

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The Regional Active Transportation Plan (ATP) provides a framework for how the region and its local communities can provide better connected and safer options for people to walk and bike to their destinations. This plan seeks to increase the health and well-being of residents in the central Puget Sound region through walking and bicycling. Research has shown that these transportation modes help create more livable communities and provide desirable economic, environmental, and health outcomes. With improved safety, connectivity, and comfort of active transportation infrastructure, more people will experience the many benefits of physical activity, social cohesion, and increased transportation options.

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The purpose of the ATP is to advance many of VISION 2040's policies through the advancement of active transportation in the Puget Sound region. This plan describes the need for active transportation, highlights its many benefits, provides guidance for local jurisdictions on their role in implementing active transportation, and provides an action plan for how the region can work to support active transportation policies, programs, and projects.

THE NEED

The active transportation system includes a network of facilities for both people who walk and bike such as off-road multi-use trails, on-road bicycle facilities, and sidewalks. Well-connected and complete networks that allow people of all ages, abilities and geographic locations to access their jobs, transit, services, and community activities on foot or by bicycling are needed to complete this system. The need for more and improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will grow as the region is expected to add another million people by 2040.

Safety, comfort and network connectivity of active transportation infrastructure is a key concern of users and jurisdictions in the central Puget Sound region. The number of fatalities and serious injuries for bicyclists and pedestrians has not seen a decrease in the trend as is the case with motor vehicles. Non-motorized serious injuries and fatalities increased from 21% to 27% of the total between 2010 and 2016 in the central Puget Sound region. In addition to behavior change, separating people from automobiles or applying other design solutions can help to reverse this trend.

BENEFITS OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation benefits people, the environment, and the transportation system. People who walk, bike, and take transit are often likely¹ to get the physical activity they need every day. Walking and bicycling causes less strain on the roadways, is carbon neutral, and serves as an inexpensive way for

WHAT IS ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION?

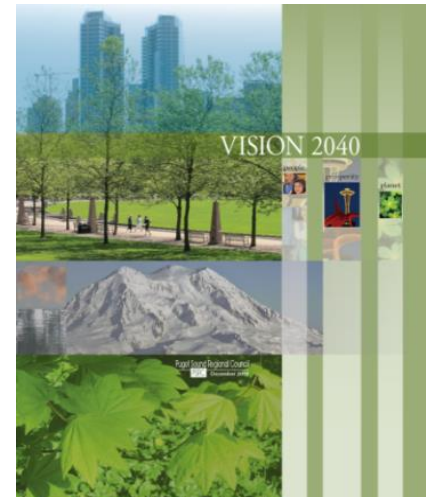
Active transportation refers to multimodal transportation solutions that connect people of all ages and abilities to where they need to go using active modes such as walking and bicycling.

¹ Lawrence D. Frank, James F. Sallis, Terry L. Conway, James E. Chapman, Brian E. Saelens & William Bachman Journal of the American Planning Association Vol. 72 , Iss. 1, 2006, Many Pathways from Land Use to Health: Associations between Neighborhood Walkability and Active Transportation, Body Mass Index, and Air Quality
Regional Transportation Plan
Appendix L: Active Transportation Plan

people to get to where they need to go. There are many other economic benefits to active transportation. See Chapter 2 for more details.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

VISION 2040 is the region's long-range growth management, economic, and transportation strategy to accommodate the 5 million people expected to live in the region by 2040. The strategy focuses on integrating land use and transportation strategies that focus growth in urban areas while preserving natural resource land and agricultural resources. The multicounty planning policies (MPP) adopted in VISION 2040 include a focus on increasing transportation choices and for a system that serves all users safely and efficiently. This includes improving the region's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure which creates a more comfortable environment for people who walk and bike while helping to reduce congestion. Active transportation supports many of the VISION 2040 MPP's. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the implementation strategy for VISION 2040.

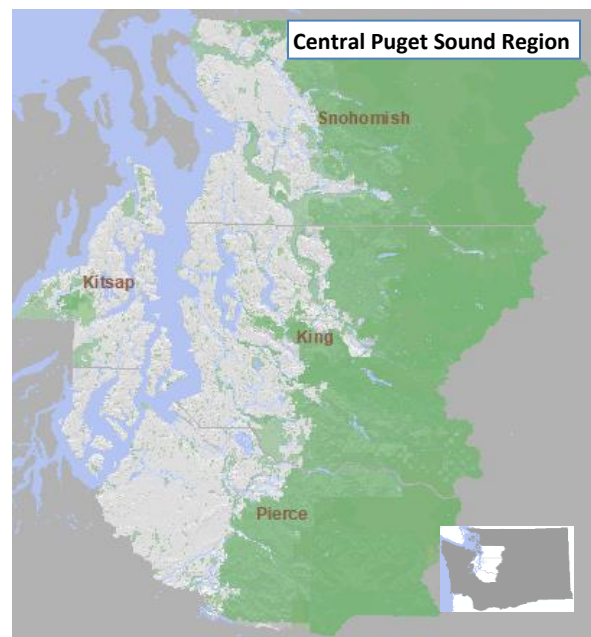


PSRC's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) worked closely with PSRC staff in forming the recommendations that guided the development of the ATP. The near-term implementation actions for both the BPAC and PSRC staff will guide the development for the BPAC work program. These implementation actions are outlined later in this document.

GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

The central Puget Sound region is home to four counties - King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish - and their 82 cities and towns stretching from the crests of the Cascade Mountains to the shorelines of Puget Sound. It covers an area of nearly 6,300 square miles (16,300 square kilometers). The region's geography is diverse, with urban, rural, and natural resource lands. Numerous hills, mountains, and lakes provide significant variety to the topography of the region.

Currently, the region is continuing to expand and improve its bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, but there are still significant gaps in the regional trail system and a need for better connected networks in urban areas for both pedestrians and bicyclists.



IMPLEMENTATION

The Action Plan provides a framework to implement active transportation policies in the central Puget Sound Region. This plan includes suggested local actions, and is designed for PSRC's work program to support local activity.

ACTION PLAN:

Goal 1: Support social equity in active transportation projects and programs

- Objective 1: Identify critical needs and gaps in areas of low opportunity or in communities of concern.
- Objective 2: Engage with PSRC's policy and plan updates to better integrate equity goals related to active transportation.

Goal 2: Improve safety and comfort for people walking and bicycling

- Objective 1: Engage with PSRC's Policy Boards, committees, members and departments to better integrate implementation of active transportation in projects and programs
- Objective 2: Promote best practices for safety and comfort that accommodate all ages and abilities
- Objective 3: Foster regional partnerships on data collection activities

Goal 3: Increase the percentage of people walking and biking

- Objective 1: Identify barriers that keep people from walking or bicycling. Encourage/incentivize local jurisdictions to address them.
- Objective 2: Promote high quality facilities, complete networks and walkable communities that people want to enjoy.
- Objective 3: Bring together jurisdictions to listen and learn from implementation of best practices across the region

Goal 4: Improve access to opportunity for people walking and bicycling

- Objective 1: Encourage the integration of transit and ferries with active transportation modes.
- Objective 2: Promote the regional bicycle network and local bike and pedestrian networks
- Objective 3: Support the integration of active transportation into local plans, policies, programs and projects