

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE WORK GROUP COMMUNICATIONS ROAD MAP

Overview

The Washington State Legislature and the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) are preparing for the arrival of autonomous vehicles (AVs). In 2018, the WSTC convened a diverse executive and legislative work group of stakeholders to develop policy recommendations to address the operation of AVs on public roadways in the state.

The primary purpose of the work group is to identify the regulatory, policy, infrastructure and other changes needed to enable and ensure the safe operation of AVs on public roadways and provide recommendations to the WSTC and the Washington State Legislature. The operation of AVs in Washington has broad implications for a wide variety of people ranging from policymakers to those who will be affected by potential policies. Therefore, readily available public information and clear communications on this topic is vital to enabling a long-term transition to more automation on our roadways and transportation system.

This communications road map will provide milestones-driven recommendations for the work group to communicate in a comprehensive, transparent and equitable way to the greatest extent possible for not only interested stakeholders and the general public, but also amongst the Work Group and subcommittees themselves.

Topics covered in this road map include:

- AV policy goals and objectives
- Communications goals and objectives
- Overview of potential stakeholders
- Tools to communicate key milestones
- Next steps

AV Policy Goals and Objectives

The Work Group adopted 8 policy goals to guide the Work Group's efforts and recommendations to the WSTC and Washington State Legislature.

1. **Organize for Innovation:** Enable organizational change that empowers officials to be flexible, accelerate decision-making, and adapt to changing technology.
2. **Shared Mobility:** Encourage and incentivize shared mobility, including an emphasis on high occupancy and shared modes for moving people and goods.
3. **Economic Vitality and Livability:** Create resilient and efficient regional networks and empower local agencies to create resilient, multimodal local networks.
4. **Infrastructure and Context Sensitive Street Design:** Promote durable, physical and digital networks that accommodate the movement of people and goods in ways that are appropriate for the context.
5. **Land Use:** Encourage land use development patterns that support multimodal connectivity to efficient local and regional networks.
6. **Equity:** Work with marginalized communities to increase access to desirable mobility options.
7. **Safety:** Increase the safety of transportation systems and infrastructure to support the safe movement of people and goods.
8. **Environment:** Reduce the local and cumulative environmental impacts of mobility to improve air and water quality, energy conservation and mitigate climate change.

Communication Goals and Objectives

The communications road map will support the overall AV policy goals and objectives. In order to achieve these policy goals, the AV Work Group will need to effectively communicate with and conduct outreach to stakeholders and policymakers to ensure the recommendations are informed and comprehensive. The following set of communication goals and objectives help the process be specific, measurable, and attainable.

Goals	Objectives
Audiences understand the significance of future AV policies in Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the policy goals which identify best practices for strategic policy development.
Audiences are informed and educated about the AV policymaking process in Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the general public and stakeholders at key points in policy development to ensure awareness and encourage input.
Communications will be developed using a racial, health, and socioeconomic equity lens to ensure holistic access across communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support collaboration with community-based organizations (CBOs) to generate interest and promote equitable and broad-based information sharing within their communities, related to the Work Group efforts. • Seek CBOs’ input and guidance on how to ensure ongoing input and access at key points.
Media coverage is balanced and informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and maintain proactive relationships with various media outlets. • Engage media outlets at key milestones in collaboration with the WSTC so that the Work Group can maintain coordinated messaging.
Foster trust with audiences in the development of these potential public policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain consistent communication with audiences to ensure that they are informed of any policy development throughout the process.

Stakeholders

While the Work Group is at the forefront of making operational and policy recommendations to the state legislature, many entities and individuals in our state are looking into the future of AVs. To ensure an equitable, inclusive and collaborative process, stakeholders will not only consist of internal agencies, private companies and general roadway users, but also include groups that may be directly or indirectly affected by these policies.

Policymakers & implementers	Impacted by / may benefit from policies	Policy influencers	Info sharing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected officials • Key agencies and departments responsible for making and implementing policy • Work Group (Executive Committee and Subcommittees) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement • Local cities and counties • Other states • Drivers • Pedestrians • Cyclists • Other roadway users including transit and TNCs • General public • Historically disproportionately impacted by policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communities of color ○ Immigrant communities ○ Low-income drivers ○ People with disabilities ○ Seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private companies • Advocacy groups • Academia & Policy think tanks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media

Communications Toolkit

The toolkit below captures key communications milestones that may occur between now and the Work Group’s sunset at the end of 2023 and the associated tools that can be used to share the information with stakeholders. As the Work Group shares information, here are a few guiding principles to keep in mind:

- **Ensure easy access to information:** Information produced by the Work Group and/or posted on the Work Group website should be accessible to the general public. When posting content, the Work Group should consider:
 - Accessibility of documents, such as:
 - Videos and graphics to ensure that they are accessible to all, including ensuring that they are accessible for screen readers
 - Graphics keep in mind those who experience color blindness
 - Videos and graphics are captioned
 - Translated documents for non-English speaking individuals or organizations
- **Continue to support collaboration internally and externally:** Identify the interconnected work among the subcommittees to support collaboration and coordination and continue to work with key external partners across sectors to share information and knowledge.

- **Stay proactive:** As a group informing public policy, the Work Group has a responsibility to transparently share information with the public about what is being accomplished and what is under consideration.
- **Keep it clear and concise:** AV technology and public policy can be daunting to industry outsiders. Communications to the public must be clear and concise to ensure that they are accurately informed of the decisions being made that will eventually affect them.

Annual Milestones

Through 2023, the Work Group will repeat a cycle of milestones that will help guide their communications through the process.

Milestone	Communication tools
<p>March - September Work Group and stakeholder engagement prior to legislative session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of public policy recommendations • Progress of Work Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder interviews at key points where feedback and/or direct input can be received • Surveys, research and polling as needed to received feedback and understand audiences • Public workshop(s) to share information and receive feedback from members of the public who may be disproportionately impacted • Work Group workshops to collect direct feedback from Work Group members • Share Q1 and Q3 newsletters to highlight work of Work Group to keep public informed
<p>December Prior to legislative session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report with policy recommendations • Update the website • Share Q4 newsletter that highlights key topics from the annual report
<p>January Start of legislative session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earned media engagement on policy recommendations
<p>January – March/May Legislative session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy evaluation and adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication tools from Work Group to legislators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a fact sheet or folio and PowerPoint slide deck for use in legislative briefings ○ Other materials, as needed
<p>March/May End of legislative session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share results of policy recommendations and next steps through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Website updates ○ Q2 newsletter ○ Earned media ○ Digital/online engagement ○ Factsheet / folio development

Next steps

The milestones and communications tools captured above align with the current purpose of the Work Group and the phase of policy exploration for autonomous vehicles in Washington State. As the purpose, road map and phase of the Work Group continues to evolve and grow, the communications road map will continue to evolve with it.