SOLID GROUND

How does accessible transportation support community well-being?

Proposed Project: Sand Point Transportation Needs Assessment

A **Planning Project** proposal for the WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program

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Sand Point Transportation Needs Assessment

A two-year planning project to better understand transportation needs and gaps impacting the well-being of low-income residents in Seattle's Sand Point neighborhood.

The Current Challenge

A former naval base in a car-centric community was converted into low-income housing without a corresponding whole community development plan, creating **housing that exists in isolation** from efficient access to essential services that support daily life.

Community Impact

For those of us navigating poverty, time is not a luxury. **When transportation is unreliable, inaccessible, or nonexistent, every other system we interact with is at risk of faltering**: jobs, schools, medical appointments, court appearances, social services, culturally relevant and affordable groceries. Transportation should be a lifeline to opportunity, not a barrier.

The Project Goal

A community informed codesigned **transportation needs assessment** that identifies transportation options, partnerships, and system changes that would reduce community isolation and increase access to well-being, recognizing Sand Point as a whole community, not only a housing site.

Addressing Our Region's Priority Mobility Needs

This planning project addresses several mobility gaps identified by PSRC, including affordability, awareness, service quality, spatial, and temporal.

High Priority Need #4

Context-appropriate transportation options in areas not well served by fixed-route transit, with a high-priority strategy to support context-appropriate transportation options.

Action 4a: Maintain and strengthen existing partnerships and explore context-appropriate activities to expand to meet local needs.

High Priority Need #6

Improved access to healthcare, wellness, and other essential services, with a high-priority strategy to expand and optimize trips to healthcare and other essential service locations.

Action 6a: Identify gaps in transit and specialized transportation coverage, frequency, and service hours to key healthcare and wellness destinations, focusing on the needs of priority populations.

Current Context & Gaps Related to These High-Priority Needs

- Limited bus routes available in the neighborhood, with fixed times & destinations
- Residents with disabilities that don't qualify for Metro Access curb-to-curb and door-to-door services
- No basic services located within walking distance, such as affordable grocery stores or pharmacies
- Residents unaware of available transportation options
- Mobility coordination challenges among low-income housing providers

Addressing Our Region's Priority Mobility Needs

Underscoring the compounding challenges and connections between income, mobility, and access to opportunity.

Regional data from the PSRC:

32%

People with disabilities live on low incomes

31%

People with limited English proficiency live on low incomes

21%

Households living on low incomes who do not own a personal vehicle

Data from Solid Ground:

59%

Adults at Solid Ground's Sand Point Housing who report a disability

34%

Individuals at Solid Ground's Sand Point Housing that need an interpreter

53%

Households that rely on public transportation*

***2026 Solid Ground Community Survey Results (representative of our service population)**

Coordination Efforts

Discovering the Need

Listening Tour – Inside Solid Ground Programs

Earlier this year, we conducted a listening tour across Solid Ground's 20+ programs in five service areas to learn about transportation needs and gaps for low-income Solid Ground program participants.

Key Findings

- Lack of transportation is a significant barrier to safety and security for people fleeing domestic violence.
- When personal vehicles break down, individuals and families are at risk of missing work or school, creating a strain on daily life and putting financial stability at risk.
- High gas prices, insurance, and tabs are forcing decisions between fuel and food.
- Mental health disabilities such as PTSD and other trauma-related conditions can be stressful and retraumatizing (loud, jostling, uncertainty), including for Veterans.
- Low-income seniors and those with limited mobility struggle to access food banks in their communities.
- **For Solid Ground's Sand Point Housing residents, lack of walkable access to affordable grocery stores and other services often requires two or more buses to reach destinations.**

Coordination Efforts

A wish list of potential solutions

Listening Tour – Inside Solid Ground Programs

In our listening tour interviews, we asked, "What potential solutions do you envision if you had a magic wand?" This is a sampling of what we heard.

Key Findings

- Reloadable bus passes and gas cards.
- An affordable on-demand ride solution that gives DV survivors agency in booking their own transportation.
- Partnerships with mechanics to repair cars at discounted rates.
- Drivers, vehicles, and mobility management for home delivery of groceries from food banks.
- **A circulator-type bus with a predictable route to affordable groceries, drug stores, post office, etc.**

Coordination Efforts

Local and regional coordination anticipated for implementing proposed project

This **planning project** is needed to move from a small indicator (internal at Solid Ground) to a community-led discovery of the full need among low-income residents at Sand Point.

Coordination efforts will include the following groups:

Sand Point Neighborhood Coordination

- Solid Ground's Sand Point Housing
- Mercy Housing
- LIHI
- Magnuson Park Community Center
- Seattle Parks & Recreation
- Magnuson Park Advisory Committee

Community Coordination

- King County Mobility Coalition
- North King County Mobility Coalition
- King County Metro
- Hopelink Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
- SDOT Transportation Access Program
- Sound Transit
- Catholic Community Services' Volunteer Services

Engagement Activities

Elevating the voices of those most impacted by poverty

Community **listening sessions** will be led by our advocacy partner, **Statewide Poverty Action Network.** Poverty Action has 30 years of experience conducting listening sessions in low-income communities across the state to learn from people directly impacted by poverty the issues most important to them.

Community Listening Sessions

- Up to six listening sessions across all low-income housing programs in the Sand Point community
- Up to two validation sessions, inviting decision-makers to hear directly from the community regarding the solutions they're advocating for
- Barriers to participation eliminated by providing free childcare, food/snacks, gift cards & door prizes for participants, language translation, and disability accommodations
- Surveys to capture input from community members who don't participate in listening sessions

Direct community input ensures we are serving communities impactfully and respectfully, acknowledging them as experts in their lives and experiences.

Engagement Activities

Providing services that match community need

A **Transportation Needs Assessment** is necessary to gather accurate information on the most urgent needs and barriers facing low-income residents at Sand Point. This planning project will not add service immediately but will **create the evidence base** to prioritize alignment and future transportation improvements.

What we can learn from a Transportation Needs Assessment

- Context-appropriate transportation options available for Sand Point
- Identify gaps in transportation options, coordinated mobility efforts, and/or system infrastructure
- How residents currently get around in their daily life
- Types of destinations residents need to get to
- What makes transportation difficult
- Satisfaction with current transportation options

Impact Beyond Sand Point

Modeling what's possible when low-income housing is developed with respect to the whole community and its needs.

The research and lessons learned from this planning project can demonstrate how transportation and housing work together to support community well-being for people living on low incomes.

Current and Related Housing and Transportation Decisions Under Consideration

- Possible development of former Fort Lawton Army post in Magnolia into low-income housing. Similar to Sand Point, Fort Lawton is located in an isolated, car-centric community, far from affordable grocery stores and other essential services.

- Possible elimination of Metro Bus Route 7 in favor of RapidRide line in 2032, resulting in the elimination of over 20 stops in the South End and making the bus come less frequently.