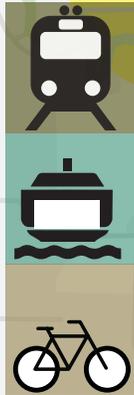


Transportation 2040

UPDATE

toward a sustainable transportation system

Appendix G: Environmental Justice



MAY 29, 2014

Puget Sound Regional Council

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUMMARY

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUMMARY

Environmental justice, which has its roots in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, means that people with low-incomes and minority residents benefit from public investments and do not shoulder the negative effects disproportionately. (The sidebar to the right provides more detail about potential negative effects of transportation projects.)

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), which coordinates transportation planning for the entire central Puget Sound area, is committed to environmental justice. When PSRC developed and adopted Transportation 2040—an action plan for transportation in the region—environmental justice was a major goal.

In addition to considering how Transportation 2040 affects minority residents and people with low-incomes, PSRC makes a special effort to address how this plan affects special needs populations. (The sidebar to the right provides more detail on environmental justice and special needs populations.)

Federal law requires PSRC to complete an update to Transportation 2040 this year to reflect changes in the region since the plan was adopted in 2010. This environmental justice summary describes how the Transportation 2040 Update affects low-income and minority residents, as well as other vulnerable populations. This summary also previews how you and other community leaders, social service providers, and residents can get involved in the next major update to Transportation 2040, scheduled to be finalized and adopted in 2018.

1.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Transportation 2040 Update maintains many key elements of the adopted Transportation 2040 plan that affect low-income, minority, and vulnerable populations, including doubling transit service by 2040 and investing in paratransit and transportation for residents with special needs. It also continues to meet all regional air quality requirements.

The Transportation 2040 Update includes a new Active Transportation Plan to establish a regional bicycle network. It also includes a Rural

Potential negative effects of transportation projects

Negative effects can include disruptions to communities, restricted access to publicly-funded facilities, safety concerns, higher exposures to hazardous materials, increased noise levels, and increased water and air pollution.

Environmental justice also involves developing transportation projects that benefit low-income or minority communities.

Effective environmental justice emphasizes ways to involve affected communities throughout a transportation project's development.

Definition of environmental justice and special needs populations

Environmental justice populations include minorities (black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander) and those with low income (people with household income at or below U.S. poverty guidelines).

State law identifies special needs populations, including: people with disabilities, youth, seniors and seniors aging in place, limited-English proficient residents, homeless school-aged children, families who have experienced domestic violence, veterans, and limited literacy residents.

Transportation Study that lays the foundation for addressing the transportation needs of the region’s rural residents in the next major update.

Because the economic recession reduced projected current law revenues by \$14 billion, the region does not have enough money to make all the investments described in the adopted Transportation 2040 plan. To re-balance the financial strategy, the Transportation 2040 Update includes adjustments to regional investments in local and county roads, state highways, and bicycle and pedestrian projects. As a result of these adjustments, some of these projects no longer have funding strategies to complete construction. Still, these projects can continue with planning and can move forward to final design and construction once a funding strategy is identified.

Low-income, minority, and vulnerable populations may be affected by the changes in the Transportation 2040 Update in the following ways:

- The Transportation 2040 Update results in fewer regional greenhouse gas emissions, which may be of particular value to low-income and minority communities that have experienced adverse environmental impacts in the past.
- The Transportation 2040 Update reflects cost-saving measures taken by local transit agencies and Sound Transit. Some of these recent service changes could have negatively affected low-income and vulnerable residents if they resulted in a reduction to local transit service in low-income neighborhoods or delay light rail expansion.
- When PSRC conducted outreach for the adopted Transportation 2040 plan, many community leaders and social service providers expressed strong interest in seeing more active and healthy transportation opportunities, such as bicycle and pedestrian trails and facilities in their communities. The new Active Transportation Plan helps make this possible.
- In the Transportation 2040 Update, some projects—including bicycle and pedestrian trails—no longer have a funding strategy to complete construction. Planning for these projects can continue, however, and they will move forward to construction as funding becomes available.
- The new Rural Transportation Study elevates the transportation needs of the region’s rural residents, which include some low-income, minority, and special needs populations, during the next major update of Transportation 2040.
- The Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan provides updated information on special needs populations and identifies how the region can better address their transportation needs.

1.3 ABOUT TRANSPORTATION 2040

1.3.1 PURPOSE OF TRANSPORTATION 2040

Transportation 2040 is a long-term action plan for transportation in the central Puget Sound region. By the year 2040, the region is expected to grow by about 1.5 million people and support more than 1.2 million new jobs. This growth means that demand for transportation in the region will increase by about 40 percent. Transportation 2040 describes all the major transportation investments needed to keep up with the region’s population and employment growth and support Vision 2040, the region’s long-range growth plan.

1.3.2 KEY ELEMENTS OF ADOPTED TRANSPORTATION 2040 PLAN

To develop the adopted Transportation 2040 plan, PSRC met with community leaders and social service providers throughout the region in 2009 and 2010. Many key elements of the adopted Transportation 2040 plan directly respond to input from these community leaders and social service providers, including:

- Implementation of Sound Transit’s long-range plan for regional light rail, commuter rail, and express bus service
- A transit investment strategy that would more than double local transit service
- Investment of a portion of revenue from tolling major highways to increase transit and paratransit services, focused on serving areas with high concentrations of jobs
- Additional funding for special needs transportation services to keep up with growth of special needs populations, such as people with disabilities, seniors, and low-income.
- Many more transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rideshare, and other travel options to reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips and avoid or minimize traffic congestion
- Improved air and water quality throughout the region

1.3.3 IMPORTANT CHANGES FOR THE 2014 UPDATE

The federal government and Washington state require metropolitan planning organizations like PSRC to update their long-range transportation plans every four years. These periodic updates also make good sense to ensure our plans track with changes in the population and economy.

Because PSRC did a major overhaul of the plan in 2010, the 2014 update is smaller and focuses on three basic themes:

- PSRC’s most pressing objective was to balance the financial strategy for the plan, so projected revenues cover projected costs.
- Because transportation funding needs are greater than projected revenues, PSRC prioritized investments that provide the most benefit to the region and help achieve Vision 2040.
- Maintaining and preserving the existing transportation system, known more formally as keeping our infrastructure in a State of Good Repair, is a high priority in Transportation 2040. For the Transportation 2040 Update, PSRC developed more accurate cost estimates to address this key priority and updated the Financial Strategy to include these needed investments.

PSRC is updating the Coordinated Transit and Human Services Transportation plan, which focuses on increasing access to transportation services for those with special needs, such as people with disabilities and seniors. Also new in the Transportation 2040 update is an Active Transportation Plan, which aims to increase opportunities for and safety of active transportation—such as bicycling and walking—throughout the region. The plan update also includes a Rural Transportation Study, which examines the transportation needs of the region’s rural residents.

1.3.3.1 CHANGING FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

A major issue for the Transportation 2040 Update is money—and less of it. The region’s forecasted transportation funding sources have declined since 2010 because of the economic recession and other factors. At the same time, costs of Transportation 2040 projects have grown, leaving a funding gap.

1.3.3.2 CHANGING POPULATION OF PUGET SOUND REGION

Transportation 2040 relied on the most recent Census data available at that time (2000) to make forecasts and assumptions about how the region's population would grow. The Transportation 2040 Update uses 2010 Census data to update population and employment forecasts. For low-income, minority, limited-English proficient, special needs, and other vulnerable residents, a few big changes are worth noting:

- Minority residents now make up a larger share of the population in all of the region's four counties—King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish. According to the 2010 Census, minorities comprised nearly one-third (31 percent) of the total regional population, up from about 24 percent in 2000. King and Snohomish counties experienced especially large growth.
- Low-income and very low-income populations have also expanded in all four counties during the last decade. The combined percentage for both groups climbed from 21 percent in 1999 to about 23 percent in 2010, with each group's share of the total population rising by about a percentage point overall.
- People with special needs also make up a larger share of the region's total population, up from 44 percent in 2008 to 47 percent in 2011. In 2011, people with low income comprised 24 percent, youth comprised 16 percent, the elderly represented 11 percent, and people with disabilities made up 11 percent of the region's total population. For more information, see Appendix K of the Transportation 2040 Update, available at www.psrc.org.

1.3.3.3 OTHER FACTORS

New federal laws have also influenced the 2014 update. For example, PSRC used direction from MAP-21, the latest federal transportation law, to develop more accurate estimates of the resources needed to maintain and preserve the region's transportation infrastructure. New fuel economy and greenhouse gas standards adopted since 2010 also affect the findings in the Transportation 2040 Update.

2 WHY IS PSRC ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

PSRC is committed to environmental justice, and conducted this analysis to ensure that affected residents benefit from Transportation 2040 and do not shoulder the negative impacts disproportionately. PSRC also prepared this environmental justice analysis to comply with existing regional and local policies. Furthermore, many of the transportation projects included in Transportation 2040 will need to comply with federal environmental justice regulations when they undergo their own environmental review processes.

2.1 LAWS AND GUIDANCE RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

2.1.1 TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which PSRC receives federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have experienced unlawful discriminatory practices under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with PSRC. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with the PSRC Title VI Coordinator within one hundred

eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. See <http://www.psrc.org/about/public/titlevi/> for more information.

2.2 OTHER LAWS RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Executive Order 12898—issued by President Clinton in 1994—requires federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice principles into their planning activities. In response, the U.S. Department of Transportation ordered transportation agencies to consider environmental justice in all environmental documents as required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

The USDOT Order requires agencies to do the following:

- Provide meaningful opportunities for public involvement by members of minority populations and low-income populations during the development of programs, policies, and activities.
- Provide the public, including members of minority and low-income populations, access to public information concerning human health or environmental impacts of programs, policies, and activities. Such information must address the concerns of minority and low-income populations for the proposed action.

3 2010 UPDATE VS. 2014 UPDATE: WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

3.1 ELEMENTS COMMON TO THE ADOPTED PLAN AND THE PROPOSED UPDATE

The adopted Transportation 2040 plan and the Transportation 2040 Update rely on tolling and user fees to fund many of the investments. Both plans invest heavily in transit, paratransit services, and special needs transportation services. Both plans meet regional air quality requirements.

3.2 KEY DIFFERENCES

3.2.1 MAINTAINING THE COMMITMENT TO DOUBLING TRANSIT SERVICE, BUT UPDATING COSTS

Transit agencies have experienced declining revenues and made substantial cuts in service as a result of the economic recession. However, based on reasonable assumptions about existing and future revenue sources, transit agencies and the Transportation 2040 Update maintain a commitment to doubling service by the year 2040.

Under federal law, Transportation 2040 must make reasonable assumptions about what revenue will be available to fund projects. The Transportation 2040 Update adjusts the funding strategy to reflect changes in assumptions about the cost of delivering local and regional transit service.

Local transit operators, which have been impacted by the recession and declines in revenue, have taken several cost reduction measures and adjusted transit service offerings to improve efficiency. For example, King County Metro Transit has changed its transit service to better feed into the regional transit system and reduced service on routes with low ridership.

Similarly, Sound Transit has adjusted plans to deliver Sound Transit 2—a 20-year plan to expand the regional mass transit system—within a slightly longer timeframe than originally planned. This approach will keep costs in line with projected revenues but still allow Sound Transit to extend light rail to Tacoma, Lynnwood and Redmond.

The Transportation 2040 Update reflects these changes and maintains the long-term commitment to double transit service by 2040.

3.2.2 REPRIORITIZING PROJECTS WHILE MEETING NEEDS

Because the economic recession reduced revenues now and into the future, the region does not have enough money to make all the investments described in the adopted Transportation 2040 plan. To re-balance the financial strategy, PSRC has been working with cities, counties, and the Washington State Department of Transportation to reconsider priorities that reflect reasonable funding assumptions.

The adopted Transportation 2040 plan divides its projects into two groups: “constrained” and “unprogrammed.” Constrained projects must have a reasonable identified funding source.

Unprogrammed projects do not yet need to have a complete funding strategy. Moving a project from the constrained list to the unprogrammed list is one major way for PSRC to re-balance its financial strategy when costs outpace revenues.

Shifting a project’s category does not necessarily mean that it will be delayed or is less likely to get built. Planning work can continue for an unprogrammed project, and the project can move forward to final design and construction once funding is identified.

For example, to help re-balance the financial strategy for Transportation 2040, PSRC initially planned to move several King County trails projects from constrained to unprogrammed. However, in August 2013, voters approved a King County Parks property tax levy that funded these projects, allowing PSRC to keep them in the constrained part of the plan. These projects being implemented starting in 2014.

The Transportation 2040 Update balances projected costs with projected revenues by moving 79 local and county road, state highway, and bicycle and pedestrian projects from the constrained list to the unprogrammed list. The net effect of these relatively minor changes is 60 fewer miles of new roadway in the constrained plan, representing a reduction of approximately \$4 billion or two percent of the total constrained financial plan for Transportation 2040.

Transportation 2040 Update - Balancing the Financial Strategy - Project Impacts				
Project Type	# Initially in Constrained	# Moved to Unprogrammed	% Moved to Unprogrammed	# Remaining in Constrained
Arterials	104	14	13%	90
Bicycle/Pedestrian	184	31	17%	153
State Highways	211	34	16%	177
Transit	93	0	0%	93
Total:	592	79	13%	513

Because maintaining the current transportation system is essential, the Transportation 2040 Update does *not* move projects that keep the current system in a State of Good Repair to the unprogrammed list. It also does not move any transit projects from the constrained list to the unprogrammed list.

3.3 HOW DO THESE DIFFERENCES AFFECT LOW-INCOME AND MINORITY PEOPLE AND OTHER VULNERABLE RESIDENTS?

3.3.1 AIR QUALITY

Air and water quality is a concern to all residents, but particularly to low-income and minority communities that may have experienced disproportionate negative environmental impacts in the past. Based on PSRC's analysis, the updated Transportation 2040 plan continues to meet all regional air quality requirements. Furthermore, projected regional greenhouse gas emissions are lower than in the adopted Transportation 2040 plan.

3.3.2 TRANSIT

Despite recent cuts to transit service brought on by shorter-term funding challenges, the Transportation 2040 Update maintains the commitment to implement Sound Transit's long-range plan and double local transit service by 2040. These long-term plans are based on reasonable assumptions about future sources of revenue. Because many people with low incomes and other vulnerable residents rely on transit, maintaining this commitment should benefit these populations.

Local transit agencies hold public outreach processes before changing transit service, and Sound Transit is preparing to launch a public outreach process for its long-term transit investment plan. If you have concerns about how cost savings measures could affect the communities you represent, these public outreach processes are important opportunities to provide your input. For more information about local transit agencies and Sound Transit, please visit their websites:

- Community Transit (Snohomish County): www.commtrans.com
- Everett Transit: www.everettwa.org
- King County Metro Transit: www.metro.kingcounty.gov
- Kitsap Transit: www.kitsaptransit.org
- Pierce Transit: www.piercetransit.org
- Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org

3.3.3 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Many community leaders and social services providers have expressed a strong interest in seeing more active transportation—bicycle and pedestrian trails and facilities—in their communities. The Transportation 2040 Update includes a new Active Transportation Plan, which establishes a regional bicycle network. These improvements should benefit all communities, including those with low-income and minority residents.

As explained in Section 3.2.2, the Transportation 2040 Update moves nearly 17 percent of bicycle and pedestrian projects from the constrained list to the unprogrammed list. Some of these changes could adversely affect low-income and minority residents if no funding source is identified for bicycle or pedestrian projects that serve these communities.

In spite of these changes, the Transportation 2040 Update retains the original plan's investment in more than 550 miles of new off-road bike and pedestrian trails, with approximately 300 miles of new bike and pedestrian trails remaining on the constrained list.

3.3.4 RURAL TRANSPORTATION

The new Rural Transportation Study examines transportation needs of rural residents. Key areas of focus include lengthy commute distances for people who work in urban areas but cannot afford to live there, preserving and maintaining roads and bridges, safety, and transportation challenges for seniors aging in place. The Transportation 2040 Update does not include a specific plan for addressing these needs, but the next major update to Transportation 2040, scheduled for 2018, may use outcomes of the Rural Transportation Study to develop solutions.

4 TRANSPORTATION 2040 UPDATE: NEXT STEPS

4.1 TIMELINE AND DECISION PROCESS

The Draft Transportation 2040 Update was released for a 45-day public review on January 24, 2014. Comments were due on March 10, 2014. The Update was adopted by the General Assembly on May 29, 2014.

4.1.1 PUBLIC OUTREACH AND OUTREACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS

To reach environmental justice and special needs populations during the public comment period for the Transportation 2040 update, PSRC took the following steps:

- In addition to publishing the entire plan update on its website at www.psrc.org, PSRC developed an executive summary of the Transportation 2040 Update, which describes plan elements of interest to low-income, minority, and special needs residents.
- PSRC distributed an Environmental Justice Summary Report (Appendix G of T2040) to an extensive list of community leaders, social service providers, and people who participated in the community roundtable discussions during development of Transportation 2040. This outreach effort focused on environmental justice, Title VI, and special needs populations.
- PSRC offered briefings to community groups and social service providers as requested during the public comment period to review the plan update and answer questions.
- PSRC prepared a narrated PowerPoint presentation designed to communicate information on the Transportation 2040 Update with environmental justice, Title VI, and special needs populations. PSRC posted this information on its website during the public comment period. Those interested were able to review the presentation and submit questions or comments.

4.3 FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

Starting in 2015, the community will have several opportunities to get involved in developing the 2018 update to Transportation 2040. To engage the community, PSRC plans to hold in-person public meetings, online meetings, surveys, and roundtable discussions throughout the four-county region.

Here is the expected timing of opportunities for the community to get involved:

- **2015:** PSRC will reach out to the community—including environmental justice and vulnerable populations—to explain the decision process for the Transportation 2040 update and request input on the types of alternatives it should consider. PSRC will specifically reach out to the

community leaders who received the Transportation 2040 Update documents and ask for input on how best to engage them and the communities they represent.

- **2015:** PSRC will release a public opinion survey that will ask for input from residents and businesses across the region, including low income, minority, special needs, and other vulnerable residents.
- **2016:** PSRC will present a range of alternatives under consideration and ask for public input. These alternatives will include proposed investments in transit, paratransit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects; special needs transportation; roadway improvements; and ferries. They will also include funding proposals to consider, such as more tolling and user fees or gas taxes.
- **2017:** PSRC will consider public input and other criteria to identify a preferred alternative. PSRC will report back to the public on how they considered and addressed this input in the preferred alternative.