Chapter 3 Plan Alternatives

1 What geographic area does the Transportation 2040 plan cover?

The central Puget Sound region is made up of King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties, and their 82 cities and towns (refer to Exhibit 3-1). The major metropolitan cities of the region are Seattle and Bellevue in King County, Bremerton in Kitsap County, Tacoma in Pierce County, and Everett in Snohomish County.

2 What makes up the region’s Metropolitan Transportation System?

The Metropolitan Transportation System (MTS) for the central Puget Sound region facilitates the movement of people and goods making local, regional, national, and international trips. These trips range from traveling to work or school, flying across the country, or shipping Washington-made products overseas.

These trips are made using a variety of travel choices. Those choices are key elements of the MTS.

Roadway System

The region has thousands of miles of roadways ranging from interstate highways to residential streets. Roadways are the primary means for moving people and goods from one location to another in the region and beyond. The interstate system, which includes Interstate 5 (I-5), Interstate 405 (I-405), and

What is included in the Metropolitan Transportation System (MTS)?

The MTS are facilities and services that provide access to any activities crucial to the social and economic health of the central Puget Sound region. Components of the MTS include:

- Roadway system
- Ferry system
- Transit systems
- Nonmotorized system
- Freight and goods system
- Intercity passenger rail system
- Regional airport system
- Transportation System Management
- Transportation Demand Management
Puget Sound Regional Council

Sound Transit’s light rail service from the airport to downtown Seattle is expected to begin operation by the end of 2009.
Source: Parametrix, Inc.

Interstate 90 (I-90), was created to support national commerce and defense needs. Together with state routes and U.S. Highways, the interstate highways are vital corridors connecting the central Puget Sound region to the rest of the state and the nation.

**Ferry System**

The region’s ferry transportation system is the largest in the United States. It functions as a vehicle-carrying marine highway to move people and goods across Puget Sound, and as a high-capacity transit system that moves thousands of passengers daily. Washington State Ferries (WSF) operates the major routes across the Sound, with additional routes provided by Pierce County and the Kitsap Ferry Company.

**Transit Systems**

The region is served by regional and local public transit providers. Sound Transit, the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, is responsible for a mass transit system featuring commuter rail, light rail, and express bus services in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. Local transit service is provided by Community Transit (Snohomish County), Everett Transit, King County Metro Transit, Kitsap Transit, and Pierce Transit. The City of Seattle also operates monorail and streetcar services. These operators provide fixed-route and demand-responsive transit services, as well as vanpool services. Special needs transportation is provided by public transportation providers (both fixed-route and demand response service) and community-based and private transportation providers (usually demand response).

**Nonmotorized System**

The regional nonmotorized system consists of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including dedicated bicycle and pedestrian paths, sidewalks, and bicycle routes or lanes on roadways.
Freight and Goods System

The regional freight and goods system consists of roadways, port facilities, railroads and rail yards, and airport facilities, all of which serve to move freight within and through the region. The system includes the following types of facilities:

- **Freight Roadways.** These are roadways throughout the system that carry more than 4 million tons annually and are designated as critical for freight movement by the State of Washington (WSDOT, 2007). These include all of the region’s interstate highways and some of the most important state routes and arterials.

- **Ports.** Everett, Seattle, and Tacoma provide marine deepwater ports to accommodate ocean-going container ships that carry cargo in and out of the region. The ports of Seattle and Tacoma are among the busiest ports in the United States, and along with the Port of Everett, continue to improve facilities to accommodate changing domestic and international needs.

- **Airports.** Two major airports in the region serve freight: the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac) and King County International Airport (Boeing Field).

- **Railroads.** Two major national railroads serve the central Puget Sound region and provide intercontinental service: Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific. Local distribution is done by Tacoma Rail in Pierce County to the Port of Tacoma and by the Ballard Terminal Railway in Seattle.

Intercity Passenger Rail

Using major national railroads, Amtrak passenger rail trains provide service between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, B.C. (Amtrak Cascades); Seattle and Los Angeles (Coast Starlight); and Seattle and Chicago (Empire Builder).

Regional Airport System

The Metropolitan Transportation System focuses on six regionally significant aviation facilities, among more than 25
aviation facilities throughout the four-county region: Sea-Tac International Airport, Boeing Field, Paine Field, Renton Municipal Airport, Harvey Field in Snohomish County, and Auburn Municipal Airport.

**Transportation System Management Programs**

These programs and facilities focus on operating the region’s multimodal transportation system as safely and efficiently as possible through the use of information, control, and communications technologies. Many jurisdictions and agencies are involved in these programs, including the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the region’s transit operators, and local governments. Systems range from emergency management to traveler information to signal timing.

**Transportation Demand Management Programs**

These programs and strategies seek to improve the efficiency of the transportation system by promoting alternatives to driving alone, such as by shifting trips out of peak travel periods; using rideshare, transit, bicycling, or walking; or reducing the need for trips.

**3 What challenges are addressed by the Transportation 2040 plan alternatives?**

PSRC forecasts show that as the region adds 1.5 million people and 1.2 million jobs by 2040 (refer to Exhibit 3-2), people in the region will likely take 19.1 million trips daily. Those trips will be made by vehicle, bicycle, transit, ferry, or on foot, and represent an overall 39% increase over trips in 2006.
To address this growing regional travel demand, the SEPA scoping process helped to identify a number of objectives that this plan will address. These objectives became the basis for the development of major issues and for the evaluation framework being used to evaluate the alternatives. Through the scoping and related processes three major challenges/issues emerged: congestion and mobility, the environment, and transportation finance. These issues were considered in the development of the alternatives by varying the amount of efficiency and strategic capacity programs and the level and type of financial investments in the action alternatives. In particular, each action alternative includes various levels of tolling to look at the implications of these strategies on congestion, the environment, and transportation finance.

- **Congestion and Mobility: Reduce congestion for all types of freight and person travel.**
  The first challenge is to address how the region can maintain and improve regional mobility with forecast growth in population and employment.

- **Environmental Concerns: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions linked to climate change, and reduce water quality impacts on Puget Sound.**
  The second major challenge is to learn how to reconcile the need for transportation facilities and their uses with

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**Tolling**

All plan alternatives include some form of tolling or user fees to help fund improvements. Tolling options include:
- High-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes
- Freeway and bridge tolls
- Ferry fares
- Arterial road tolls
- Vehicle miles traveled fees
growing concerns about how to protect and restore the quality of the built and natural environment. Transportation activities, if unmitigated, are a major source of water and air pollutants, including greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Transportation Finance: Support the development of sustainable transportation funding.**
  The third challenge is transportation finance. Information on transportation finance issues is included in the DEIS as an optional item under WAC 197-11-440(8). Sustainable funding is a critical issue in the implementation of any of the alternatives and a part of the region’s federal requirement to produce a financially constrained plan.

Transportation 2040 will provide additional information on travel trends, physical constraints, and the environmental concerns that need to be addressed to meet the region’s commitments to better environmental stewardship. It also will support the region’s policy to develop an urban environment that promotes healthy, active lifestyles.

4 **What alternatives are being analyzed by the Transportation 2040 DEIS?**

This DEIS analyzes six plan alternatives—a Baseline Alternative plus five action alternatives. Each alternative describes how transportation investments can improve efficiency and expand the system’s ability to handle future demand, while at the same time support the region’s goals for managing urban growth and protecting the environment.
Improving efficiency means making better use of the existing system and managing growing demand more effectively, particularly during peak morning and evening travel hours. Efficiency can be improved through shifts in the chosen route, the time of travel, the mode of travel, and the patterns of trips taken to work and other activities.

Strategic expansion means increasing capacity by making investments in both capital facilities and operations. These investments include projects to relieve roadway bottlenecks; expanded and new transit lanes, transit services, and fleets; vanpools and carpool programs; high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes; bicycle and pedestrian trails, sidewalks, and paths; and ferry terminals and service.

Some elements are consistent among all plan alternatives, and others vary (Exhibit 3-3). These elements are described below.

Exhibit 3-3
Program Investments in the Transportation 2040 Alternatives
Consistent Growth Assumptions
Each alternative was analyzed using the same assumptions for future land use policies and strategies for growth management as established in VISION 2040. The base year 2006 population is also consistent. The analysis found that there are minimal population and employment growth differences among the alternatives in the year 2040 at the regional level.

Consistent Transportation Assumptions
The Baseline Alternative is the starting point for comparing the alternatives. The action alternatives start with the policies, plans, and funded projects included in the Baseline Alternative. Each alternative also includes the current base year (2006) transportation facilities in the region.

In addition, the action alternatives include an identical set of core investments to improve safety and security and to support transportation options for special needs populations. These core investments focus on improvements that extend beyond the existing funding level and are therefore not contained in the Baseline Alternative.

Core investments would include improved roadway crossings, safety projects, improved signal coordination, completion of freeway system ramp metering and coordination with arterial signals, and Freight Action Strategy (FAST) freight mobility projects.

Differing Transportation Assumptions
The action alternatives differ by the new projects, policies, and programs proposed in each, and by how new projects and programs (and to a lesser extent existing projects and programs) are financed. These differences are shown in Exhibit 3-3 and in the subsequent discussions.

All action alternatives contain components to expand and complete the walking and bicycling network and ways to connect this network to transit stations and ferry terminals, although at different levels of investment and emphasis. Each action alternative also includes programs to reduce vehicle miles traveled and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, again at different levels.
The action alternatives differ in how the region would distribute investments in efficiency and expansion. The approaches range from modest improvements with limited funds to a dramatic shift in priorities resulting in a new type of transportation system.

Tolling also plays a role in each alternative. The alternatives explore how different approaches to tolling can help manage congestion and also pay for improvements.

5 Which programs and projects are included in the Baseline Alternative (SEPA No-Action Alternative): Build Funded Projects?

The Baseline Alternative is funded mostly with “current law” traditional revenue sources—gas tax, sales tax, state and federal grants and loans, local general fund revenues, permit and licensing fees, and limited tolling (on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and the ferry system). The Baseline Alternative would build state highway projects funded under the state’s “Nickel” gas tax and Transportation Partnership Account (TPA) programs, plus Sound Transit’s Phase 2 plan (ST2), approved by voters in November 2008. It would sustain existing ferry service and demand management programs and make modest additions to transit service, including King County Metro “RapidRide” and Community Transit “Swift” bus rapid transit (BRT). Beyond current law funding, the Baseline Alternative assumes that the region would find sufficient additional revenue to fully maintain and preserve the existing transportation system.

The programs and projects included in the Baseline Alternative are described below and are shown in Exhibits 3-4 and 3-5.
Exhibit 3-4. Baseline Alternative (SEPA No-Action Alternative): Build Funded Projects

Map shows major investments. Not all investments are shown.
Exhibit 3-5. Baseline Alternative Tolling Map
What are Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers?
GTECs are defined areas (generally with higher employment and/or population) within which cities are encouraged to expand.

Baseline Alternative System Efficiency
Baseline Alternative Demand Management
The Baseline Alternative assumes that participation in employer demand management programs will continue at existing levels (714 sites). Support continues for Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC) programs in Seattle, Bellevue, Tacoma, and the regional growth center in the Redmond/Overlake area. Parking management programs will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, as will investments in “complete streets,” bicycle and pedestrian networks, and local development regulations to induce mixed-use development near transit centers and rail stations.

Baseline Alternative System Management
This will include ramp metering, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), corridor management, transit signal priority, incident detection and management, active traffic management and speed harmonization programs, and 511 and traveler information systems. The Baseline Alternative assumes that the state and the region can maintain and preserve existing ferry routes (and service levels), terminals, the fleet, and current passenger-only service.

Baseline Alternative Strategic Expansion
Baseline Alternative Roadways
The roadway improvements in the Baseline Alternative are limited to those funded by the state’s “Nickel” and Transportation Partnership Act funding programs, plus a few other investments funded under current law. Tolling is limited to those facilities where it exists or is planned (on the ferry system and the Tacoma Narrows Bridge until the tolls are lifted).

Baseline Alternative Transit
The Baseline Alternative assumes that funds are available to maintain current levels of transit services for core, community connector, and specialized types of service and to increase service across all providers by, on average, approximately 1% per year. Core service operates all day at a high frequency serving a high volume of riders. Community connector transit
provides less frequent service to areas with lower ridership. Specialized transit offers service to specific destinations at limited times of day, such as peak hour trips to centers from park-and-ride lots.

The Baseline Alternative includes funding to complete Sound Transit’s Phase 1 and 2 programs, which will expand the light rail, commuter rail, and express bus network. The region’s other transit agencies will implement 6-year plans, including King County Metro’s RapidRide bus rapid transit (BRT) projects and Community Transit’s SWIFT services along SR 99 in Snohomish and King counties.

Baseline Alternative Ferry
The Baseline Alternative assumes that the state and the region can maintain and preserve existing ferry routes (and service levels), terminals, the fleet, and current passenger-only service.

Baseline Alternative Bicycle and Pedestrian
The Baseline Alternative includes completion of selected trail extensions and bicycle lanes. Sidewalk completions or improvements are subject to funding availability and based on local plans and regulations.

Baseline Alternative Funding
The Baseline Alternative would be funded using current law revenues primarily from traditional sources (gas tax, sales tax, etc.). Toll revenues would also be available from the ferry system (fares), tolls on the SR 167 high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, and from the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Baseline Alternative Preservation
In general, the Baseline Alternative assumes that existing facilities will maintain their capacity through year 2040 (exceptions are noted in Appendix A: Alternatives Technical Report). The state and the region are planning two major replacement efforts for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program and the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project. The regional plan update made the following assumptions to allow regional planning to proceed while these processes reach their own conclusions:
Alaskan Way Viaduct
All alternatives, including the Baseline Alternative, assume that sufficient resources have been committed to preserve the viaduct or replace it in ways that would be equivalent to the current viaduct’s capacity (three lanes in each direction through the downtown core).

SR 520 Bridge Replacement
The Baseline Alternative assumes that sufficient resources have been committed to preserve the bridge in ways that would maintain the current capacity (two lanes each direction at the middle of Lake Washington on the bridge section).
Alternatives 1 through 5 include replacing the existing Evergreen Point Floating Bridge with a six-lane structure (two general-purpose lanes and one managed lane in each direction).

6 Which programs and projects are included in Alternative 1: Emphasize the Efficiency of the Existing System?
This alternative is designed to recognize that one possible future is to make the most of our existing transportation system with limited funding. This includes efficiency improvements through significant investments in programs to manage demand and in technology to manage roadways. This management strategy includes limited use of tolling by converting the existing HOV network to a one-lane HOT system with limited capacity investments to provide a two-lane HOT system on much of I-405. In addition, Alternative 1 includes a substantial increase in bus service. Together, these strategies were designed to do a better job of moving people and goods on the existing system by providing options that would reduce both demand for peak hour travel and demand for drive-alone trips.

The programs and projects included in Alternative 1 are described below and are shown in Exhibits 3-6 and 3-7.
Exhibit 3-6. Alternative 1: Emphasize the Efficiency of the Existing System

Map shows major investments. Not all investments are shown.
Exhibit 3-7. Alternative 1 Tolling Scenario

**Alternative 1**

Suggested Tolled Segments and Practices 2040

Freeway System Tolling Concept
Tolled System in the 6-9-08 2020 Forecast
WITH Major WSDOT Projects

SR 520 Bridge (Montlake I/C to 84th):
- 6 Lanes (2 GP, 1 Managed) each direction
- Full tolling both directions
  (in addition to HOT charges from approaches)
- Transit free
- [Managed lane each direction transit and HOV3+ only]

SR 520 Approaches
(I-5 to Montlake; 84th to SR 202 in Redmond):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- Transit and HOV3+ Free

I-405 (North I-5 I/C to SR 522 I/C):
- 1 HOT lane each direction

I-405 (SR 522 I/C to SR 167 I/C):
- 2 HOT lanes each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
  Second HOT lane built by corridor widening projects

I-405 (SR 167 I/C to I-5 Tukwila I/C):
- 1 HOT lane each direction

I-90 (I-5 to Front St. in Issaquah):
- 1 HOT Lane Each Direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
  [Bridge Center Roadway Reserved for Transit]

SR 167 (I-405 to SR 512):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free

Southern HOT lane segment built by what was HOV project

SR 520 Bridge (Montlake I/C to 84th):
- 6 Lanes (2 GP, 1 Managed) each direction
- Full tolling both directions
  (in addition to HOT charges from approaches)
- Transit free
- [Managed lane each direction transit and HOV3+ only]

SR 520 Approaches
(I-5 to Montlake; 84th to SR 202 in Redmond):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- Transit and HOV3+ Free

I-405 (North I-5 I/C to SR 522 I/C):
- 1 HOT lane each direction

I-405 (SR 522 I/C to SR 167 I/C):
- 2 HOT lanes each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
  Second HOT lane built by corridor widening projects

I-405 (SR 167 I/C to I-5 Tukwila I/C):
- 1 HOT lane each direction

I-90 (I-5 to Front St. in Issaquah):
- 1 HOT Lane Each Direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
  [Bridge Center Roadway Reserved for Transit]

SR 167 (I-405 to SR 512):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free

Southern HOT lane segment built by what was HOV project

KEY

- One-Lane HOT
- One-Lane HOT (Construction required)
- Two-Lane HOT
- Two-Lane HOT (Construction required)
- Full Tolling (Construction required)

Tacoma Narrows Bridge:
- TOLLED & OPERATED PER 2006 POLICY
Alternative 1 System Efficiency

Alternative 1 Demand Management
To increase the efficiency of the system, Alternative 1 places more emphasis on the use of employer demand management programs (incentive and volunteer) that promote options to driving alone. Options include expanding established programs such as Commute Trip Reduction (CTR), better use of vanpools, guaranteed ride home, and more opportunities to telecommute. GTEC programs would extend to more locations and could include options for non-work trips. These programs will accomplish several objectives: fewer vehicle trips, improved air quality, and other quality-of-life improvements. More cities would address parking regulations and implement parking rate surcharges or increases for both private and public facilities.

Alternative 1 System Management
Alternative 1 makes use of a variety of ITS techniques to monitor the system and to improve freight mobility on freeways and arterials. These ITS techniques range from center-to-center communications to in-vehicle traveler information devices. Alternative 1 also expands system management techniques and programs (e.g., signal coordination, incident management), extending them across jurisdictional boundaries regionwide. Doing so would reduce travel times and delay and would improve travel reliability.

Alternative 1 Strategic Expansion

Alternative 1 Roadways
Alternative 1 includes improvements to HOV lanes on I-5 and SR 16. This alternative relies on the limited use of tolling by implementing the one-lane HOT lane network on core freeways and is designed to improve roadway operations (HOT lanes allow single-occupant vehicles to use the HOV lane for a fee). Toll rates would be set to maximize system efficiency, and most revenues would be spent to operate the HOT network, with the remainder spent on investments in the tolled corridors. (The HOT network includes lanes on I-5, I-90, I-405, SR 167, and SR 16, with full tolls in both directions on the SR 520 floating bridge.)
Alternative 1 Transit
Alternative 1 makes the most of low-cost transit investments to improve core service throughout the day and more community connector service during peak hours. Sound Transit Phase 2 (ST2) will extend Link light rail service north to Lynnwood, east to Redmond/Overlake, and south to Redondo/Federal Way. Increases in transit service hours would keep pace with the region’s population growth. Improvements that connect regional growth centers to transit centers, rail stations, and ferry terminals will also result in a more efficient system.

Alternative 1 Bicycle and Pedestrian
An extended and safer network of connecting sidewalks, trails, and paths will facilitate bicycle and pedestrian choices.

Alternative 1 Funding
Alternative 1 would rely on limited increases in traditional funding (gas tax, etc.), revenue from a one-lane HOT lane system on core freeways, and additional parking revenues for local jurisdictions.

7 Which programs and projects are included in Alternative 2: Emphasize Roadway and Transit Capacity Expansion?

This alternative most resembles the current plan, Destination 2030. Alternative 2 adds the most roadway capacity through lane additions to existing highways, the creation of several new highways (SR 167 Extension, SR 509 Extension, and Cross-Base Highway), and added lanes on the regional arterial network. It adds considerable new light rail capacity beyond ST2 and a new auto ferry route across Puget Sound. It adds pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in key locations. Its demand management, bus service, and system management investments are similar to the Baseline Alternative. Its most significant management strategy is the establishment of a two-lane HOT system on much of the regional freeway network (with some one-lane HOT) to manage congestion and provide revenue to supplement traditional funding sources. Traditional funding sources would provide the bulk of the financing.

The programs and projects included in Alternative 2 are described below and are shown in Exhibits 3-8 and 3-9.

Map shows major investments. Not all investments are shown.
I-5 North to US 2:
- 2 HOT lanes each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
- Second HOT lane uses shoulders in peak periods only

I-5 (Northgate to US 2): 
- 2 HOT lanes each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
- Second HOT lane uses shoulders in peak periods only

I-5 Reversibles:
- All HOT, reverse per 2006 schedule
- HOV3+ and Transit Free

SR 167 to SR 512:
- 1 HOT lane each direction

I-5 (SR 509 Extension to SR 167 Extension):
- 2 HOT lane each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
- 2nd HOT lane CONVERTED from existing GP

SR 520 Bridge (Montlake I/C to 84th):
- 6 Lanes (2 GP, 1 Managed) each direction
- Full tolling both directions (in addition to HOT charges from approaches)
- Transit free
- [Managed lane each direction transit and HOV3+]

SR 520 Approaches
(I-5 to Montlake; 84th to SR 202 in Redmond):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- Transit and HOV3+ Free

SR 512 (SR 167 to I-5):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- HOT lane BUILT

I-5 SR (167 Extension to S. 96th St):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free

I-90 (I-5 to Front St. in Issaquah):
- 1 HOT Lane Each Direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
- [Bridge Center Roadway Reserved for Transit]

SR 16: (I-5 to SR 302 in Purdy):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free

Tacoma Narrows Bridge:
- TOLLED & OPERATED per 2006 Policy

I-5 SR (167 Extension to S. 96th St):
- 1 HOT lane each direction
- HOV3+ and Transit Free
**Alternative 2 System Efficiency**

**Alternative 2 Demand Management**
Given its emphasis on roadway and transit expansion, Alternative 2 relies less on increased participation in employer demand management programs such as CTR, vanpools, and “telework” for system efficiency. Rather than expecting all cities with regional growth centers to participate in GTECs and “complete streets” programs, Alternative 2 places emphasis on the five metropolitan cities (Seattle, Bellevue, Bremerton, Everett, and Tacoma) as proposed locations for such programs. Pricing strategies and a reservation system would help manage auto ferry demand and improve system efficiency.

**Alternative 2 System Management**
There would be only modest investments in overall system management programs and ITS. Efforts would concentrate on coordinating signals across jurisdictional boundaries and transit signal priority improvements.

**Alternative 2 Strategic Expansion**

**Alternative 2 Roadways**
Alternative 2 assumes both arterial and freeway expansions (on I-405, SR 167, SR 18, SR 522, SR 509, and US 2 among others). This alternative proposes to convert existing HOV lanes to HOT lanes and to add new HOT lanes, resulting in a two-lane HOT system on a large portion of the region’s freeways. This will result in increased efficiency by maximizing use of the roadway capacity to improve travel times, reduce delay, and improve reliability for all users.

**Alternative 2 Transit**
In Alternative 2, rail and ferry services would extend farther. Sound Transit’s Link light rail service would extend to Everett, Tacoma, and downtown Redmond. Passenger-only ferry service would augment the WSF auto ferry system, with improved transit connections to ferry terminals.

**Alternative 2 Bicycle and Pedestrian**
Alternative 2 includes investments to complete a continuous network of sidewalks, paths, and trails to connect bicyclists and pedestrians to transit centers, rail stations, and ferry terminals. This network would also connect to park-and-ride lots in
manufacturing/industrial centers and in regional growth centers. Combining bicycle and pedestrian options with the expanded transit systems and more efficient roadways would provide significant improvements in access to housing and jobs.

Alternative 2 Funding
Alternative 2 would rely on significantly more traditional funding (gas tax, etc.), as well as new revenues from implementing a two-lane HOT lane network on major highways. Given the amount of new capacity investments, this alternative would likely have the highest need for generating new revenue.

8 Which program and projects are included in Alternative 3: Toll Revenues Expand Capacity and Improve Efficiency?

Alternative 3 would expand capacity and improve efficiency in the central portion of the Puget Sound region. This alternative proposes a significant shift in the way our region collects and allocates transportation funds. Major freeways where improvements are planned would be tolled, and toll revenues would be spent on highway improvements in the tolled corridors. These revenues would be sufficient to fund significant portions of highway projects, including lane additions on the central regional freeways; reconfiguration of ramps and interchanges for efficiency, such as those on I-5; and new facilities such as the SR 167 Extension, SR 509 Extension, and the Cross-Base Highway. Traditional revenues would fund other efficiency and management programs, including substantial bus service investments, strategic arterial roadway expansion, and new off-road trail infrastructure in the corridors connecting the regional centers to form a nonmotorized network. Alternative 3 includes the same light rail program (ST2) as the Baseline Alternative to form the regional transit system. The highway tolling rates would be set to also serve a demand management function and minimize impacts on adjacent arterials.

The programs and projects included in Alternative 3 are described below and are shown in Exhibits 3-10 and 3-11.
Exhibit 3-10. Alternative 3: Toll Revenues Expand Capacity and Improve Efficiency

Map shows major investments. Not all investments are shown.

Baseline
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Commuter Rail
- HOV Transit
- Light Rail
- Streetcar
- State Highways
- Auto Ferry
- Passenger-Only Ferry
- Bike/Pedestrian
- Transit Stations

Alternatives
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Streetcar
- State Highway
- Passenger-Only Ferry
- Bike/Pedestrian

*MTS* roadway
*Metropolitan Transportation System

Regional Growth Centers
- Manufacturing/Industrial Centers
- Incorporated Urban Areas
- Unincorporated Urban Areas

Urban Growth Area boundary
Alternative 3 System Efficiency

Alternative 3 Demand Management
Alternative 3 relies more on greater participation in employer demand management programs such as CTR, vanpools, and “telework.” GTECs would locate in all cities with regional growth centers and would collect additional parking charges to manage parking supply. This alternative includes incentives for mixed-use development near transit centers and rail stations. In response to a greater demand for parking, a user fee would be charged at park-and-ride lots. Regional growth centers may provide incentives to supply parking for carpools and vanpools. Pricing strategies and a reservation system would help manage auto ferry demand and improve system efficiency.

Alternative 3 System Management
The approach to arterial management in Alternative 3 concentrates on signal coordination in major corridors that connect centers, and places a strong emphasis on ITS and a wide range of other technology tools (from center-to-center communications to in-vehicle devices) that allow operators—including freight movers and transit drivers—to use the system more efficiently.

Alternative 3 Strategic Expansion

Alternative 3 Roadways
By collecting tolls on the region’s core freeways, Alternative 3 would generate sufficient revenue to complete major highway projects, including the SR 509 and SR 167 extension projects, as well as improvements to SR 9, SR 18, and US 2. It is important to note that Alternative 3 proposes to adhere to a traditional tolling philosophy that targets the use of toll revenue to the facility where it is collected. The collected toll funds would not be spent on transit or other projects, programs, or system improvements.

Alternative 3 Transit
Alternative 3 implements specific management measures to retain transit speed and reliability on the arterial system. Transit service hours would increase from higher transit speeds on the tolled freeways. These additional service hours would be reallocated to key arterial routes. This alternative would also
focus arterial system management investments on transit-supportive strategies. Passenger-only ferry service would augment the WSF auto ferry system, and transit service to ferry terminals would be improved.

Alternative 3 Bicycle and Pedestrian
Alternative 3 would increase bicycle access to transit on arterials and proposes to complete sidewalk networks on all arterials in urban areas. Bicyclists would benefit from a completed network along the corridors that connect regional growth centers. Bicycle and carshare programs would offer more travel choices.

Alternative 3 Funding
Alternative 3 would rely on toll revenues to finance highway improvements and would use limited traditional funding sources (sales taxes) to fund transit improvements. In this alternative, tolls would be placed on the core freeway system: I-5, I-405, I-90, the SR 520 floating bridge, SR 167, SR 509, and the northern segment of SR 18 near Snoqualmie that would be widened.

9 Which programs and projects are included in Alternative 4: Combine Traditional Revenues and Tolls to Maximize Efficiency?

This alternative combines traditional revenue sources and highway tolling to create funding for a broad array of investments. In this alternative, nearly the entire highway network would be tolled, and toll rates would be set to maximize efficiency rather than to generate revenue. It includes strategic roadway expansion to alleviate congestion at bottlenecks and chokepoints, integrated system management and operational coordination across multiple modes, extending the light rail network beyond ST2, significant bus service increases, and strategic arterial roadway expansion. It would add new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the regional centers and their connecting corridors.

The programs and projects included in Alternative 4 are described below and are shown in Exhibits 3-12 and 3-13.
Exhibit 3-12. Alternative 4: Combine Traditional Revenues and Tolls to Maximize Efficiency

Map shows major investments. Not all investments are shown.

Baseline

- Bus Rapid Transit
- Commuter Rail
- HOV Transit
- Light Rail
- Streetcar
- State Highways
- Auto Ferry
- Passenger-Only Ferry
- Bike/Pedestrian
- Transit Stations

Alternatives

- Light Rail
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Streetcar
- State Highway
- Passenger-Only Ferry
- Bike/Pedestrian

MTS* roadway

*Metropolitan Transportation System

Regional Growth Centers
Manufacturing/Industrial Centers
Incorporated Urban Areas
Unincorporated Urban Areas
Urban Growth Area boundary

Map shows major investments. Not all investments are shown.
Exhibit 3-13. Alternative 4 Tolling Scenario

Alternative 4
Tolled Freeway Segments

KEY
- Full Tolling
- Full Tolling (Construction required)
- Tacoma Narrows Bridge

SR 509 Extension
SR 522 Widening
SR 520 Bridge Replacement
SR 18 Widening
**Alternative 4 System Efficiency**

*Alternative 4 Demand Management*
In Alternative 4, more funds would be available to invest in employer demand management programs such as CTR to support transit users and vanpools. These programs, plus other incentives that encourage travel choices other than driving alone, will increase opportunities to reduce freeway congestion. Pricing strategies and a reservation system would help manage auto ferry demand and improve system efficiency.

*Alternative 4 System Management*
Alternative 4 makes strategic use of a variety of ITS techniques to manage traffic flow. Techniques range from traveler information systems both in and out of vehicles that can expedite freight traffic and assist transit operators on the freeways and arterials. Added ITS technology will provide better traveler information.

**Alternative 4 Strategic Expansion**

*Alternative 4 Roadways*
Roadway expansions in Alternative 4 would be limited to projects that relieve congestion at bottlenecks and chokepoints by using some of the revenue generated by tolls.

*Alternative 4 Transit*
New revenue (including some toll revenue) would be invested in transit service. Alternative 4 would implement ST2 plus extend light rail to Everett, Tacoma, and downtown Redmond. These expansions, and the better use of shared rights of way for BRT, would combine to make the entire transit system more convenient for users and better integrated with roadway systems. Alternative 4 proposes to increase transit services on tolled corridors, including core and specialized service on routes where the use of tolling improves transit travel times. Passenger-only ferry service would augment the WSF auto ferry system, and transit service to ferry terminals would be improved.

*Alternative 4 Bicycle and Pedestrian*
Toll revenues would be spent to complete bicycle and pedestrian connections to transit centers, rail stations, and ferry
terminals. These investments would provide better access to arterial transit service, complete sidewalk systems and bicycle networks along corridors that connect regional growth centers, and provide more safety features at crosswalks. Cities with regional growth centers would work to provide better “end-of-trip” facilities such as locker rooms, storage, and secure bicycle racks.

Alternative 4 Funding
Funding for Alternative 4 would include limited traditional revenue sources and a significant increase in toll revenues derived from tolling most of the regional freeway system. Toll revenues would be used for both highway system improvements and for systemwide transit improvements.

10 Which programs and projects are included in Alternative 5: Reduce Emissions with Limited Highway Investments and Regional Tolling?

Alternative 5 would include limited highway investments and focus on transit and nonmotorized programs. This alternative proposes a shift from dependence on fuel-based revenues and creating a system with greatly enhanced travel choices. In Alternative 5 all freeway and arterial roadways would be subject to tolls (or similar user fees) designed to maximize system efficiency. Toll revenue would replace some traditional funding sources and would fund a wide variety of investments, including elimination of bottlenecks and chokepoints on freeway and arterial roadways, expansion of arterials and highways in strategic locations, and creation of sophisticated roadway and transit management systems. Of all the alternatives, the investments in Alternative 5 would provide the largest expansion of light rail or other high-capacity transit, the largest increase in bus service, and the largest expansion of dedicated nonmotorized infrastructure. Altogether, these programs and investments are designed to also reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

The programs and projects included in Alternative 5 are described below and are shown in Exhibits 3-14 and 3-15.
Exhibit 3-14. Alternative 5: Reduce Emissions with Limited Highway Investments and Regional Tolling

Map shows major investments. Not all investments are shown.
Exhibit 3-15. Alternative 5 Tolling Scenario

Alternative 5
Tolled Highways and Arterials
Freeway System Tolling Concept
Tolled System in the 6-9-08 2020 Forecast WITH Major WSDOT Projects
Alternative 5 System Efficiency

Alternative 5 Demand Management
Alternative 5 includes incentive programs that encourage travel options for employers in small towns and rural areas. All cities with regional growth centers will offer GTEC programs. In addition, more effort will be made to engage small businesses and residential areas in carshare and vanpool programs. Pricing strategies and a reservation system would help manage auto ferry demand and improve system efficiency.

Alternative 5 System Management
Alternative 5 relies on extensive system management and regionwide ITS programs to regulate traffic flow and improve travel time.

Alternative 5 Strategic Expansion

Alternative 5 Roadways
Alternative 5 would include limited investment in roadways. Improvements would primarily include completion of HOV lanes on I-5 and SR 16 and regionwide chokepoint and bottleneck improvements.

Alternative 5 Transit
Alternative 5 promotes an interconnected transit system that reaches beyond ST2 by building out the Sound Transit Long-Range Plan. It would extend express bus and rail (both light and commuter) service and increase core, connector, and specialized bus services throughout the region. Light rail or other high-capacity transit would connect Everett and Tacoma, extend to downtown Redmond, and serve Ballard and West Seattle. In addition, commuter rail would connect Renton and Snohomish via the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe (BNSF) rail corridor. Alternative 5 would invest in new passenger-only ferry service to serve demand rather than expanding the auto ferry system, and transit service to ferry terminals would be improved. Investments in the transit system would stimulate mixed-use development near transit centers and rail stations. Cities would have funds for “complete street” projects to support safe, walkable, communities.
Alternative 5 Bicycle and Pedestrian
Dedicating more space in the right of way would provide a continuous network of bicycle lanes, sidewalks, paths, and trails connected to transit centers, rail stations, ferry terminals, and park-and-ride lots. Combined with parking management techniques and wide use of employer-based demand management programs, the system would offer commuters safer and more efficient travel alternatives.

Alternative 5 Funding
Alternative 5 would replace existing traditional funding sources (gas tax, etc.) with user-based fees and place tolls on all highways and arterials. This complete network tolling approach would generate sufficient revenues to finance roadways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian options, and other investments.

Alternative 5 Innovations
With innovative fuel sources, technological advances, and a new pricing mechanism, Alternative 5 proposes a dramatic shift from dependence on fossil fuels and fuel-based revenues to a system that offers more travel choices, greatly reduces carbon dioxide emissions, and is funded by sustainable and dependable means.

11 How did PSRC develop the alternatives?

- PSRC staff worked with a consultant team, a number of subject matter groups, task forces, the Regional Staff Committee, and two subcommittees of the Transportation Policy Board to develop draft alternatives. The drafts were reviewed by the Transportation Policy Board and other PSRC boards. In January 2009, the PSRC Executive Board authorized staff to proceed with the environmental, technical, and policy review and analysis of the alternatives. To reach that stage, the process included the following activities:
  - Extensive research of current and potential practices by subject matter experts
  - Thorough analysis of funding methods, including tolling concepts
• Soliciting transportation investment concepts from member agencies and interest groups
• Collaboration with groups, officials, and members on alternative concepts

12 How was the public involved in the development of the alternatives?


The Determination of Significance marked the beginning of an extended public outreach and scoping process that extended to February 2008. Public outreach included a variety of methods, including a public opinion survey, workshops, open houses, presentations to a diverse set of stakeholders, and more.

One of the key purposes of the scoping process was to focus the plan update and environmental review on the most compelling transportation issues facing the region. PSRC received hundreds of comments, and about two-thirds of all comments suggested that the plan (1) focus on congestion and mobility and (2) address concerns about energy and the environment (including climate change). In addition, over 300 comments called for the plan to address the following concerns: support for VISION 2040, tolling and congestion pricing programs, investments in transit, system and demand management measures, transportation funding, and ways to prioritize investments.

Emphasis on these issues was included in the DEIS Scope of Work and directly influenced the structure of the alternatives discussed earlier in this chapter.

13 How were the alternatives evaluated?

The alternatives were evaluated by a process that involved the following steps:

• A technical analysis using the PSRC integrated land use and travel models, as well as other technical tools to measure air quality impacts and user benefits impacts

PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS

For more information on the public scoping process, please refer to Appendix F.

HOW WERE RESOURCE AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES?

Please refer to Appendix J: Agency Consultation for more information about the involvement of resource agencies in the development of the plan alternatives.

MAJOR ISSUES IDENTIFIED THROUGH SCOPING

Comments received during the scoping process were related to the following 10 broad issues.

• Land Use
• Economy
• Congestion and Mobility
• Equity and Special Needs Transportation
• Safety & Health
• Security
• Energy and the Environment
• Preservation of the System
• Transportation Funding
• Project Prioritization

VISION 2040

For more information about VISION 2040 and its relationship to Transportation 2040, refer to Chapter 2: Introduction and Background.
▪ An assessment using measures in the Transportation 2040 evaluation criteria as described below
▪ A comprehensive policy analysis of each alternative’s ability to support VISION 2040
▪ The analysis of environmental impacts under the formal SEPA review process contained in this document

**Integrated Transportation and Land Use Modeling**

The transportation modeling effort produced forecasts of the future distribution of jobs and population across the region and the future performance of the region’s transportation system. The transportation system inputs used in the forecasts were derived directly from the investments specified for each alternative as documented in the Alternatives Technical Report (refer to Appendix A). The model inputs vary for each alternative. The outputs of the forecast tools are presented in detail in the Policy Analysis and Evaluation Criteria Report (refer to Appendix D).

To test how transportation can affect land use patterns, the travel modeling for Transportation 2040 employed a new land use model, UrbanSim (www.urbansim.org).

Using an internal representation of the region’s collective future year land use plans as a starting point, each alternative, including the Baseline Alternative, was modeled to assess whether the alternatives resulted in land uses consistent with VISION 2040 policies. The results of this modeling are described in detail in the Policy Analysis and Evaluation Criteria Report (refer to Appendix D) and in Chapter 5: Land Use, Population, Employment, and Housing.

**Transportation 2040 Evaluation Criteria**

VISION 2040 is the organizing framework for evaluating the alternatives. The regional growth strategy and the goals, objectives and policies in VISION 2040 guided the development of the evaluation criteria and the organization of the policy analysis. The evaluation criteria are a way to measure progress toward achieving VISION 2040. The evaluation criteria were developed to address the overarching goals of the transportation planning process. Individual metrics

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**Evaluation Policies and Criteria**

For more information about the evaluation of plan alternatives, please refer to Appendix D: Policy Analysis and Evaluation Criteria Report.

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**Modeling methods and details**

Refer to Appendix E: Technical Description of the Modeling Framework for a more detailed technical description of the modeling framework.
were developed to quantify different aspects of each evaluation criteria. The criteria measures are grouped into seven categories: mobility, finance, growth management, economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, quality of life, and equity.

Some of the metrics represent a different means to measure transportation benefits (or impacts) than has been commonly used in the past. An example is vehicle miles traveled, which is commonly used as a proxy for measuring congestion or air quality impacts. In these metrics, we are directly measuring congestion as a function of travel time savings and directly measuring the cost of emissions as a function of vehicle speeds and distance, so there is no direct need to use the vehicle miles traveled as a proxy measure for these other metrics. In fact, reporting vehicle miles traveled would produce a duplicative effect of measuring both the proxy metric and the actual metric, based on the same underlying data.

Many of the criteria measures are estimated in monetary values so they can be included in a benefit-cost result. These measures are reported as annual benefits (positive values) and costs (negative values) for the plan horizon year 2040 in millions of year 2008 dollars. All monetary values are additive except for the economic prosperity benefits which are a subset of the regional benefits already reported in the other measures. Other criteria measures are reported in the following summary table with directional measures as follows: “nc” indicates no significant change, “–” indicates negative or undesirable change, and “+” indicates positive or desirable change.

The advantages of the benefit-cost approach are that both benefits and costs can be combined to assess the potential economic consequences of a particular transportation alternative. The disadvantage is that non-monetizable measures, such as growth management or economic prosperity, cannot be directly included. The full set of evaluation criteria recognizes the advantages of the benefit-cost method but combines this with other quantitative and qualitative measures to provide a more comprehensive assessment of each alternative in Appendix D.
### Exhibit 3-16  
**Evaluation Criteria Analysis Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria (All Comparisons to the 2040 Baseline: $$ in Millions)</th>
<th>Alt 1</th>
<th>Alt 2</th>
<th>Alt 3</th>
<th>Alt 4</th>
<th>Alt 5</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
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<td>Travel Time Savings</td>
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<td>$1,140</td>
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<td>-$189</td>
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<td>Other User Benefits</td>
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<td>-$15</td>
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<td>Finance</td>
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<td>-$550</td>
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<td>Capital Cost</td>
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<td>-$2,310</td>
<td>-$1,670</td>
<td>-$1,650</td>
<td>-$1,700</td>
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<td>Operating Revenues</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Population</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no significant change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no significant change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jobs to Housing Balance</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no significant change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Population and Jobs in Centers</td>
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<td>no significant change</td>
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<td>Economic Prosperity</td>
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<td>Benefits to Low and High-wage Employment</td>
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<td>nc</td>
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<td>Agriculture and Natural Resource Lands</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Energy Usage from Vehicle and Building Use</td>
<td>nc</td>
<td>nc</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
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<td>Accident Cost Savings</td>
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<td>$168</td>
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<td>Nonmotorized Travel</td>
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<td>Redundancy (Roads and Transit)</td>
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<td>nc</td>
<td>nc</td>
<td>nc</td>
</tr>
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<td>Equity</td>
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<td>Geographic Distribution of Benefits</td>
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<td>nc</td>
<td>+</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All comparisons to the 2040 Baseline: $$ in millions; positive values are benefits, negative values are costs; all monetary values are additive except the Economic Prosperity benefits which are benefits to a subset of the region. nc = no significant change, - = negative change, + = positive change.
Policy Analysis
The adoption of the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy in April 2008 set forward a series of growth policies. The Transportation 2040 alternatives are evaluated against these goals and policies.

Environment
A core principle of VISION 2040 is maintaining and improving both the natural and built environments. Land use, transportation, air quality, and human health are interconnected and therefore require integrated planning, regulations, and implementation actions.

Development Patterns
The Development Patterns section of VISION 2040 reflects key elements of the Regional Growth Strategy, with a focus on the continued growth of designated regional centers and sub-regional centers. It also reemphasizes preserving rural lands and not allowing development to diminish rural character and scale.

Economy
The economic policies focus on creating a prosperous and sustainable regional economy. They incorporate new focus areas, based on the Regional Economic Strategy. The policies are organized around the topics of business, people, and places. This new structure maintains many of the existing policies, but streamlines them while now addressing many new topics.

Transportation
The region’s long-range transportation strategy is to establish a coordinated multimodal transportation system that is integrated with and supportive of regionwide growth management planning objectives. To support the regional vision for focusing growth within the designated urban growth area, especially in identified centers, transportation facilities and programs must contribute to establishing a balanced transportation system that provides enhanced travel options. The transportation policies focus on creating a cleaner, more efficient transportation system, reducing congestion, and providing guidance to the region’s metropolitan transportation plan, Destination 2030.
14 What are the benefits and disadvantages of delaying implementation to a future time?

If implementation of the Transportation 2040 plan is delayed, transportation projects or programs identified in the plan could also be delayed. The primary benefit of this delayed implementation would be to delay any adverse construction and operating impacts of the projects included in the final Transportation 2040 plan.

The primary disadvantages of delayed implementation could include:

- Failure to implement a key component of VISION 2040, the region’s long-range vision for managing growth
- Delays in implementing transit, nonmotorized, and other project types that have environmental benefits
- Impacts on achieving economic development goals including affordable and convenient housing opportunities
- Deferred decisions by other parties on related transportation or development projects
- Increased cost or pressure to develop right-of-way needed for some of the projects
- Risk in delaying or receiving a reduced amount of federal funding
- Higher construction costs due to inflation

15 What are the next steps?

After the release of the DEIS, PSRC will take the following steps:

- **DEIS Public Comment Period**: For 45 days, PSRC will seek public comments from around the region. This input will be used to help select a preferred alternative and to help inform the analysis of environmental impacts and mitigating measures. Once the written public comment period on the DEIS has concluded in the summer of 2009,
work will proceed on the identification of a preferred alternative and the preparation of the FEIS.

- **Identification of a Preferred Alternative**: PSRC’s Transportation Policy Board will consider the agency and public comments on the DEIS, and use the technical and environmental findings, and the results of the Evaluation Criteria Report (Appendix D) to develop a preferred alternative. A draft of Transportation 2040 is scheduled to be issued for public review and comment in September 2009, and that draft will identify a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative may be one of the six plan alternatives or a hybrid of elements and strategies from among the different alternatives. Following public review of the draft plan, PSRC’s Executive Board will then identify a preferred alternative for the FEIS.

- **FEIS and Transportation 2040**: The FEIS will include a description of the preferred alternative and the responses to public comments on the DEIS. The FEIS will also update, as appropriate, the plan alternatives, and the environmental analysis and discussion of mitigation measures.

After issuance of the FEIS, Transportation 2040 will be moved forward for review by the Transportation Policy Board and other PSRC boards.

Transportation 2040 and the FEIS will be reviewed by the Executive Board, which will make a final recommendation for adoption of Transportation 2040 by the General Assembly in spring 2010.