



MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting: Health & Equity Subcommittee
Location: Teleconference
Date: October 20, 2020

Attendees:

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Debi	Besser	Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC)
Daniela	Bremmer	Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Brian	Brooke	Sound Transit
Barb	Chamberlain	WSDOT
Kit	Chiu	WSP USA
Andrew	Dannenberg	University of Washington (Chair)
Margo	Dawes	Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
Michael	Harpool	Whatcom Transportation Authority
Paul	Ingrham	Puget Sound Regional Council
Francois	Larrivee	Hopelink
Erika	Mascorro	WTSC
Kyle	Miller	WSDOT
Paula	Reeves	Washington Department of Health, Subcommittee Staff
Bryce	Yadon	Futurewise

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND QUICK OVERVIEW OF WORK TO DATE

Dr. Andrew Dannenberg, UW School of Public Health

- The meeting began with a brief welcome from Dr. Andrew Dannenberg.

Topic Closed.

Update on Status of Two Proposals from the Health & Equity Committee and Review of Questions from AV Executive Committee

Dr. Andrew Dannenberg, UW School of Public Health

- Dr. Dannenberg provided an update on the Executive Committee's response to the two proposals that the Health and Equity subcommittee has put forward, the first pertaining to public engagement, and the second to do with equity assessments of testing locations.
- Dr. Dannenberg remarked that overall reception from the Executive Committee was mixed. While some members expressed understanding of why the proposals were being put forward, the response was not particularly enthusiastic.
- On the proposal related to public engagement:



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- Dr. Dannenberg had explained to the Executive Committee that the subcommittee would ideally like to be able to engage a wider range of people within the subcommittee's membership, but recognize that accessing funding for direct participation would be difficult. The proposed outreach funding would provide an opportunity to gain better insight from some specific communities on their needs.
 - The request for \$30,000 in funding was framed as a scalable amount, and more could be done with additional funding.
 - At least some subcommittee members recognized that this was necessary, though overall the reaction was mixed.
- On the proposal related to the testing location assessment:
 - Reaction to this proposal was similarly mixed. While some understood the need to understand how testing would impact equity, others questioned whether this was necessary as it would create burden on the companies testing in Washington.
- After the Executive Committee meeting, Dr. Dannenberg and Paula Reeves engaged in a follow-up discussion with a representative from Waymo to understand industry perspectives on the testing location assessment.
 - Recommendation from Waymo was to simplify the request to a matter of where companies are testing, rather than require an actual assessment. It was noted that a full assessment may be seen as too onerous and drive prospective testing companies away, whereas a general mapping of testing locations would not be too big of a burden.
 - Waymo currently does testing in Arizona, and supply their test locations for law enforcement.
 - Location information provided by the testing companies would give some indication of the communities that are potentially impacted, but would not provide information such as the types or number of vehicles being tested.
- Responding to feedback from the Executive Committee, and insights from subsequent discussions, Dr. Dannenberg suggested that the proposal for the testing location assessment be simplified to require just the identification of testing locations rather than an actual assessment.
 - There is also a need to be more specific about equity, and think about what the actual concerns are.
 - Dr. Dannenberg expressed that the State cannot burden companies with specifics on where they should test because the companies will test based on where they need to test, but getting some information will be able to help the State understand where testing is happening.
- Paula Reeves added that in the context of the discussion with Waymo, there seemed to be openness around receiving information related to local populations in exchange for disclosing their testing locations.
- Discussion:
- Kit Chiu asked a question on the granularity of data that the updated proposal would ask for, seeing that the existing regulations do require some degree of location reporting for the purpose of law enforcement.



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- Paula responded that the current legislation requires information on a county level. The proposal would likely ask for census block or zip code information.
- Waymo had also suggested that they could just provide a polygon file to map out where they would test. However, this could potentially lead to companies drawing large boundaries that provide little insight into actual impacts.
- Dr. Dannenberg remarked that he is not sure whether the proposal would commit to providing the testing companies with information about the local communities.
 - Paula responded that if they were to provide information to the testing companies, it would be leveraged from existing databases.
- Margo Dawes commented that the proposal sounds better than to have no information, but seems to miss the larger question of having companies test in the state of Washington. She questioned whether the status quo would be that companies testing in Washington continue to do so without providing any information.
 - Margo added that, at a minimum, it would be helpful to understand the goals for testing, and ensure that they have an evaluation plan that is more involved.
 - Barb Chamberlain noted that there should be more concern about the burden on people potentially affected by testing rather than the burden on the companies that have a responsibility to inform the public. That is the charge of this subcommittee.
 - Paula responded that this proposal came from the idea of a safety assessment put forward by advocacy groups to the Federal government. This idea was dialed back by the subcommittee members out of concern that it would deter testing in Washington. However, it remains unclear whether having testing in Washington is actually desirable.
 - Paul Inghram added that if AVs enhance mobility to underserved communities, such as AV vans that connect to transit, then allowing some testing might be a way to encourage service to those communities.
 - Dr. Dannenberg added that given the less than enthusiastic response from the Executive Committee, it would be difficult to get approval for a more onerous information request.
 - Barb commented that the role of the subcommittee is not only to bring what would be acceptable to the Executive Committee, but to raise the full burden of impacts of testing to their attention.
 - Margo added that if we don't want to make the assessment overly burdensome, they might consider a more collaborative approach. The State has these goals, and there is a need to work together with companies to ensure that these align.
- Dr. Dannenberg followed up with a question on whether there should be a difference in approach between testing and implementation.
 - Margo responded that it should be a matter of goals and vision. If there is understanding of the benefits and burdens, the State can work with companies to build a collaborative mobility program. This should have both evaluation and implementation components.
 - Dr. Dannenberg followed with a question on what is currently done with companies like Uber and Lyft.
 - Margo responded that cities and states did not have much opportunity to structure frameworks ahead of the arrival of Uber and Lyft, and regulators were



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caught by surprise. However, learnings from this experience with Uber and Lyft have inspired most of the shared mobility programs around the world.

- While Uber and Lyft are typically licensed, and provide only a bare minimum of information for their operations, bikeshare and scooter-share companies have been implemented with a more collaborative approach, and is framed more from the perspective of an equity framework.
- Barb added that it may be informative to compare the regulatory structure already around existing scooter share programs to that of permissive AV testing. There seems to be more scrutiny on vehicles that operate 15-20 mph and have a human operator, rather than larger, faster, and heavier devices that have no human operator.
- Kit added that there seems to be two separate objectives. One relates to near-term testing, and the other to longer term objectives that potentially fall more in line with the Cooperative Automated Transportation (CAT) Policy objectives. There is definite need for guardrails to be in place to ensure that the long-term objectives are met. However, in the short term, it is a matter of ensuring that testing is done equitably, and do not have disproportionate impacts. Though the information requested in the proposal is minimal, it may provide the necessary insight to help shape the testing program to be more equitable, and less burdensome to communities in the long run.
 - Paula commented that the point of testing is to learn, and there is a need to go about this with an open perspective rather than approach this as a way to collect information to prevent companies from doing certain things.
- Dr. Dannenberg followed up by asking the subcommittee to come up with a list of considerations when it comes to concern around the equity of AVs.
 - Margo commented that in the context of the broader framework, concern around AVs has to do with who will benefit and who will be harmed. One aspect is that the price of bringing this technology to society will bring more harm to people of lower income. More specifically, there are safety concerns around AVs that could be detrimental to some communities more than others. Safety can be subjective, and take many different forms. What is considered safe for someone in a majority white and affluent community may be different than what communities of color may perceive. There is also concern that the technology itself, due to the way in which the algorithms are trained, will be less able to detect People of Color (POCs) on the street. There is concern that the technology will be less able to maneuver streets in lower income areas that are not as well maintained. There are also safety concerns around passenger usage and implicit bias that may allow some people to use AV services while others get cut out.
 - Bryce Yadon commented that there is also an impact on street right of way allocation, and how long it might take for someone to get from point A to point B. Changes to road space allocation for AVs could increase travel time for certain parts of the population and we need to make sure we don't exacerbate these issues.
 - Dr. Dannenberg also noted that in the discussion with Waymo, it was noted that future AVs are likely to be electric, and the distribution of vehicles and service may depend on the availability of electric vehicle charging.
 - Michael Harpool added that if there is a decision to keep testing of AVs out of certain neighborhoods for environmental justice purposes, there will need to continue to be education for these communities to ensure that they are made aware of the use of these technologies in other communities.



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- Francois Larrivee added that transportation infrastructure investments meant to support AVs could also exacerbate inequitable investment.
- Michael further added that the cost of services and payment options could create barriers for certain populations, especially as payment options shift to cashless digital options that may be inaccessible to those who are unbanked and without access to technology.
- Erika Mascorro added that if there is budget for education of communities, there should also be education in multiple languages.
- Margo remarked that communities typically do not ask for AVs—it is quite low on their list of priorities as they don't see a benefit to them. The work being done in the AV space is questionable as it is unclear whether it will make a difference to Washingtonians.

Topic Closed.

Moving On – We will start on the next item on our workplan: Review the CAT Policy on Equity

Dr. Andrew Dannenberg, UW School of Public Health

- Dr. Dannenberg indicated that beginning next meeting, the subcommittee will focus on reviewing the CAT policy on equity.

Topic Closed.

Questions, Discussion, next steps

All

- Paula announced that the next Executive Committee meeting will be held on November 12th, ahead of the next meeting of this subcommittee.

Topic Closed.

NEXT TELECONFERENCE MEETING: November 17th, 2020 12pm – 1pm

MEETING ADJOURNED.