

## Transportation Planning Forum, June 14, 2021

PSRC transportation data visualization tool: <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/regional-planning/regional-transportation-plan/rtp-data-research>

Regional Transportation Plan survey & engage page: <https://engage.psrc.org/regional-transportation-plan>

### **Issues Raised, Points Made:**

- I really appreciate the detail you are going into with this project(s). You are all doing a fantastic job.
- Well run forum with great data and depth of answers to audience questions! Six of our CCAC were in attendance.
- Light rail has great advantages environmentally over BRT, particularly related to climate change, but also air and water quality. If buses must be used, they should be continuous power via overhead contact wire vs batteries for similar reasons. (The Climate Emergency: Trains-An Effective Response ISBN 978-1-7327310-1-1)
- Improved rail (Amtrak) will effectively compete with air for distances of about 400 miles, with a far lower climate footprint - even prior to rail electrification.
- Caution with the terminology of "high speed rail" ; the "ultra" HSR plan for the Cascades as proposed will likely not be at all operational until beyond 2045, providing no climate emissions reductions benefits in the urgent short term. Amtrak upgrades can provide useful emissions reductions incrementally and utilizing our investments in infrastructure and a comprehensive blueprint.
- As a transit spine, updated Amtrak will be far more useful than a 250mph bullet train that only connects large cities and won't be operational for decades. It's really the missing link for all transit and multimodal (including first/last mile service to and from station hubs)
- Chat room 1: Maintenance cost & replacement cost of utilities and infrastructure in places where existing development makes cost more expensive. - resilience to deal with natural disasters- challenge of staging out projects to deal with rising costs. That also causes problems when people don't want to pay for projects when they won't get to benefit from them.
- Chat room 5 was impressed about information about sidewalks and bike lanes and how important to track and ensure they are considered during the next 30 years
- Concern: Coordination among all the areas and agencies; leverage the effort and money for an integrated solution.
- The tribes may be sovereign nations, but their commercial development in our residential areas negatively impact us, the citizens, that live in those areas. It's a shame that the tribes don't have to follow the GMA zoning laws.
- Re service to Eastern WA, and other topics, please see Thomas White's new book at <http://www.vtd.net/VTDPUB/TCE/TCE.html>
- Transit should include on-demand transit as a transparent last mile trip as part of the transit system in lieu of parking lots and driving. An example: <https://www.youtube.com/user/pantoniuminc>
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### **Questions:**

- Forecasts:
  - On what are the projections based that households will be smaller in 2050?  
The region is projected to add 830,000 new households to reach a total of 2.4 million by 2050. Average household size, which has been relatively stable over the last two and a half decades, is anticipated to begin declining again as baby boomers age and the number of

empty-nester and one-person households increases. Decreasing fertility rates also contribute to this trend.

- Is Arlington considered a high growth and increased manufacturing area, given the new dedicated MIC between Marysville & Arlington?

Arlington is a high capacity transit community under VISION 2050's regional growth strategy based on future investments in bus rapid transit. As the region's transit system grows, these 34 identified high capacity transit communities in our region play an increasingly important role as hubs to accommodate regional employment and population growth. In addition, the cities of Arlington and Marysville share a regionally-designated Manufacturing Industrial Center, called the Cascade Industrial Center. The cities are planning for significant employment growth in this location.

- What factors determine growth centers (the black dots on slide 16)? Several communities in Kitsap County are experiencing rapid expansion, with formerly rural area roads seeing heavy traffic increases. In particular, Poulsbo & greater Kingston are adding housing.

The black dots indicate regional growth centers. Local jurisdictions have self-nominated and the region has designated 29 regional growth centers. These are locations of the region's most significant business, governmental, and cultural facilities where local jurisdictions are planning to focus growth.

- Aviation:

- Why is Boeing Field not included in regional evaluation?

King County International Airport (Boeing Field) is included in the full analysis.

- Will the location of the airports handling increased commercial plane traffic be included in the draft plan? In other words, what is the next step in picking a site for the airport providing support for SEA TAC traffic?

The Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission was created by the Washington State Legislature and tasked WSDOT Aviation to provide staff support for coordinating and administering the commission and technical assistance as requested by commission members. By 2023 the commission will develop recommendations to meet Washington state critical aviation system capacity needs. In addition to recommending a new primary commercial aviation facility, the commission will recommend additional ways to accommodate capacity needs at other facilities. WSDOT Aviation is responsible for the administration of the commission's work while providing technical support to the commission members.

- Has commercial air traffic been classified by distance traveled? Short distance air service should be diverted to rail and funds expended accordingly. In addition to the effect on climate change, an additional commercial airport will merely exacerbate urban sprawl.

The analysis in the Regional Aviation Baseline Study did look at the percentage of air travel to relatively short distances (e.g., Vancouver, B.C. and Portland Oregon). These trips represented approximately 4 percent of regional air travel.

- What authority does PSRC have over the siting of an airport? Can a city refuse to accept commercial travel at their municipal airport? I remember Arlington being chosen in 1992 by PSRC as the site to handle SEA TAC overflow, but I don't remember what the city's role was in that?

PSRC does not have any authority on the siting of aviation facilities, which is overseen by the Federal Aviation Administration, the State of Washington, and airport owners.

- Rail:

- Has the high speed rail idea from King County to Moses Lake risen from the ashes?

PSRC's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is not specifically calling out or planning for this particular route, but we are identifying the various aspects of future high speed rail lines as part of meeting the need of growth coming to the region in the future.

- Will you aim to prevail upon WSDOT to develop an improved, faster, more frequent Amtrak Cascades Service Plan?  
Similarly to the above response, the potential for improved and/or extended Amtrak service will be addressed in the RTP as another opportunity to serve intercity transportation needs.
- Ferries:
  - What are the plans to mitigate several of the ferry problems that have cropped up lately?  
The replacement and preservation needs of the ferry system will be documented in the plan and captured in the financial strategy, identifying needs between now and 2050.
- Transit – Connections:
  - If North Kitsap & South Kitsap have “suburban” type growth due to the availability of passenger only ferries, will Kitsap Transit be expected to fund the bus connections?  
PSRC conducted a feasibility study of 45 distinct routes across the 12 counties bordering Puget Sound. The study identifies all of the challenges and opportunities that implementers would have to address should they wish to pursue each route, including the provision of land side connections including transit. There was not an assumption of financial or other roles and responsibilities – that is called out as one of the necessary considerations if a route were to move forward into a project-level planning study.
  - How much emphasis has been placed on the "last mile"? In other words, how do we get from where we are to the transit?  
PSRC is placing considerable emphasis on access to transit as part of this plan. This includes not just the provision of new rail and bus lines, but the infrastructure and connections to make it easier for people to take that transit. We are evaluating sidewalks, bicycle lanes, park and rides, feeder bus service as well as on demand services both now and into the future.
  - Any plan for on-demand transit to serve the “last mile issue”? (in reference to aviation & rail)  
Similar to the above response, we recognize that on demand services are an emerging area in the region and around the country. There is still much to learn and limited data is available that would help to forecast those services, but PSRC is monitoring this sector and providing tools that will hopefully assist cities and transit agencies in planning the right service in the right area.
- Transit Planning:
  - Has consideration been given for improving transit between South King County and Tacoma?  
Current plans include the extension of Link Light Rail from Federal Way to Tacoma, anticipated to be complete by 2030. There are also improvements to the South Sounder Commuter Rail service through 2036.
- Emissions/EVs:
  - Can projected electrical generation and grid capacity support needs of rail needs and road-based vehicles? Is the Regional Plan integrated with the State Energy Strategy 2021?  
PSRC is working with a variety of partner agencies, including the State, universities, utilities, member jurisdictions and the Puget Sound Clean Air agency to plan for and advance electrification of the transportation system. Utilities are active partners in the conversation and overall there is a solid plan in place to prepare for this future.
  - How are plans for light rail, highway and bus rapid transit focused on dropping carbon emissions?  
PSRC’s Regional Transportation Plan is built from the policies in VISION 2050 for a sustainable future and a goal to reduce carbon emissions. The plan includes a Four-Part Greenhouse Gas Strategy that addresses land use, transportation choices, pricing and technology. The long-range plan, including all of the planned investments across modes and the regional strategy to focus future growth in compact communities near transit, is

analyzed for a variety of air pollutants including greenhouse gases. There is a significant focus in the plan for expansion of transit and active transportation opportunities, as well as the efficiency of the roadway system.

- Will there be enough electric car charging stations available in our communities in the near future?

Per the response above, PSRC is working with partners on a Regional Electric Vehicle (REV) Collaborative to plan for this future. Legislation was also just passed to develop tools to help forecast the charging and other infrastructure needs across the state. In our region, we are working with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency to develop a clearinghouse of information that will include the work being conducted at the state as well as information on current charging infrastructure.

- Are you planning for fewer private cars being driven?  
PSRC's plan strives to focus growth in compact communities and near transit, provide a better jobs/housing balance and to provide adequate transportation options. The results of these efforts should provide a more sustainable transportation system with reduced vehicle miles traveled and lower emissions. We are a large, diverse and growing region, and people will still travel by car, but we hope to provide travel options and to ensure the cars that are on the road are efficient and run with cleaner energy.
- How are you actually planning to influence the carbon emissions in the area to actually drop?

See above responses.

- Other:

- Do any of these plans address parking? Many cities find that reducing or eliminating mandatory minimum parking spaces improves things for local businesses, reduces environmental harm, and reduces traffic deaths.

PSRC's plan includes information on parking throughout the region, but at the four-county regional scale we do not analyze at the local scale for site specific parking policies.

- How will the changes affect the character of neighborhoods? How will traffic increases be mitigated? Primary focus is on the I-5 corridor, but how can attention be directed to other growth areas (housing prices lower outside King Co.) attracting additional traffic. How will that be mitigated? Traffic on foot ferries is high and perhaps demand is growing.

Between VISION 2050 and the Regional Transportation Plan, all aspects of the region – from large metropolitan cities to suburban cities to small cities and rural areas are addressed for their growth and transportation needs. VISION 2050 addresses the jobs/housing balance question, and the data provided in the Regional Transportation Plan – including the transportation system conditions visualization tool – helps to identify the needs across the region.

- Are you doing surveys on the number of cars that use certain roads? That doesn't appear to be happening here in Lynnwood.

PSRC has collected traffic count information from the state and various jurisdictions. We don't have information on every road, but for many of the major facilities.

- Public Processes:

- What have you done to involve city councils of King County in the priorities in the 2050 draft plan?

PSRC's member jurisdictions have representation on our boards and committees and are actively engaged in the development of our plans. In addition, PSRC staff routinely attend meetings held by the counties and cities, both at the staff and elected official level.

- Since the cities are the "units of change for this plan", how have the cities engaged the citizens that will be impacted by these changes?

Cities and Counties are required to periodically update local comprehensive land use plans, with the next updates required by June 2024 in the central Puget Sound region. These

updated local plans will address provisions adopted in VISION 2050. As part of these planning processes, local jurisdictions are required to conduct public outreach and engagement.

- How did you randomly distribute the survey? None of us received the postcard, nor did anyone we know?

The survey invitation was mailed to 24,000 randomly selected addresses in King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. Additional outreach was conducted with the help of 34 community-based organizations to reach more people who are historically marginalized or disenfranchised, people with low incomes, people who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and people who use simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Also, in addition to the representative public survey, the same survey is now available on PSRC's website at <https://engage.psrc.org/regional-transportation-plan>.

- Are the tribes who are building casinos or other large buildings held to the same standards for mitigation of transportation as other state/county/city groups?

Yes. Projects undertaken by Tribal governments must undergo environmental analysis under either the State Environmental Policy Act or National Environmental Policy Act as appropriate and identify and implement mitigation measures.

- Funding:

- Will the money for transportation projects for Seattle be funneled to more of the outlying cities as more people seem to be moving away from Seattle and to the suburbs/ outlying communities?

PSRC does not allocate funding to specific cities. We conduct competitive grant processes to distribute federal funds to priority projects across the region that meet regional policies. Funds raised locally by jurisdictions are captured in our long-range financial strategy but would presumably remain within their own jurisdiction.

- How do you "encourage" coordination between agencies and cities on transportation projects? I am interested in leveraging resources to limit duplication and waste.

For the projects that PSRC oversees, either through the long-range plan or the short-range federal grant processes, we publish information on every project including via a web-based map. Where there is an intersection with neighboring jurisdictions, the state or a transit agency, we have policies and procedures that address this coordination and concurrence.