



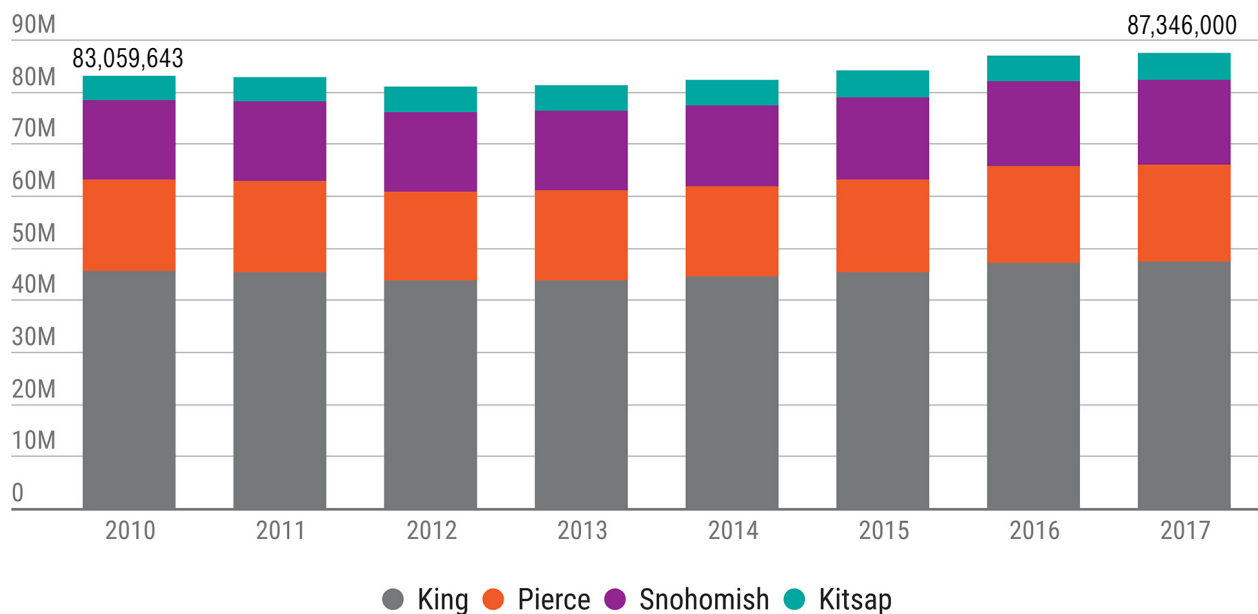
Vehicle Miles Traveled

Total vehicle miles traveled continues to rise but per person miles are down

The total annual number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the central Puget Sound region increased slightly in 2017 (0.5%), continuing a trend observed over the last few years.

This trend is consistent across all the four counties in the region and was about one-fourth the rate of population change over the same time period. Although overall VMT was up slightly, daily per person miles traveled in the region decreased 1.5% between 2016-2017. The 2017 estimate of 21.5 VMT per capita is well below the peak of 24 miles per person per day in the late 1990s.

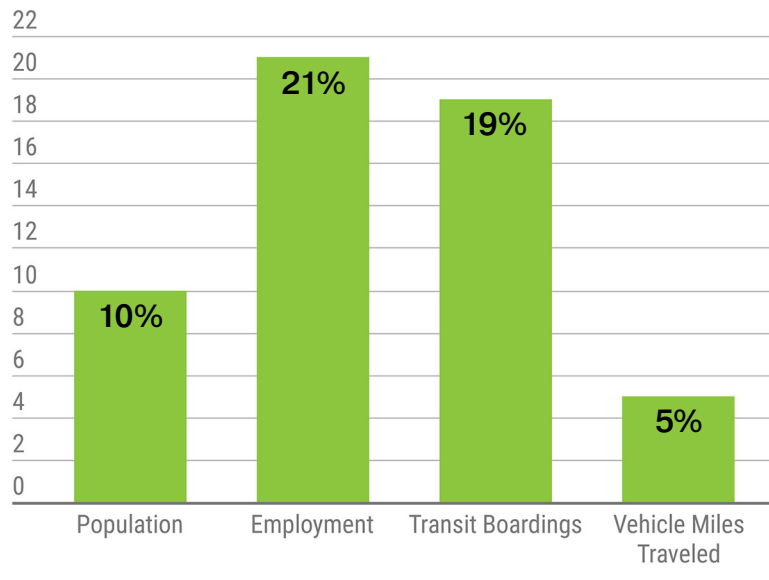
Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled, 2010-2017



Data Source: WSDOT Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS).

It is important to view the modest increase in VMT in the context of a robust economy and growing population. Between 2010-2017, the total VMT in the region has increased by 5%, half as fast as population and one-fourth as fast as employment. In contrast, transit boardings in the region increased 19% during the same time period.

Population, Employment, Transit Boardings, and Vehicle Miles Traveled, 2010-2017

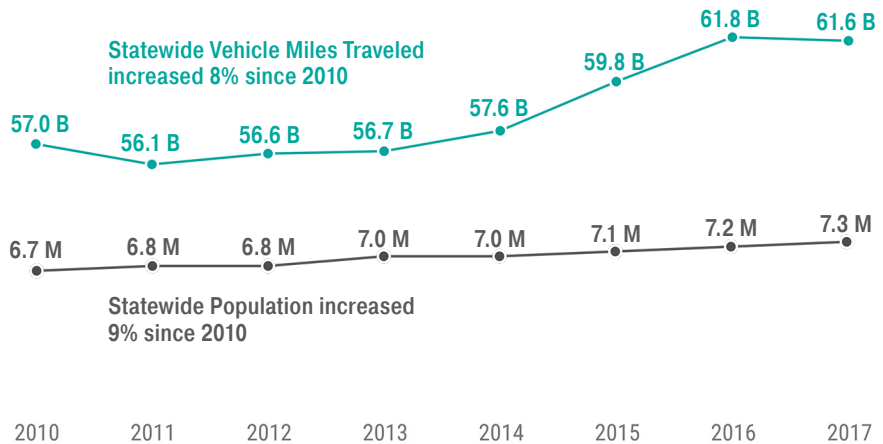


Data Sources:
 Transit Boardings: National Transit Database Monthly Adjusted Release, December 2017. <https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/data-product/monthly-module-adjusted-data-release>
 Population: OFM, April 1, 2018 Population of Cities, Towns and Counties.
 Employment: ESD, WA Employment Estimates (seasonally adjusted) April 2018.

What about the state as a whole?

Compared to the modest increase seen in the region, the total VMT around the state saw a slight decrease after years of fairly strong growth. The vehicle miles traveled per person in the state saw a decrease as well.

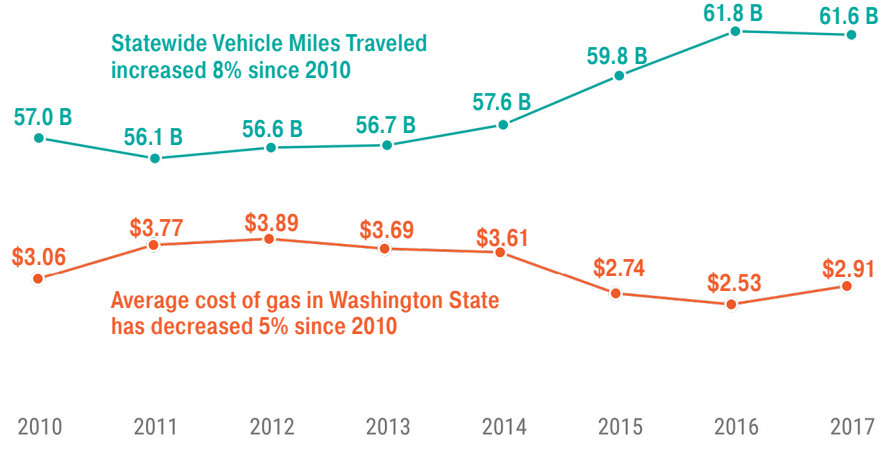
Statewide Vehicle Miles Traveled and Statewide Population, 2010-2017



Data Sources:
 VMT: FHWA Office of Highway Policy Information.
 Population: OFM, April 1, 2018 Population of Cities, Towns and Counties.

The decline in VMT across the state can be attributed to increase in the cost of fuel. As shown in the figure below, VMT changes since 2010 around the state have mirrored the average cost of gas — with VMT generally increasing with decreasing fuel prices. The fluctuations in average statewide fuel prices have seen corresponding changes in VMT across the state.

Statewide Vehicle Miles Traveled and Statewide Fuel Price, 2010-2017



Data Sources:
 VMT: FHWA Office of Highway Policy Information.
 Fuel Price: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

Why do Vehicle Miles Traveled matter?

Vehicle Miles Traveled is a measure that demonstrates how much people are traveling about the region. The amount of vehicle miles traveled has impacts on the amount of traffic on our roads and the amount of ozone and carbon dioxide emitted into the air. A goal of the region’s integrated land use and transportation planning is to increase the number of travel options available to people and to lower the amount of vehicle miles traveled by automobile. Reducing the number of miles driven per capita is an integral part of the Washington state’s Climate Change Policy and a key part of the Four-Part Greenhouse Gas Strategy in the Regional Transportation Plan.