

Chapter 2 Introduction and Background

1 What is Transportation 2040?

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) has prepared Transportation 2040, a new transportation plan that will address critical issues such as congestion and mobility, the environment, and transportation finance. Transportation 2040 will be integrated with VISION 2040 and the Regional Economic Strategy to accommodate the addition of 1.5 million people and 1.2 million jobs in the region by 2040¹. These increases continue several decades of dramatic growth. The Puget Sound region ranked 15th among U.S. metropolitan areas in 2006 with a population of 3.5 million people.

The regional transportation plan covers a metropolitan area encompassing King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties and their 82 cities and towns, as shown in Exhibit 2-1. It addresses mobility needs across all modes and functions of travel for the future, including:

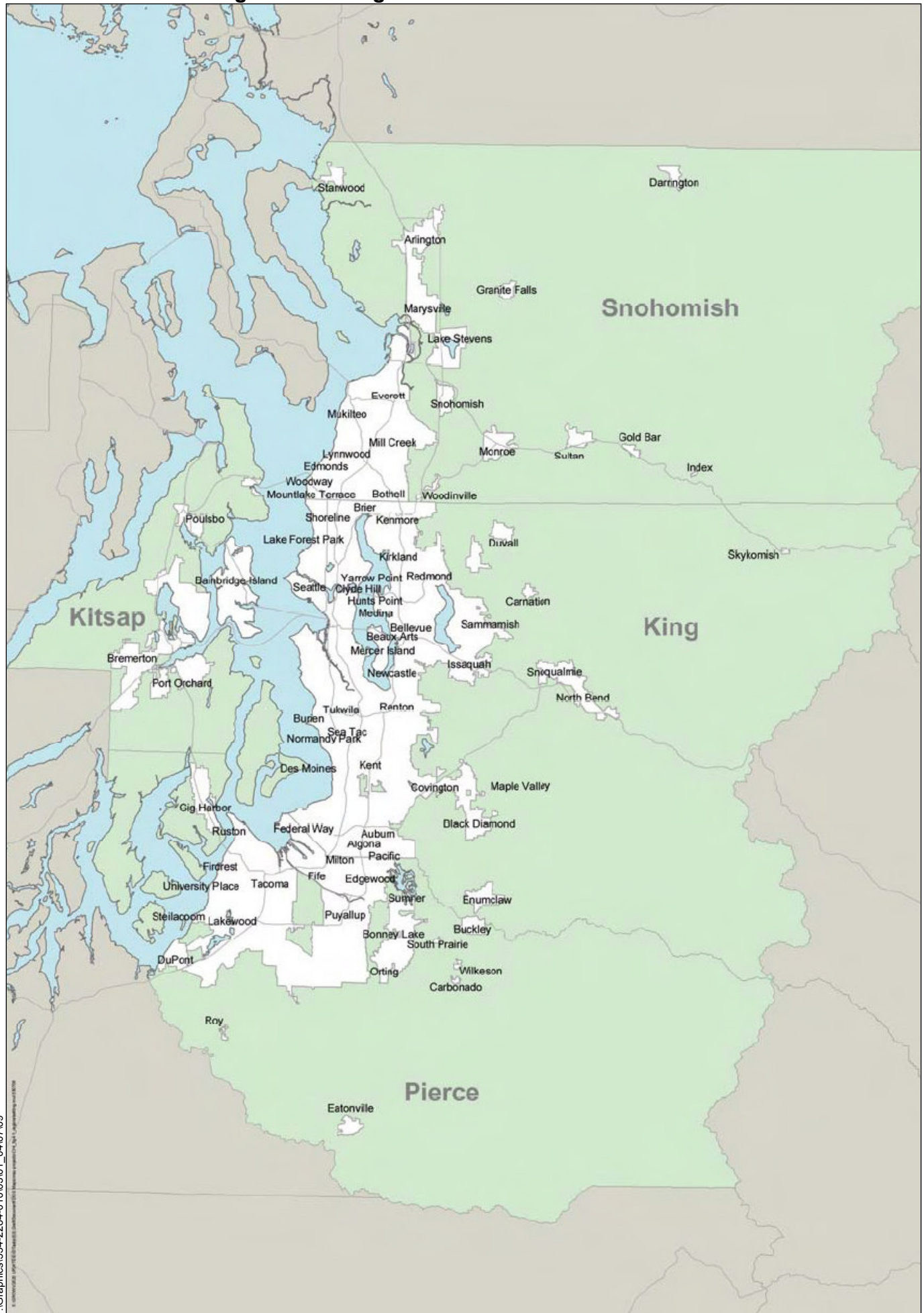
- Aviation
- Ferries
- Walking and bicycling
- Roadways
- Rail
- Freight

What is a regional transportation plan?

A regional transportation plan is a comprehensive document for the long-range transportation planning in a region. It is a comprehensive document that states the objectives and actions for the region to meet its mobility needs.

¹ The period of analysis throughout Transportation 2040 is between 2006 and 2040.

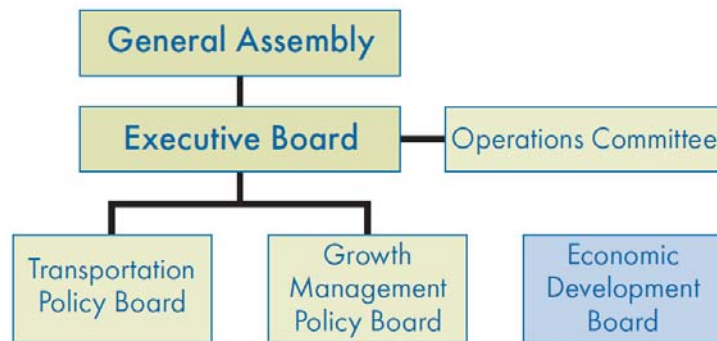
Exhibit 2-1. Central Puget Sound Region Cities and Towns



The plan includes personal and commercial travel for all vehicle types (autos, trucks, and buses on the roadway and ferry systems, as well as trains and airplanes). Commercial travel includes vehicles that move people and goods and that provide services.

2 What is the Puget Sound Regional Council?

PSRC is the long-range growth management, transportation, and economic planning agency for the central Puget Sound region of Washington state. It serves as a forum for cities, counties, ports, transit agencies, tribes, and the state to work together on important regional issues.



A General Assembly and Executive Board govern PSRC. The Growth Management Policy, Economic Development, and Transportation Policy Boards advise the Executive Board. The General Assembly is composed of local elected officials and representatives from all member jurisdictions and agencies (refer to the listing on page 34 of the Executive Summary). The Executive Board is chaired by PSRC's President.

Legal Responsibilities

PSRC is designated under state law as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization, and under federal law as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the central Puget Sound region. PSRC also supports the region's federally designated Economic Development District. PSRC has specific planning responsibilities under federal and state laws, including the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-

What are the key responsibilities of the Puget Sound Regional Council?

- Long-range growth, economic, and transportation planning
 - Transportation funding and regional project prioritization
 - Economic development coordination
 - Regional data
 - Technical assistance
 - Certification of transportation-related provisions of local comprehensive plans
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What laws guide the preparation of this Environmental Impact Statement and Transportation 2040?

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Transportation 2040 has been prepared according to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) (Ch. 43.21C Revised Code of Washington [RCW]) and the adopted rules for EIS preparation under Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-400 to 460, which require public agencies to consider the environmental effects of their proposed actions.

By federal law, long-range regional transportation plans must be updated every 7 years. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which became law in August 2005, authorizes the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005–2009. SAFETEA-LU has recently been extended into 2010 pending approval of a new federal transportation law.

LU); the federal Clean Air Act; the state Growth Management Act; the state Clean Air Washington Act; and the federal Public Works Act, as well as responsibilities pursuant to the Interlocal Agreement and Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement, as signed by its members.

3 What is the purpose of and need for Transportation 2040?

The purpose of Transportation 2040, as identified in the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) scoping process in fall 2007, is to address the following question:

How can the region best provide the mobility required to support a growing population to the year 2040, sustain the region's environment and economic vitality, improve system safety and efficiency, and enhance the region's overall quality of life?

To address this question, Transportation 2040 needs to accomplish the following:

- Extend the current regional transportation plan horizon to the year 2040.
- Support VISION 2040 and the Regional Economic Strategy.
- Meet federal and state requirements.

4 What are the objectives of Transportation 2040?

The SEPA scoping process was used to help identify the following objectives for the plan to accomplish:

- Prioritize projects and make strategic investments to produce the greatest net benefits to users of the system (for the movement of both people and goods) and to the environment, with a specific environmental focus on climate change factors and the health of Puget Sound waters.
- Improve personal mobility and people-moving capacity in the central Puget Sound region.

- Improve freight mobility to increase the health of the national, state, and regional economy.
- Meet the region's present and anticipated travel needs.
- Continue to preserve, maintain, and improve the existing urban and rural transportation system.
- Ensure that the urban and rural transportation system is safe, efficient, integrated, reliable, sustainable, secure, and usable.
- Focus investments on creating a highly efficient multimodal transportation network that will provide access to, mobility within, and connections between centers.
- Use the latest innovation and technology to creatively and efficiently manage congestion and delay, improve safety and operational efficiency, manage demand, and enhance transportation choices that affect the movement of people and goods.
- Improve access to services, education and training, jobs, and recreation for special needs populations.
- Enhance the role that transportation plays in human health and community livability for all residents, including reducing deaths and injuries on the regional transportation system and providing more opportunities for walking and bicycling.
- Define financially viable and sustainable funding sources for implementing the transportation plan.
- Improve the region's water and air quality and find creative ways to address climate change.
- Support the implementation of regional and local growth plans.

The objectives listed above provide the framework for the seven evaluation criteria and four areas of policy analysis used in the *Policy Analysis and Evaluation Criteria Report*, which is provided in Appendix D.

5 What is the Transportation 2040 FEIS?

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) informs the public, agencies, and decision makers about the environmental consequences (both positive and negative) of the actions proposed in the Transportation 2040 plan alternatives. In November 2007, PSRC concluded that the development of a transportation system to accommodate projected population and employment growth would likely result in significant impacts on the environment. At that time, PSRC issued a Determination of Significance, pursuant to SEPA—Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43.21C.030 (2)(c) and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-360.

This FEIS reviews environmental effects at a regional planning (non-project) level, concentrating on the long-term results of implementing Transportation 2040 plan alternatives. The FEIS may also provide guidance for further project-level review under SEPA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for future individual transportation projects.

PSRC will adopt Transportation 2040 as the transportation plan for the Puget Sound region. Choosing to move forward with planning and implementation of individual projects is the responsibility of city, county, state, and federal agencies; ports; transit agencies; tribal nations; and non-governmental organizations. The region's efforts to maintain, improve, and manage the transportation system can be found within the combined plans, projects, and programs of these project sponsors. Sharing responsibility for the region's future are the transportation system's users—the general public, institutions, businesses, and industries—whose daily transportation choices affect the region's character, environmental quality, and economic health.

6 What is projected for the region's population, employment, and housing?

The region was home to more than 3.5 million residents in 2006 and is forecast to grow by an additional 1.5 million persons between 2006 and 2040, an increase of 42 percent,

What is a Determination of Significance?

A threshold determination is made to determine whether or not an EIS is required. If the lead agency's SEPA official makes a determination of significance (DS), it is because significant potential impacts on the environment are expected and an EIS is required.

If a determination of nonsignificance (DNS) is made, there are no significant potential environmental impacts expected.

What is the difference between plan-level and project-level environmental review?

This is a plan-level or non-project (rather than a project-level) EIS per WAC 197-11-442.

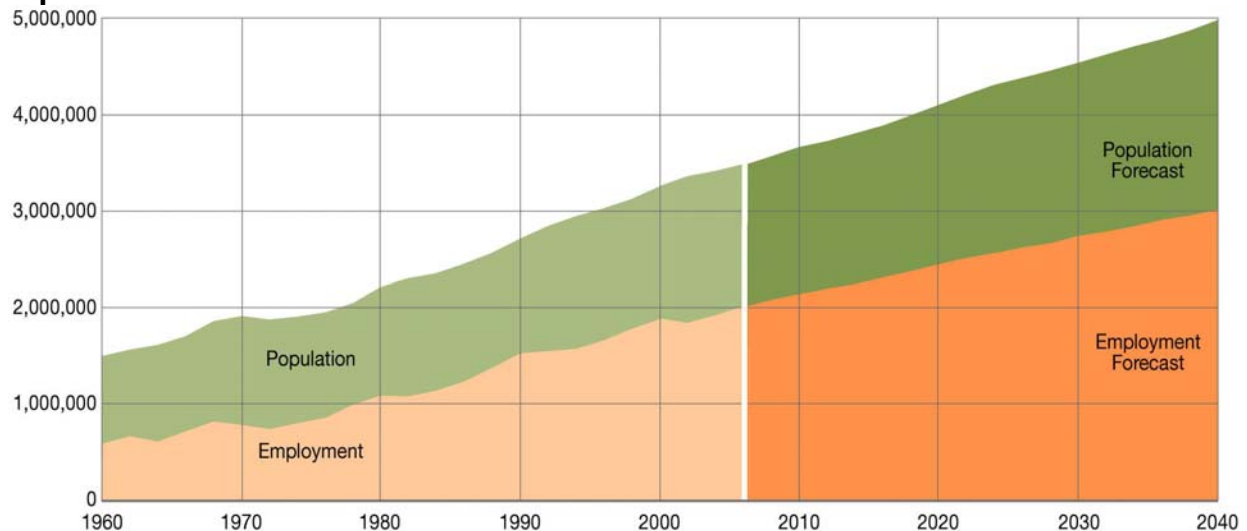
Accordingly, the alternatives are defined and the environmental effects are evaluated at a relatively broad level. More detailed project-specific environmental review will be developed as appropriate in the future for projects identified in the Transportation 2040 plan that are selected for implementation by their sponsors: Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), transit agencies, counties, and cities.

with the region's population reaching nearly 5 million by 2040 (Exhibit 2-2).

In 2006, the region's employment base was 1.9 million jobs, and it is forecast to grow by an additional 1.2 million jobs by 2040. This is an increase of 60 percent, with the region's employment reaching over 3.1 million by 2040.

The region's housing stock comprised 1.5 million units in 2006, and it is forecast to grow by an additional 800,000 net new housing units by 2040 (Exhibit 2-3). This is an increase of 56 percent, with the region's housing stock reaching 2.3 million units by 2040.

Exhibit 2-2
Population and Job Growth Trends and Forecasts



Source: PSRC

Exhibit 2-3
Housing Trends and Forecast

	Estimated					Forecast			
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2006	2010	2020	2030	2040
Housing Units	682,600	901,500	1,134,200	1,348,100	1,483,800	1,547,400	1,796,800	2,036,500	2,310,300
- % Single Family	75%	77%	69%	69%	68%	68%	67%	65%	63%
- % Multifamily	25%	23%	31%	31%	32%	32%	33%	35%	37%

Source: Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000; OFM, 2008; PSRC, 2006

Notes: Forecast housing units estimated from the 2005 Puget Sound Economic Forecaster (PSEF) model forecasts of households by structure type

7 What is the overall growth management strategy for the region?

Together, VISION 2040, Transportation 2040, and the Regional Economic Strategy are designed to address the region's ability to handle its increasing growth and transportation challenges in compliance with federal and state transportation, environmental, and growth management legislation.

VISION 2040 is an integrated strategy for guiding development, environmental planning, and the provision of transportation and services in the central Puget Sound region. It provides long-range direction for allocating population and employment growth, as well as the overarching policy framework for regional, countywide, and local planning. It emphasizes sustainability and restoration of the natural environment as the region accommodates new people and jobs. VISION 2040 directs a major portion of new development into communities with regional growth centers. New development in rural areas and on the urban fringe would be substantially reduced compared to past development activity in these areas.

Transportation 2040 serves as a functional plan for regional mobility, implementing the objectives identified in VISION 2040 while identifying priorities and action steps for the region's major transportation investment decisions.

The Regional Economic Strategy is the economic development component of VISION 2040. The strategy was prepared by the Prosperity Partnership, a coalition of government, business, labor, non-profit, and community leaders from the four counties. The goal set by the partnership is to provide long-term economic prosperity and jobs for the central Puget Sound region.

Together, these plans and strategies provide the mechanism for the region to coordinate its approach to land use, as well as economic and transportation planning. These strategies would help achieve the region's goals for quality of life, economic vitality, and environmental stewardship through 2040.

8 What policies are contained in VISION 2040?

PSRC adopted VISION 2040 in April 2008. VISION 2040's Regional Growth Strategy allocates population and employment growth among six regional geographies (Exhibit 2-4). The majority of the region's employment and housing growth is allocated to metropolitan cities and core cities, which together contain the more than two dozen designated regional growth centers. Larger cities also play an important role over time as places that accommodate growth. Small cities provide jobs and housing that support vital and active communities at a less intensive scale. Growth in the unincorporated urban growth area is prioritized for areas that are identified for annexation into adjacent cities. Significantly less growth is allocated to the rural areas than has occurred in the past.

VISION 2040 contains the region's updated multicounty planning policies, which are required by the Washington State Growth Management Act. With policy guidance in six key areas—Environment, Development Patterns, Housing, Economy, Transportation, and Public Services—VISION 2040 provides a comprehensive regional approach to manage growth through the year 2040.

VISION 2040's main transportation goal is for the region to have a safe, cleaner, integrated, sustainable, and highly efficient multimodal transportation system. This system is intended to support the Regional Growth Strategy, promote economic and environmental vitality, and improve public health.

Exhibit 2-4
Regional Geographies Identified in VISION 2040²

Regional Geography (number of places)	Growth: 2000–2040	
	People	Percent
Metropolitan Cities (5): Bellevue, Bremerton, Everett, Seattle, Tacoma	550,000	32%
Core Cities & Silverdale (14): Auburn, Bothell, Burien, Federal Way, Kent, Kirkland, Lakewood, Lynnwood, Puyallup, Redmond, Renton, SeaTac, Silverdale, Tukwila	369,000	22%
Large Cities (18): Arlington, Bainbridge Island, Des Moines, Edmonds, Fife, Issaquah, Kenmore, Maple Valley, Marysville, Mercer Island, Mill Creek, Monroe, Mountlake Terrace, Mukilteo, Sammamish, Shoreline, University Place, Woodinville	240,000	14%
Small Cities (46): Algona, Beaux Arts, Black Diamond, Bonney Lake, Brier, Buckley, Carbonado, Carnation, Clyde Hill, Covington, Darrington, DuPont, Duvall, Eatonville, Edgewood, Enumclaw, Fircrest, Gig Harbor, Gold Bar, Granite Falls, Hunts Point, Index, Lake Forest Park, Lake Stevens, Medina, Milton, Newcastle, Normandy Park, North Bend, Orting, Pacific, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, Roy, Ruston, Skykomish, Snohomish, Snoqualmie, South Prairie, Stanwood, Sultan, Steilacoom, Sumner, Wilkeson, Woodway, Yarrow Point	136,000	8%
Unincorporated Urban Area (assumed to be annexed over time)	302,000	18%
Rural Area	115,000	7%
Total Increase	1,712,000	100%

VISION 2040's multicounty planning policies related to transportation are structured around three broad areas:

- Maintenance, Management, and Safety
- Support of the Growth Strategy
- Greater Options and Mobility

The objective of these policies is to obtain optimum benefits from the current systems as well as past and future investments. These advantages would be gained by strengthening the critical link between transportation and land

VISION 2040 Transportation Policies

For more information about VISION 2040's transportation policies, refer to Appendix C: VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies.

² The period of analysis throughout VISION 2040 is between 2000 and 2040. As a result, this growth is larger than the growth reported for Transportation 2040 between 2006 and 2040.

use, enhancing environmental performance, and improving mobility through many travel choices.

9 Which studies preceded Transportation 2040?

Transportation studies completed in the region prior to Transportation 2040 include the following:

- 1995 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) (May 1995)
- Destination 2030 Draft EIS (DEIS) (2000)
- Destination 2030 FEIS (2001)
- Destination 2030 Amendments since the 2001 FEIS
- VISION 2040 FEIS (April 2008)

1995 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

In May 1995, the PSRC General Assembly adopted the MTP as a comprehensive statement of long-range transportation planning objectives and actions for the central Puget Sound region. The 1995 MTP is a detailed long-range plan for future investments in the central Puget Sound region's transportation system. The MTP was required to be formally reviewed every 2 years under state law (RCW 47.80), and every 7 years under the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). The 1995 plan was reviewed and reaffirmed in 1998.

Destination 2030

In 2001, PSRC adopted Destination 2030, which updated the 1995 MTP. The transportation plan was developed as a component of VISION 2020, which at the time was the region's growth management, economic, and transportation strategy. Destination 2030 serves as the region's MTP under federal requirements and as the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) under state law. As required under state and federal law, Destination 2030 was reviewed and reaffirmed in 2004 and 2007.

Destination 2030 provides a detailed strategy to achieve the region's transportation needs consistent with goals and objectives outlined in VISION 2020. The following actions are key elements of the plan:

What are the MTP and the RTP?

Destination 2030 serves as the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) under federal law and as the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) under state law. The plan satisfies all state and federal requirements. For this reason the terms MTP and RTP may be used interchangeably in the Transportation 2040 EIS.

- Investing in more roads, more transit service, better traffic management, and improved linkages between land use and transportation.
- Identifying over 1,100 specific road, transit, and ferry service projects.
- Including over 1,500 miles of new and improved regional and state roadways, better public transit, incentives for carpools and vanpools, and more than 2,000 miles of new walkways and bikeways to connect communities with transit, shopping, and services.
- Establishing investment principles that clearly emphasize coordination among the state, counties, cities, towns, ports, and transit agencies.
- Outlining a process for developing clear lines of public accountability that directly link investments with measurable improvement.
- Addressing land use strategies, including physical design guidelines and best practices.

The Destination 2030 DEIS addressed alternatives ranging from an option with no additional investment to alternatives that included new revenue sources to allow greater transportation capacity investments. For each alternative, transportation demand was forecasted and likely environmental impacts were analyzed.

Destination 2030 FEIS

The FEIS described a Preferred Alternative assembled from several alternatives addressed in the DEIS. The Preferred Alternative sought to address transportation issues resulting from continued population and employment growth. The FEIS was adopted by the PSRC General Assembly on May 24, 2001.

Destination 2030: Amendments since 2001

Since adoption of the 2001 FEIS, four amendments were made to Destination 2030, each of which has added and/or deleted projects from the plan. Exhibit 2-5 summarizes these changes.

Exhibit 2-5

Summary of Project Additions and Deletions by Amendment

Amendment	Projects Added	Projects Deleted
2005	3	0
2006	12	0
2007	79	144
2008	45	25
Total	139	169

The four amendments combined have added approximately 139 projects and deleted approximately 169. Among the 139 projects added, 25 were nonmotorized projects, 35 were transit projects, 28 were roadway widening projects, 11 were Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects, and 40 were roadway projects that would not substantively increase vehicle capacity.

The deleted projects included many general-purpose widening efforts that are no longer warranted nor desired by affected communities, a number of freeway-to-freeway ramp projects, and a few transit queue jump and high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane projects on state-owned arterials. In many cases, the deletions occurred because sponsors combined projects with others that still remain in the plan.

VISION 2040 FEIS

In April 2008, PSRC released the FEIS for VISION 2040. As described in Question 8, VISION 2040 provides a comprehensive regional approach to manage growth through the year 2040.

The VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy serves as the land use basis for the alternatives analysis in this FEIS (refer to Chapter 5: Land Use, Population, Employment, and Housing for more details).