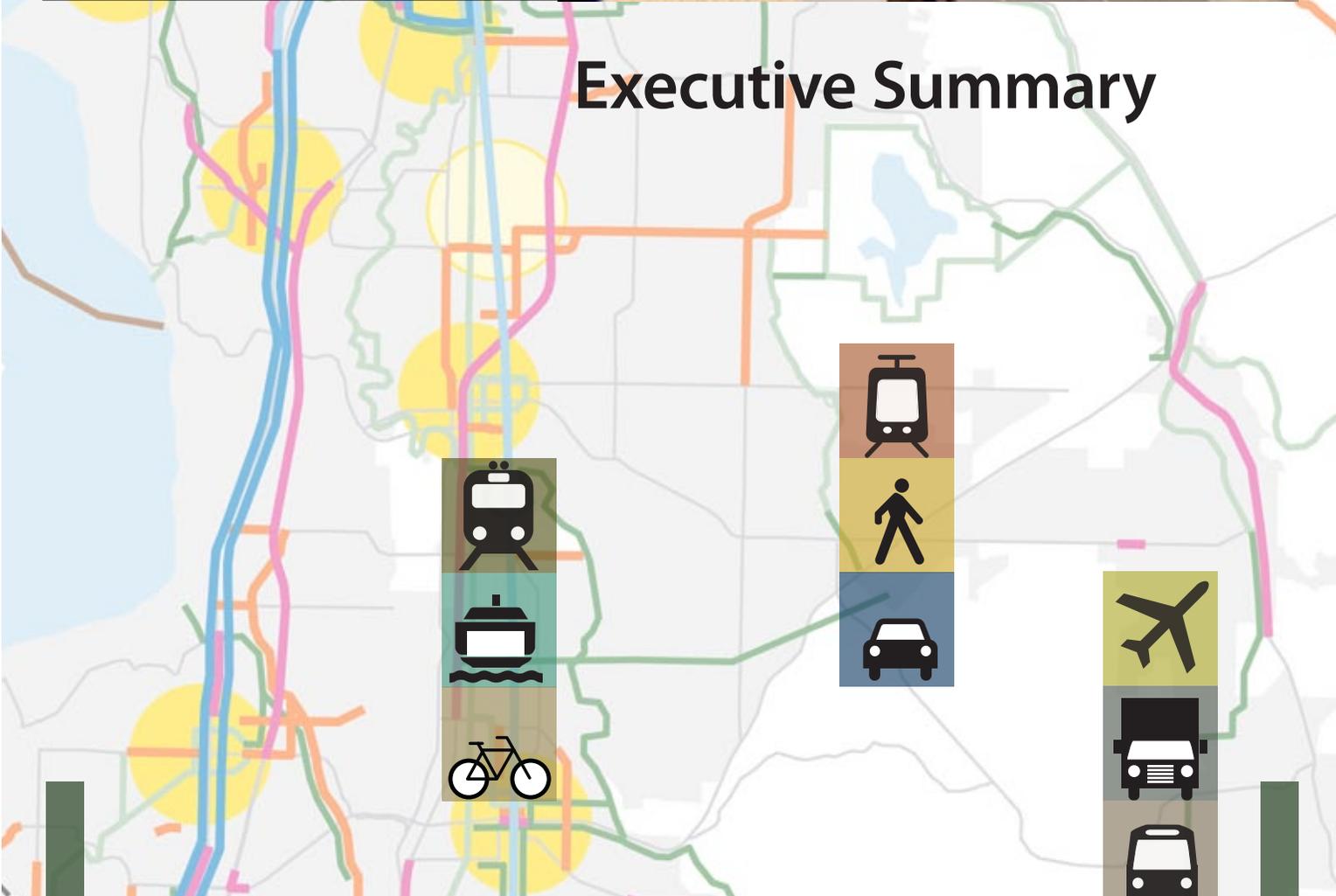


# Transportation 2040



toward a sustainable transportation system

## Executive Summary



MAY 20, 2010

Puget Sound Regional Council



Puget Sound Regional Council  
**PSRC**

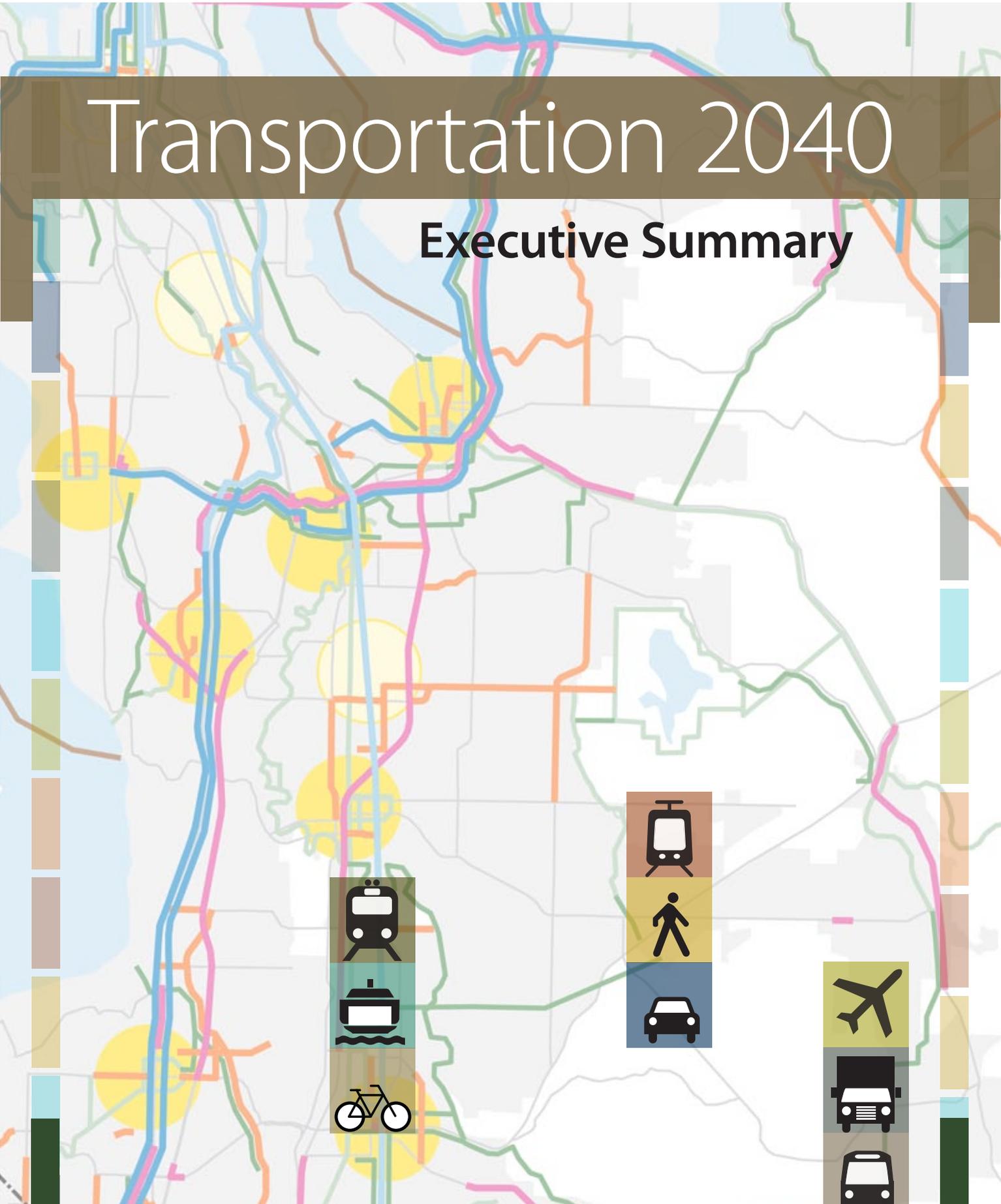
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# Transportation 2040

## Executive Summary



MAY 20, 2010

Puget Sound Regional Council



City of Tacoma

## ***What is a regional transportation plan?***

***A comprehensive document that states the objectives and actions for the region to meet its mobility needs.***

# Transportation 2040

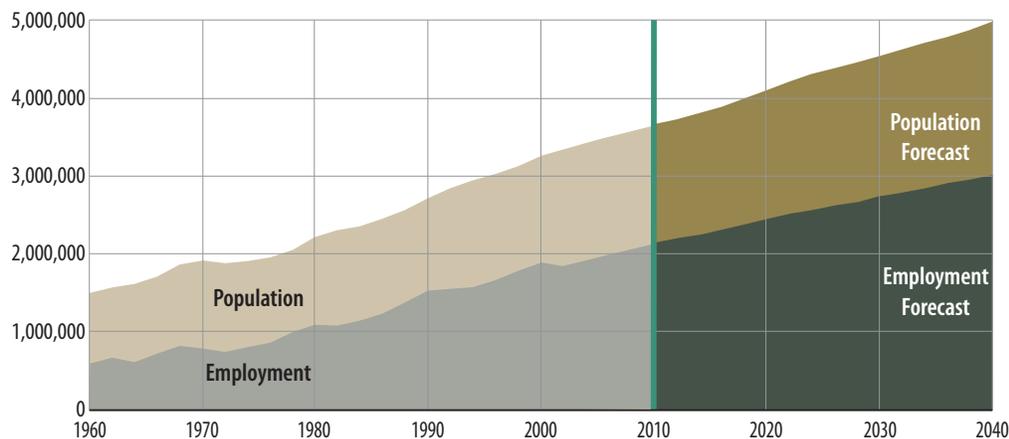
## The Central Puget Sound Region's Transportation Plan

*Transportation 2040 is an action plan for transportation in the central Puget Sound region for the next 30 years. During that time, the region is expected to grow by roughly 1.5 million people and support more than 1.2 million new jobs. All of these new people and new jobs are expected to boost demand for travel within and through the region by about 40 percent. While the long-term growth for the region seems certain, the plan has been put together in a time of unprecedented uncertainty in the short-term.*



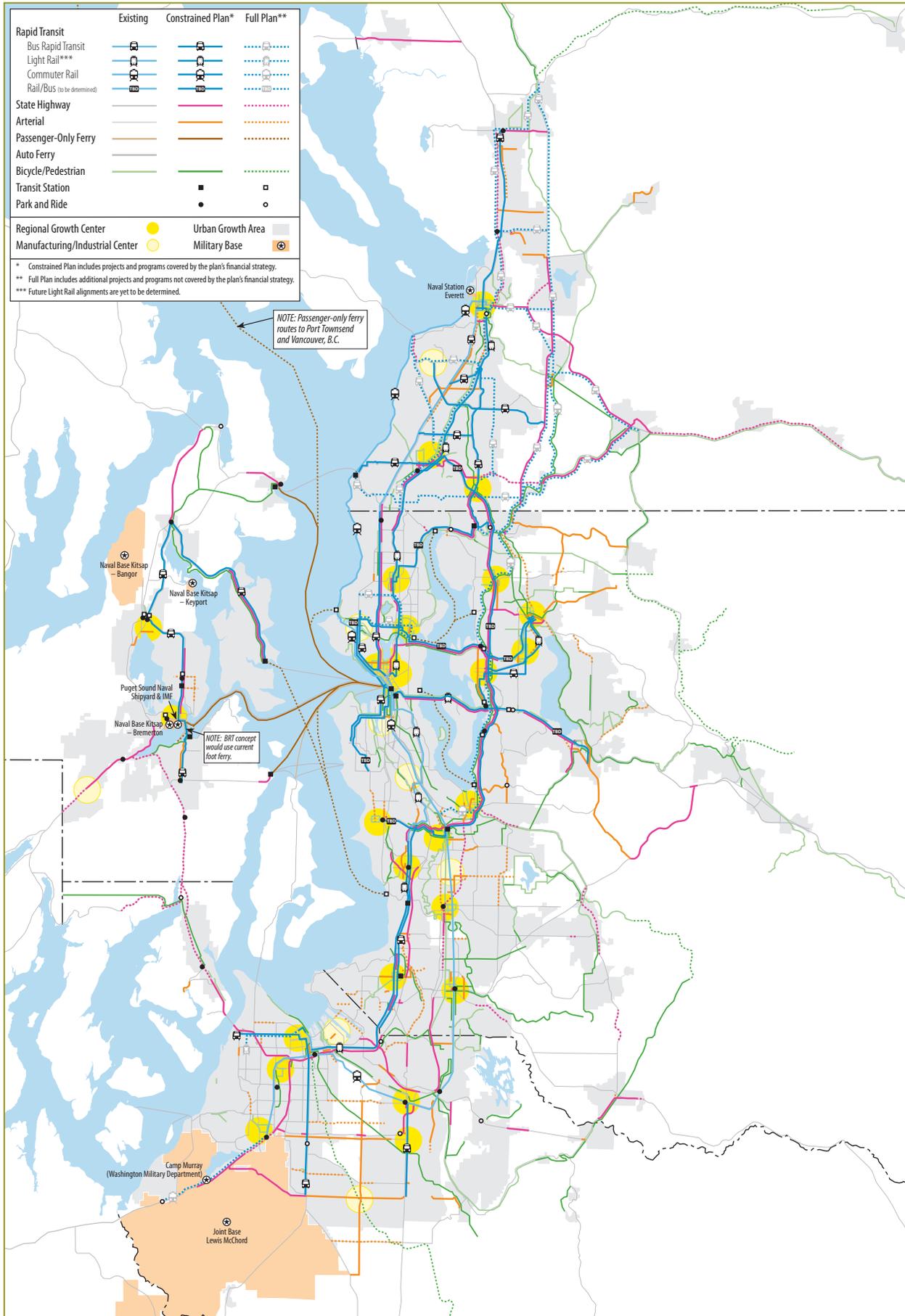
- A severe economic downturn has had significant effects on jobs, housing, freight movement, and commuting levels and patterns. As the economy recovers, the Puget Sound region, like metropolitan areas everywhere, will be in global competition for jobs and business. Adequate transportation is one key to sustaining an economic edge.

- The region's recently adopted Regional Growth Strategy, in VISION 2040, calls for a regional growth pattern with more growth occurring in existing urban areas, especially in designated centers.



The Regional Growth Strategy better matches job and housing locations, resulting in shorter commutes and reduced emissions. While the region has adopted this as clear policy, achieving this growth strategy

# Transportation 2040



requires changes from past growth patterns which resulted in more growth in rural areas and in communities on the urban edge. Concerted efforts will be needed to realize the benefits envisioned from a more central and concentrated growth pattern.

- Energy supply, evidenced in the 2008 spike in gas prices, is projected to continue to affect the affordability of travel, the costs of transportation projects, how goods and people move around the region, where businesses and families choose to locate, and decisions made in using the central Puget Sound as a gateway for trade.
- Federal policies that have shaped directions for highway and transit programs since the early 1990s expired at the end of September 2009. Congress is currently debating significant changes to federal programs which could affect federal direction on transportation, and an increased role for metropolitan regions in transportation decision-making and finance.
- Nationally, and in Washington state, the system of transportation finance that has been in place in recent decades is beginning to fail. A combination of high fuel prices, increasing popularity of more efficient cars and trucks, and the shift to non-polluting alternative fuel vehicles means less reliance on gas tax as a main source of transportation investment. A new finance system at the local, state and federal levels, as yet undefined, must be developed to pay for transportation investments.
- Globally, there is increasing consensus that the climate is changing, and that transportation contributes a significant part to greenhouse gas emissions. Washington state has adopted greenhouse gas emission limits, and the federal government is expected to adopt national policies in the next few years. These state and federal policies may profoundly influence transportation planning, but in ways that now are uncertain.
- The advancing speed of new technologies from laboratories to marketplaces will influence transportation, and planners will have to distinguish what's real in the near term from what's reasonable to assume for the longer term.

Recognizing that these uncertainties exist, Transportation 2040 outlines a long-term template for how this region should invest in transportation, while at the same time



Tukwila International Station

### Transportation 2040 Plan Framework



embracing the need to be flexible and responsive to the ways people — and the world — actually will change.

- Transportation 2040 identifies investments to support the region's expected growth and improve the service transportation provides to people and businesses.
- Transportation 2040 lays out a financing plan that suggests a long-term shift in how transportation improvements are funded, with more reliance on users paying for transportation improvements.
- Transportation 2040 proposes a strategy for reducing transportation's contribution to climate change and its impact on important regional concerns, such as air pollution and the health of Puget Sound.

By being clear about this regional long-term vision, the Puget Sound region will be better able to influence near-term decisions on environmental protection, and the future direction of the nation's transportation programs.



# Investing in the Region’s Transportation Future



Tacoma Narrows Bridge electronic tolling, WSDOT

Transportation 2040 is built upon the foundation of VISION 2040. The transportation plan then establishes three integrated and sustainable strategies: (1) Congestion and Mobility, (2) Environment, and (3) Funding. These strategies guide transportation investment decisions to meet growing travel needs for people and freight — more transit, more biking and walking facilities, more ferries, and more complete roadways. Within these strategies the plan identifies four major categories of investment: preservation, maintenance and operations; safety and security; efficiency; and strategic capacity.

## THREE KEY STRATEGIES

**Congestion and Mobility.** The plan improves mobility through a combination of effective land use planning, demand management, efficiency enhancements, and strategic capacity investments. To improve system efficiency, the plan creates “smart corridors” with advanced technology, better information for travelers, and advanced tolling approaches which adjust for actual traffic conditions. Capacity improvements strategically expand roadway, transit, and nonmotorized facilities, with new roadways limited to key missing links and enhancing existing facilities. This plan includes additional attention to monitoring system performance.

**Environment.** A key focus of the plan is to protect and improve the region’s environmental health. This includes ensuring that the region has healthy air that meets all standards, ensuring that transportation projects improve the handling of stormwater runoff to protect Puget Sound and other surface waters, and addressing emerging issues such as transportation’s role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. The plan includes a specific strategy to address

state greenhouse gas goals and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction benchmarks. The four-part strategy includes Land Use, Transportation Pricing, Transportation Choices, and Technology. In addition, the plan builds on current efforts to protect natural areas and support vibrant, livable communities.

**Funding.** The Transportation 2040 financial strategy relies on traditional funding sources in the early years of the plan. Over time the region will transition to a new funding structure based on user fees, which could include high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, facility and bridge tolls, highway

## Transportation 2040



system tolls, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) charges, and other pricing approaches that replace the gas tax and further fund and manage the transportation system. Funding strategies need to include a nexus between the tax, fee, or toll and the use of the revenues.

The strategy starts with developing HOT lanes, and tolling individual highway and bridge projects in their entirety as they are implemented. The plan calls for full highway system tolls by approximately 2030. Guidance for the funding strategy includes remaining flexible and accelerating the implementation of tolls earlier than 2020 wherever feasible.

Transportation 2040 lays out the following framework for transportation investments. The full plan includes two categories of programs and projects: (1) Constrained and (2) Unprogrammed. These categories recognize the federally approved structure for regional plans and the range of uncertainty that is inherent in long-range transportation planning programs.

**Constrained.** A federally required component of the plan where project and program costs must be accounted for and balanced with reasonably expected revenues over the life of the plan.

**Unprogrammed.** Projects and programs that are included in the plan but are not subject to the requirement of having a corresponding funding strategy and may be more “illustrative” or aspirational in nature.

## PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

**Maintain, Preserve, and Operate.** The plan’s highest priority is to maintain, preserve, and operate the region’s transportation system, and represents the largest program cost, at approximately \$110 billion. This includes replacing some key vulnerable structures (such as the Alaskan Way Viaduct, the SR 520 Floating Bridge, and the I-5 Puyallup River Bridge), increased investment in local arterial preservation, maintaining existing transit service, and ensuring the continued operation of the Washington State Ferries. The plan includes all local roadway preservation needs that may be funded through transportation benefit districts or other mechanisms.

**Safety and Security.** Implement the state’s strategic highway safety plan (Target Zero) to eliminate deaths and disabling injuries and enhance security in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

**System Efficiency.** Improve efficiency through:

- Transportation Demand Management. Emphasize greatly expanded employer and residential programs to reduce travel demand and increase use of transit,

vanpools, bicycling, and walking. Variable tolling implementation should also help manage demand for the roadway system.

- Transportation System Management and Operations. Support an aggressive program of advanced technology on arterials and freeways, including better signal coordination, active traffic management, new and expanded traveler information services, and transit-specific technologies to ensure on-time performance and provide customers with more complete, up-to-date travel information.



**Strategically Expand Capacity.** Implement strategic capacity investments in the following areas:

- **Public Transportation (regional and local transit).** Implement an aggressive transit strategy. Complete *Sound Transit 2* projects and additional *Link* light rail extensions to Everett, Tacoma and Redmond. Increase local transit service by more than 100 percent in peak periods and over 80 percent in the off-peak, while achieving operational efficiencies to reduce costs. Additional local transit service should be added to keep up with increasing population and job growth if it can be financed through operational efficiencies and tax base growth to offset increases in arterial delay. Provide additional all-day service with high frequencies (generally every 15 minutes).
- **State Highways.** Complete and replace the network of roadway projects necessary to support development of the centers identified in VISION 2040 and

keep freight moving to support a strong economy. These include State Route (SR) 167, SR 509, SR 520 Floating Bridge, US 2 and SR 3. Rely directly on users of the new highway capacity to pay for improvements through tolling, which also has positive effects on reducing congestion and emissions.

- **Local Roads.** Expand local roadways to support transit and improve people and freight efficiency, especially to provide access to and within centers.
- **Nonmotorized Transportation.** Focus bike and walk improvements in regional growth centers and facilities with one terminus in a center. Build facilities that complete a missing link, or within one mile of existing and planned transit station areas for pedestrians and within three miles for bicyclists. Implement “Complete Streets” practice in all the region’s urban areas.
- **Vehicle Ferries (state and local).** Maintain existing boats and terminals, as well as current routes and service. Some auto capacity will be added due to scheduled

fleet replacement with slightly larger boats. Replace and upgrade key terminals.

- **Passenger Ferries.** Maintain the Seattle–Vashon, West Seattle–Downtown Seattle Water Taxi, Bremerton–Port Orchard, and Bremerton–Annapolis passenger-only ferry routes and service levels. Start new passenger-only ferry service between downtown Seattle and Bremerton, Kingston, and Southworth and add additional service after further analysis.
- **Aviation.** The aviation component of Transportation 2040 carries forward the adopted regional policy and builds upon the recently completed statewide Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS).
- **Intercity Passenger Rail.** Recognize Washington state’s commitment to improving the intercity rail passenger service provided by Amtrak along the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor over the next 30 years. Transportation 2040 also highlights the potential to develop a high-speed rail corridor linking the major cities of the Pacific Northwest region.



Sound Transit Link Light Rail

# Transportation 2040 Produces Big Benefits for the People of This Region

## SUPPORT FOR VISION 2040

Transportation 2040 is a multimodal transportation plan that provides a variety of choices designed to support VISION 2040's Regional Growth Strategy. A fundamental goal of VISION 2040 is to focus growth (people and jobs) in urban areas in a way that improves transportation efficiency, increases the use of transit, biking, and walking, and improves the balance between jobs and housing. Transportation 2040 supports:

- Focusing approximately 97 percent of growth within designated Urban Growth Areas.
- Continued development of regional growth centers, including adding more than 173,000 people and an additional 475,000 jobs to these areas by 2040, more than double the current activity in designated regional growth centers.

Transportation 2040 includes specific projects that support the growth strategy:

- Approximately 80 miles of new light rail are included in the full plan, building a fast and frequent regional high-capacity transit system that links and serves 12 regional growth centers, including all four east Sound Metropolitan Cities. Sounder commuter rail serves nine regional growth centers, and ST regional express bus serves 15 regional growth centers.
- Of the full plan's highway and roadway investments, 87 percent are within or directly serve Metropolitan Cities and Core Cities.



Harborside Park, Bremerton

- Regional guidance calls for new local transit to be focused on providing frequent service along major travel corridors in urban areas, and to and between local and regional centers.
- Bicycle and pedestrian projects are focused on providing access to regional growth centers and transit.

**STRENGTHEN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY**

Transportation is extremely important to economic growth. The mix of investments in Transportation 2040 produces tangible benefits to people and freight in terms of travel time savings and improved travel reliability.

In addition, Transportation 2040 recognizes the need to secure transportation funding that does not unnecessarily burden the economy. By having the users of the transportation system pay for major improvements, Transportation 2040 helps to establish a sustainable financial framework for transportation investments and guarantee that the region gets the most out of transportation investments.

**MOVING FREIGHT AND GOODS**

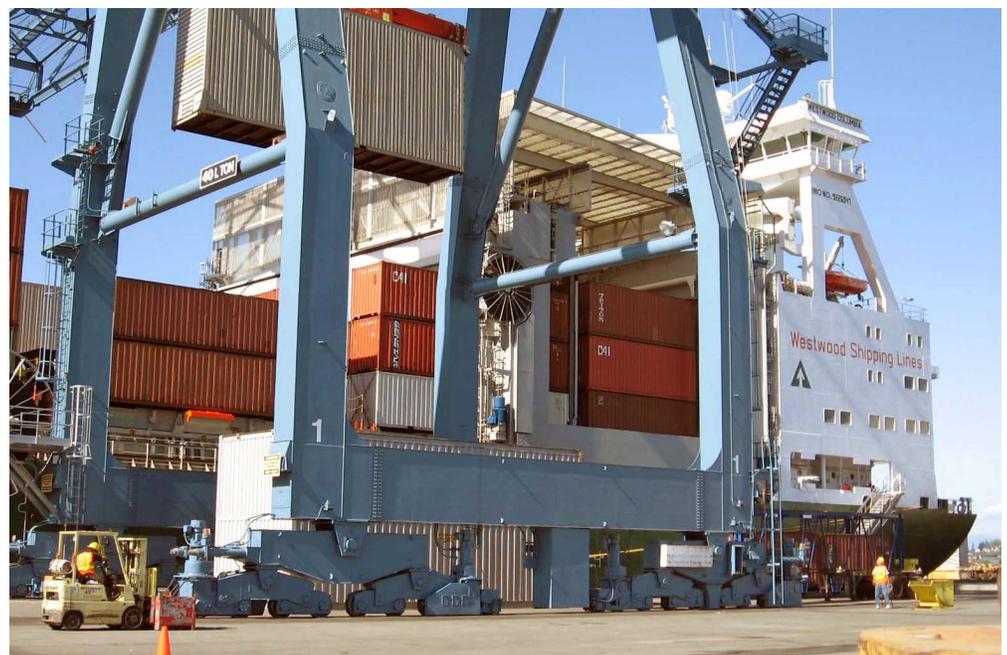
A transportation system that provides for the efficient movement of freight and goods is critical for the region's economic prosperity. By making investments that improve freight mobility, Transportation 2040 supports the region's businesses and manufacturers, as well as the role of the central Puget Sound region as a gateway for international trade.

**IMPROVE MOBILITY**

Transportation 2040 recognizes that improving mobility for people and freight will require a combination of preserving the region's existing transportation system, efficiency improvements, and strategic investments in transportation choices and roadway capacity.

Transportation 2040 includes a balance of mobility investments which will help the region accommodate future growth and improve mobility for people and goods. The combination of significant investments in transit, bike and walk facilities, strategic new roadway capacity, and phased implementation of highway tolling will improve mobility by reducing congestion in major travel corridors and offering new, efficient travel options for those who cannot or choose not to drive. As the region adds 1.5 million more people and 1.2 million more jobs by 2040, the investments in Transportation 2040 reduce peak hour freeway delay by 32 percent. Transportation 2040 also achieves a better balance of travel among modes, with transit capturing an increasing share of riders. Compared with 3 percent in 2006, by the year 2040 transit will account for 4.9 percent of the region's total daily trips, an increase of 63 percent. For work trips, transit will increase its share from 10 percent in 2006 to between 17.4 percent and 19 percent in 2040, a 74 to 90 percent increase in share. With its focus on land use, transit and nonmotorized investments, combined with increased user fees, Transportation 2040 exceeds the state benchmark set for vehicle miles traveled reduction for 2035.

Total benefits to all system users exceed \$6 billion per year in the year 2040. Freight users experience significant



Port of Everett



mobility benefits from the investments included in the plan. Medium and heavy trucks realize over \$2 billion in annual benefits, primarily from travel time savings and improved travel reliability.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

The plan assures that we meet all air and water quality standards, thereby keeping federal and state transportation funding flowing to the region. The region is committed to maintaining the air quality standards in the region by continuing to reduce emissions of air pollutants through the use of cleaner fuels and vehicles, increasing alternatives to driving alone, and land use strategies. The region will continue to monitor these air quality issues, and ensure that Transportation 2040 maintains its compliance with all air quality and transportation conformity regulations.

The Puget Sound region is committed to meeting all state and federal targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions. Transportation 2040's four-part greenhouse gas reduction strategy is flexible, and is designed to incorporate anticipated guidance specific to the region and the transportation sector. Analysis shows that with aggressive implementation of land use, pricing and technology solutions, as well as increased transportation choices, the strategy has the potential to reduce regional greenhouse gases from transportation by up to 28 percent below 2006 levels. These results show that Transportation 2040 is on the right track toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation, and promoting the complementary strategies needed to support the state's overall

greenhouse gas reduction approach. By December 2011, when WSDOT is required to report to the Governor on the status of regional transportation plans PSRC will work with WSDOT and local and regional jurisdictions to improve analysis methodologies and identify additional strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. When state targets are set for the transportation sector and regions, PSRC should revisit its greenhouse gas reduction strategy.

The plan also emphasizes focused urban investments and the retrofit of existing infrastructure to address water quality of the region's streams, lakes, rivers, and Puget Sound.

### **EQUITY**

Transportation 2040 programs and projects are proposed to be implemented in ways that prevent or minimize negative impacts to low-income, minority, and special needs populations:

- The analysis shows Transportation 2040 produces higher net benefits for low-income and minority households than for the region as a whole
- On a per-trip basis, benefits to transit, high-occupancy vehicle users and freight operators were significantly higher than benefits to single-occupant vehicle users.

### **COST**

The plan cost (in 2008 dollars) ranges from \$189 billion for the constrained portion of the plan to \$225 billion for the full plan. This includes preservation, operation, maintenance and capital cost. Current law revenues are estimated at \$125 billion in 2008 dollars. The plan's

financial strategy envisions a transition from existing revenue sources (gas tax, sales tax, etc.) to increasing reliance on user fees to finance transportation improvements. The financial strategy provides an additional \$64 billion in revenues to fully fund the cost of the constrained portion of the plan.

### **MONITORING PERFORMANCE**

Performance monitoring completes the link between plan policies and an investment strategy designed to implement those policies. Through evaluation over time, the region can be sure that investments are achieving desired outcomes. In order to perform this function properly, the region is establishing a baseline and developing transportation performance measures against which actual transportation system performance information can be compared.

Performance measures provide policymakers and the public a framework for evaluating progress toward implementing adopted regional policies. These measures are established by describing desired policy outcomes, identifying measurable indicators for each outcome, and setting targets for these indicators at various points in the future.

### **MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER**

Transportation 2040 represents a break from business as usual, laying out a transportation vision to meet the mobility needs of all of the region's residents in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner.

Transportation 2040 provides the framework for the development of a sustainable transportation system that improves travel for people and businesses throughout the four-county central Puget Sound region. The plan includes projects, programs and other actions to reduce congestion and improve mobility to support the nearly five million people who will call this region home by 2040.

Transportation 2040 contains an aggressive environmental strategy to reduce transportation's impacts on the water quality of Puget Sound, protect air quality, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The plan's greenhouse gas reduction strategy is intended to lead and complement the development of the state strategy to meet greenhouse gas reduction goals.

The plan embraces a new direction for transportation funding, intended to provide stable and sustainable funding over the long term. The plan's finance strategy recognizes the long-term limitations of traditional transportation funding approaches, and moves the region to a new user-based funding system that not only provides necessary revenues, but also helps reduce congestion and improve environmental quality.

Transportation 2040 was developed in a time of considerable uncertainty about the future scope of federal legislation governing transportation, evolving direction from the state and federal levels to reduce greenhouse gases, changing technology, and a changing pace in regional economic growth. Transportation 2040 will be updated as needed to address state and federal transportation requirements, knowledge gained as the region moves forward, and the changing needs of the people and businesses of the central Puget Sound region.

Following adoption of the plan, a process for evaluating and prioritizing projects included in the plan will be developed. This process will develop technical approaches which will help the region identify those projects which best implement the region's policies in Vision 2040 and provide direction on future additions and deletions to the plan. The results of the prioritization will be completed by early by early 2012 to be considered by PSRC's General Assembly.



USS Lincoln, Naval Station Everett



# Puget Sound Regional Council

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For the **FULL** version of **Transportation 2040**, contact the PSRC Information Center at [info@psrc.org](mailto:info@psrc.org) or 206-464-7532.

**OR** visit the agency website at [psrc.org](http://psrc.org) and find the documents listed below:

## **Transportation 2040 Map**

## **Transportation 2040**

### **TRANSPORTATION 2040 — BY CHAPTERS**

Resolution/Introduction

What is the PSRC?

Chapter 1. Toward a Sustainable Transportation System

Chapter 2. A Strategic Approach to Regional Mobility

Chapter 3. A Sustainable Environment

Chapter 4. A Sustainable Financial Framework

Chapter 5. Regional Programs and Projects

Chapter 6. Monitoring Implementation and System Performance

Chapter 7. Future Planning, Programming and Implementation

Glossary/References/Boards

### **APPENDICES A—M**

Appendix A. 2010 Action Strategy

Appendix B. Projects and Programs by SMART Corridor

Appendix C. Multicounty Planning Policies

Appendix D. The Metropolitan Transportation System

Appendix E. Regional Air Quality Conformity Analysis

Appendix F. Financial Strategy Background

Appendix G. Environmental Justice

Appendix H. Analysis Tool Documentation

Appendix I. Public Involvement and Outreach

Appendix J. Regional Freight Strategy

Appendix K. PSRC Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Appendix L. Climate Change Background

Appendix M. Metropolitan Transportation System Capacity Improvements List



Puget Sound Regional Council