



February 5, 2018

Mr. Josh Brown  
Executive Director, Puget Sound Regional Council  
101 Western Avenue – Suite 500  
Seattle, WA 98104-1035

RE: Comments on the draft PSRC *Transportation 2040* Update

Dear Mr. Brown:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on PSRC's draft *Transportation 2040* plan update. This is an exciting and challenging time for how we think about our community's travel needs and the ways we can meet them. The update process is a strong catalyst to refresh our common understanding, and to focus transportation system investments toward the region's greatest priorities.

We are pleased that this draft update expands the regional conversation on climate change and greenhouse gas emissions mandates, recognizes the important role of freight in our transportation systems and economy, and emphasizes the needs for maintenance, preservation, and resiliency. We also appreciate the expanded consideration of social equity and environmental justice, and strongly endorse PSRC's frank discussion of future transportation funding needs and challenges.

Below are comments we ask you to consider as you prepare the final plan and begin the upcoming VISION 2050 update:

- **Implementation: We recommend that PSRC expand its list of implementation actions in the draft update to match the plan's bold vision.** This update is an opportunity for PSRC to work with its members to scope, prioritize and implement needed actions as part of developing PSRC's regular work program and budget.
- **Climate Change: PSRC should work to align plan reduction targets with those of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and periodically report to PSRC boards on progress being made to integrate climate change strategies.** The draft plan acknowledges the role of transportation-related greenhouse gas and other pollutant emissions in climate change but needs next steps. We suggest that PSRC add an implementation action to convene a regular regional forum where state, regional, and local programs can coordinate and exchange information to effectively reduce emissions.
- **Data development: The plan should describe how the agency will develop a robust work program to expand data development, as well as establish standardized metrics across the region for comparable performance measurement.** PSRC should take a lead role in data

development to support area transportation planning. Travel patterns for both people and goods are changing rapidly in our region. However, the plan relies on dated information and generalized trending, even as it recognizes the importance of robust analytic data and performance measures to guide and evaluate transportation system use and performance during a time of disruption.

- **Financial Strategy: We recommend that PSRC include specific implementation actions to advance transportation financing options and monitor actual outcomes.** The draft plan shows a notable shift in long-term finance strategy from regional tolling to a spectrum of user charges, and we commend PSRC for making a real effort to better quantify transportation needs and update the regional strategy. However, there are no details that describe next steps to secure proposed funding and track the long-term actual versus planned revenues.
- **Technology: The plan should promote a culture of innovation across existing regional modal/technical disciplines through educational outreach and information-exchange forums.** The plan elevates the role of technology to a stand-alone category of future PSRC work as it describes the potential for, and issues around, the use of technology to address transportation needs. However, technology is a means toward better transportation system performance, rather than an end in itself. A separate standing committee exclusively for technology risks creating a silo that fails to connect technology investments with practical system outcomes.

As our region's metropolitan planning organization, PSRC is uniquely poised to support a robust discussion of Central Puget Sound's urgent transportation needs, and to promote coordinated and innovative strategies to meet them. We look forward to being an engaged partner with you and our fellow members to fulfill the vision of *Transportation 2040*.

Sincerely,

Goran Sparrman  
Interim Director

cc: Tracy Krawczyk, Policy and Planning Division Director  
Jude Willcher, Capital Development Lead, Policy and Planning Division