

February 2, 2026

Puget Sound Regional Council
1201 3rd Ave #500
Seattle, WA 98101
VIA EMAIL: RTPcomment@psrc.org

RE: Comments on Draft Regional Transportation Plan, 2026 - 2050

Dear PSRC,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Regional Transportation Plan 2026-2050 (RTP 2050).

- The Port of Seattle and Port of Tacoma were founded over a century ago to serve as a public port authority, to ensure that our two deep-water harbors serve as economic engines for their counties, the region and the state. In 2015, the ports of Seattle and Tacoma formed a marine cargo operating partnership, the Northwest Seaport Alliance, the seventh-largest container gateway in the United States and handled 3.3 million TEUs in 2024 ([Top 10 Largest And Busiest Container Ports In The United States](https://marineinsight.com), marineinsight.com, downloaded 2/1/26).
- Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), operated by POS since the 1940s, continues to grow as the region's primary airport. In 2024, SEA served over 52 million annual passengers, ranking 11th in North America for passengers. Also in 2024, SEA ranked 19th in North America for air cargo by weight, with over 460,000 metric tons ([North American Airport Traffic Report - Airports Council International - North America](https://airportcouncil.org), airportcouncil.org, downloaded 2/1/26).

This letter represents the shared perspective of the Port of Seattle, The Northwest Seaport Alliance, and the Port of Tacoma. Our programs touch the lives of Puget Sound residents in numerous ways, ranging from economic engines as the state's largest seaport cargo terminals and airport and cruise terminals to quality of life through our travel, parks system and recreational boating marinas.

As Public Port Districts, our mission is to create family wage jobs by advancing trade and commerce, promoting manufacturing and maritime growth, and stimulating economic development in an environmentally responsible manner. The Growth Management Act recognized the importance of our facilities by designating them as Essential Public Facilities, the Port of Tacoma, Port of Seattle, and the Seattle-Tacoma International

Airport. Our ports are assets of statewide significance, serving as national and international gateways for goods, travelers, tourism, and industry. These facilities have developed over decades, benefiting from significant public investment with unique interactions among existing land uses and critical transportation infrastructure.

These gateways cannot be relocated or replicated elsewhere and provide a crucial function in the resilience of our state's economy. For this reason, when we review transportation plans, we must consider what our assets need to sustain and to be able to grow, correlated to economic growth.

We applaud PSRC for being thorough in development of the Regional Transportation Plan, which uses a new online story map format to provide a dedicated spotlight on freight. This balance is exemplified through the language around safety on freight corridors – where it was both clear that safety is the top shared priority and that freight and manufacturing industrial centers (MICs) have unique needs that must be designed for. Encouraging all Puget Sound jurisdictions to recognize and plan for this reality is important to making the regional freight system work.

In recognition of our role in the regional, state, and national economy, we ask that you consider the following comments in development of the final plan. Please feel free to reach out to us directly if you have any questions or would like to discuss a comment in greater detail.

Current Systems Report

1. **Introduction:** Consider including a definition of “urban goods” and “freight” in the introduction. From our standpoint, urban goods are local deliveries that can be made by smaller vehicles (ex. vans or cargo bikes). Whereas freight represents cargo often using intermodal transport by trucks, rail, ships or planes, distributed regionally such as to ports, railyards, manufacturers, distribution centers and warehouses, and large brick-and-mortar retailers.
2. **Section 3: Streets and Highways**
 - a. To improve clarity, Figure 30 should identify the measure of VMT (daily, thousands, etc.) --- we assumed daily based on Figure 31.
 - b. Whenever ACS is referenced, the year should be included. See Figure 33.
3. **Section 4: Freight**

We request that Port of Tacoma be acknowledged as a Commercial Strategic Port under the [National Port Readiness Network](#) and handles military cargo in collaboration with JBLM. While we do not wish to comment on their behalf, the Port of Everett also has this designation.

4. **Section 6: Aviation:** Consider adding here or in another appropriate place: “Port of Seattle works with the state, city, regional and county transportation agencies to ensure passengers, employees and cargo can access the airport for their flights or jobs, day or night via roads, highways and/or transit.”

Future Systems Report

5. In the freight section, we recommend incorporating the WPPA Marine Cargo Forecast findings: <https://fmsib.wa.gov/studies/2024-washington-marine-cargo-forecast>. Especially for maritime container cargo, the only international container ports in the State are located within PSRC’s planning boundaries.
6. If you want a forecast for SEA Aviation Demand Forecasts to incorporate in the Aviation Section 6, please let us know and we can get that for you.

Maintenance and Preservation

7. On page 5: First paragraph, recommend adding both “ports” and “access to ports” here. “Cities, counties, transit agencies, port districts and the state are coping with increasingly strained budgets and applying innovative approaches to reduce costs...” Otherwise, this document overlooks both the public investment of port transportation facilities and the public interest in providing access to airport and seaport terminals, which is often performed by general purpose governments (cities, counties and the state). While we will continue to address our own maintenance in a fiscally responsible manner and will not be able to provide detailed financial data, there should at least be a small section that addresses the maintenance and preservation needs of the ports and access to the major seaports and airports in the region. The needs are significant and continuing regional collaboration is important.
8. On page 9: "...not every bridge is anticipated to need replacement during the plan period." The Plan should include a list of bridges on major routes that need replacement during the plan period to the extent possible. Particularly in the Port of Tacoma and Seattle waterways, there are critical examples of bridges subject to closure.

RTP Performance Dashboard

9. Under the axiom that “what gets measured gets managed,” please add a freight performance metric to the Dashboard. It could be the minutes of delay on major truck streets/highways, or something else, but should be made visible on the regional dashboard.

We have also attached a comment matrix for specific or technical comments at various locations throughout the multiple documents that make up the RTP. Please see attached.

We appreciate the effort of PSRC staff to develop this RTP2050 and look forward to the work of the PSRC Boards to address public comments and make plan refinements to help the region achieve the diversity of goals we have for ourselves. Please call on us for any clarification or assistance required.

Sincerely,



Geraldine Poor
Senior Regional Transportation Manager
Port of Seattle



Deirdre Wilson
Planning Director
Northwest Seaport Alliance | Port of Tacoma

Attachment: Supplemental Comment Spreadsheet – POS, POT, NWSA

Document	Section	Page	Comment
RTP - main document	Addl System Needs	15	Beyond the region: after introducing intercity rail/bus services and the region's airports and marine terminals, please add a sentence that "the access roads and transit services to/from these terminals is a necessary investment."
Freight Transportation Tool	Deepwater ports		Port of Everett is mentioned as a designated recovery port to provide resiliency in the event of a disaster - I am curious whose designation that is and whether there are other WA ports specifically designated as such and what recovery planning effort made this designation?
Freight Transportation Tool			There's a reference to Seattle's SODO Rail Corridor Grade Separations - would it be better to call out specific projects?
Maintenance and Preservation		5	First paragraph, would it make sense to add ports here? <i>Cities, counties, transit agencies, port districts and the state are coping with increasingly strained budgets and applying innovative approaches to reduce costs ...</i> This document overlooks the public investment of port transportation facilities. It seems like there should at least be a small section that addresses the maintenance and preservation needs of the major seaports and airports in the region seems to be missing a big chunk of needed public investment related to the Freight Network and System. There are, however, dedicated sections for transit and state facilities.
Outreach and Engagment	Board insights	9	Freight Operators Committee should read Freight Advisory Committee
Outreach and Engagment	Focus groups	76	Please add reflection of Freight Focus Group held 1/6/26 & integrate new learnings into the RTP. We appreciated the time spent with us and hate for our feedback to be lost based on timing of the draft report.
Puget Sound Regional Hazards	Map	Regional Airports	Regional Airports -- interesting that all airports are shown the same; recommend distinguishing those with commercial service from those others without. Page 90 of the 2025 Current Transpo System Report provides a great classification explanation which could be applied here, at least at the "primary and non-primary" FAA-levels I see this is better dealt with on teh Transpo System Visualization Tool. Please adopt their conventions on this map. Other GIS maps in the RTP with an airport layer are clearer in this regard.
Puget Sound Regional Hazards	Map	Rail Freight Corridors	Please show rail line to West Seattle, serving Nucor Steel, Terminals 5 & 18 and other industries on West Marginal Way.

Document	Section	Page	Comment
Puget Sound Regional Hazards	Map	Rail Freight Corridors	The STB officially railbanked the Woodinville Subdivision from Woodinville to Snohomish in 2024. It's no longer an active freight line.
Multimodal-mobility	Webpage	Landing page	Please add text on the landing page or section start which directs users interested in freight and goods movement to the freight systems component of the RTP. The title implies that this section deals with "all modes" in the system, but after reading, the user realizes it never intended to include goods movement. https://www.psrc.org/planning-2050/regional-projects/2026-rtp/multimodal-mobility
System Performance	Section 5: freight performance metrics	62	Summary does not identify opportunities to reduce delay and improve freight performance for the region. Please add this metric to the RTP Dashboard
System Performance	S9: CM process & federal performance targets	140	Text explains the setting of targets, but not how/when the targets will be measured & reported upon?
Current Transportation System	Fig 39:	77	The STB officially railbanked the Woodinville Subdivision from Woodinville to Snohomish in 2024. please remove this route as a n R-5. Also, please show rail line to W Seattle, serving Nucor Steel, Terminals 5 & 8 and other industries on W Marginal Way
Current Transportation System	S4: Major freight corridors	78	This paragraph is vague and doesn't make sense to this reader: "Different types of roadways serve different purposes for freight, which need to be balanced with the purposes each facility serves for other modes as well. Most other streets & hwy also move goods to varying degrees, primarily commercial and residential deliveries using medium-duty trucks as well as smaller delivery vehicles ranging from vans to cargo e-bikes." what is meant by "different types" and "other"? The RTP could note that not all roads are intended to serve trucks, and thus those that are truck routes must be designed safely for all users on the road.
Current Transportation System	S4: Other Freight Infrastructure : Ports	79	please source (or date) "sixth-busiest cargo port in the country" as this changes each year.

Document	Section	Page	Comment
Current Transportation System	S4: Airports	78-80	Sea-Tac Airport is spelled with a hyphen. However, POS is now rebranding references to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport as SEA, its call letters. Please update references throughout the documents to the airport as Sea-Tac or SeaTac to SEA.
Current Transportation System	S4: Airports	79	Here's additional language which corrects the implication that service to Asian, Europe & the MidEast is only all-cargo on pp 79. "SEA hosts a thriving air cargo market, served by multiple all-cargo freighter services and belly cargo capacity on many wide-body passenger flights, both domestic and internationally. Air cargo at SEA includes a growing e-commerce component, serviced by several integrator airlines, all-cargo freighter services, and passenger airlines. SEA consistently ranks in the top 20 cargo airports in North America and was ranked 19th in air cargo volumes in 2024 (ACI rankings-2024)."
Current Transportation System	Section 6: Aviation	89	POS now references Seattle-Tacoma International Airport as SEA, its call letters. thank you for this use here.
Current Transportation System	Section 6: Aviation	89	This provides a continent-wide perspective on SEA which you may want to add: "In 2024, SEA served over 52 million annual passengers, ranking 11th in North America for passengers."
Current Transportation System	Section 6: Aviation	89	36 airlines serve 94 nonstop domestic and 33 international destinations including Canada, Mexico, and seasonal operations.
Current Transportation System	Section 6: Aviation	89	Recommend adding here, or in a more appropriate place of your choosing: The Port of Seattle partners with local agencies for surface transportation to the airport and its 24/7 operations. Port of Seattle works with the state, city, regional and county transportation agencies to ensure passengers, employees and cargo can get to the airport for their flights or jobs, day or night.
Current Transportation System	S7: Summary	91	A broader statement about interdependence of agencies and reliance on each other (as referenced in the ports comment directly above) would add value in the bulleted summary here
Current Visualization Tool	map	Rail layer	woodinville-snohomish subdiv was railbanked in 2024
Current Visualization Tool	map	FGTS	woodinville-snohomish subdiv was railbanked in 2024
Current Visualization Tool	map	Rail layer	show spurs along east & west sides of Duwamish waterway for completeness

Document	Section	Page	Comment
Current Visualization Tool	map	Freight Intensive Areas	what is the orange hatched area in South Lake Union? remnant?
Current Visualization Tool	map	Reg'l Ped & Bike Ntwk	It's misleading to characterize the airport expressway and terminal drives as "no facilities" when there are alterantive routes for pedestrians from international Boulevard. would like to discuss with map originator.
Future Transportation System	Section 6: Aviation	31	<p>Recommend adding here, and/or in a more appropriate place of your choosing: The Port of Seattle partners with local agencies for surface transportation to the airport and its 24/7 operations. Port of Seattle works with the state, city, regional and county transportation agencies to ensure passengers, employees and cargo can get to the airport for their flights or jobs, day or night.</p> <p>As I discussed with Kelly McG, this is a surface transportation plan and SEA Airport has surface transportation needs for getting passengers and employees to their planes and work sites. Thus, this intermodal reflection is highly appropriate in a regional council surface transportation plan!</p>
Freight Transpo Story Map	Deep-water Ports		Please report the NWSA volumes in number of containers rather than weight. This is the measure used by international gateways. We suggest using: NWSA is the seventh-largest container gateway in the United States and handled 3.3 million TEUs in 2024 (Top 10 Largest And Busiest Container Ports In The United States, marineinsight.com, downloaded 2/1/26).
Freight Transpo Story Map	Airports		Current sentence reads: "Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) has the greatest variety of cargo offerings and acts as the primary gateway for international cargo. 6" This is vague & unclear to readers. We suggest something like: SEA air carriers offer a mix of domestic & intrntnl belly cargo, domestic and international freighter cargo, as well as integrator/express cargo generated by FedEx, DHL & Amazon Air."
Freight Transpo Story Map	Freight Issues & Needs	Safety Issues	Please update to reflect project completion (shift tense): "As an example, Seattle's EMW Multimodal Improvements Proj is expected to include operational elements that improve conditions for peds & bikes such as enhanced crossings, in addition to freight features like ITS and freight-only lanes." ... eg, Sea's EMWCorridor Imprvmnt Proj includes elements that improve conditions for peds & bike such as a separated bike path, enhanced road xings & ITS freight. (No freight-only lanes, i believe)