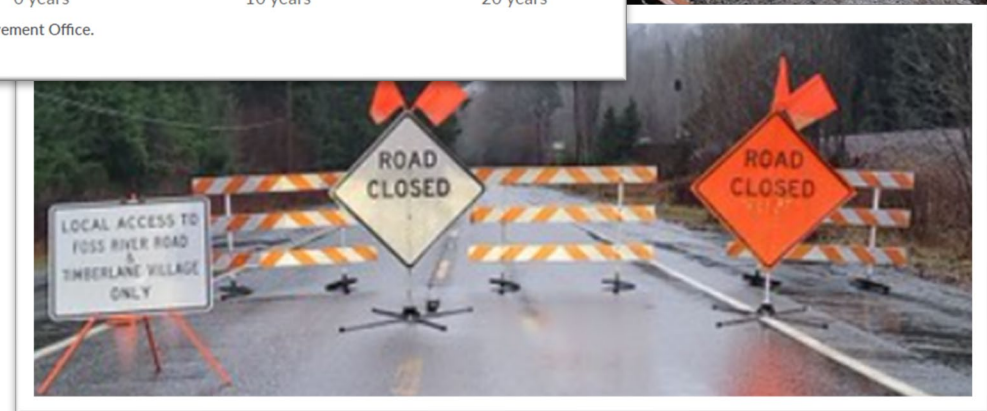
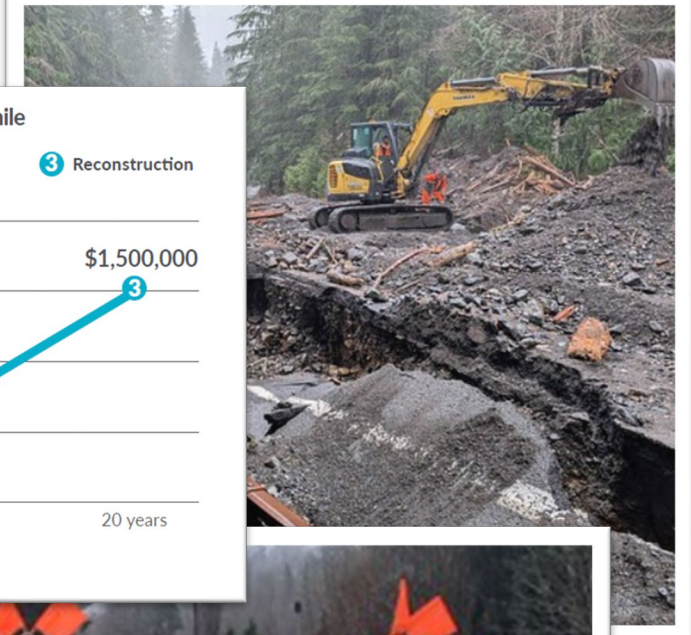
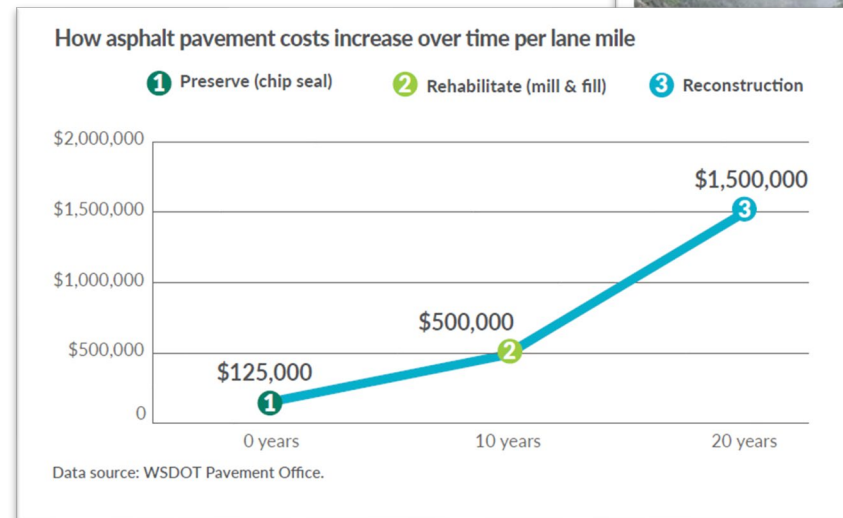


Data source: WSDOT Bridge Office.

Notes: The cost index shows how much more expensive it becomes to do the same work when bridge preservation is delayed. When bridges are preserved on time, the cost index stays close to 1, meaning every dollar spent delivers full value. But years of deferring preservation have already driven costs nearly twice as high by 2025 and are projected to rise more than fourfold by 2044. In simple terms, every year of underfunding makes future repairs dramatically more expensive, while timely preservation keeps bridges safe and saves taxpayer dollars.

# New data and measures for a focused narrative that resonates

- System outcomes
- Unfunded needs
- Cross-program connection
- Predictive indicators
- Risk clarity
- Narratives with purpose



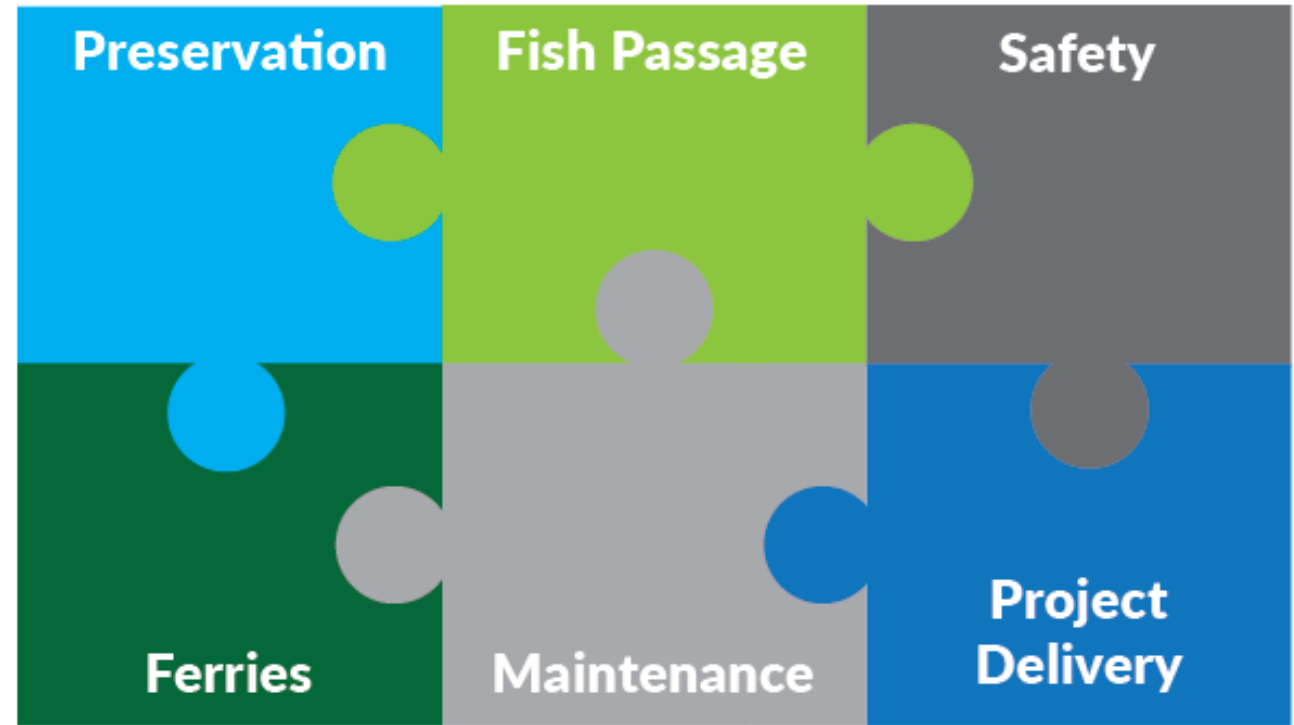
# Why this matters

- Keeps WSDOT accountable, transparent, and forward-looking.
- Strengthens legislative understanding of unfunded needs and long-term risks.
- Builds a unified, data-driven narrative for Washington's multimodal transportation future.
- Aligns with **Governor Ferguson's Executive Order 25-06** by using performance and customer feedback to improve service for Washington travelers.

# Finding common ground in unfunded needs

## Emerging themes:

- Shared risk
- Integrated story
- Forward-looking tools
- Consistent messaging



# Potential implementation challenges



- Mindset shift
- Trust & ownership
- Governance clarity
- System integration
- Risk translation
- Sustained adoption

# Thanks!

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