

Chapter 3

Goals and Policies

Goals and Policies translate the region's Guiding Principles into a more detailed framework for transportation decision-making at all levels of government. The 20 goals in the plan address four aspects of transportation planning and implementation: Transportation relationships, system management, system components, and process.

Each goal area is arranged similarly:

- Statement of the goal.
- Policies for implementing the goal.
- Importance and challenges, providing context in meeting the goal.
- Examples of supportive measures, potential implementation strategies for projects and programs to reach the goal.

Transportation Relationships

These policy elements describe transportation's most essential relationships: between transportation and land use, between different modes, and between transportation and people's ability to connect with their community.

1. **Transportation and Land Use Consistency** – Ensure the design and function of the transportation facilities are consistent with and support sustainable, healthy urban, suburban, and rural communities.
2. **Multimodal Transportation System** – Work toward an integrated, multimodal transportation system that supports the adopted land use plans, reduces overall need to drive, and encourages transit, walking, and cycling as choices.
3. **Barrier-Free Transportation** – Ensure transportation system investments support the special travel needs of youth, elders, people with disabilities, literacy, or language barriers, those with low incomes, and other affected groups.

System Management

These policy elements describe the essential functions associated with owning and operating the transportation system. They address enhancing safety and maintenance; increasing

system efficiency through demand management; harnessing technologies to improve safety and efficiency; and improving freight mobility.

4. **System Safety and Security** – Enhance the safety and security of those who use, operate, and maintain the system.
5. **System Maintenance and Repair** – Protect investments that already have been made in the transportation system and keep life-cycle costs as low as possible.
6. **Transportation Demand Management** – Increase overall operating efficiency of the transportation system through the effective use of measures that reduce the need to drive.
7. **Transportation Technologies** – Use technology-based approaches to address transportation congestion, safety, efficiency, and operations.
8. **Freight Mobility** – Promote efficient, cost-effective, timely, and safe movement of freight in and through the region.

System Components

Transportation in the Thurston region encompasses many different forms – or modes. These policy elements describe each of the specific modes considered in the plan.

9. **Streets, Roads, and Bridges** – Establish a street and road network that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while supporting adopted land use goals.

10. **Public Transportation** – Provide a robust level of reliable, effective public transportation options to increase the share of all trips made by public transportation.
11. **Bicycling** – Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by bicycling.
12. **Walking** – Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by walking.
13. **Rail** – Ensure the continued long term viability of existing and rail-banked rail lines in the region for future freight and passenger rail travel.
14. **Aviation** – Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the general aviation needs of residents and businesses in the region.
15. **Marine Transportation** – Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the region’s marine transportation needs.

Process

These policy elements describe the various processes that are integral to transportation decision-making in this region.

16. **Public Involvement** – Build a community of an engaged and informed public that contributes ideas and supports actions to create a highly functional multimodal transportation system consistent with the goals and policies in this plan.

17. **Intergovernmental Coordination** – Ensure transportation facilities and programs function seamlessly across community borders and between regions.
18. **Environmental and Human Health** – Minimize transportation impacts on the natural environment and the people who live and work in the Thurston region.
19. **Performance Measures** – Develop performance measures that are realistic, efficient to administer, effective in assessing performance, and meaningful to the public.
20. **Transportation Funding** – Secure adequate funding from all sources to implement the goals and policies of this plan.

1. Transportation and Land Use Consistency



Goal: *Ensure the design and function of transportation facilities are consistent with and support sustainable, healthy urban, suburban, and rural communities.*

Policies:

1.a Commit to the development and implementation of land use plans, development patterns, and design standards that encourage walking, bicycling, transit use, and other alternatives to driving alone.

1.b Provide transportation facilities that support the location of jobs, housing, industry, and other activities as called for in adopted land use plans.

1.c Meet mobility, access, and economic goals in designated Strategy Corridors with an appropriate combination of investments, policies, and land use measures.

1.d Design and invest in transportation projects that have a lasting positive impact, reflect the goals of the people who live and work in the area, and contribute to a sense of place and community.

1.e Support policies, programs, and procedures that promote urban infill, and make transportation investments that support increased urban densities.

1.f Provide transportation facilities and services which appropriately support urban development in cities and urban growth areas, and help maintain rural character outside urban growth areas.

1.g Ensure adequate transportation capacity to address growth consistent with adopted comprehensive plans.

1.h Preserve and promote awareness of our historic, cultural, and natural heritage.

1.i Minimize high noise levels.

1.j Create vibrant city centers and activity nodes along transit corridors that support active transportation and housing, jobs, and services.

1.k Create safe and vibrant city and town centers that foster entrepreneurship, active transportation, civic pride, and a sense of place.

1.l Create safe and vibrant neighborhoods with places that build community and encourage active transportation.

1.m Protect the region's farms, forests, prairies, and open spaces while providing appropriate transportation services.

1.n Site major public facilities that generate substantial traffic near major transportation corridors.

Importance and Challenges

What can – or cannot – be supplied in the way of transportation facilities, services, and programs is directly related to the kind of community that is built. Low-density, segregated land uses are auto-oriented, regardless of whether alternative transportation facilities are provided. However, alternative travel facilities are a feasible element of compact, mixed-use development patterns. Shorter trips and convenient connections depend on compact development with a mix of housing types, and appropriate-scale commercial and civic uses. Transportation should work with other elements contributing to the community's character. On a per capita basis, this is also a cost-effective and efficient kind of transportation system for government to offer.

Policy makers have examined – with the “Vision/Reality Disconnect” – where adopted community visions don't seem to be playing out on the ground, and have undertaken a series of actions to implement the collective vision. The incremental changes needed to realize these visions are troubling to some residents. For example, established urban neighborhoods sometimes object to infill projects that add housing to adjacent lots. While infill improves the delivery of government services – like transit – it can also change the local neighborhood character. Growth management policies protect the diversity of urban, suburban, and rural communities, but also limit the range of choices available to both government and individual property owners.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Minimize the impact of highways on each of the historic South County community centers.
- Promote telework in towns and cities to keep workers and their dollars local and reduce vehicle miles traveled.
- Identify and reduce barriers that discourage private sector development or redevelopment of close-in urban areas as called for in adopted land use plans, where efficient transportation can be provided.
- Implement parking standards and management strategies in city centers and core areas that support a variety of transportation modes, and encourage people to walk, bicycle, and take transit.
- Consider appropriate freight access and infrastructure in land use and transportation decisions and projects.
- Increase transit service in urban centers and corridors as warranted and sustainable.
- Work to establish “20-minute neighborhoods” that offer most neighborhood residents an array of basic services within a half mile or 20 minute walk from home.

- Expand transit routes and increase service frequency where the density, land uses, street design, and location of neighborhoods between main activity center destinations will result in good service usage.
- Identify and build street and path connections within existing neighborhoods and design well-connected streets within any new neighborhoods.
- Initiate public/private partnership development opportunities for transportation-efficient projects. Use the regional forum to share information with other jurisdictions during implementation.
- Make appropriate use of access management techniques to moderate the impacts of land use on the regional transportation system.
- Site public facilities in areas with convenient public transportation and activity center access.
- Target street improvements to districts that are anticipated to transition to a more walkable form over time.
- Locate public office buildings near major transit corridors to provide options for all facility users and employees.
- Use modeling and other tools to analyze transportation projects, programs, and actions needed to achieve Sustainable Thurston goals.

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2. Multimodal Transportation System



Goal: Work toward an integrated, multimodal transportation system that supports adopted land use plans, reduces overall need to drive, and encourages transit, walking, and cycling as choices.

Policies:

2.a Provide for quality travel mode options appropriate to existing and future land uses, including walking, bicycling, public transportation, rail, and motor vehicles, including freight.

2.b Ensure that development of transit transfer centers, activity centers, employment centers, schools, rail stations, the waterfront, and the

airport accommodates multiple modes of travel and safe, efficient connections among those modes of travel.

2.c Invest in mode-specific strategies that contribute to the overall development of an integrated, multimodal transportation system.

2.d Promote public education on the rights and responsibilities of automobile drivers, bicyclists, and walkers, and ways to travel together efficiently and safely.

Importance and Challenges

The transportation system has to meet many different kinds of travel needs safely and efficiently. A multimodal transportation system recognizes all travel needs and supports the movement of freight as well as people. It increases choice and opportunity.

We can't afford to build our way out of congestion – it's something to be managed, not solved. One way of managing congestion is to build communities that offer safe and convenient travel options. No one relies exclusively on driving. It's often easier to travel between multiple, close destinations by foot, bicycle, or bus than by driving. Many people

who need to travel can't drive – young people, some older adults, and some with physical disabilities. Increased use of walking, bicycling, and public transportation will reduce overall vehicle miles traveled and improve air quality. Sometimes government is criticized for investing in multimodal options, like trails or transit. These investments help meet multiple needs and goals, like helping people who can't drive, improving efficient use of the system, and promoting healthy communities.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Continue to serve new development with interconnected public streets that provide safe and convenient pedestrian,

bicycle, and motor vehicle access. Work to ensure that neighborhood residents understand what future street connections are planned, and what functions those connections are intended to serve.

- Implement a street design that encourages safe, multimodal user behavior, especially in residential neighborhoods, school zones, and civic centers where alternative travel modes are likely to be used.
- Look for opportunities to make connections that provide bicycle and pedestrian access between residential, commercial, and industrial destinations like schools, parks, shopping centers, or major transit routes, where full street connections are not feasible.
- Recognize that a one-size-fits-all approach to developing a multimodal transportation system is not cost-effective. Continue to tailor design standards appropriate to rural, suburban, and urban uses.
- Promote multimodal trip-making by locating appropriately sized park-and-ride facilities near major transit/highway interchanges, smaller park-and-pool facilities along key suburban and rural routes, and park-and-bike facilities adjacent to bike trails such as the Yelm-to-Tenino and Chehalis-Western Trails.
- Remove barriers to infill and redevelopment in urban centers and along transit corridors, where a wider choice in travel options currently exists. Some of the actions that can be taken include developing predictability in the permitting process, conducting planned action environmental impact statements, adjusting fees to reflect location-specific impacts of development, and engaging in sub-area planning to involve the community in development of a neighborhood or district vision.

3. Barrier-Free Transportation



Goal: Ensure transportation system investments support the special travel needs of youth, elders, people with disabilities, literacy, or language barriers, those with low incomes, and other affected groups.

Policies:

3.a Ensure transportation facilities comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3.b Construct public transportation stops and walkway approaches that are accessible for those with differing capabilities.

3.c Provide appropriate transportation services, facilities, and programs that reduce barriers for people who do not speak or read English.

3.d Present information and provide public participation opportunities for everyone, including people with physical disabilities and/or people with limited literacy skills.

3.e Promote land use policies that provide a variety of housing types in core areas near employment and services.

The intent of these policies is to support implementation of state and federal regulations for barrier-free transportation.

Importance and Challenges

Transportation is considered an essential factor in maintaining independence, economic self-sufficiency, and dignity, and in preventing isolation. Many residents face physical, economic, or linguistic hurdles – such as negotiating curbs and uneven sidewalks, arranging transportation to work, the doctor’s office, and the grocery store, and reading transit schedules and street signs. Barrier-free transportation is based on thoughtful design, diverse travel choices, and policy awareness that reduces these mobility challenges.

The Thurston region population is aging rapidly. Fit and healthy baby boomers in their prime wage-earning years are beginning to retire. As

the trend of “aging in place” increases, more people will want to stay in the Thurston region. The portion of the population 65 and over will grow from the current 15 percent in 2015 to 20 percent by 2040. It will become even more important – and challenging – to provide transportation options that meet the needs of our community’s elders. Similarly, services and programs serving youth and those with disabilities will see more demand in the next few decades.

Those services and barrier-free improvements to transportation infrastructure are already underfunded and unable to keep up with current demand. Simply trying to retrofit existing facilities, as called for in the Americans with Disabilities Act, is beyond the means of most communities. Supporting the independence of

our growing senior population depends on the success of establishing cost-effective, convenient travel alternatives and community development patterns.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Sustain partnerships among government, nonprofit, for-profit, and faith-based agencies that serve the transportation needs of the region's youth, elders, and people with disabilities.
- Look for innovative ways of funding and providing life-line transportation services.
- Continue transportation services that connect low-income populations with employment areas and social services.
- Explore innovative public/private partnerships aimed at increasing affordable, transit-friendly housing choices in the urban area near essential services.
- Find sustainable financial support for urban and rural public transportation programs.

4. System Safety and Security

Goal: Enhance the safety and security of those who use, operate, and maintain the transportation system.



Policies:

4.a Use a combination of education, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation to maintain and enhance system.

4.b Add or widen shoulders, or use other measures as appropriate, on narrow, high-volume, and high-speed rural roads.

4.c Design transportation infrastructure to encourage safe user behavior.

4.d Support projects that improve passenger safety and security on public transportation and at associated facilities like park-and-ride lots and transit centers.

4.e Provide for safe routes to schools.

4.f Retrofit key transportation facilities to improve their ability to withstand a major earthquake or other natural disaster.

4.g Build in system redundancy to support emergency response and reduce community disruption during natural or man-made disasters.

4.h Encourage coordination between transportation system providers and emergency response providers who rely on that system.

Importance and Challenges

The ability to travel safely – regardless of mode – is recognized as the most basic of transportation needs. Stretching limited revenues is challenging when designing and building transportation systems that accommodate driver error, lapse of attention, and poor weather conditions without loss of life or injury to travelers. This is especially difficult to manage in urban areas with frequent conflict between motorized and nonmotorized travel. Rural roads also pose specific safety challenges. High travel speeds often result in more serious damage when vehicles lose control, as well as endangering others using the system.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Implement measures that promote safe and responsible behavior by all travelers.
- Explore innovative methods of making signs, crosswalks, traffic signals, and other system elements more visible, such as using size, placement, and lighting to improve readability of signs.
- Ensure local, tribal, and state governments, school districts, Intercity Transit, the Port of Olympia, and emergency service providers can effectively communicate and coordinate

their services following a major emergency that disrupts transportation in the Thurston region.

- Evaluate the experience of other communities and assess the feasibility of using cameras and other technologies to detect red light running and speeding, and enforce applicable laws.
- Implement appropriate measures to deter vandalism and crimes at park-and-ride lots and transit centers, and ensure that sites project a sense of safety and security for users.
- Encourage personal responsibility for safety and security through public education.
- Increase collaboration among school districts, local agencies, business, and other community organizations to make walking and bicycling routes to school safer and more inviting.
- Continue retrofit of existing facilities, where appropriate, with bicycle and pedestrian features that improve safety while maintaining adequate capacity.
- Use traffic calming techniques where appropriate.
- Examine the state's Target Zero plan and adopt safety targets consistent with federal performance measure requirements.

5. System Maintenance and Repair



Goal: *Protect investments that already have been made in the transportation system and keep life-cycle costs as low as possible.*

Policies:

5.a Prioritize maintenance, preservation, operations, and repair of the existing transportation system.

5.b Use preventative maintenance programs to ensure lowest life-cycle costs.

5.c Use street restoration standards, and coordinate utility and street projects, to

minimize the destructive impact of utility projects on streets. Where possible, leverage investments for both project types to deliver more cost-effective public facilities.

5.d Explore innovative programs that reduce infrastructure life-cycle costs or increase efficiency of service delivery, including use of new materials, technologies, and resource partnerships.

Importance and Challenges

Maintenance and repair are needed to protect investments already made in the system. Maintaining the system keeps life-cycle costs low, minimizes hazards resulting from deteriorating pavement or debris, and reduces the need for costly reconstruction projects.

Local budgets cannot adequately maintain the transportation system, let alone rebuild it. Without sufficient funding to take care of existing facilities and make structural investments, like shoulder additions that keep travel lanes from eroding, the challenges of the transportation system will only grow worse.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Ensure sweeping and maintenance activities are adequately scheduled and address the entire curb-to-curb or shoulder-to-shoulder need, including bike lanes and multiuse shoulders.
- Continue to support pavement management programs that promote lowest life-cycle costs, including increases to base funding levels where possible, to attain optimal paving levels.
- Support legislation giving local jurisdictions additional revenue and revenue authority to optimize maintenance and repair programs.

- Strengthen and improve street-cut ordinances to minimize utility impacts on pavement in good condition.
- Explore options for identifying, prioritizing, and funding maintenance and repair projects on streets and roads that cross boundaries between cities, town, counties, tribes, and state facilities.
- Encourage people to report problems (for example, pot holes and malfunctioning signals). Use technology and social media to make it easier for people to report.

6. Transportation Demand Management



Goal: Increase overall operating efficiency of the transportation system through the effective use of measures that reduce the need to drive.

Policies:

6.a Promote transportation-efficient development and redevelopment, and site services and facilities where transit, walking, and bicycling are now or will be viable alternatives to driving.

6.b Encourage use of public transportation, ridesharing, bicycling, and walking by improving access, convenience, and reliability.

6.c Sustain and expand private and public sector programs and services that encourage employees to commute to work by means other than driving alone, or to change commuting patterns through teleworking, flex-time, or compressed work weeks.

6.d Manage parking to improve consistency with transportation demand management objectives.

6.e Use technologies that enable people to meet their needs without having to travel.

6.f Use transportation demand management techniques to provide alternatives during temporary congestion, such as during major construction.

6.g Mainstream telework as a primary transportation demand management strategy among public and private employers.

6.h Strive to meet State Commute Trip Reduction targets for the region.

6.i Decrease annual per capita vehicle miles traveled in the Thurston Region to:

- 1990 levels by 2020
- 30 percent below 1990 by 2035
- 50 percent below 1990 by 2050

Importance and Challenges

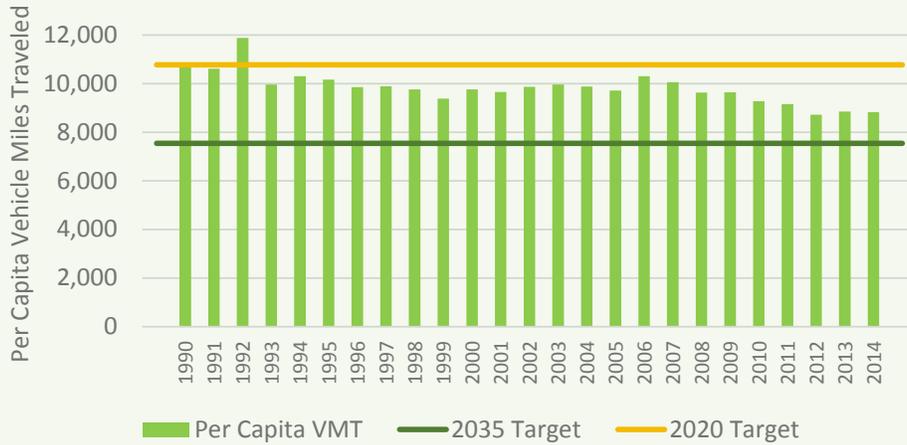
The transportation system is a resource, like water or power. To create more capacity we can either build or conserve. Transportation demand management – also known as TDM – focuses on conservation. TDM is a central element of local, regional, and state transportation mobility strategies. The State’s Commute Trip Reduction law is an example of a statewide TDM strategy.

An effective mix of TDM strategies helps people manage the impacts of congestion on their own lives by changing when, how, or why they travel. TDM may be tailored to specific needs in a corridor or downtown area, or applied regionwide. Its success hinges on a variety of factors, such as how we build our communities, good access to public transportation, supportive public policy, and widespread participation.

TDM offers benefits beyond improving system efficiency. It supports healthier communities

Policy 6.i describes the region’s per capita vehicle miles traveled targets. This graph shows the region is currently meeting the 2020 target. Reaching the 2035 target, however, is still a challenge.

Figure 3-1: Annual Per Capita Vehicle Miles Traveled - Thurston County



Source: Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS).

by promoting bicycling and walking. It saves money by investing less in building and maintaining new infrastructure. TDM improves mobility and opportunity for everyone, including elders, youth, and people with special needs. It lessens environmental impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions. TDM reduces the need for office space and parking, broadens the available workforce, and reduces employee absenteeism and turnover.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Support efforts to develop park-and-ride lots throughout the region. Encourage partnerships for shared use of

underutilized parking lots at businesses and other facilities.

- Work to meet Commute Trip Reduction goals.
- Establish transportation emphasis areas in activity centers. Pursue parking management and trip reduction with businesses to free up customer parking and reduce all-day employee parking.
- Integrate TDM in schools, including transit access and siting decisions, parking availability and management, and curriculum-based programs.

- Identify a sufficient and stable source of funding for TDM programs, targeted at demonstrated long-term benefits and effective program-sharing ideas.
- Evaluate the impacts of various strategies, such as parking management, congestion pricing, managed lanes, and tolling to manage demand efficiently.
- Expand outreach, education, and implementation efforts to increase telework throughout public agencies in Thurston County.
- Develop more trailheads and access points connecting shared use paths to activity centers and roadways.

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7. Transportation Technologies

Goal: Use technology-based approaches to address transportation congestion, safety, efficiency, and operations.



Policies:

7.a Use transportation technologies to more effectively utilize the existing transportation system.

7.b Use transportation technologies to better integrate transportation modes.

7.c Make short-range technology investment decisions that support future technology implementation strategies.

7.d Look for opportunities to integrate transportation technology considerations in all projects.

7.e Recognize that transmittal of electronic information is an important function of a transportation system, and integrate this into transportation system evaluation, policies, and implementation strategies.

Importance and Challenges

Those who provide, maintain, operate, or use transportation facilities are finding increasing benefit from the use of technology – for improved communications, increased coordination within and among government agencies and other organizations, and safer and more efficient travel conditions. Technology provides powerful tools in the effort to maximize system performance and safety.

Effective deployment of technology strategies requires coordination among agencies and divisions that have often never worked together. New ways are needed to think about problems, and consider and implement solutions. This also requires compatible protocols for system design, which may mean relinquishing proprietary systems to accomplish the full benefit of these investments.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Update the regional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) architecture as necessary to ensure it remains a relevant and useful tool for guiding transportation technology decision and investments.
- Expand the use of information technologies to provide system information to the traveling public.
- Continue to support Intercity Transit's technology plan.
- Encourage the continued deployment of ITS technologies along I-5 and US 101.
- Consider ways to improve the traditional scoping and design process for transportation projects that include

technology elements. As appropriate, promote system integration, coordination, and resource sharing to enhance operations, safety, and cost.

- Continue to enhance signal efficiency for all modes.
- Use technology resources in evaluating system performance.

8. Freight Mobility

Goal: Promote efficient, cost-effective, timely, and safe movement of freight in and through the region.



Policies:

8.a Support freight access to and from highways and other major freight corridors, and between the region's intermodal facilities and industrial areas.

8.b Support efforts to increase the amount of freight that is moved by rail to enhance efficiency, productivity, safety, and mobility.

8.c Explore strategies to reduce conflict and optimize safety for all transportation system users where industrial/commercial land uses are in highly urbanized areas.

8.d Promote policies and design standards that support economic vitality by allowing delivery trucks to serve businesses and services while minimizing impacts on local streets.

Importance and Challenges

The ability to efficiently move goods to and from market in a timely manner is a critical element of a sound economy. Whether that means transporting raw materials to manufacturing centers and finished products out, or moving goods and supplies on time to local retailers, the specific mobility needs of freight must be considered.

As traffic increases, so do the impacts of big trucks on roads, so more investments are needed in the system to accommodate freight. Rail can only serve a portion of the region's freight mobility needs. Even if more freight rail opportunities were available, the need for highway access would still be strong. While some freight moves at night, much is moved by day – leading to conflicts on highways and local roads. Heavy trucks contribute to increased road wear, which requires more frequent repair to keep the roads safe.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Design, build, and maintain transportation facilities that support appropriate, safe freight access based on adjacent land uses and access routes.
- Deploy technologies on freight corridors that improve predictability of travel time for freight, such as weigh-in-motion devices, automated truck counters, and enhanced signal timing.
- Identify and address deficiencies on key streets, roads, and bridges that limit freight mobility.
- Develop a coordinated strategy that identifies existing and future freight mobility problems and opportunities, and ways to maximize the use of ship, rail, air, and truck in an efficient multimodal freight transport system.

- Regularly review and update the region's Freight and Goods Transportation System (FGTS), which designates important freight routes on state and local facilities.
- Monitor federal and state legislation regarding truck size to ensure that proposals do not result in adverse increases in legal size or undue restrictions on local governments' ability to regulate truck size and weight on local streets.
- Support the efficient movement of locally produced food.

9. Streets, Roads, and Bridges



Goal: Establish a street and road network that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while supporting adopted land use goals.

Policies:

9.a Design and construct multimodal, context-sensitive, complete streets and roads.

9.b Coordinate with jurisdictions on new regional connections that provide more direct routes and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

9.c Avoid widening any local arterial or collector to more than two through lanes in each direction and auxiliary turn lanes where warranted (five lanes maximum mid-block width) to preserve an acceptable community scale and minimize transportation impacts on adjacent land uses.

9.d Use new technologies or alternative designs for safely and efficiently managing the flow of traffic, such as roundabouts as alternatives to traffic signals or stop signs.

9.e Use access management techniques to improve roadway capacity and operating efficiency, and increase overall safety.

9.f Develop an interconnected grid of local streets and roads to increase individual travel options and neighborhood connectivity, while improving efficient use of the overall regional network.

9.g Ensure that street, road, and bridge projects are integrated with pedestrian amenities in districts and neighborhoods, adding lasting value to the community.

9.h Incorporate alternative strategies to address congestion where road widening and traffic control devices are not acceptable, particularly along Strategy Corridors.

9.i Design roadways to reduce weather-induced weight restrictions on streets, roads, and bridges that are important freight routes.

9.j Meet two-hour p.m. peak Level of Service (LOS) Standards:

- LOS E or better in urban centers and corridors.
- LOS D or better elsewhere inside city limits and urban growth boundaries.
- LOS C outside any urban growth boundaries.

In strategy corridors LOS may exceed adopted standards. [See Maps 3.1 and 3.2 for reference.]

Definitions

Level of service (LOS) is a mechanism used to determine how well a transportation facility is operating from a traveler's perspective. Typically, six levels of service are defined and

each is assigned a letter designation from A to F, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions, and LOS F the worst. For more information on LOS, see Appendix O Level of Service Standard and Measurements.

Strategy corridors are places where road widening is not a preferred option to address congestion problems. This may be because the street or road is already at the maximum number of lanes, or that adjacent land uses are either fully built out or are environmentally sensitive. In strategy corridors, level of service (LOS) may exceed adopted standards, suggesting instead that a different approach is needed for maintaining access in these areas – such as increased transit service, more sidewalks or bicycle facilities, a complete and connected street grid, transportation technology measures that improve system operating efficiency, access management, parking management, or incentives for employees to telework or carpool.

Importance and Challenges

Streets, roads, and bridges are the backbone of the region's transportation network. They support the mobility needs of people and goods. Streets and roads connect residences to businesses and activity centers, providing access for essential services such as waste disposal, emergency response, and mail delivery. Complete streets enable safe access and travel for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit users, and travelers of all ages and abilities.

Congestion is a daily challenge for many people. Sufficient funding to take care of existing streets, roads, and bridges is a growing challenge for government. Another challenge is moving growing numbers of vehicles through neighborhood corridors without having undue impact on the quality of life in those neighborhoods.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Undertake early, comprehensive public education and involvement to increase awareness of the need for access management and new connections.
- Explore the reasons why implementation of interconnected streets policies is difficult and identify strategies for improving that implementation.
- Increase connections within and between developments, particularly for commercial properties, to support access management.
- Build bike lanes, and use signs and markings to enhance the bicycle network and to raise awareness of motor vehicle drivers for bicyclists. Accommodate a wide range of bicyclists – novice to experienced – through a variety of facilities.
- Create a safe and pedestrian-friendly environment, particularly on urban streets. Include adequate buffers between motor vehicle traffic and sidewalks, and safe crossing opportunities.
- Coordinate implementation of transportation projects with other infrastructure projects (such as water, sewer, and cable service) to avoid frequent pavement cutting and repair.

10. Public Transportation

Goal: Provide a robust level of reliable, effective public transportation options to increase the share of all trips made by public transportation.



Policies:

10.a Support Intercity Transit’s long-range plan, which emphasizes trunk and primary routes serving core areas along designated strategy corridors, with supportive land use and appropriate design standards developed by local jurisdictions.

10.b Increase the share of trips made by public transportation.

10.c Invest in regional commuter vanpool programs to provide cost-effective, flexible alternatives to commuting in single-occupancy vehicles.

10.d Develop inter-regional transportation partnerships for long-distance commute trips to and from Thurston County. Identify opportunities to coordinate with and support other regional transportation providers serving Thurston County.

10.e Provide safe, convenient, and cost-effective transportation services to youth, elders, people with disabilities, or other people with special needs.

10.f Increase awareness of public transportation options and how to use them through expanded education and public information tailored to various groups and interests.

10.g Support a broad range of public transportation programs and services that ensure a full mix of options for meeting transportation needs as they evolve.

10.h Explore public transportation options for newly emerging urban centers, including innovative partnerships and programs, where fixed-route service is not currently feasible or sustainable.

10.i Plan for the long-term countywide funding needs of the region’s public transportation systems.

Importance and Challenges

Public transportation can be a very efficient way to move people in urban communities and can stimulate compact urban development. Besides supporting urban mobility, public transportation is a critical part of the social safety net that ensures access and independence for many members of the community, including those who do not own or drive a car. A good public transportation system is an indicator of a well-developed, complete urban network.

The Thurston region contains large expanses of relatively low-density residential areas isolated from activity and employment centers. This type of land use is difficult and expensive to serve with public transportation.

To support transit, adopted land-use plans promote urban infill, mixed-use development, and siting facilities with good access to major transportation routes. Unfortunately, achieving these goals may be in conflict with other values. For example, residents may worry that infill will change the neighborhood’s character. Developers may site facilities in areas outside

centers to keep land and construction costs down, but this can ultimately drive up the ongoing transportation costs. Making long-term investments in large government facilities and major employment sites outside the core areas and urban corridors results in less efficient, more expensive transit service.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Place a high priority on the availability of public transportation services as well as pedestrian and cycling access, when locating public facilities.
 - Work with community partners to explore alternate forms of public transportation, such as flex-car and bus rapid transit (BRT).
 - Continue to implement innovative service models and partnerships with nonprofit and other groups to supply life-line services to people in outlying areas of Thurston County where traditional public transit and paratransit (on-demand) services are not feasible.
 - Explore ways of improving coordination of public transportation services with school districts to improve efficiencies of these services to the communities being served.
- Support high occupancy vehicle lanes.
 - Convene regional conversations to discuss the value of and funding mechanism for both urban and rural public transportation.
 - Support local funding options for transportation.

11. Bicycling

Goal: Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by bicycling.



Policies:

11.a Develop a continuous, safe, and convenient regional bicycle network that functions as an integral part of the overall transportation system.

11.b Provide safe and convenient bicycle routes to all schools in the region, and encourage their use.

11.c Invest in a regional network of contiguous and connected north-south and east-west dedicated shared-use trail corridors to serve as the backbone of the non-motorized system.

11.d Provide bicycle parking facilities at transit centers, park-and-ride locations, train stations, and other multimodal facilities.

11.e Provide short- and long-term bicycle parking and other supporting facilities at locations such as schools, employment sites, and activity centers.

11.f Support education programs for motorists and bicyclists to increase understanding of bicycling laws, and encourage safe and lawful sharing of the road.

11.g Support regional long-term strategies for funding bicycle facilities and services.

Importance and Challenges

A well-balanced transportation system offers a variety of safe and convenient travel options. Many people are able to take advantage of bicycling for some of their trips – for example, children pedaling to school and urban commuters riding to work. Bicycling also furnishes independence for those who are not able to drive. It is a “clean” mode of transportation that is good for the environment and the health of the bicyclist, and an integral part of the overall regional transportation strategy. State law recognizes bicycles as vehicles, and many local governments provide safe facilities consistent with overall traffic demands and local resources.

However, many people still see bicycling solely as a recreational endeavor, instead of a legitimate mode of transportation. They oppose spending transportation funds on bicycle facilities. Despite compliance by a majority of riders, bicyclists who don’t obey the rules of the road create negative public opinion. The bicycling experience – much like that of walking – is influenced greatly by the actions of drivers and the built environment. Additionally, the difference in speeds between driving and bicycling can create an intimidating travel environment for bicyclists, which limits the willingness or ability of people to bicycle.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Implement the *Healthy Kids, Safe Streets Action Plan*.
- Reconvene a regional bicycle advisory committee, with diverse representation, as a constructive way for regional bicycling interests to provide input into policy discussions and address issues.
- Initiate a public discussion on the function of bicycle lanes and how they're financed to determine whether current funding mechanisms are appropriate.
- Explore the feasibility of levying and administering a bicycle license fee or other use fee. Revenues from such a fee could underwrite a variety of bicycle safety and education efforts for both riders and drivers, and could provide facilities and signage.
- Incorporate sensing devices at signalized intersections to facilitate responsible and efficient on-street bicycle riding.
- Maintain the *Regional Trails Plan*.
- Continue to include appropriate bicycling and walking improvements, such as wide shoulders, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes, as part of road projects.
- Promote the use of bicycle lights and helmets.
- Continue to update and publish the *Thurston County Bicycle Map*.

12. Walking

Goal: Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by walking.



Policies:

12.a Provide a direct, safe, interconnected pedestrian network that supports existing and desired land uses.

12.b Construct and maintain safe and accessible sidewalks, and effective crossings, within an appropriate radius of every school in the region, and encourage their use.

12.c Provide frequent pedestrian crossings, especially in urban areas, along primary transit routes, and near activity centers.

12.d Develop and encourage connections for pedestrian and bicycle travel to shorten trip lengths to transit routes, schools, parks, trails, activity centers, and other destinations.

12.e Require pedestrian-friendly building design in activity centers, and pedestrian-oriented or high density zoning districts.

12.f Provide street lighting, pedestrian buffers, trees, benches, and other elements that make walking safe and pleasant.

12.g Encourage neighborhood planning efforts to refine and identify pedestrian corridors and promote walkability.

Importance and Challenges

Every traveler is a pedestrian at the beginning and the end of the trip, since even drivers need to move safely and conveniently to and from the car. Beyond this most basic need, though, walking is often the only way that some members of the community can visit parks, shops, libraries, or neighborhood friends. This is important not just for their independence and mobility, but also as an effective way of countering the effects of the nation's sedentary lifestyle. When it comes to city centers and activity centers, pedestrians are often referred to as the "indicator species" of a healthy downtown. Often, in a well-designed and

established downtown area, travel is much easier on foot than by car. Walking is healthy, easy on the environment, cost-effective, and, with the right facilities and community design, a pleasant way of traveling.

For decades, communities built around the car, often resulting in an inhospitable environment for walkers. However, more recently, significant advancements have been made in regionwide walkability. Increasing density in some areas and speed in others creates the need for facility improvements to support access and safety for walkers. Until recently, sidewalks were sometimes viewed as an optional amenity to be funded and maintained by adjacent property owners, not as an integral part of the

transportation network. Fast moving vehicles operating along larger streets and roads can make walking unpleasant and often dangerous. Effective measures are needed to discourage speeding and unsafe driving, such as stricter law enforcement or innovative street design that encourages different driving behavior.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Implement the *Healthy Kids, Safe Streets Action Plan*.
- Coordinate school siting to make the best use of pedestrian infrastructure. Explore innovative financing options for school districts to participate in building pedestrian facilities surrounding new and renovated schools.
- Continue to include appropriate pedestrian facilities as part of all publicly and privately funded transportation projects.
- Make completion of gaps in the sidewalk system a priority, especially in city centers, core areas, urban corridors, and within a quarter-mile of any major activity center or public transit corridor.
- Provide frequent and convenient pedestrian access points between on-street sidewalks and dedicated nonmotorized facilities like the Chehalis-Western Trail, the Yelm-to-Tenino Trail, or the Woodland Trail.
- Provide safe walking routes within half-mile of all schools.
- When feasible, incorporate public places and pedestrian plazas in city center building design.
- Use design features like “bulb-outs” to improve pedestrian visibility and to minimize the street crossing distance in busy intersections. Incorporate other appropriate design features, such as wider sidewalks (over 6 feet) where possible and vehicular/pedestrian separation design, such as bio-swales or planter strips with trees/vegetation. Other design features could be used to slow vehicular travel speed in neighborhoods and activity centers where pedestrians are common.
- Develop more public funding options to plan, construct, and maintain sidewalks and pedestrian facilities where they support transportation priorities.

13. Rail

Goal: *Ensure the continued long term viability of existing and rail-banked rail lines in the region for future freight and passenger rail travel.*



Policies:

13.a Support appropriate opportunities for the potential shared use of freight rail lines for passenger rail opportunities.

13.b Facilitate the acquisition and continued operation of short-line railroads by local jurisdictions where needed to support current and future economic development needs.

13.c Use design techniques, technology (ITS), and operations coordination to minimize potential conflicts between trains and other modes of transportation, and between trains and adjacent land uses.

13.d Consider the acquisition of railroad rights-of-way threatened with abandonment in order to preserve these corridors for transportation use in the future.

13.e Consider future potential rail opportunities during long range planning to include planning of sites that may have the opportunity for future rail, and reserve areas for future rights-of-way as appropriate.

13.f When appropriate, participate in the partnerships necessary to foster efficient, high-speed passenger rail service in the Pacific Northwest rail corridor.

13.g Continue efforts to position the Thurston region for a future commuter rail connection to central Puget Sound.

Importance and Challenges

Rail offers one of the most cost-effective and efficient forms of transportation for many mobility needs. Freight trains can quickly and profitably move many raw and finished materials long distances. Heavy goods like gravel and logs can be shipped by rail, reducing significant wear on roads. Commuter trains offer predictability and affordability to long-distance commuters in major metropolitan areas like Seattle. Intercity passenger rail is increasingly popular for travel between Eugene,

Oregon and Vancouver, B.C., helping to ease pressure on highways and airports. Rail service also benefits some community development patterns. It stimulates complementary land use activities, such as industrial growth in an area served by freight rail, or transit-oriented development in areas served by commuter rail.

A pressing regional challenge is the loss of transportation corridors through rail line right-of-way abandonment by BNSF Railway or Union Pacific, the region's two primary rail owners. Without a sufficiently funded, proactive acquisition strategy, these difficult to assemble corridors could be lost to future transportation

uses including passenger rail service. Another challenge is establishing passenger rail service on tracks owned by the major railroads, whose primary business is moving freight. Making shortline connections to the major railroads, for either freight or passenger movements, can be challenging, as is maintaining shortline tracks to keep them operational. Land use patterns in the western United States dictate that rail travel complements – not replaces – car, bus, and truck travel, requiring good intermodal transfer locations and facilities.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Update and expand the Regional Rail Strategy to ensure information is current, realistic strategies are in place to keep rail corridors intact if faced with abandonment, options are explored to expand passenger and freight rail services in Thurston County, and safety issues are identified and addressed.
- Coordinate efforts among jurisdictions, rail operators, and public and private economic interests to evaluate the feasibility of increasing rail use along the Tacoma Rail Mountain Division line through eastern Thurston County.
- Identify rail segments that conflict with safe and efficient operation of streets and roads – such as the overpass on Rainier Road north of the City of Rainier or on Rainier Road south of Yelm Highway – and develop an implementation and funding strategy for retrofitting these facilities to improve safety.
- Support the state and other partners in promoting high speed passenger rail service.
- Identify opportunities to facilitate development of dense urban centers near existing and future rail stations.
- Identify and develop a funding strategy for transportation investments that improve access to existing and planned rail stations such as Yelm Highway Bridge at BNSF Railway.
- Determine which Sound Transit services are feasible for the Thurston Region.
- Widen active rail overpasses that restrict roadways to only one lane or two narrow lanes.

14. Aviation

Goal: Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the general aviation needs of residents and businesses in the region.



Policies:

14.a Encourage coordination between the Port of Olympia, the cities of Olympia and Tumwater, and Thurston County to maintain consistency between adopted land use plans and long-range airport development strategies, and to encourage land use compatibility in affected areas adjacent to the airport.

14.b Maintain and develop the Olympia Regional Airport in accordance with the current Airport Master Plan.

14.c Support regional passenger air service at the Olympia Regional Airport.

14.d Support multimodal access to the Olympia Regional Airport and to Sea-Tac International Airport.

Importance and Challenges

Air travel in the Thurston region serves passenger and freight mobility. Those with access to private planes and helicopters enjoy a convenient alternative to highway travel and increasingly time-consuming procedures at Sea-Tac International Airport. Small, commercial planes offer that same convenience to business travelers. Air travel also provides expedient options for time-sensitive missions like helicopter med-evac, or for access to remote areas. For certain freight delivery needs, air travel into and out of a small regional facility like the Olympia Regional Airport is a timely alternative to highway delivery.

State and federal laws govern the kinds of land uses that can be located within a certain distance of public use airports. These laws necessitate increasing coordination and

communication between airports and their surrounding jurisdictions. Once located at the outskirts of the urban area, the Olympia Regional Airport is increasingly surrounded by industrial, office, and residential uses. Many people are concerned about the environmental impacts of increased air travel, whether from the high fuel consumption, or pollutants and noise impacts on nearby neighborhoods. If aircraft size and flight frequencies increase, even long-established neighborhoods and communities far from the airport will feel increased impacts.

The Port's ability to retain a commercial air carrier has been challenged over the years by insufficient market demand. This makes it difficult to establish the facilities and critical user base needed to ensure such a venture remains profitable. The existence of threatened species or their habitat will make expansion of facilities and businesses at the airport more difficult.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Periodically review *Olympia Airport Master Plan* forecasts and assumptions to ensure that long-range goals and objectives for the airport are consistent with other local and regional objectives.
- Continue to evaluate commercial passenger air service opportunities.
- Consider aviation impacts from and to land use near airfields and flight paths.
- Complete the 20 year *Airport Capital Development Plan* in accordance with the current *Airport Master Plan* update.
- Monitor federal and state policy regarding the use of drones, and consider local action if warranted.
- Identify any areas of conflict between future plans for the aviation terminal and adjacent land use plans in Tumwater, and develop a coordinated strategy with all effected interest for addressing those issues to ensure that all user needs are met.

15. Marine Transportation

Goal: Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the region's marine transportation needs.



Policies:

15.a Maintain a marine terminal for water-borne freight movement.

15.b Encourage coordination among the Port of Olympia, the City of Olympia, and other stakeholders to maintain consistency between

adopted land use plans and long-range marine terminal development strategies, including adequate truck and rail access.

15.c Consider long-term strategies for integrating maritime passenger service into the regional transportation system as viable alternatives develop.

Importance and Challenges

Puget Sound waterways are natural transportation corridors. Historically, marine transportation has been vital to this region and continues to be important for passengers, and domestic and international trade. Passenger ferries on Puget Sound have been replaced with other modes of travel, whereas shipping continues through the Port of Olympia's marine terminal, as well as privately owned facilities on Budd Inlet. Marine terminals, while situated at sensitive environmental locations on the water's edge, can serve a vital national purpose in facilitating marine transportation of cargo and people.

Marine cargo moving through the Port of Olympia is challenged by its location at the southern terminus of Puget Sound. Major ports of call in Seattle and Tacoma offer shorter trips and larger facilities designed to handle the massive trans-oceanic ships arriving

from or departing to Asia. The current trend in cargo shipping is toward consolidation of containerized freight through the Ports of Tacoma and Seattle. The Port of Olympia has a reputation as a "specialty port" catering to the needs of break-bulk and project cargo shippers.

The Port peninsula is bordered by downtown Olympia, as well as its own Swantown and Market districts. As downtown becomes more active, it will be more challenging to balance freight train and truck traffic access to the Port with other commercial and residential traffic downtown.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Periodically update the Port's *Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements* to reflect changing conditions and evolving development strategies.

- Ensure that land use and market assumptions reflect short- and long-range priorities for redevelopment of land adjacent to the marine terminal, including the Port's Swantown and Market Districts and City of Olympia efforts.
- Identify any areas of conflict between future plans for the marine terminal and adjacent land use plans in Olympia, and develop a coordinated strategy with all affected interests for addressing those issues to ensure that all user needs are met.
- Monitor development of passenger ferry proposals for service into and out of Olympia. Incorporate any final implementation strategy into transportation and land use plans as appropriate.

16. Public Involvement

Goal: Build a community of an engaged and informed public that contributes ideas and supports actions to create a highly functional multimodal transportation system consistent with the goals and policies in this plan.



Policies:

16.a Comply with applicable state and federal non-discrimination and accessibility requirements for public involvement.

16.b Provide broad-based, early, and continuing public involvement in all aspects of the transportation planning process.

16.c Ensure equal access to participation for all users of the transportation system.

16.d Promote increased community understanding of the relationship between land use choices and transportation consequences facing communities at local, Tribal, regional, and state levels.

16.e Engage in consultation with Tribal governments within the region to ensure Tribal participation.

16.f Explore innovative participation techniques to increase overall public involvement.

Importance and Challenges

When it comes to transportation policies and investments, the region faces difficult choices and trade-offs. The public has a vested interest in the outcome, whether in 20-year regional decision-making processes or day-to-day local decisions. Effective public input informed by an understanding of issues and choices produces better decisions and results.

To realize effective involvement, the community needs an opportunity for on-going education and dialogue to understand the issues, and evaluate choices and consequences. Government is challenged to make the best use of the public's time with meaningful process, clear and effective materials, and

sincere consideration of input. Special efforts are needed to make information available in a variety of formats (social media, website, TV, radio, personal outreach, mailing, phone calling, open houses, etc.), and languages. It is important to continue outreach to young people to help them become life-long informed transportation consumers.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Create and implement a curriculum designed to educate citizens on the local, Tribal, regional, state, and federal roles in transportation decision-making. Include information on how and when to become involved and key points of contact. This program could be used to educate

community members on a regular basis, empowering them to play a more active role in their community's transportation decision-making process.

- Use the internet, social media, and other technology-based approaches for on-going community dialogue on a range of transportation topics, including funding priorities, trade-offs, revenue options, and the effects of individual choices on regional consequences. This could also provide a virtual form for comment on specific plans or policies. Encourage participating agencies to post internet links to community dialog on respective websites and through other public information channels.
- Take advantage of regional data to effectively tailor outreach efforts to minority and socio-economically disadvantaged communities.
- Routinely offer "Transportation 101" briefings to new elected officials and planning commissioners on local, state, and federal transportation issues.
- Consider project signs providing information on funding sources and participating agencies.

17. Intergovernmental Coordination



Goal: *Ensure transportation facilities and programs function seamlessly across community borders and between regions.*

Policies:

17.a Encourage coordination among the local, regional, tribal, state, and federal governments in operation of the transportation system.

17.b Work with government agencies to coordinate land uses, implement countywide planning policies, and refine the tools needed to accomplish land use plans.

17.c Coordinate street and road projects of all our local jurisdictions and Intercity Transit where appropriate.

17.d Coordinate the development and updates of local, regional, state, and federal transportation plans to ensure consistency.

17.e Exchange ideas, information, and issues among local jurisdictions, tribal, state, and federal transportation authorities, and economic development interests to facilitate informed, reasoned decision-making processes.

17.f Maintain government-to-government relations with tribal governments within the region to encourage coordination of land use and transportation plans.

Importance and Challenges

Travelers expect a high level of transportation service throughout the region and seamless transitions between communities. Therefore, the transportation network should function like a single system, not a collection of independent systems. Governments at the federal, state, tribal, local, and regional levels must coordinate their investments, policies, operations, and standards to ensure this continuity.

To function seamlessly across community borders, the transportation system must be planned, funded, and constructed in a coordinated way. This requires coordination

among more than a dozen traditional transportation providers in the Thurston region alone and many service providers who rely on that system to supply assistance and mobility programs. Coordination of facilities and services is challenged by differences in funding abilities and processes, land use pressures, prioritization processes, time, and other government needs. A key challenge is the competitive nature of much of the region's transportation funding, which often pits one community against another in the effort to secure scarce transportation revenue.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Continue to explore common issues and identify appropriate next steps through TRPC's policy maker forums.
- Reach out to Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, and Pierce Counties to identify possible issues meriting further inter-regional coordination.
- Increase communication and understanding between tribal and non-tribal governments.
- Continue active participation on established inter-governmental bodies and look for ways to increase the effectiveness of these organizations.
- Explore new ways of coordinating and delivering transportation services among various providers and agencies to leverage investments and improve public service.
- Continue to educate elected officials, planning commissions, and other decision makers on the relationship between land use and transportation.

18. Environmental and Human Health



Goal: *Minimize transportation impacts on the natural environment and the people who live and work in the Thurston region.*

Policies:

18.a Protect water quality from the impacts of stormwater runoff by minimizing impervious surface area using low impact development methods where feasible, and effectively treating and managing unavoidable runoff.

18.b During transportation planning, design, and construction, proactively address fish barrier removal, taking into consideration the habitat of fish bearing streams and environmentally sensitive areas.

18.c Develop a transportation system supporting compact, mixed-use development policies and non-motorized travel that curbs growth in miles of motor vehicle travel to increase energy efficiency, reduce environmental impacts, and encourage physical activity and community health.

18.d Promote use of alternative fuels and technologies that reduce pollution and other environmental impacts from motorized vehicles.

18.e Ensure federal Title VI requirements for environmental justice are met. Title VI protects minority populations and people with low incomes so that they do not incur disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects from transportation programs, policies, and investments.

18.f Ensure federal Clean Air Act transportation requirements are met.

18.g. Support policies and actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

18.h Reduce the impacts of transportation infrastructure on the natural environment during construction, retrofit, and maintenance.

18.i Acknowledge that changing weather and climate patterns will impact the human, natural, and built environment, and plan for impacts such as increased flooding and sea-level rise.

Importance and Challenges

The Thurston region has a legal responsibility to ensure that transportation investments don't reverse the good results achieved in air quality over the last 20 years. It's also important to ensure the negative impacts of the transportation system on the social

and built environment don't outweigh its benefits. Transportation investments should add to – not detract from – quality of life in neighborhoods, rural communities, and city centers.

The Thurston region – like most of the U.S. – is dependent on fossil-fuel technologies for virtually all of its transportation. The way the region developed created many mobility needs.

These fossil fuels, and the many square miles of impervious surface required to meet daily travel needs, have long impacted air and water quality, wildlife habitat, healthy lifestyles, and community livability.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Pursue “clean fuel” technology in the Thurston region. Continue supporting market development through investments in government vehicle fleets. Encourage suppliers to widely promote and make available clean fuels and technologies in Thurston County.
- Evaluate fish-bearing streams to better target resources to the highest priority culvert retrofits.
- Employ participatory processes, such as those inherent in Context Sensitive Design, as a way to include citizens and businesses in evaluating specific transportation problems, determining needs, and designing solutions.
- Encourage sustainable, low impact development strategies, such as pervious surfaces.
- Support Thurston Thrives health planning activities related to land use.
- Support health of pollinators and other environmental goals by preserving and using pollinator-friendly native vegetation when appropriate and possible during building and maintenance of the transportation system.

19. Performance Measures

Goal: *Develop performance measures that are realistic, efficient to administer, effective in assessing performance, and meaningful to the public.*



Policies:

19.a Use transportation performance measures to evaluate, monitor, and respond to the performance of regional policies and investments.

19.b Use transportation performance measures that reflect priority regional objectives, such as consistency of transportation and land use decisions, improved mobility and access, adequate

maintenance and repair of the existing system, environmental protection, and safety.

19.c Develop performance measures that reflect the contribution of all modes of travel.

19.d Where feasible, use performance measures consistent with those used by other organizations to enable comparisons.

Importance and Challenges

Performance measures can be useful tools in evaluating how well policies and investments support key transportation objectives. These measures provide a basis for understanding current situations, assessing decisions and outcomes, and perhaps making future course corrections. This can be helpful in prioritizing issues, allocating resources, and marking progress on complex issues. Performance measures can also be powerful tools for explaining issues, strategies, and outcomes to constituents and other interests.

A serious downfall of many programs is the urge to develop too many performance measures. Unless key objectives are narrowed and meaningful measures developed for those select priorities, collecting data, monitoring,

and reporting on performance measures can be time consuming and expensive. It is difficult, but essential, to prioritize among the list of objectives and select only a few performance measures.

Another challenge is posed by the limited availability of reliable data that can be updated periodically. Again, measures that rely on creation of new data are likely to be costly or difficult to maintain over time. Regional performance measures may be different from many measures implemented at the local, tribal, or state levels because missions and priorities differ. Without a commitment to monitor, report on, and evaluate performance measures in a meaningful way, the public and other stakeholders will grow disillusioned. A thoughtful process is needed to establish measures that identify appropriate objectives and avoid over-committing resources.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Explore whether or not a multimodal level of service standard is a workable and desirable measure for local or regional system evaluation.
- Develop an appropriate reporting format, evaluation schedule, and process for monitoring performance measures over time.
- Conduct surveys to better understand use of the transportation system and gauge public opinion on transportation issues.
- Develop a communication strategy to report findings.

20. Transportation Funding

Goal: Secure adequate funding from all sources to implement the goals and policies in this plan.



Policies:

20.a Provide timely and comprehensive public information about transportation funding issues and opportunities to better enable citizens to participate in complex funding decisions.

20.b Prioritize the maintenance and preservation of the existing transportation system to minimize life-cycle costs.

20.c Consider costs and benefits in the allocation of transportation funds to ensure best long-term investment decisions.

20.d Make strategic transportation investments that reinforce land use and transportation decisions consistent with the goals and policies of this plan.

20.e Ensure that transportation investments are equitable to all segments of the community – in terms of costs such as relocations, adverse health impacts, and land use disruptions, and in terms of benefits derived from the system, such as levels of service or travel choices.

20.f Support efforts to improve the availability, predictability, and flexibility of transportation revenues for all modes.

20.g Use transportation funding policies and investments to make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.

20.h Continue local policies that require new development to pay for its impacts on the transportation system.

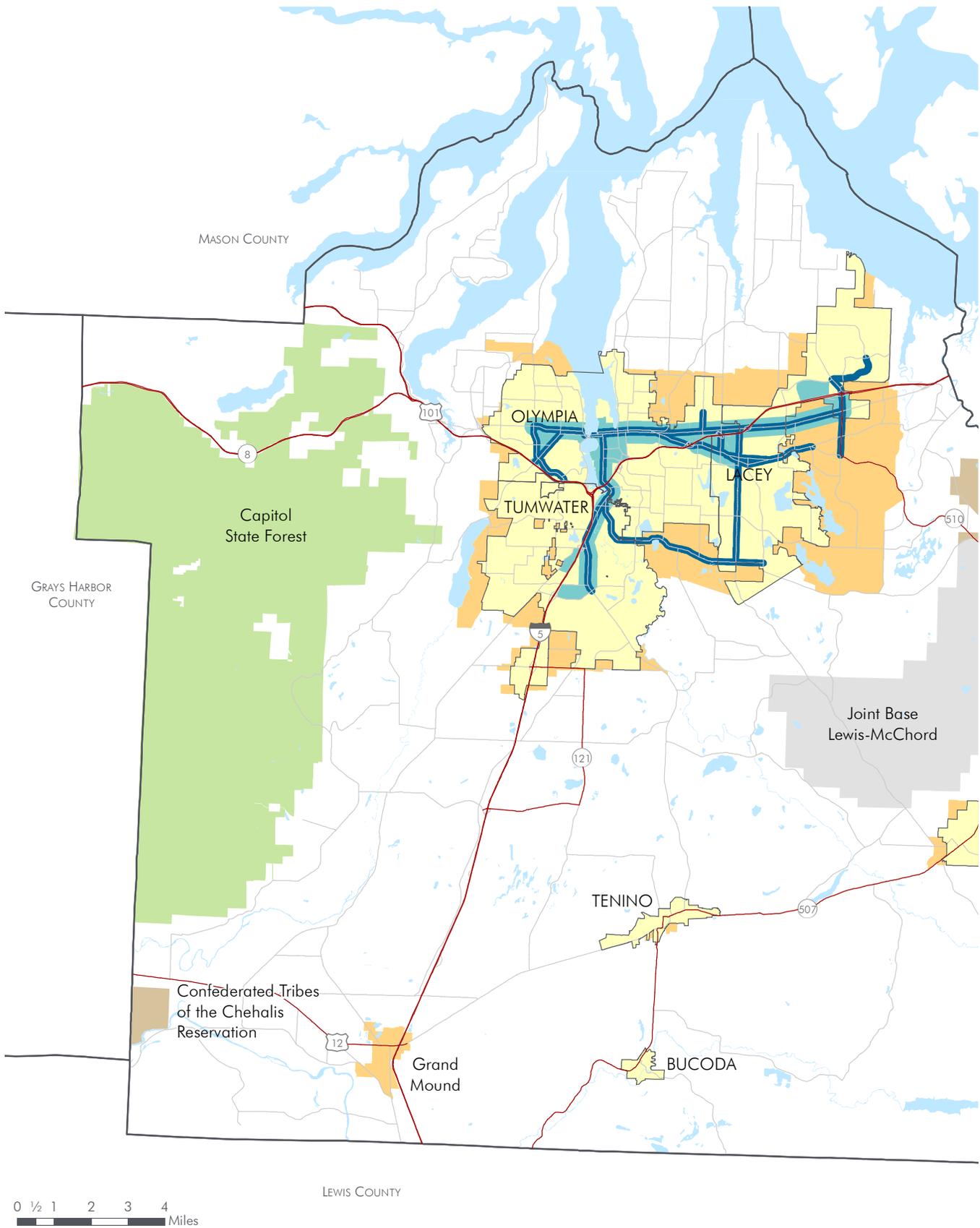
Importance and Challenges

The facilities that are built, the programs and services that are implemented, and the education and outreach that is conducted, all rely on sufficient funding. No single funding source is available for governments to build, maintain, and operate the region's transportation system. Instead, funding is pieced together from a variety of revenues. This challenges orderly and thoughtful prioritization and implementation strategies.

Voters in Washington State and Thurston County alike have been divided on the subject of transportation funding in recent years, often along rural/urban lines. Recent state gas tax and local sales tax increases do not offset earlier losses of revenue sources or inflationary effects on fixed revenues. In some cases, delaying program investments – as in pavement preservation programs – results in higher life-cycle costs later. Funding issues are further compounded by the lack of true market mechanisms to manage demand for travel. Unlike utilities, few pricing structures are available for effectively balancing supply and demand, and those that exist are rarely politically feasible.

Examples of Supportive Measures

- Consider ways to refine development fee structures for transportation to better support local and regional investment goals, improve predictability and equity for developers, and generate appropriate contributions attributed to all development impacts.
- Improve funding and programming predictability at the local and regional levels by increasing the amount of revenue over which agencies have decision-making authority, either through the provision and implementation of workable local revenue options, or through an increase in state revenues distributed directly to local or regional agencies for programming.
- Monitor and respond to legislative proposals to expand local and State revenue options for priority transportation needs.

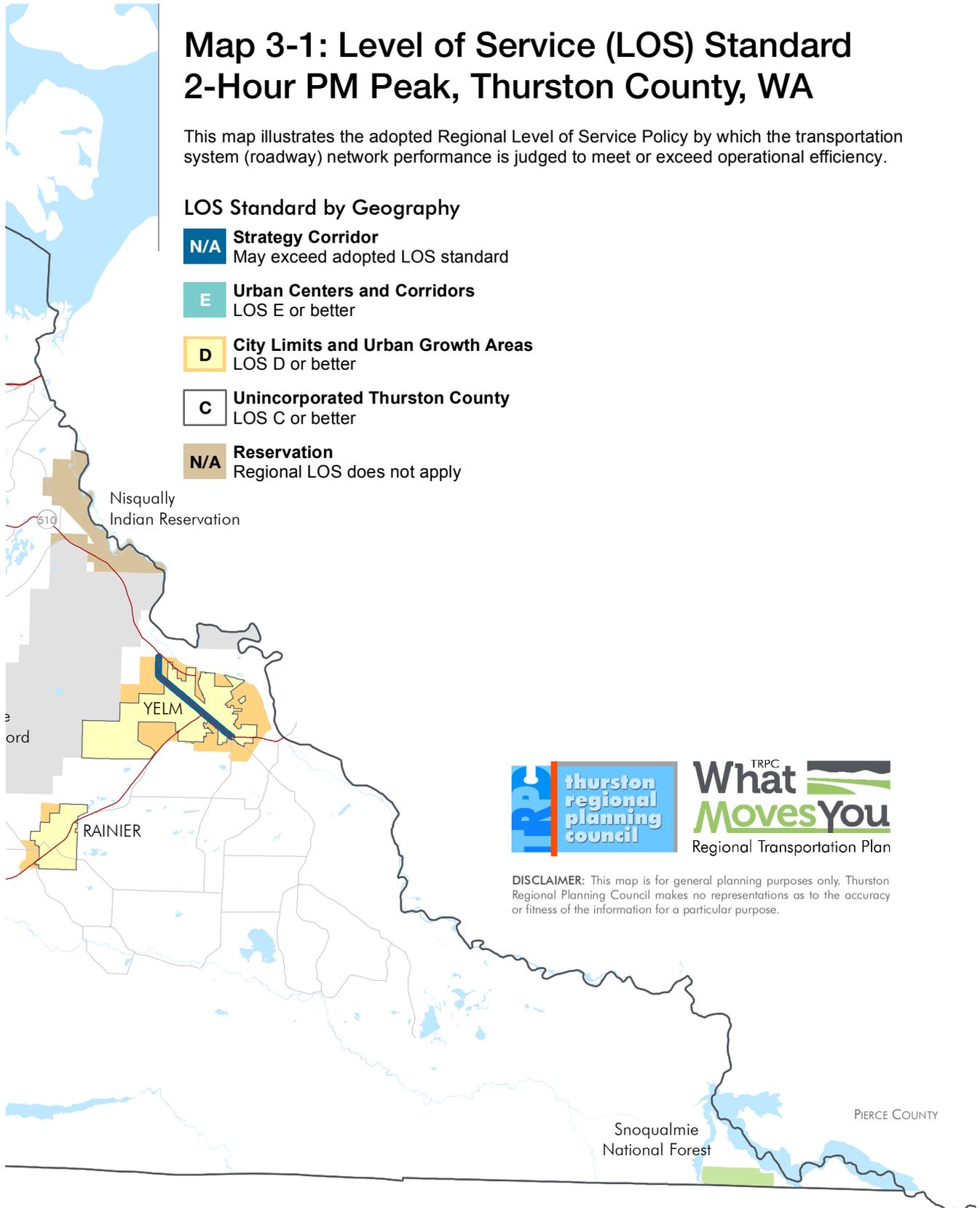


Map 3-1: Level of Service (LOS) Standard 2-Hour PM Peak, Thurston County, WA

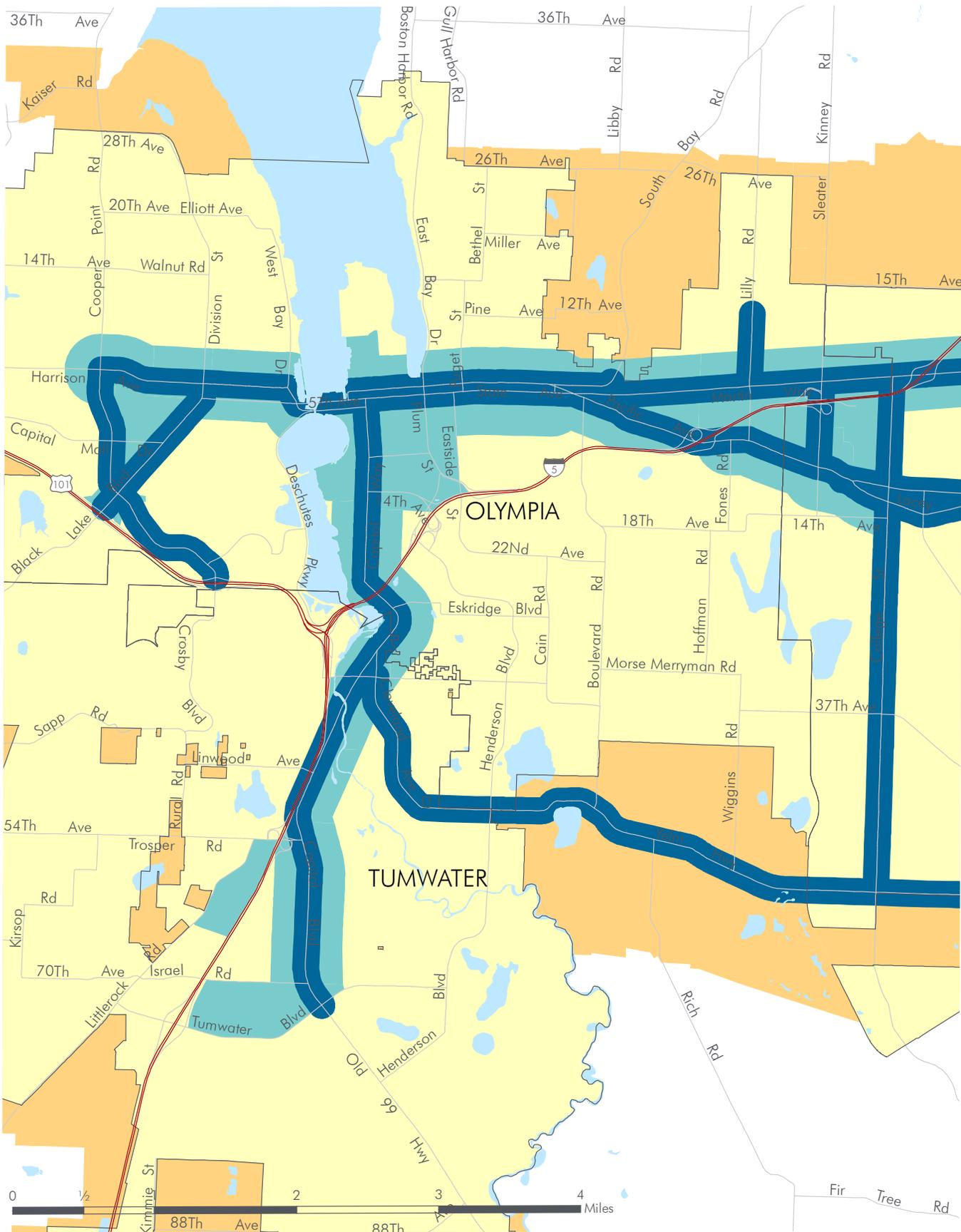
This map illustrates the adopted Regional Level of Service Policy by which the transportation system (roadway) network performance is judged to meet or exceed operational efficiency.

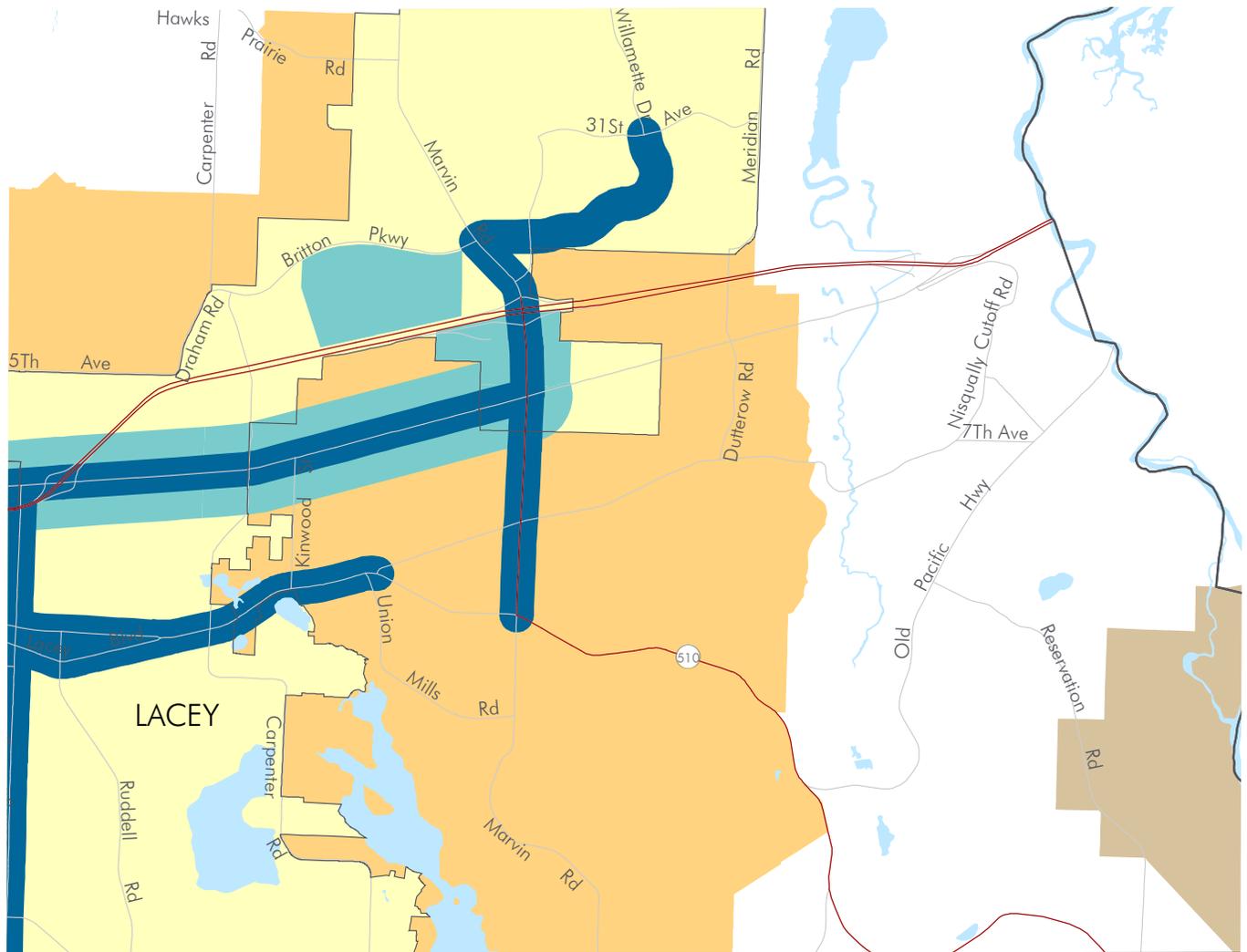
LOS Standard by Geography

- N/A Strategy Corridor**
May exceed adopted LOS standard
- E Urban Centers and Corridors**
LOS E or better
- D City Limits and Urban Growth Areas**
LOS D or better
- C Unincorporated Thurston County**
LOS C or better
- N/A Reservation**
Regional LOS does not apply



DISCLAIMER: This map is for general planning purposes only. Thurston Regional Planning Council makes no representations as to the accuracy or fitness of the information for a particular purpose.





Map 3-2: Level of Service (LOS) Standard 2-Hour PM Peak, Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater, WA

This map illustrates the adopted Regional Level of Service Policy by which the transportation system (roadway) network performance is judged to meet or exceed operational efficiency.

LOS Standard by Geography

- N/A Strategy Corridor**
May exceed adopted LOS standard
- E Urban Centers and Corridors**
LOS E or better
- D City Limits and Urban Growth Areas**
LOS D or better
- C Unincorporated Thurston County**
LOS C or better
- N/A Reservation**
Regional LOS does not apply

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