CHAPTER 5
TRANSPORTATION

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan serves as the Transportation Element as defined by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A. The contents of this chapter include descriptions of the highway and road system, local transit service, bicycle and pedestrian ways, and rail and air systems in Thurston County; the specific GMA requirements for the Transportation Element; and maps showing existing and future roadways (M-33), existing and future bikeways (M-35), intercity transit routes (M-34), and rail systems (M-41).

A transportation system includes a variety of facilities and services. Roads and highways, public transit, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities, bicycle and pedestrian paths, equestrian trails, sidewalks, rail facilities, waterways, airports, and utility transmission corridors can all be considered part of an area's transportation system. Transportation systems serve an important function in our society; they connect communities and provide routes for trade and commerce, easy access to a variety of destinations, and recreation and exercise. Transportation systems can also generate noise and safety issues and create barriers or boundaries. In order to realize the most good and limit adverse impacts, transportation systems must be thoughtfully planned, and coordinated with planned land use patterns and intensities, taking into account regional and local needs in the process.

This Chapter was reviewed and updated in 2004 as part of a periodic review required by RCW 36.70A.130(4)(a).

Thurston County's transportation system connects communities, provides routes for commerce, and creates opportunities for recreation and exercise. The transportation system costs a great deal to maintain - and in terms of monetary value, is the most valuable County asset. Growth in Thurston County is resulting in more congested roads and generating noise that impacts commuters and residents. People still lose their lives on county roads, and each of those deaths or injury has ripples out to family members, friends, and the broader community. To limit adverse impacts and maximize benefits, the system must be planned thoughtfully and coordinated with land-use patterns and intensities, considering user needs today and tomorrow.

To that end, Chapter 5 of the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan sets goals, objectives, and policies for roadway design and level of service (vehicle congestion) and for bicycle and pedestrian facilities (bike lanes, sidewalks, and multiuse trails). Additional sections and regulations relate to the county's rail, air, and bus network.

Thurston County updated Chapter 5's body text and regulations during 2017 and 2018 as part of a periodic review required by RCW 36.70A.130. The revisions ensure that the chapter is consistent with the State Transportation Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, County Wide Planning Policies, Intercity Transit Strategic Plan, Regional Trails Plan, and Thurston County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The latter document outlines for the 2017–2022 period Thurston
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September 2018 – August 2019 BoC Public Recommendation Hearing Draft

County's transportation program and includes ranked projects and estimated annual revenues and expenses.

20189 Update: Critical Issues

Where we live and work – and how we travel – impact how well Thurston County's transportation system works and meets the needs and expectations of a changing population. The county’s population is projected to grow from about 270,000 residents today to 370,000 residents in 2040 – a 40 percent increase between 2018 and 2040. Commuting into and out of Thurston County is projected to double over the same period.

Over the next few decades, some people may continue to drive alone in 2040, while others may ride a bus, bicycle, or use another alternative to get to jobs, schools, or other destinations. No matter changes in transportation modes over the next few decades, the system must work efficiently, equitably, and safely for all users.

From 2006 to 2016, construction costs increased almost 53 percent. This means a $1 million project in 2006 would cost more than $1.5 million in 2016. Inflation, coupled with no increase in the federal gas tax (a grant source on which Thurston County relies) means fewer funds for transportation investments.

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1 Washington State Department of Transportation Construction Cost Index
Critical issues confronting decision-makers planning for the county’s transportation network include how to:

- Finance the maintenance, preservation, and expansion of the transportation network as the traffic volume grows.
- Maintain acceptable operating service levels and a safe transportation network.
- Reduce automobile dependence and serve the needs of people who rely on public transportation services.
- Minimize environmental impacts associated with transportation systems.
- Adapt to new transportation technologies (e.g., electric and driverless vehicles).
- Preserve and promote options for passenger rail in the Puget Sound Corridor.
II. PLANNING CONTEXT FOR TRANSPORTATION

Critical issues confronting decision makers regarding delivery of transportation systems include how to:

1. **Maintain Acceptable Operating Service Levels and a Safe Transportation Network;**
2. **Maintain Roads as Efficiently as Possible;**
3. **Provide Public Transportation Services where Planned in the Region to Help Meet Decreased Auto Dependence Goals and Serve the Needs of People who Rely on Public Transportation;**
4. **Finance Extension of Road Systems especially New Connections that Establish a Network that can Help Meet County and Regional Goals;**
5. **Monitor and Regulate the Transportation of Hazardous Materials;**
6. **Avoid Environmental Impacts Associated with Transportation Systems; and**

A. **State Regulatory Growth Management Requirements**

This chapter of the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan serves as the Transportation Element, as defined by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), 36.70A.070. The chapter meets all GMA requirements by including: descriptions of the highway and road system; local transit services; bicycle and pedestrian ways; and, rail and air systems in Thurston County. The chapter also references relevant information in the Capital Facilities chapter Plan (Chapter 6) and the Capital Improvement Program (Appendix G), as well as the following maps: Federal Functional Classification (T-1); County Functional Classification (T-2); Grand Mound Functional Classification (T-2a); Transit Routes (T-3); Existing and Planned Bicycle and Multiuse Trail Facilities (T-4); Rail, Port, and Airport Facilities (T-5); 2015 Modeled Traffic Volumes (T-6); 2040 Modeled Traffic Volumes (T-7); Freight and Goods Transportation System (T-8); Level of Service (T-9); 2040 Level of Service Projections (T-10).

The State Growth Management Act (GMA) includes a Transportation Planning Goal, to encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans. The State Growth Management Act (GMA) also requires Transportation Chapter and the Transportation Goals and...
Policies this plan and its chapters to implement and be consistent with the land use elements of plans and include at a minimum:

1. **Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(i), the plan must include Land-land** use assumptions used to estimate travel.

   The assumptions in this Chapter are consistent with those used in the Regional Transportation Plan and the Land Use Chapter of this Thurston County Comprehensive Plan. This plan’s Land Use chapter (Chapter 6). The regionally adopted population and employment forecasts reflect locally adopted land use plans, and have been approved for use by the Office of Financial Management. The 2025-2040 land use forecasts are based on the general policy concept of concentrating high-density residential development and commercial development in cities and urban growth areas where it can be accommodated with urban services and infrastructure, and maintaining low-density residential patterns outside of those areas to preserve rural resource lands and lifestyles, and to minimize sprawl.

2. **Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(ii), the plan must include Estimated traffic impacts to state-owned transportation facilities resulting from land use assumptions.**

   The Regional Transportation Plan analyzes traffic impacts for the entire regional network, including state facilities. The traffic forecast volumes provided in Appendix E, Map T-7 Map 46 and Map 47 include estimated modeled traffic impacts to state-owned transportation facilities.

3. **Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iii)(A), the plan must include An inventory of existing air, water, and land transportation facilities and services, and future facility and service needs.**

   The maps in Maps and tables associated with this chapter show current and proposed transportation facilities and services. Refer to the adopted joint Plans for proposed transportation facilities within the urban growth areas around the cities and towns. Refer to the Grand Mound Subarea Plan for proposed facilities within the Grand Mound urban growth area. Appendix F identifies existing state transportation facilities in Thurston County. Six-year capacity needs are included in the Capital Improvement Program Facilities Plan (CIP) in unincorporated areas both inside and outside of urban growth boundaries.

4. **Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iii)(B), the plan must include Regionally coordinated level of service (LOS) standards for state highways, locally owned arterials, and transit routes to serve as a gauge to judge performance of the system.**

   LOS standards for regionally significant state facilities are consistent with those adopted by local agencies. LOS standards for highways of statewide significance (HSS) are not subject to locally-adopted standards. The list of regionally-significant transportation projects includes those needed to maintain the adopted LOS standards for regionally significant state facilities.
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Transportation standards, and such projects are included in the Capital Facilities Plan/Improvement Program, as appropriate. Specific actions and requirements for bringing facilities into compliance with established LOS standards are listed in this chapter. Goal 4, Objective C addresses transit LOS. Goal 4, Objective A, Policies 6 and 7 describe LOS for state highways, arterials, transit routes and other roads in the county.

5. Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iii)(E), the plan must include traffic forecasts for at least ten years that identify vehicle trips generated by forecasted population, employment and adopted land use plans.

Twenty-five year traffic forecasts have been completed as part of the Regional Transportation Planning process, and a sample of information available is presented in Maps 46 and 47, Map T-7 and Appendix E. The list of transportation system improvements in the CFP reflect the results of that forecast. The traffic volume forecasts document the actual numbers used in the analysis and are hereby made a part of this chapter of the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan.

6. Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iv)(B), the plan must include a multi-year transportation financing plan that identifies system expansion and management needs that meet current and future demands and analyzes needs against probable funding resources. If probable funding falls short of meeting needs, the Comprehensive Plan must discuss the strategy for assuring that LOS standards will be met.

Short-term (six-year) and anticipated long-term (20-year) needs and possible funding sources are identified in the Capital Facilities Plan/Appendix B/Chapter 6) and the Capital Improvement Program (Appendix G) where possible funding resources are identified. The proposed financing plan beyond six years, to meet future demands, is identified in the Regional Transportation Plan. All known improvements needed to provide for capacity at adopted LOS standards are included in the CFP. The CFP contains a detailed discussion for addressing funding shortfalls in CFP Goal 1, Objective C, Policies 1-86 contains a detailed discussion for addressing funding shortfalls in CFP Goal 1, Objective C, Goal 4, Objective A, Policy 8 discusses alternatives for addressing facilities that do not meet adopted LOS standards. Short-term (six-year) needs are identified in the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) where possible funding resources are identified. The proposed financing plan beyond six years, to meet future demands, is identified in the Regional Transportation Plan. All known improvements needed to provide for capacity at adopted LOS standards are included in the CFP. The CFP contains detailed discussion for addressing funding shortfalls in CFP Goal 1, Objective C, Policy 9. Goal 4, Objective A, Policy 8 discusses alternatives for addressing facilities that do not meet adopted LOS standards.

7. Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(v), the plan must include a description of intergovernmental coordination efforts, including an assessment of the County transportation plan and land use assumptions on the transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions.
Land use and transportation goals, policies, and CIPFP projects are based on the Regional Transportation Plan and the coordinated regional planning process. If adjacent jurisdiction plans are in compliance with the Regional Transportation Plan, then the Thurston County's Comprehensive Plan will not adversely impact adjacent jurisdictions. Intergovernmental coordination policies are included in Goal 1, Objective A, Policy 3, this chapter's Goal 9, Objective A.

8. Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(vi), the plan must include a description of any existing and planned transportation demand management (TDM) strategies to reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles by offering alternatives to the use of single occupancy vehicles.

Transportation demand management TDM strategies in this chapter include promoting use of public transportation such as Intercity Transit, bicycling, walking, and alternative commute options. These strategies, which are strategies are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan, are codified in this chapter's Goal 3, Objective C policies. Demand management strategies can be found under Goal 1, Objective A, Policy 2 and Goal 2, Objectives A and B, and associated policies.

9. Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(vii), the plan must include a bicycle and pedestrian component. Section IV: Bicycles & Pedestrians, and accompanying policies under Goal 3, Objectives E and F, satisfy this requirement.

10. Per RCW 36.70A.070(5)(iii)(D), the plan must include a policy for transportation concurrency.

Thurston County has adopted a Concurrency Ordinance (Thurston County Code, Chapter 17.10) and will monitor the impacts of developments on the capacity of transportation facilities. This chapter's Goal 2, Objective B includes concurrency policies. Policy for transportation concurrency.

The County has adopted a Concurrency Ordinance and will monitor the impacts of developments on the capacity of transportation facilities. Concurrency policies can be found under Goal 1, Objective A, Policy 7 and Goal 4, Objective A, Policy 4.

B. COUNTY WIDE PLANNING POLICIES

This Transportation Chapter Comprehensive Plan reflects the County Wide Planning Policies' with their emphasis on building an efficient multimodal transportation system that provides for travel by a variety of modes based on regional priorities. The policies are reflected in the adopted Regional Transportation Plan. In addition, As such, this chapter's intergovernmental coordination policies [Goal 9, Objective A] lay out the commitment to coordinate regional and local transportation plans through the Thurston Regional Planning Council and its periodic update of the Regional Transportation Plan.

C. THURSTON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
The Thurston County Comprehensive Plan works in concert with the Regional Transportation Plan. Both plans work together in support of a transportation system that offers safe, efficient, affordable travel choices for people and goods, while supporting land use plans and long-term quality of life objectives. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) – which provides a blueprint to help guide local agency decisions on transportation and land use through 2040 – supports a transportation system that offers safe, efficient, affordable travel choices for people and goods. The Comprehensive Plan’s Transportation Element (Chapter 5) and the Capital Facilities Plan Element (Chapter 6) are important implementation tools for carrying out the regional plan. To that end, this chapter’s goals, objectives, and policies adapt policy language from the Regional Transportation Plan.

D. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN ARE IMPORTANT IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS FOR CARRYING OUT THAT PLAN. THE COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS HELPS TO ENSURE THAT DECISIONS CARRIED OUT BY ALL LOCAL AGENCIES WILL BE CONSISTENT WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES. IN TURN, COURSE CORRECTIONS NEEDED DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS INFORM THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND THE REGION’S LONG RANGE STRATEGY. THIS CONSISTENCY BETWEEN LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS IS AN UNDERLYING TENET OF THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT.

II. HIGHWAYS AND ROADS

Roadways have three basic roles in serving our overall transportation needs in Thurston County. These are:

❖ To provide for safe travel (SAFETY Safety).
❖ To provide for the movement of people and goods (MOBILITY Mobility).
❖ To provide access to land (ACCESS Access).

These three concepts of SAFETY, MOBILITY and ACCESS, safety, mobility and access are the key to designing and locating the various classes of roadways. Arterial highways and roads serve as the primary providers of mobility within the county. Land access is provided primarily by local urban and rural roadways. Intermediate to these classes of roadways is a collector/distribution function
performed by collector roadways. Each of these roadways allows safe travel from one destination to another, usually by several different modes.

A. DESIGN AND LOCATIONAL STANDARDS

Roadways in Thurston County should be constructed with a context-sensitive approach, which addresses objectives and considerations not only for the transportation facility but also for the surrounding area and its land uses, developments, economic and other activities, and environmental conditions.

Urban growth area roads should serve higher-density development and balance the needs of drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and adjacent residential and commercial building occupants. Rural roads that serve less-dense but generally higher-speed traffic are constructed to a different standard. Inside of urban growth area boundaries, urban road standards will be applied in accordance with the appropriate joint plans and/or agreements.

Design and location of county roadways depends on a number of factors related to traffic demand and land use. Roadways in Thurston County must meet different standards depending on whether they are inside or outside urban growth areas. Roads are constructed to a different operating standard within urban growth areas to serve higher density and more intense development. Rural roadways serving less dense but generally higher-speed traffic are constructed to a different standard. Extending roadways with urban standards and excess capacity (i.e., more travel lanes than needed) out into undeveloped rural areas would have the potential of encouraging development outside urban growth areas, resulting in unnecessary costs for construction and on-going maintenance.

Inside urban growth areas, there is a memorandum of understanding that efforts will be made to adopt the road design standards in the joint plan of each applicable jurisdiction. Inside urban growth areas around the south county cities and towns, right-of-way needed to meet urban standards in each joint plan will apply, but rural road improvement standards will apply for residential areas. Setting aside the right-of-way needed to meet urban standards in the future will assure that, when urban development does occur, adequate right-of-way will be available for upgrading roads to urban street standards. When areas within the south county urban-growth areas are annexed to the adjacent jurisdiction, urban road standards will apply (in cities and towns where urban road standards exist). County urban road standards will apply in the Grand Mound Urban Growth Area, consistent with the road cross-sections in the Grand Mound Subarea Plan. For more detailed information on road standards see “Thurston County Road Standards”.

Roadway classifications should reflect the appropriate emphasis on access or mobility. A roadway intended as a major carrier of traffic should have its efficiency of traffic flow maintained by limiting access. Designated as an arterial or collector, access to this roadway is limited to intersections and widely spaced driveways. Conversely, if access is to be maximized, then local access roads should be designated.
THURSTON COUNTY HAS PREPARED MAPS OF CRITICAL AREAS WITHIN THE COUNTY (I.E., FLOODPLAINS, WETLANDS, GEOLOGICAL HAZARD AREAS, ETC). THESE MAPS ARE ON FILE AT THURSTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND ARE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW. CRITICAL AREAS MAKE UP A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF COUNTY LANDS. LOCATING ROADS TO SERVE DEVELOPING AREAS OF THE COUNTY WOULD ALMOST ALWAYS IMPACT CRITICAL AREAS. MINIMIZING THESE IMPACTS THROUGH CAREFUL AND THOUGHTFUL LOCATION AND DESIGN OF ROADWAYS IS CRITICAL. WHEN IMPACTS TO CRITICAL AREAS CANNOT BE AVOIDED, APPROPRIATE MITIGATION SHALL BE MADE.

OTHER LAND USE RELATED CONCERNS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED WHEN LOCATING A PARTICULAR CLASS OF COUNTY ROADWAY. ALIGNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER THE CONFIGURATION, USE AND SIZE OF A PARCEL IT TRAVERSES, CONTINUITY WITH EXISTING AND PROPOSED FUTURE ROADWAYS AND BIKEWAYS, AND THE REQUIRED LANE CAPACITY (I.E., NUMBER OF TRAVEL LANES) AND ALTERNATIVE MODE SUPPORT TO ACCOMMODATE THE EXPECTED MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE. COMPATIBILITY ALSO IMPLIES THAT ROADWAY CLASS SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO THE TYPE OF LAND USE. IN URBAN AREAS, GOOD CONNECTIONS WILL BE IMPORTANT TO:

- DISPERSE TRAFFIC TO A MULTIPLE OF ROADS GIVING VEHICLES OPTIONS AND AVOIDING FUNNELING TRAFFIC ON TOO FEW ARTERIAL AND COLLECTOR ROADS;
- PROVIDE GOOD ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS, BIKE RIDERS, TRANSIT RIDERS AND VEHICLES; AND
- REDUCE THE NEED FOR ROAD WIDENINGS. REGIONALLY ADOPTED STANDARDS LIMIT THE WIDTH OF STREETS AND ROAD TO 5 LANES — TWO THROUGH LANES EACH DIRECTION AND A CENTER TURN LANE — AS WIDER FACILITIES ARE NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE SCALE AND CHARACTER OF THE REGION AND DISCOURAGE PEOPLE FROM WALKING OR BIKING.

B. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CAPACITY & LEVEL OF SERVICE
Thurston County used the regional transportation model\(^2\) to conduct the analysis in this chapter at a scale useful for identifying broad issues relating to transportation. The model allows analysis of factors such as:

\(^2\) The regional transportation model is a mathematical representation of supply and demand for travel in the region and represents the choices that people here make to travel. The regional transportation model is maintained by the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC).
How system efficiency changes over time, or the comparison of network usage versus investments in capacity projects.

How much we travel, generally expressed as travel volumes, or number of trips that the model predicts will utilize each part of the model network, including vehicle lanes, trails, and transit routes.

How we travel, or mode, such as walking, bicycling, single occupancy vehicle, shared rides, school bus, or transit.

How far we travel, generally expressed as vehicle miles traveled.

How long it takes to travel, measured as average speed.

Maps T-6 and T-7 show current conditions (2015) and future conditions (2040).

Thurston County uses Level of Service (LOS) – a qualitative measure of traffic congestion – to describe how well a transportation facility is operating from a traveler’s perspective, in terms of travel times, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, and convenience. There are six LOS measurements – much like an academic grading system (A-F) (See Table 5-1 and sections a through c, below). They represent conditions from “free-flowing” (A) to “gridlock” (F) (See Table 5-12). Thurston County’s LOS standards are consistent with the regionally adopted measurement, based on a two-hour p.m. peak period. These typically reflect the busiest hours of the day on any particular roadway during average conditions. This means roads are assessed for average conditions rather than worse-case conditions, such as during the holiday shopping season. Map T-10 illustrates future level of service projections.

Table 5-1. LOS Standards for Roads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>LOS Units</th>
<th>LOS Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>Letter designations based on motorist delays &amp; traffic flow (A=no delays to F=delays of over one minute)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Table 5-2 (p. 5-8) describes the letter system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban:</td>
<td>Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater UGAs—D (E for high density residential corridors)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yelm UGA—C (resid. zones); D (commercial &amp; Lt. Indus. zones); F (urban core)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tenino &amp; Rainier UGAs—D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Mnd. UGA—D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural:</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 LOS is derived from a Volume-to-Capacity (V/C) ratio analysis, a numeric calculation of how much traffic a facility was designed to carry compared to how much traffic it actually carries. The closer a facility comes to carrying 100 percent of the traffic it was designed to carry, the lower the LOS measurement.
### Table 5-2. Vehicle Level of Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Flow Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Highest driver comfort; free-flowing traffic</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Image of free-flowing traffic" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>High degree of driver comfort; little delay</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Image of little delay traffic" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Acceptable level of driver comfort; some delay</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Image of some delay traffic" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Some driver frustration; moderate delay</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Image of moderate delay traffic" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>High level of driver frustration; high delay</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Image of high delay traffic" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Highest level of driver frustration; excessive delay</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Image of excessive delay traffic" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Level of Service (LOS):

Table 5-1 explains roadway level of service (LOS). LOS is defined as a qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream, and the perception by motorists and/or passengers of the driving experience during those conditions. A "level of service" describes these conditions in terms of speed and travel times, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort and convenience, and safety. Six LOS standards, much like an academic grading system (A-F), represent conditions from "free flow" (A) to "gridlock" (F). The LOS standards derive from a numeric calculation of how much traffic a particular facility was designed to carry compared to how much traffic it is actually carrying. The closer a facility comes to carrying one hundred percent of the traffic it was designed to carry, the lower the LOS standard. It was designed to be, and is used as, a measure of vehicular congestion. The current edition of the Highway Capacity Manual presents the primary measures of effectiveness used to define LOS for each type of facility (Transportation Planning Handbook, 2nd Edition). Map M-48 illustrates the adopted LOS standards for Thurston County. Thurston County’s adopted LOS standards are consistent with the current, regionally-adopted standards which are based on a two-hour p.m. peak period.

The distinction between urban and rural operating conditions is a critical policy issue. What may be an acceptable level of congestion on urban streets—with their slower speed limits, frequent turning movements, and frequent signal spacing—may be completely inappropriate on rural roads, where there are higher travel speeds, fewer turns, and no signals. However, higher-density urban population centers are areas where transportation alternatives will be most heavily used making the most of investment in transit, car/vanpool programs, and excellent bike and pedestrian paths. Low-density urban sprawl and development in rural areas cannot be efficiently served by alternatives and results in almost total auto dependence and higher costs, both in dollars and degraded quality of life for the entire community which must provide a regional transportation network.

Roads Within Urban Growth Areas:
In Thurston County, the adopted LOS standard for roads within unincorporated urban growth areas is LOS D. Refer to joint plans for specific LOS for each urban growth area. Refer to Policy 4 A (7) for the LOS standards that apply within the Grand Mound Urban Growth Area.
Table 5-1

Level of Service Characteristics by Roadway Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Service</th>
<th>Controlled Access Highways</th>
<th>Multilane Rural Without Access Control</th>
<th>Two Lanes</th>
<th>Urban and Suburban Arterials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Free flow. Average travel speeds at or greater than 60 mph. Service flow rate of 750 passenger cars per hour per lane.</td>
<td>Average travel speeds 57 mph or greater. Under ideal conditions, flow rate is limited to 750 passenger cars per lane per hour or 36 percent of capacity.</td>
<td>Average travel speeds of 50 mph or higher. Most passing maneuvers can be made with little or no delay. Under ideal conditions, a service flow rate of 420 passenger car per hour, total two-way, can be achieved.</td>
<td>Average travel speed of about 45 percent of free flow speed. Stopped delay at signalized intersections is minimal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Reasonably free flow conditions. Average travel speed at greater than 57 mph. Service flow rate not greater than 1,500 passenger cars per hour per lane.</td>
<td>Reasonably free flow. Volume at which actions of preceding vehicle will have some influence on following vehicles. Flow rates will not exceed 54 percent of capacity or 1,350 passenger vehicles per lane per hour at a 23 mph average travel speed.</td>
<td>Average travel speeds of 55 mph or higher. Flow rates may reach 72 percent of capacity with continuous passing eight distance. Flow rates of 750 passenger cars per hour, total two-way, can be carried under ideal conditions.</td>
<td>Average travel speeds drop due to intersection delay and intervehicular conflicts, but remain at 50 percent of the free speed. Delay is not unreasonable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Operation stable, but becoming more critical. Average travel speed at 54 mph, service flow at 27 percent of capacity or not more than flow rate of 1,500 passenger cars per hour per lane.</td>
<td>Stable flow to a flow rate not exceeding 73 percent of capacity of 1,300 passenger cars per lane per hour, under ideal conditions, maintaining at least a 55 mph average travel speed.</td>
<td>Flow still stable. Average travel speeds of 57 mph or above with total flow rate under ideal conditions equal to 42 percent of capacity with continuous passing eight distance, or 1,350 passenger cars per hour total two-way.</td>
<td>Stable operations. Longer queues at signals result in average travel speeds of about 45 percent of free flow speeds; Motorists will experience appreciable tension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Lower speed range of stable flow. Operation approaches instability and is susceptible to changing conditions. Average travel speeds approx. 45 mph. Service flow rates at 62 percent of capacity. Flow rate cannot exceed 1,250 passenger cars per hour per lane.</td>
<td>Approaching unstable flow. Average travel speeds at flow rates up to 87 percent of capacity or 1,250 passenger cars per hour at an average travel speed of about 48 mph under ideal conditions.</td>
<td>Approaching unstable flow. Average travel speeds approx. 50 mph. Flow rates, two-directional, at 64 percent of capacity with continuous passing opportunity, or 1,200 passenger cars per hour total two-way under ideal conditions.</td>
<td>Approaching unstable flow. Average travel speeds drop to 40 percent of free flow speed. Delays at intersections may become extensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Instable flow. Average travel speeds of 30-45 mph. Flow rate at capacity or 7,000 passenger cars per hour per lane under ideal conditions. Traffic stream cannot dissipate even minor disruptions. Any incident may produce a serious breakdown.</td>
<td>Flow at 80 percent of capacity or 2,800 passenger cars per lane per hour under ideal conditions. Average travel speeds of about 30 mph.</td>
<td>Average travel speeds in neighborhood of 45 mph. Flow rate under ideal conditions, total two-way, equal to 2,800 passenger cars per hour. Level E may never be attained. Operation may go directly from Level D to Level F.</td>
<td>Average travel speeds 33 percent of free flow speed. Instable flow. Continuous backup on approaches to intersections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Forced flow. Freeway acts as a storage for vehicles backed up from downstream bottleneck. Average travel speeds range from near 30 mph to stop-and-go operation.</td>
<td>Force, congested flow with widely varying volume characteristics. Average travel speeds of less than 30 mph.</td>
<td>Force, congested flow with unpredictable characteristics. Operating speeds less than 45 mph.</td>
<td>Average travel speed between 25 and 33 percent of free flow speed. Vehicular backups, and high approach delays at signalized intersections.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction: Urban and Rural Operating Conditions

The distinction between urban and rural operating conditions is a critical policy issue. What may be an acceptable level of congestion on urban streets – with their slower speed limits, frequent turning movements, and frequent signal spacing – may be completely inappropriate on rural roads, where there are higher travel speeds, fewer turns, and no signals. Thus, Thurston County takes a context-sensitive approach to LOS, roadway design, and mobility solutions.

However, higher-density urban population centers are areas where transportation alternatives will be used most heavily, making the most of investments in transit, car/vanpool programs, and excellent bike and pedestrian paths. Low-density urban sprawl and rural development in rural areas cannot be efficiently served by alternatives and results in almost total auto dependence and higher costs, both in dollars and degraded quality of life for the entire community which must provide a regional transportation network. The following sections describe the LOS standard – and exceptions – for rural and urban areas, as shown in Map T-9.

b. Strategy Corridors

LOS E is the standard for the T-shaped urban corridor that connects downtown Olympia with densely developed centers in west Olympia (Capitol Mall/Harrison Avenue), Tumwater (Capitol Boulevard/Troper Road), and Lacey (Woodland District and Hawks Prairie). Such roadways feature a wide range of services – from hospitals, to shopping centers, to industrial warehouses – so traffic volumes are comparatively heavy and congestion is common.

The capacity of a transportation system is traditionally thought of as the space needed on our streets to move cars. Thurston County looks at capacity more broadly and sees it as the ability to move people, goods, and services.

The street system can move more people when more trips are made by walking, biking, or riding the bus. On streets that have unacceptable levels of congestion, and where widening is not appropriate, Thurston County will consider using transportation technology or building facilities to support walking, biking, or transit that improves the efficiency of the roadway system.

This is needed most in many parts of the county, where roads cannot be widened further. These streets are considered “Strategy Corridors” and are already at the maximum width, have environmental constraints, or are adjacent to areas that are built out fully.

The region and Thurston County has designated the main fully built-out urban arterials and collectors (such as Pacific Avenue, Capitol Way, Martin Way, etc.), as well as other heavily traveled roads that continue through unincorporated urban growth areas into the rural county (e.g., Yelm Highway), as "Urban Strategy Corridors" where level of service may exceed adopted standards (See Map T-9).

Thurston County defines as “Rural Strategy Corridors” (See Map T-9) places where the adopted LOS C standard may be exceeded. Such roads, which include Old Highway 99, South Bay Road, and Rainier Road, are essentially built out today at two travel lanes and paved shoulders. In lieu-of road

Commented [MB9]: Created new subhead to highlight distinguishing characteristics for context-sensitive land use/transportation zones.

Commented [MB10]: October 2018
For the sake of clarity and conciseness, staff combined Section “c” (Strategy Corridors) with Section “a” (Urban Centers and Strategy Corridors); the consolidated section “a” was renamed “Strategy Corridors.” Staff also made minor text edits (highlighted in yellow) to reflect the LOS standards shown in map T-9 and presented to the Planning Commission.
widening, alternatives (e.g., intersection improvements, connections to regional trails, extending/increasing transit service) shall be applied to mitigate congestion.

b. Urban Areas

LOS D is the standard for roads amid the urban growth areas (UGAs) slated for eventual incorporation by Thurston County’s cities and towns. LOS D also is the standard for roads in the “Rural/Urban Transition Area” (census urbanized area) that surrounds the Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater UGAs (See Map T-9). Such urbanizing areas generally have higher population densities and more commercial services than rural Thurston County, so drivers might experience moderate delays during peak hours.

LOS D applies to county roads within the Grand Mound Urban Growth Area. Please refer to joint plans for LOS standards for roads within each city’s or town’s incorporated urban growth area.

LOS C is the standard for roads amid rural, unincorporated Thurston County outside of the current census urbanized area and identified strategy corridors (See Map T-9).

Rural Roadways

The adopted LOS standard for roads outside urban growth areas, is LOS C except for Mud Bay Road, from the Olympia urban growth boundary west to Highway 101. Because that facility functions like an urban street, it has a LOS standard of D, even though it is outside the urban growth boundary.

Multi-Modal Approach to Level of Service Goals – Strategy Corridors

Another exception to the LOS standard is a select number of regionally-identified “Strategy Corridors.” These strategy corridors, located primarily within the north urban area, are facilities on which LOS standards do not apply. That is because these facilities cannot be widened sufficiently to ever solve congestion, either because they are already at the maximum five-lane width, or because the surrounding land is fully built out already, or due to environmental constraints. In these corridors a targeted mix of land use policy, access management, travel demand management, investment in travel alternatives, and system efficiency measures will be used to improve mobility to the best extent possible.

Martin Way is designated as a strategy corridor, over which Thurston County has jurisdiction in the unincorporated urban growth area. The moratorium aspects of concurrency ordinances do not necessarily apply in this corridor. Ordinances should emphasize and support a range of measures for improving efficiency and travel alternatives within corridors even when road widening itself is not an option.

The results of the east/west traffic study determined that a connection south of the Yelm Highway would not relieve congestion along the highway. Both road widening (in the Hewitt Lake area) and travel demand management incentives planned as part of the Regional Transportation Plan will be used in the area along the Yelm Highway.
State Highways

Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) utilizes a 24-hour highway assessment instead of the two-hour p.m. peak hour volumes utilized by the county and the Regional Transportation Plan. The state’s system translates to LOS D in urban areas and LOS C in rural areas for all Regionally Significant state highways as well as those designated Highways of Statewide Significance. Policy 4 A (6) addresses the LOS for state highways in Thurston County.

Two Hour P.M. Peak Used to Determine Peak Traffic Period

The Regional Transportation Plan looks at Level of Service in a broader context than volume to capacity (V/C) ratio. A V/C ratio, calculated using a peak period of two hours, will be used as a screening tool for identifying capacity deficiencies. Once a deficient corridor is identified, other factors such as road spacing and type or classification, road connections and access, environmental, social and physical constraints should be considered in determining the need and feasibility for road widening.

2. Concurrency

The Growth Management Act requires that adequate transportation facilities be available when the impacts of development occur, or that a financial plan is in place to assure that needed facilities are in place within six years of the development.

The concept of concurrency means that as our community grows, the level of service (level of congestion) that we consider acceptable for a specific street is maintained. To achieve this requires that we add “capacity” to the street. Concurrency measurements are assessed for average conditions rather than worse-case conditions, such as during the holiday shopping season.

Jurisdictions are required to adopt and enforce ordinances that prohibit development approval if the development causes the level of service on a transportation facility to drop below adopted standards outlined in the transportation chapter of the comprehensive plan. However, concurrency requirements do not apply to transportation facilities and services of statewide significance, per RCW 36.70A.070(6).

The County has adopted a Concurrency Ordinance (Thurston County Code, Chapter 17.10) and will monitor the impact of approving development on the capacity of transportation facilities.

Concurrency: The Growth Management Act requires that adequate transportation facilities be available when the impacts of development occur, or that a financial plan is in place to assure that needed facilities are in place within six years of the development.

Jurisdictions are required to adopt and enforce ordinances which prohibit development approval if the development causes the level of service on a transportation facility to drop below adopted standards outlined in the transportation chapter of the comprehensive plan. However, concurrency requirements do not apply to transportation facilities and services of statewide significance, per RCW 36.70A.070(6).

The County has adopted a Concurrency Ordinance and will monitor the impact of approving development on the capacity of transportation facilities.
The Growth Management Act requires that city and county transportation plans and the Regional Transportation Plan be consistent with one another and with the Regional Transportation Plan. The Growth Management Act defines consistency as meaning that no feature of a plan be incompatible with any other feature of a plan. This requirement recognizes that transportation and land use decisions affect one another and will affect the ability of the region to provide efficient transportation services and reach goals for reducing dependency on automobiles.

The requirements for consistency also recognize that transportation systems cross jurisdiction boundaries. This makes emphasizes the importance of having compatible road and bikeway standards as well as having coordinated transit service goals and shared responsibility for the preservation of preserving rail corridors.

Concurrency requirements do not apply to transportation facilities and services of statewide significance, per RCW 36.70A.070(6).

C. EXISTING COUNTY ROADWAY SYSTEM

Thurston County, as a whole, has a good roadway network. However, many roadways within and near the urban growth areas and the growth areas are experiencing varying degrees of congestion. The most severe levels of congestion are experienced mainly within the incorporated cities and towns. For the most part, rural roadways operate with minimal congestion. Map M-2T-2 illustrates the existing network of arterial roadways serving rural unincorporated Thurston County.

Of more immediate concern is the condition of existing roads. While Thurston County has an effective pavement-management program that keeps most rural road surfaces in good driving condition, there are many miles of road that do not meet current design standards or assets (e.g., guardrail, traffic signals, sidewalks, etc.) that continue to age and compete for limited maintenance or preservation resources. Thurston County has miles of road that do not meet current design standards. These are typically old facilities that have narrow travel lanes, as well as minimal or no shoulders that serve more residents and higher traffic volumes.

Thurston County also is responsible for more than 100 bridges, many of which are nearing the end of their design life. Many others should be retrofitted to better accommodate the needs of salmon and other wildlife. These are typically old facilities that have narrow travel lanes, minimal or no shoulders, or tight curves that create poor sight distance. Thurston County is also responsible for hundreds of bridges, many of which are nearing the end of their useful design life, many others of which should be retrofitted to better accommodate the needs of salmon and other wildlife. As population increases in rural Thurston County, pressure increases to retrofit these old facilities and bring them up to modern design standards. Unfortunately, this is a very expensive need, one for which there is a significant funding shortfall.

For a five-year period from 2011 to 2016, there were 131 serious and fatal collisions on unincorporated roads in Thurston County. This represents about a 25 percent reduction from the preceding five-year period. The reduction correlates to national trends. Now, nationally, fatal crashes are trending higher, and this is reflective of in Thurston County data, too.
The predominant crash type on Thurston County roads leading to fatalities and serious injuries is lane departures. Other crash factors contributing to deaths and serious injuries include intersection conflicts, as well as behavioral issues such as impairment, speeding, distraction, and lack of driving experience. Contributing factors also include conflicts between vehicles and vulnerable travelers such as pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists, and between cars and heavy trucks.

Additional analysis is warranted to review appropriate levels of roadway congestion in combination with what level of future population growth can be accommodated in rural Thurston County. There are only a few key north-south corridors, such as Rainier Road, Littlerock Road, Old 99, and SR 510, where level of service will be a possible concern during the morning and evening commute times. Thurston County has been experiencing increasing traffic volumes on rural roadways, especially near urban areas. The Regional Transportation Plan identified this as an area for further evaluation to ensure that Thurston County has appropriate levels of mobility on its roads in conjunction with appropriate land use zoning for projected growth well into the future.

D. FUTURE CAPACITY NEEDS
ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Roadway Classifications: As discussed previously, there is a functional hierarchy of roadway classes that provides varying degrees of access and mobility. Exhibits B-A through E-D illustrate the classes of county roadways in the rural area. These conceptual renderings/images are consistent with current county road standards. In unincorporated urban growth areas, the County will make efforts to adopt the street standards of the applicable adjacent jurisdiction. In the Grand Mound Urban Growth Area, refer to the subarea plan for the urban standards that apply. County Road Standards. In all other areas, rural road standards will apply since the low residential densities currently allowed in these areas do not require urban road standards.

E. E. ISSUES: A PORTION OF YELM HIGHWAY AND A PORTION OF MARTIN WAY ARE IDENTIFIED AS STRATEGY CORRIDORS (SEE MULTI-MODAL APPROACH TO LEVEL OF SERVICE GOALS — STRATEGY CORRIDORS — PG. 5-11).

FUTURE ROADWAYS

An adequate network of roadways will be needed to accommodate both existing and future development. To meet future needs, the roadway system will need to be located and designed in a way that effectively serves the areas that will exceed level of service measures/community. In addition, future roadways should provide for sufficient appropriate vehicle capacity, be safe for all users, minimize hazards, and be efficient in the use of county funds. Capacity improvements in the unincorporated county are based on a 20-year traffic forecast done during the regional transportation planning process (see Appendix E). These traffic forecasts used the average of the p.m. two-hour peak period. These forecasts will be updated as needed. A list of all transportation improvements planned for the next six years can be found in the joint plans and the Capital Facilities Chapter Plan Improvement Program (Appendix G Chapter 6) of this Comprehensive Plan. These improvements are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.

Map M-23T-2 shows the existing and future rural roadway system in Thurston County. The network of arterials and collectors delineated on the future roadway map is based on the land use...
designations contained in the Land Use Chapter. These designations are used to project expected population and employment distribution and provide a logical basis for planning a future roadway system for Thurston County.

F. ACCESS MANAGEMENT

According to the Transportation Research Board’s Access Management Manual, the purpose of access management is to provide vehicular access to land development in a manner that preserves the safety and efficiency of the transportation system. Given the importance of the corridor to both movement of traffic and access to residential and commercial land uses, proper access management will be tantamount to the success of the corridor and to the realization of safety and efficiency benefits of the corridor to adjacent communities.

G. SAFETY (TARGET ZERO)

The ability to travel safely – regardless of mode – is recognized as the most basic of transportation needs. Reflecting this need, Washington State has adopted Target Zero – a goal to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries on Washington’s roadways to zero by the year 2030. Thurston County supports this goal of zero deaths and serious injuries, because every life counts. A fundamental element of this goal is that it is data driven, identifying the critical factors that contribute to fatal and serious injury crashes on Thurston County roads. Then use those factors to identify proven, recommended strategies along with new ones for reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries in a number of common areas. Coordination, collaboration, and communication among traffic safety partners (e.g., Sheriff’s Department, Health & Human Services and Prosecuting Attorney’s office) are key to the implementation of the strategies. However, if Thurston County is to actually reach Target Zero by the year 2030, it will take a continued concerted effort on many fronts. Reaching our Target Zero goal will only be accomplished through federal, state, and local partnerships leveraging innovation, research, and changes in the traffic safety culture of our state.

H. ROADWAY MAINTENANCE AND PRESERVATION NEEDS

Maintenance is considered a routine activity associated with repairing a physical asset or keeping the physical asset functional during the asset’s useful life. Maintenance of the roadways includes such activities as repairing potholes, cleaning streets and culverts, or repairing a sign that is knocked down.

Preservation is the replacement or repair of an asset after it has reached its useful life to accomplish the same overall function. Some good examples of preservation are the replacement of a bridge, the repaving of a roadway, or the replacement of a sign when it is worn and faded and no longer adequately visible.

It is important to understand the strong relationship between maintenance of an asset and the cost of preserving or replacing the asset. If the asset is well maintained, it will maximize the useful life of the asset and minimize the cost of keeping the asset functional when it comes time to replace it. We
all understand this relationship for our automobiles where regular changing of the oil and good maintenance can lengthen the life of the car and reduce our cost of having transportation. A familiar phrase is "pay me now or pay me more later."

The County regularly evaluates its roadways for future maintenance needs to maintain the system at the lowest life-cycle cost, maximizing the County investment. Evaluations generally include condition, maintenance history, regulatory requirements, and other factors. Roadway maintenance and preservation is financed mainly by County road funds and motor fuel taxes through the County Road Administration Board.

THE COUNTY EVALUATES ITS ROADWAYS EVERY TWO YEARS FOR PAVEMENT CONDITION AND ANNUALLY FOR HIGH-FREQUENCY ACCIDENT LOCATIONS.

TO DETERMINE THE MAINTENANCE NEEDS OF OUR ROADWAY PAVEMENTS, THE COUNTY EVALUATES THE PAVEMENT SURFACE FOR SIGNS OF CRACKING DISTRESSES ON AT LEAST A TWOYEAR CYCLE. THIS RESULTS IN AN INVENTORY OF PAVEMENT CONDITION RATINGS, WHICH IS THE BASIS FOR PRIORITIZING MAINTENANCE EFFORTS FOR PAVEMENT OVERLAYS AND ASPHALT SEALING OF THE PAVEMENT SURFACE. ROADWAY PAVEMENT MAINTENANCE IS MAINLY FINANCED BY COUNTY ROAD FUNDS.

I. ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The Capital Facilities Plan chapter (Chapter 6) outlines the funding capacity and resources to finance the roadway improvements. The County uses priority programming in the development and application of techniques designed to rank any array of potential projects in order of importance for the Capital Improvement Program. The distribution of limited resources.

When development occurs in the urban area, developers are required to construct improvements or contribute funds toward measures that will improve the function and safety of streets, such as installing bike and pedestrian improvements, turn pockets or special lanes for buses, or roundabouts, or modifying traffic signals.
Exhibit A: Private Road

A Rural Private Road is characterized as being very low volume, low speed, and generally less than a mile in length. Such roadways are generally designed to accommodate emergency vehicles.

A.1: Paved Private Road
Exhibit A.2: Gravel Private Road
Exhibit B: Local Road

A Local Road is characterized as being low-volume, with speeds ranging from 25-50 miles per hour. Such roadways generally connect communities with the arterial-collector roadway system.

B.1: Rural Local Road

Pictured: 100th Avenue SW
B.2: Rural Residential Local Road

Pictured: Summerwood Drive SE.
B.3: Urban Local Road

Pictured: Lady Fern Loop NW
Exhibit C: Collector Road

A Collector Road is characterized as being medium/high volume, with speeds ranging from 35-50 miles per hour. Such multimodal roadways connect communities with the arterial roadway system, and they generally include paved shoulders, higher truck volumes, and fewer driveways.

C.1: Major Collector

Pictured: Dutterow Road SE
C.2: Minor Collector

Pictured: McKenzie Road SW
Exhibit D: Arterial Road

An Arterial Road is characterized as being of higher volume and speeds. Such multimodal roadways serve as community connections for goods, services, and employment. They generally include paved shoulders, higher truck volumes, and fewer driveways.

D.1: Urban Arterial Road

Pictured: Yelm Highway
D.2: Rural Arterial Road

Pictured: Bald Hill Road SE
Public transportation can be a very efficient way to move people in urban communities and can stimulate compact urban development, according to the Regional Transportation Plan. 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. TRANSIT SERVICES

Intercity Transit (IT) – the primary public transit operator for Thurston County – was formed as a municipal corporation in 1980 as the Thurston County Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA). The agency is governed by a nine-member board of directors, the Intercity Transit Authority.

Intercity Transit’s service area (Map T-3) includes the urban growth areas of Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater and Yelm – an area of roughly 94 square miles. The agency operates 25 bus routes, a door-to-door service for people with disabilities, a vanpool program, and specialized van programs. The agency also supports local employers’ Commute Trip Reduction efforts.

Intercity Transit also makes regional transit connections with other local providers, including Mason Transit, Grays Harbor Transit, Pierce Transit, and Sound Transit bus service to King County. Regional and interstate connections are also provided with Greyhound buses in Olympia, Amtrak passenger rail in Lacey, and Sounder commuter service in Pierce County.

Rural Transit (RT), managed by the Thurston Regional Planning Council, operates routes that serve the rural communities of Rochester, Tenino, Bucoda, Rainier, Yelm, and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation. RT connects to IT in the urban core and to Twin Transit in Lewis County.

B. THE FUTURE OF TRANSIT SERVICES IN THURSTON COUNTY

Increasing the use of the existing transit system and developing in a manner that supports easy access to transit are important elements of a transportation system that meets the goals of growth management planning, the State Commute Trip Reduction Law (CTR), and the Regional Transportation Plan. The policies associated with this chapter’s Goal 3, Objective D are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan goal of providing a robust level of reliable, effective public transportation options to increase the share of all trips made by public transportation.

In coming years, Thurston County will continue to see increasing commuter demand for services. Major employers are operating programs to meet the requirements of CTR, and they need to be able to direct employees to transportation alternatives.

Intercity Transit considers new services as part of its Transit Development Plan (TDP) – a six-year combined comprehensive and capital facilities plan improvement program for the transit system, outlining programs and facilities that IT is involved in or will pursue. To these ends, the Comprehensive Plan and Regional Transportation Plan share several policies, including supporting 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.
local jurisdictions; and, supporting a broad range of public transportation programs and services that ensure a full mix of options for meeting transportation needs as they evolve. Intercity Transit (IT) is the public transit operator for Thurston County. The agency was formed as a municipal corporation in 1980 as the Thurston County Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA).

Voters initially approved in 1980 collecting a 3/10ths of 1% in local sales tax for the newly formed transit system. Service under the new authority began January 1, 1981. In 1992 voters approved the expansion of the PTBA to include all of Thurston County. In 1999 however, the loss of Motor Vehicle Excise Tax revenue required significant reductions in service that ensued over the next few years. In early 2002 local elected officials also approved the reduction in the size of the service area. The resized district was implemented in the fall of 2002. The new service district includes the urbanized areas (CMA) of Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, and Yelm, and certain contiguous County areas in

September 2002 voters also approved an increase in local sales tax to 0.6% within the PTBA. Since 2003 Intercity Transit has begun a planned rebuilding of the services and system elements that were impacted or altered from the previous loss of revenues.

IT is currently governed by an eight member Authority made up of the following members: one Thurston County Board of Commissioner; one Council member each from Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, and Yelm; one member chosen from the Councils of Tenino, Rainier, and Bucoda; and three citizen representatives appointed by the Authority.

A. Service Types Provided:

IT provides a wide range of transportation services including fixed route, ridesharing, and paratransit services. A Village van program provides assistance with welfare reform and work training efforts in the region. IT’s ridesharing service matches people with carpool partners and coordinates vanpool formation and operation by providing training, technical assistance, and vehicles for vanpool groups.

All IT buses and paratransit vans are wheelchair accessible, and are lift-equipped for persons who use wheelchairs or have difficulty boarding the bus. Dial-A-Lift is a special van service offered for people with disabilities who are unable to ride our regular buses. IT also has one accessible vanpool.

The agency also actively participates in and provides assistance to many local employers regarding Commute Trip Reduction efforts and works with local jurisdictions responsible for overseeing these requirements. In addition, coordination of local land use and transportation issues is continually worked on in coordination with these same jurisdictions.

Transit service is operated 7 days a week with federally mandated comparable paratransit service. The Ridesharing program matches people to carpool and vanpool vehicles. The program maintains a fleet of vans for monthly lease to groups of 8 – 15 commuters as well as coordinating vanpool formation and operation of the service by providing safety, training, and technical assistance for the groups.
All Intercity Transit buses and paratransit vans ("Dial-A-Lift") are wheelchair accessible, and are lift-equipped for persons who use wheelchairs or have difficulty boarding a bus. Dial-A-Lift van service is provided to ADA qualified citizens whose disabilities make it impossible or difficult for them to utilize regular fixed-routed bus service.

B. Service Area

The current service district includes the urbanized areas of Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, and Yelm.

Intercity Transit also makes regional transit connections with other local providers including Mason Transit, Grays Harbor Transit, Pierce Transit, and Sound Transit bus service to King County. Regional and interstate connections are also provided with Greyhound buses in Olympia, Amtrak passenger rail in Lacey and Sounder commuter service in Tacoma. Intercity Transit also operates with Pierce Transit express bus service between Olympia, Lacey, Lakewood, and Tacoma.

C. The Future of Transit Services in Thurston County:

Increasing the use of our existing transit system and developing in a manner that supports easy access to transit are goals for Thurston County’s future. Transit is an important element of a transportation system designed to meet the goals of growth management planning, the State Commute Trip Reduction Law (CTR), and the Regional Transportation Plan.

Public transportation in Thurston County offers many advantages. It provides commuting and daily circulation between the cities and unincorporated areas of the region, and offers connections with neighboring counties, including Grays Harbor, Mason, and Pierce Counties. It also provides connections to Sound Transit service into King County. One of the major benefits of a transit system based on buses is its ability to alter routes and schedules to meet changing demand. So as Thurston County changes, transit service can change along with it.

Thurston County will continue to see increasing demands in services for commuters. Major employers are operating programs to meet the requirements of CTR, and need to be able to direct employees to transportation alternatives. Intercity Transit considers new services as part of its Transit Development Plan (TDP), which is updated annually. The TDP is a six-year combined comprehensive and capital facilities plan for transit system, outlining programs and facilities that Intercity Transit is involved in or will be pursuing.

In partnership with Thurston Regional Planning Council, Intercity Transit developed a long-range system plan to set the direction for public transportation in Thurston County through 2020. The plan serves as a blueprint for implementing the transit component of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The long-range system plan identifies critical issues that affect transportation services in Thurston County such as land uses; parking policies and facility needs; environmental impacts; travel behavior; community goals; and financing. The plan also provides long-range direction for coordinating possible high-capacity transportation services and the land-use changes necessary for a successful system.

Thurston County’s Comprehensive Plan provides direction as to how the area should develop to improve the quality of life for its citizens. The transportation element, which includes
transportation choices such as transit, is an important part of that plan. It can assist the county in meeting the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan by providing high-quality transit service. Thurston County can help IT to make transit more attractive and efficient by ensuring that development accommodates pedestrians and bicyclists and can be easily served by transit. (Resolution 11589, 12/15/9)

V. BICYCLES & PEDESTRIANS

This section and related elements of the Comprehensive Plan serve as a bicycle and pedestrian component, in compliance with RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(vii)(F). The Capital Facilities Plan chapter (Chapter 6) and CIP (Appendix G) identifies short- and long-term road, parks, and open space capital projects that support bicycle and pedestrian activity. These Comprehensive Plan elements are consistent with Regional Trails Plan and Regional Transportation Plan goals to enhance community access and promote healthy lifestyles.

A. BIKEWAY CLASSIFICATION

The Washington State Department of Transportation has set standards for bikeways funded with state and federal monies. Exhibits E through H illustrate four classes of bikeway prepared by the Thurston Regional Planning Council and consistent with these standards.
Exhibit E: Multiuse Trail

A Multiuse Trail is a 10- to 14-foot-wide paved or compact-gravel surface, not on a roadway, for pedestrians and bicycles.

Pictured: Chehalis Western Trail
Exhibit F: Bike Lane

A Bike Lane is 5-foot-wide paved or striped roadway lane, specifically for bicycles, and is typically found in urban areas.

Pictured: Yelm Highway SE
Exhibit G. Bike Route

A Bike Route is generally a 4-foot to 8-foot-wide paved roadway shoulder. Typically found in rural areas, these routes serve pedestrians, bicyclists, emergency pull-offs, and other roadway design functions.

Pictured: Rich Road SE
Exhibit H: Shared Travel Lane

A Shared Travel Lane, typically on lower-volume rural roads, accommodates vehicles and bicycles.

Pictured: Overhulse Road NW
B. CURRENT NETWORK
Thurston County’s urban core has a dense network of on-street and off-street bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities (e.g., bicycle lanes, sidewalks and trails) that connect residential and employment areas with regional destinations, schools and public transportation services. Major shared-use trails, such as the Chehalis Western Trail and Yelm-to-Tenino Trail, provide active-transportation links between the urban core and South County jurisdictions. Map T-4 in Appendix E shows on-street and off-street bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities - including bike lanes and existing and planned shared-use trails that connect Thurston County jurisdictions.

Arterial and collector roads that are upgraded to current County standards will include paved shoulders. Paved shoulders have a number of uses, including safety, bicycle and pedestrian usage, improved drainage, emergency pull off, and better support of the pavement for the driving lane. Because of the multiple usage of paved shoulders, particularly roads with higher traffic volumes, some roads may warrant shoulder paving even if they are not on a recognized future bikeway.

C. FUTURE NETWORK
Compatible goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, and Regional Trails Plan support the creation of a connected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that increase the share of trips made safely and conveniently by active transportation. As the number of cyclists and pedestrians increases, however, so does the potential for conflicts with fast-moving automobiles.

In response, the Comprehensive Plan contains policies intended to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities along and across roadways. In addition, Thurston County and its regional partners are working to expand and improve off-road trails, including those along out-of-use rail corridors.

Bicycle improvements will be part of roadway improvements, when possible, since adding these as part of roadway work is the most cost-effective strategy. The Regional Transportation Plan emphasizes the multiuse trails that serve as the backbone of the region’s non-motorized system. Urban bike lanes and rural bike routes are best identified at the local level, with coordination between agencies to ensure seamless connections at jurisdictional boundaries, and at critical junctions with the multiuse trail network. Additional Regional Transportation Plan policies, which are also codified in this Comprehensive Plan chapter, encourage active-transportation connections to shorten trips, as well as neighborhood planning efforts to refine and identify pedestrian corridors to promote walking.

Exhibits I through K show examples of pedestrian facilities in Thurston County.
Exhibit I: Urban Pedestrian Facilities

Generally, urban pedestrian facilities may include a 5-to-10-foot sidewalk, vegetated strip, street lighting, and transit stops.

Pictured: Yelm Highway SE
Exhibit J: Rural Pedestrian Facilities

Generally, rural pedestrian facilities constitute a wide shoulder along a rural road.
Exhibit K: Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings

Generally, seen on higher-volume, higher-speed, and multi-lane roads, enhanced pedestrian crossings can include various improvements such as signage, markings, lane narrowing, medians, beacons, and lighting.

IV. BICYCLES

A. Bikeway Classification:

The Washington State Department of Transportation has set standards for bikeways funded with state and federal monies. Exhibits H through K illustrate four urban classes of bikeway prepared by the Thurston Regional Planning Council, which are consistent with state bikeway standards and which will be used in county Urban Growth Areas. In rural areas paved shoulders will serve as bikeways (see Exhibit D and E Rural Area Roadway Design Standards for Shoulder Widths). Classes of bikeways include:

Class I Bike Path: Separated path, not on roadway.
THURSTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Class II Bike Lane: _________ 4-5 foot, paved and striped lane marked specifically for bicycles.

Class III Bike Route: _________ Shared, wide curb lane, signposted for bicycling.

Class IV Bike Route: _________ Shared vehicle travel lane, typically connecting links between facilities.

CLASS I BIKE PATH

EXHIBIT G

CLASS II BIKE LANE
EXHIBIT H

CLASS III BIKE ROUTE

EXHIBIT I

CLASS IV BIKE ROUTE

EXHIBIT J

B. Current Network:

Various individual bikeways exist within metropolitan and rural Thurston County. Bikeways are located in the cities of Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater, and radiate out into the county and to rural cities and towns. Refer to Map M-35 for existing and future bike
facilities in the county. As rural arterial and collector roads are upgraded to county standards they will include paved shoulders (see Exhibit D and E for County road shoulder requirements). Paved shoulders have a number of uses including safety, bikeways, pedestrian usage, improved drainage, emergency pull off, better support of the pavement for the driving lane and others. Because of the multiple usage of paved shoulders, particularly roads with higher traffic volumes, some roads may warrant shoulder paving even if they are not on a recognized future bikeway.

C. Future Network:

Bicycling has become very popular in Thurston County, both as a form of recreation and exercise and as a means of transportation. As the number of bicyclists has increased, conflicts and the potential for conflicts with automobiles have risen. In response to this situation, the Comprehensive Plan contains policies intended to improve bikeways in the county. These policies recommend that all jurisdictions and major activity centers in Thurston County be connected by continuous and safe bike lanes. In addition, a trail system is being developed by preserving out-of-use rail corridors. These trails will provide additional bike connections.

Bicycle improvements will be part of roadway improvements when possible since adding these as part of roadway work is the most cost effective. Recommendations included in the Regional Transportation Plan emphasize the Class I bike paths that serve as the backbone of the region’s non-motorized system. Class II and Class III facilities are best identified at the local level, with coordination between agencies to ensure seamless connections at jurisdictional boundaries and at critical junctions with the Class I network. The vision is for all jurisdictions to be interconnected with an unbroken network of bicycle facilities to which neighborhoods and activity centers in every jurisdiction are connected by safe and convenient on-street facilities. In this way most residents will be able to choose bicycling as a viable travel alternative. Map M-35 illustrates the regionally significant projects included in the 2025 Regional Transportation Plan.
V. RAIL AND AIR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

A. RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Rail transportation in Thurston County includes both freight hauling and passenger services. Goods and materials move to, from and through Thurston County and downtown Olympia’s Port of Olympia marine terminal on Burlington Northern Santa Fe (both Amtrak and Union Pacific share use of these lines), Tacoma Rail Mountain Division, Puget Sound and Pacific (operating from Centralia through Thurston County to Grays Harbor), Yelm Prairie Line, and Union Pacific.

Passengers can travel regionally and between States on AMTRAK coaches that serve the rail station on the Yelm Highway. Thurston County is served by a high-speed regional rail system that carries passengers throughout the Western Washington Corridor and from Eugene to Vancouver B.C. Existing railroads and other freight corridors, in Thurston County, and their ownerships are illustrated on Map M-41T-8.

During the process to update the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan, the Thurston County community indicated they want more rail transportation services. The community may be faced with a number of problems and opportunities affecting rail transportation. These include:

1. Decline in local shipping by freight rail, which causes rail lines to be abandoned;
2. Passenger rail facilities that are nonexistent or need major improvements;
3. The need to identify and preserve critical right-of-way so Thurston County can participate in regional passenger rail;
4. Land use densities and types that are needed to support rail transportation services;
5. Timely preservation and acquisition of right-of-way that railroad companies are disposing of, after rail services are stopped;
6. Decisions as to what uses are appropriate and environmentally sound on railroad right-of-way that is acquired by public entities (e.g., nature trails, bikeways, historical/cultural activities, future roadway connections, future rail); and
7. Intergovernmental coordination in enhancing and planning for more rail transportation services throughout the State of Washington.

A substantial amount of work has been done to enhance rail transportation services and to address the specific issues and impacts on the Thurston County community. This Comprehensive Plan contains policies to guide preservation and enhancement of rail transportation services (Goal 5G, Objectives B, C, D, and E). Additionally, the Regional Transportation Plan recommends updating and expanding 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 rail and freight rail services in Thurston County, and safety issues are identified and addressed. In addition to these guiding policies, Thurston County, Thurston Regional Planning...
Transportation

THURSTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Council, and other jurisdictions are working cooperatively to identify a regional vision for rail and a proactive strategy for keeping rail a viable and thriving option in the region. The Regional Transportation Plan called for development of a regional rail strategy that will define what role rail should play in the region in moving people and goods within the region and in connecting Thurston County to the greater Puget Sound region and beyond. Such a strategy will be essential in identifying and preserving corridors, planning for compatible land use and siting of facilities, and in coordinating with the diverse array of public and private partners that will be required if rail is to play a larger role in this region. While the Railroad Right-of-Way strategy is a valuable tool for acquiring rail lines as they become abandoned, the Regional Rail Strategy, when complete, will help ensure that fewer of those lines are ever threatened with abandonment.

B. AIR TRANSPORTATION

Air transportation in Thurston County includes both a small public airport owned and operated by the Port of Olympia and some private airstrips. The Port of Olympia’s Airport Master Plan concludes that the Olympia Regional Airport has adequate capacity to meet projected air traffic growth through 2030.

Thurston County should continue to coordinate with other jurisdictions and the Port of Olympia to determine future plans for the Olympia Regional Airport that will affect adjacent land uses. To that end, this chapter’s Goal 7, Objective B includes policies to help maintain compatible relationships between all of Thurston County’s airfields and landing strips and surrounding land uses.

One such policy (7B.1) calls for coordination among the County, Port of Olympia, and the cities of Olympia and Tumwater 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. Air transportation in Thurston County includes both the small public airport owned and operated by the Port of Olympia and some private air strips. An analysis undertaken by the Port of Olympia shows that the Olympia Airport has adequate capacity to meet future aviation demand for the next 20 years. Refer to the Olympia Airport Master Plan for more information.

Thurston County should continue to coordinate with other jurisdictions and the Port of Olympia to determine future plans for the Olympia Airport that will affect adjacent land uses. Land uses in the airport area should be compatible with these plans and adequate arterial access to the airport should be maintained. Land Use and development standards in the airport area should protect the safety of residents and the operation of the airport (see Section V, Chapter Two, for more information).
The addition of small airfields and landing strips should be discouraged because of their impacts on adjacent uses. Private landing strips should meet FAA standards, cumulative impacts should be analyzed and mitigated, and landing strips should be placed to minimize hazard and nuisance. Table 5-2 lists existing private airports located within the county. Table 5-2A lists existing public use airports located within the county.

### Private Airports - Thurston County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 R&amp;K Sky Ranch</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Flying Carpet</td>
<td>Lacey</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Yelm (Western Airpark)</td>
<td>Yelm</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Cougar Mountain</td>
<td>Yelm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Aero Plaza</td>
<td>Olympia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Cowen Field &amp; Seaplane Base</td>
<td>Olympia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Cricket Field</td>
<td>Littlerock</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Blade, Rotary &amp; Wing</td>
<td>Littlerock</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Sorrell</td>
<td>Tenino</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Wisslers</td>
<td>Tenino</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 NW Helicopters</td>
<td>Tumwater</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Kari Field</td>
<td>Olympia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Flying “B”</td>
<td>Yelm</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N/A – Information Not Available

Source: Port of Olympia, 2004
### Table 5.2A: Public Use Airports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Runway Lengths (ft)</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Olympia-Regional Airport</td>
<td>Tumwater (City)</td>
<td>4,177 and 5,419</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R &amp; K Skyranch</td>
<td>Rochester (Thurston County)</td>
<td>2,480</td>
<td>Turf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelm (Western Airpark)</td>
<td>Nr. Yelm (Thurston County)</td>
<td>2,845</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GOAL 1:** PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS THAT ENHANCE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THURSTON COUNTY CITIZENS.

**OBJECTIVE A:** To develop programs for identifying and mitigating roadway hazards which result in accidents and threats to public safety.

**POLICIES:**

- The county should design and maintain highways and roadways consistent with geometric and structural standards that reduce the risk of serious injuries and fatalities in the event of accident.

- The county should provide safe and effective traffic control or grade separation at railroad crossings where practicable.

- The county should provide sufficient travel lane capacity to meet the demand for safe vehicular travel in major corridors, consistent with the road width and community scale limits identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (four to five lanes).

- The county should utilize state-of-the-art traffic control devices, signalization and signing, consistent with professionally accepted warrants to improve the safety and operation of county roadways.

**OBJECTIVE B:** To coordinate with the state to prepare procedures to monitor and control the movement of vehicles carrying hazardous cargos or materials on transportation facilities within the county.

**POLICIES:**

- The county should assist in enforcement of federal and state regulations for transportation of hazardous materials.

Commented [MB15]: Staff decided to replace these with new Goals, Policies and Objectives that track more closely with the updated Regional Transportation Plan and feedback from the public process.
The county should develop and implement policies to minimize the transport of hazardous cargo or materials through population and activity centers by restrictive routing where practical.

The county should conduct a study to inventory hazardous materials being transported through and to Thurston County and identify procedures to handle spills or other accidents.

**GOAL 2: PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS THAT SUPPORT AND COMPLEMENT THE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE THURSTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, AND ARE CONSISTENT WITH, AND WORK TO MEET THE GOALS OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN.**

**OBJECTIVE A:** To prepare long-range plans for future arterial and collector roadways that stress safety and maintenance, meet county and regional goals to decrease the rapid growth of traffic congestion; provide adequate rights-of-way that consider existing and future development; implement Transportation Demand Management and Transportation System Management Programs; are coordinated with the Regional Transportation Plan and adjacent jurisdiction plans; and meet concurrency requirements of the State Growth Management Act.

**POLICIES:**

The county should use future land use projections based on county and jurisdiction comprehensive plans to identify and provide for adequate safety, structural right-of-way and other possible improvements that support the vehicle transportation needs plus use alternative transportation modes as areas develop.

Transportation Demand Management programs should work to decrease auto dependence. These efforts should be consistent with Regional Transportation Plan goals, and coordinated through Intercity Transit with the cooperation of jurisdictions and the state.

The county should utilize land use decisions regarding types and levels of development intensity to determine the types and levels of transportation facilities to be provided within the unincorporated county. Land use and transportation goals and decisions should be integrated with one another and coordinated with adjacent jurisdictions and with the Regional Transportation Plan.

The county should ensure that all transportation projects within Thurston County that have an impact upon facilities or services identified as regional in the Regional Transportation Plan are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.

The county should designate areas where roadway construction or other transportation network improvements to serve designated land use intensities are not feasible as Strategy Corridors in local and regional plans. If strategies cannot be identified to resolve the problems then such land use designations or the level of service should be reviewed.

The county should deny the development of transportation facilities or levels of service which generate pressures for undesirable changes in the Land Use Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.

To meet concurrency requirements of the State Growth Management Act, the county should ensure that adequate transportation facilities are available when the impacts of development occur, or a financial plan must be in place to assure that needed facilities are in place within six years. The
County concurrency management ordinance assures that development within unincorporated areas will not occur that causes the level of service on a transportation facility to drop below the standards outlined in this Transportation Chapter or adopted joint plans.

**OBJECTIVE B:** To provide land development standards to ensure safe and efficient access to land while maintaining the integrity of the arterial roadway system.

**POLICIES:**

Wherever possible, newly created individual lots should not have direct access to present and planned future arterials; access should be by local or collector roadways connecting to arterials.

The county should ensure that all developments have adequate access and circulation for all public service vehicles.

The county should maintain compatible street and road standards among Thurston County jurisdictions.

The county should recognize the advantages and encourage the design of connected networks of arterial and collector roads in order to avoid additional lanes as much as possible. However, the county should ensure local residential streets are designed to discourage cut through traffic and high speeds.

Where new connections are identified, the county should work with appropriate partners to confirm the need for the connection, and identify right-of-way if appropriate.

**OBJECTIVE C:** To minimize environmental impacts of transportation systems according to the State Environmental Policy Act.

**POLICIES:**

The county should ensure that design of transportation facilities include mitigation of adverse impacts on water resources, drainage patterns and soil’s profiles.

The county should ensure that the location of transportation facilities will minimize the disruption of natural habitat, floodplains, wetlands, geologically hazard areas, resource lands and other environmentally sensitive areas.

The county should consider the development of transportation systems that include aesthetic and visual values, if their costs, including maintenance and operation, can be justified.

The county should encourage alternative modes of travel to the single-occupant automobile in order to reach Regional Transportation Plan goals, reduce energy consumption, air pollution and noise levels.

**GOAL 3: PROVIDE MOBILITY FOR ALL CITIZENS REGARDLESS OF AGE, HANDICAP OR INCOME.**

**OBJECTIVE A:** In cooperation with Intercity Transit, assist in preparation of plans and programs for alternative transportation in Thurston County.
POLICIES:

The county should encourage cooperation between private and public agencies, schools and citizens in preparation of transit plans and programs.

The county should encourage development that accommodates pedestrians, bicycle riders, and transit riders (who are pedestrians at the beginning and end of each trip) wherever transit service is planned. Facility needs should be coordinated between the county and Intercity Transit.

The county should encourage Intercity Transit to continue providing fully-accessible buses for elderly and handicapped persons who can use the scheduled, fixed-route transit program.

The county should encourage Intercity Transit to ensure that viable paratransit options continue to provide mobility for those elderly or handicapped persons who cannot utilize the scheduled, fixed-route transit system.

The county should encourage public and private nonprofit agencies providing mass transportation to coordinate these services in order to maximize operating efficiency and level of service.

OBJECTIVE B: To include identification of pedestrian paths and bikeways in transportation system plans.

POLICIES:

The county should ensure that continuous and/or direct bicycle lanes are provided between all jurisdictions and major activity centers.

The county should ensure that compatible bikeway standards are maintained among Thurston County jurisdictions.

The county should encourage Intercity Transit’s efforts to provide interconnections between different modes of travel.

The county should encourage the provision of convenient and secure bicycle parking at commercial or other employment sites wherever possible.

The county should support the identification and improvement of recreation and scenic bicycle and walking routes to meet demand for both short and long trips.

The county should encourage pedestrian facilities in order to provide reasonable access between public facilities and residential areas and serve a public safety purpose.

The county should ensure a safe system of bicycle and pedestrian ways tying together schools, recreation areas, business areas and activity centers is provided.

The county should ensure that new construction of pedestrian facilities accommodates elderly and handicapped user needs.
County arterial and collector road standards should include paving shoulders that are needed for roadway safety and structural support so they can be used by bicyclists.

**GOAL 4: EFFICIENTLY PROVIDE PUBLICLY ACCEPTED LEVELS OF SERVICE.**

**OBJECTIVE A:** To prepare a Road Improvement Ordinance to equitably assign the costs of transportation improvements associated with new development to the developer and county.

**POLICIES:**

The county should ensure that proponents of development required to undergo Concurrency Review provide an assessment of traffic impacts on off-site road and highway facilities. Concurrency requirements do not apply to designated transportation facilities and services of statewide significance, per RCW 36.70A.070(6).

The county should use the average of the two-hour p.m. peak period volumes (consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan) generated by such development as the primary measurement in establishing the proportionate share of street improvement which a proponent will be required to assure.

The county should require that each phase of such development be accompanied by a program to provide mitigation of off-site traffic impacts, with costs pro-rated among phases of the development and beneficiaries of any improvements.

The county should give consideration to innovative transportation programs in impact determinations to help meet county and Regional Transportation Plan goals.

**Multi-Modal Approach To Level of Service Goals – Strategy Corridors:** The county should refer to roads with motor vehicle capacity deficiencies and various constraints that are not good candidates for adding travel lanes as strategy corridors. In the strategy corridors a multi-modal approach to level of service goals—a framework to evaluate alternatives to road widening—should be considered.

A multi-modal approach is a decision tree that would start by considering tradeoffs between improving vehicle capacity (e.g., road widening, new parallel roads, removal of on-street parking during peak hours) and improving other travel modes. Actions to reduce vehicle trips, such as adding bike lanes and sidewalks (in urban areas), improving transit services, and implementing travel demand management measures, should be considered to relieve traffic congestion in strategy corridors. Concurrency ordinances should be reviewed and updated as appropriate to implement multi-modal strategies identified for strategy corridors.

Roadways in unincorporated Thurston County outside the urban growth areas, except state highways of statewide significance, shall operate minimally at or above Level C (as defined by the current version of the Highway Capacity Manual). However, due to their unique circumstances, the following two roadways will be allowed to operate at Level of Service D, and for short periods, below D: (1) Mud Bay Road from the Urban Growth Area boundary west of the Olympia city limits to Highway 101, and (2) Yelm Highway from the Urban Growth Area boundary at the Burlington Northern railroad easement east to Fairoaks Road SW.
Roadways in unincorporated Thurston County within the urban growth areas, except unincorporated Grand Mound, should use the level of service standards established in the joint plans. Level of Service D shall apply to county roads within the Grand Mound Urban Growth Area.

The county should continue to implement the concurrency management ordinance to assure that adopted levels of service will be maintained. When transportation facilities do not meet adopted levels of service, the county should consider selecting one of the following alternatives: (1) move a needed improvement on a transportation facility onto the Capital Facilities Plan or (2) lower the level of service, (2) increase revenues (bonds, new or increased user fees or taxes, regional cost sharing, developer financed improvements), (3) reprioritize projects to focus on those related to concurrency, (5) decrease the cost of the facility, (6) decrease the demand for the facility, or (7) revise the Comprehensive Plan’s Land Use chapter.

Refer to the Capital Facility Plan Goal 1, Objective C, Paying for Capital Facilities, Policy 9.

The county should review and update the concurrency ordinance, as appropriate, to implement multi-modal strategies identified for strategy corridors.

**OBJECTIVE B:** To participate in programs aimed at reducing peak period traffic congestion, discourage the use of single-occupant automobiles and increase use of alternative transportation.

**POLICIES:**

The county should encourage employers in the urbanized areas to offer staggered work hours or flextime and other Transportation Demand Management programs such as parking management, ride match services and preferential parking for carpools and vanpools, covered bike racks, lockers and showers at work sites.

The county should encourage transportation improvements that allow efficient provision of transportation services such as park-and-ride lots, park-and-pool lots, vanpools and carpools.

The county should continue to participate with state government and Intercity Transit in maintaining an ongoing regional program to promote and facilitate ridesharing by the general public and commuters.

The county should facilitate a parking management strategy in the urban area that provides incentives for ridesharing or other commute trip reduction alternatives. As part of this parking management strategy, the county should encourage Intercity Transit to provide bus services at park and ride lots located at the edge of the urban core to serve rural commuters.

The county should continue to support the Regional Transportation Plan and work towards meeting the requirements of the Commute Trip Reduction Act by promoting car/vanpools, working with Intercity Transit and other partners to site park and ride lots, and investigating parking management programs.

**OBJECTIVE C:** To prepare, in cooperation with Intercity Transit, level of service standards for public transportation facilities consistent with current county road standards and the land use policies of this Comprehensive Plan and coordinate the Transportation Demand Management and
Transportation System Management with Intercity Transit. (See Map 34 for existing transit level of services.)

POLICIES:

The county should integrate public transportation planning into elements of land development and design and maintenance of public roads through coordination of county road plans with Intercity Transit service plans.

The county should encourage the extension of public transportation throughout the PTBA\(^4\) as needs arise, resources become available, and the population base of urban growth areas increase.

The county should design roads anticipated to carry Intercity Transit services to accommodate the size of transit vehicles needed.

The county should coordinate county road plans with Intercity Transit service plans to work toward meeting anticipated transit vehicle needs.

OBJECTIVE D: To participate with Intercity Transit, inter-county bus operators and AMTRAK in establishing compatible schedules and terminal locations.

POLICIES:

The county should encourage interconnections and time coordination of public transportation modes (bus, coach and rail) to increase level of service and ridership.

The county should support and encourage the location of terminals and their design features to permit use by multiple mass transportation modes where practical.

The county should encourage schedule and fare coordination of public transportation service for Thurston, Grays Harbor, Pierce and Mason Counties.

The county should continue to work with Intercity Transit to provide public transportation to serve the AMTRAK terminal.

GOAL 5: ALLOW THE STATE-WIDE AND INTERSTATE MOVEMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND PASSENGERS.

OBJECTIVE A: To cooperate with other jurisdictions to ensure adequate services to and from major air and water transportation systems.

POLICIES:

The county should encourage sufficient airfield capacity to accommodate existing and future aviation demand.

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\(^4\) PTBA: Public Transportation Benefit Area
The county should encourage sufficient berthing capacity, backup area, harbor and navigational improvements to accommodate the movement of waterborne cargo and loading and unloading operations.

The county should support noise abatement methods and procedures in new construction to reduce the impact of aircraft flyovers on the community.

The county should provide safe and efficient ground access to the major air and water transportation facilities on county arterials.

County building requirements should ensure that developments in the Olympia Airport approach area will not interfere with airborne aircraft due to structure height, visual distraction, electrical interference or other safety conflicts.

The county should maintain cooperative relationships with the Port, the cities of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater, Intercity Transit, and the Thurston Regional Planning Council to determine solutions to needs as they are identified.

OBJECTIVE B: To encourage continued and enhanced freight rail transportation.

POLICIES:

The county should encourage Railroad companies and shippers to maintain rail freight service on lines that if abandoned would have negative impact on the Thurston County economy.

The county should support the Thurston County Economic Development Council in its work to attract businesses that will increase use of freight rail services and discourage rail line abandonments.

The county should educate shippers as to the benefits of transporting their products by rail for long distance hauling.

The county should cooperate with the state in its effort to preserve essential rail freight service that offers long-term economic benefits.

The county should cooperate with Thurston Regional Planning Council and other jurisdictions in the development, update, and implementation of a regional rail strategy.

OBJECTIVE C: To encourage continued and enhanced passenger rail transportation.

POLICIES:

The county should cooperate with the State Department of Transportation Rail Office and AMTRAK to establish programs to upgrade interstate passenger rail service.

The county should assist rail transportation operators in improving the market for passenger rail travel by making improvements to speed, safety, station amenities, local connections by public transit to the urban area and parking.
OBJECTIVE D: To pursue balanced transportation programs and policies that directly enhance the operating and capital resources of freight and passenger rail transportation.

POLICIES:

The county should cooperate with the state and other jurisdictions in pursuing the preservation and acquisition of railroad rights-of-way for future rail use, economic development and interim trail use. State railroad right-of-way preservation funds should be pursued.

The county should encourage the building of linkages between local transportation services, regional rail and interstate rail services.

The county should participate with the state in rehabilitating and constructing new rail facilities that enable services to be maintained or enhanced.

The county should establish land use types and densities along rail corridors that support freight and passenger rail transportation.

OBJECTIVE E: To prepare plans for railroad rights-of-way when continued rail service is not practical and take action before official abandonment takes place to avoid breaking up property ownerships.

The county should support state or local acquisition of out of use railroad rights-of-way to preserve these resources as future transportation corridors, such as passenger rail lines, bikeways, pedestrian/equestrian trails and roadways.

The county should consider environmental and community impacts with regard to actions for preservation and use of out-of-use railroad right-of-way.

The county should work with the Port, the Economic Development Council, and the state to institute a program to educate shippers, passengers, and the general public as to the benefits of rail services and plan for the future freight, regional, and interstate rail.

GOAL 6: MAINTAIN COMPATIBLE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AIRFIELDS AND LANDING STRIPS AND SURROUNDING LAND USES.

OBJECTIVE A: To encourage location of new airfields and landing strips where they would minimize adverse impacts on existing surrounding land uses.

POLICIES:

The county should encourage small airfields serving rural uses and needs to locate where adequate roads, fire protection, and other necessary facilities and services are available.

The county should require mitigation for any potential adverse impacts to surrounding land uses related to new small.
The county should require landing strips for private use serving one aircraft in rural, residential or commercial areas to locate on sites meeting current FAA recommendations, providing adverse impacts can be mitigated.

The county should require that landing strips serving more than one aircraft, including those associated with residential development and resource uses, be regulated according to current FAA recommendations and analyzed for their cumulative impacts, with mitigation measures proposed.

The county should require that approach zones for small airfields and landing strips be oriented to minimize hazard and nuisance to present and potential adjoining land uses.

The county should discourage the proliferation of small airfields and landing strips due to their cumulative impacts on air traffic and nearby uses.

The county should notify nearby land owners about proposals for small airfields and landing strips.

The county should establish standards for small airfields and landing strips within the Special Use Chapter of the Zoning Ordinance.

**OBJECTIVE B:** To allow existing small airfields and landing strips to continue operations.

**POLICIES:**

The county should not consider small airfields and landing strips which are originally developed compatibly with surrounding land uses as a nuisance to new land use developments in the area.

The county should designate land surrounding existing small airfields and landing strips for land uses which are compatible with aircraft activity. The county should use Federal Aviation Administration Regulations and Advisory Circulars information as a guide.

The county should establish guidelines for expansion of existing airfields and landing strips, to be subject to the same guidelines as new ones.

The county should inventory the current use of water for aircraft activity and explore the need for regulations (including storage of aviation fuel).

## VI. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**GOAL 1:** **ENHANCE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THOSE WHO USE, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.**

**OBJECTIVE 1A:** Reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Thurston County roadways to zero by 2030.

**POLICIES:**

Use a combination of education, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation to maintain and enhance the transportation system safety.

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

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

Provide and support safe routes to schools programs and projects.

Develop and maintain a data-driven county road safety plans to identify priorities and proven, recommended, and new solutions to support the Target Zero safety goal.

Consider the safety of all users when designing transportation facilities, and design infrastructure to encourage safe user behavior.

Prioritize roundabouts instead of traffic signals at intersections to maintain traffic flow and improve safety performance.

As transportation facilities are upgraded, consider retrofitting them to improve their ability to withstand a major earthquake or other natural disaster.

Build in system resilience into transportation improvements to support emergency response and reduce community disruption during natural or man-made disasters.

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

Develop or support policies to respond to spills and accidents of hazardous materials on County transportation facilities.

Develop and maintain a rapid-reaction strategy to assess safety of transportation facilities during an emergency.

Support Interstate 5 detour strategy with regional partners.

Map transportation infrastructure that is vulnerable to repeated floods and/or landslides, and designate alternative travel routes for critical transportation corridors when roads must be closed because of natural hazards.
Goal 2: Ensure the design, function, and capacity of transportation facilities are consistent with and support sustainable, economically vibrant, healthy urban, suburban, and rural communities.

OBJECTIVE 2A: Ensure long-range plans for transportation address county growth projections.

POLICIES:

T.2A.1: Use urban design standards to encourage walking, bicycling, transit use, and other alternatives to driving alone.

T.2A.2: Consider transportation investments that support economic development and economic sustainability throughout the County.

T.2A.3: Support mobility, access, and economic goals in designated Strategy Corridors, with an appropriate combination of investments, policies, and land use measures.

T.2A.4: Support policies, programs, and procedures that promote urban infill, and make transportation investments that support increased urban densities.

T.2A.5: Provide transportation facilities to help maintain rural character outside of urban growth areas.

OBJECTIVE 2B: Ensure compatibility between transportation and land use.

POLICIES:

T.2B.1: Continue implementation of city road design standards for urban growth areas.

T.2B.2: Plan, design and construct multimodal, context-sensitive, complete streets and roads.

T.2B.3: Avoid widening any local arterial or collector to more than two through lanes in each direction – except auxiliary turn lanes, where appropriate – to preserve an acceptable community scale and minimize transportation impacts on adjacent land uses.

T.2B.4: Avoid widening rural Strategy Corridors to more than one through lane in each direction – except auxiliary turn lanes, where appropriate – to preserve an acceptable community scale and minimize transportation impacts on adjacent land uses.

T.2B.5: Designate arterial and collectors as Strategy Corridors once they are fully built-out. Continue to consider alternatives to road widening aimed at improving mobility for people, goods, and services.

T.2B.6: Continue and support development of 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.
T.2B.7. Continue to support and implement urban and rural access management principles to preserve the safety and efficiency of the transportation system.

T.2B.8. Continue to implement the concurrency management ordinance to support adopted levels of service as required by state law. The concurrency ordinance includes alternatives such as: move a needed improvement on a transportation facility into the Capital Facilities Plan Improvement Program; change the level of service; increase revenues; reprioritize existing projects; implement transportation demand management strategies; and, revise the Comprehensive Plan’s Land Use chapter.

T.2B.9. Coordinate with all cities, towns, and communities to implement appropriate context-sensitive urban improvements.

OBJECTIVE 2C: 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.

POLICIES:

T.2C.1. Support awareness of our historic, cultural, and natural heritage through signs and other methods.

T.2C.2. Support the creation of vibrant city centers and activity nodes along transit corridors.

T.2C.3. Support safe and vibrant rural communities and centers that foster entrepreneurship, active transportation, civic pride, and a sense of place through development of Main Street or community action plans.

T.2C.4. Support protection of the region’s farms, forests, prairies, and open spaces while providing appropriate transportation services.

T.2C.5. Engage and inform the community in transportation infrastructure planning and investments.

GOAL 3: PROVIDE MOBILITY FOR ALL RESIDENTS, REGARDLESS OF AGE, ABILITY, OR INCOME.

OBJECTIVE 3A: Ensure transportation system investments support the special travel needs of youth and elders, people with disabilities, people with literacy or language barriers, people with low incomes, and other affected groups.

POLICIES:

T.3A.1. Ensure transportation facilities comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
Support public transportation stops and walkway approaches that are accessible for those with differing capabilities.

Present information and provide public participation opportunities for everyone, including people with physical disabilities, people with limited literacy skills, and/or people who do not speak or read English.

**OBJECTIVE 3B:** Provide for quality travel mode options appropriate to existing and future land uses, including walking, bicycling, public transportation, rail, and motor vehicles, including freight.

**POLICIES:**

T.3B.1. Support development of transit transfer centers, activity centers, employment centers, schools, rail stations, and other projects that enable multiple modes of travel and safe, efficient connections among those modes of travel.

T.3B.2. Promote public education on the rights and responsibilities of automobile drivers, bicyclists, and walkers, and ways to travel together efficiently and safely.

**OBJECTIVE 3C:** Increase the overall operating efficiency of the transportation system through the effective use of measures that reduce the need to drive and help achieve the Regional Transportation Plan’s targets for reducing vehicle miles traveled as well as the State commute trip reduction goals for the jurisdiction and region.

**POLICIES:**

T.3C.1. Encourage use of public transportation, ridesharing, bicycling, and walking by improving access, convenience, and reliability.

T.3C.2. Support 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.

T.3C.3. Use transportation demand management techniques to provide alternatives during temporary congestion, such as during major construction.

T.3C.4. Use new technologies or alternative designs – such as roundabouts as alternatives to traffic signals or stop signs – to safely and efficiently manage the flow of traffic.

T.3C.5. Use access management techniques to improve roadway capacity and operating efficiency, and increase overall safety.

T.3C.6. Incorporate alternative strategies to address congestion where road widening and traffic-control devices are not acceptable, particularly along Strategy Corridors.
**OBJECTIVE 3D:** Provide a robust level of reliable, effective public transportation options to increase the share of all trips made by public transportation.

**POLICIES:**

T. 3D.1. 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.

T. 3D.2. Support investments in regional commuter vanpool programs to provide cost-effective, flexible alternatives to commuting in single-occupancy vehicles.

T. 3D.3. Support 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.

T. 3D.4. Support safe, convenient, and cost-effective transportation services for youth, elders, people with disabilities, or other people with special needs.

T. 3D.5. Support increased awareness of public transportation options and how to use them through expanded education and public information tailored to various groups and interests.

T. 3D.6. Support a broad range of public transportation programs and services that ensure a full mix of options for meeting transportation needs as they evolve.

T. 3D.7. Support exploration of public transportation options for newly emerging urban centers, including innovative partnerships and programs, where fixed-route service is not currently feasible or sustainable.

**OBJECTIVE 3E:** Increase the share of all trips made by bicycling.

**POLICIES:**

T. 3E.1. Develop a continuous, safe, and convenient regional bicycle network that functions as an integral part of the overall transportation system.

T. 3E.2. Provide safe and convenient bicycle routes to all schools in the region, and encourage their use.

T. 3E.3. Invest in a regional network of contiguous and connected north-south and east-west dedicated shared-use trail corridors, as outlined in the Regional Trails Plan, to serve as the backbone of the non-motorized system.

T. 3E.4. Support bicycle parking facilities at transit centers, park-and-ride locations, train stations, and other multimodal facilities.

T. 3E.5. Support education programs for motorists and bicyclists to increase understanding of bicycling laws, and encourage safe and lawful sharing of the road.
OBJECTIVE 3F: Increase the share of all trips made by walking.

POLICIES:

T.3F.1. Develop a continuous, safe, and convenient regional pedestrian network that functions as an integral part of the overall transportation system.

T.3F.2. Develop and encourage connections for pedestrian and bicycle travel to shorten trip lengths to transit routes, schools, parks, trails, activity centers, and other destinations.

T.3F.3. Provide street lighting, pedestrian buffers, trees, benches, and other elements that make walking safe and pleasant.

T.3F.4. Encourage neighborhood or community planning efforts to refine and identify pedestrian corridors and promote walkability.

T.3F.5. Ensure that street, road, and bridge projects are integrated with pedestrian amenities in neighborhoods and communities.

T.3F.6. Identify and construct high-priority multiuse path trailheads to maximize the visibility of trail users and vehicle drivers.

Goal 4: Protect investments that have been made in the transportation system.

OBJECTIVE 4A: Maintain and preserve the existing transportation system.

POLICIES:

T.4A.1. Prioritize maintenance, preservation, operations, and repair the existing transportation system.

T.4A.2. Develop a strategic asset management plan.

T.4A.3. Use preventative maintenance programs to ensure lowest life-cycle costs.

T.4A.4. Coordinate annually with local utility providers and local and state governments on road construction and maintenance activities.

T.4A.5. Use street restoration standards, and coordinate utility and street projects, to minimize the impact of utility projects on streets. Where possible, leverage investments for both project types to deliver more cost-effective public facilities.

OBJECTIVE 4B: Use technology-based approaches to address transportation congestion, safety, efficiency, and operations.

POLICIES:
Transportation

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**OBJECTIVE 4B:** Explore innovative programs that reduce infrastructure life-cycle costs, improve safety, or increase efficiency of service delivery, including use of new materials, technologies, and resource partnerships.

**POLICIES:**

**T.4B.1** Explore innovative programs that reduce infrastructure life-cycle costs, improve safety, or increase efficiency of service delivery, including use of new materials, technologies, and resource partnerships.

**T.4B.2** Use transportation technologies to more effectively utilize the existing transportation system.

**T.4B.3** Use or support transportation technologies to better integrate transportation modes.

**T.4B.4** Make short-range technology investment decisions that support future technology implementation strategies.

**T.4B.5** Look for opportunities to integrate transportation technology considerations in all projects.

**T.4B.6** Recognize that transmittal of electronic information is an important function of a transportation system, and integrate this practice into transportation system evaluation, policies, and implementation strategies.

**OBJECTIVE 4C:** Develop performance measures that are realistic, efficient to administer, effective in assessing performance, and meaningful to the public.

**POLICIES:**

**T.4C.1** Incorporate two-hour p.m. peak traffic volumes into transportation and infrastructure planning or use current regional policies.

**T.4C.2** Use Transportation Level of Service (LOS) thresholds of LOS E or better in urban centers and corridors; LOD D or better elsewhere inside city limits, urban growth boundaries, and census urbanized areas; LOS C outside any census urbanized areas or meet regional policies, except on Strategy Corridors, where widening is not an option, level of services may fall below adopted levels.

**T.4C.3** Develop and use transportation performance measures to evaluate, monitor, and respond to the performance of County policies and investments.

**T.4C.4** 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.

**T.4C.5** Explore performance measures that reflect the contribution of all modes of travel.

**T.4C.6** Where feasible, use performance measures consistent with those used by other adjacent jurisdictions to enable comparisons.
OBJECTIVE 4D: Secure adequate funding to implement the goals and policies in this plan.

POLICIES:

T.4D.1. Provide timely and comprehensive public information about transportation funding issues and opportunities to better enable citizens to participate in complex funding decisions.

T.4D.2. Prioritize transportation system maintenance and preservation over expansion.

T.4D.3. Consider benefits and costs in the allocation of transportation funds to ensure best long-term investment decisions.

T.4D.4. Make strategic transportation investments that reinforce land use and transportation goals and policies of this plan.

T.4D.5. 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.

T.4D.6. Support efforts to improve the availability, predictability, and flexibility of transportation revenues for all modes.

T.4D.7. Use transportation funding policies and investments to make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.

T.4D.8. Continue local policies that require new development to pay for its impacts on the transportation system.

T.4D.9. Establish a revenue source for the Thurston County Transportation Benefit District.

Goal 5: Create and preserve a transportation system that supports and promotes economic vitality.

OBJECTIVE 5A: Ensure freight mobility and access within the region.

POLICIES:

T.5A.1. Support freight access to and from highways and other major freight corridors, and between the region’s intermodal facilities and industrial areas.

T.5A.2. Support efforts to increase the amount of freight that is moved by rail to enhance efficiency, productivity, safety, and mobility on the region’s roadways.

T.5A.3. Explore strategies to reduce conflict and optimize safety for all transportation system users where industrial/commercial land uses are in highly urbanized areas.

T.5A.4. Promote policies and design standards that enable delivery trucks to access businesses while minimizing impacts on the transportation system.
When creating new roadways or upgrading existing ones, design roadways to reduce weather-induced weight restrictions on streets, roads, and bridges that are important freight routes.

**OBJECTIVE 5B:** Support tourism in the region.

**POLICIES:**

- **T.5B.1:** Install and maintain signage for identified regional historic, cultural, and natural heritage and scenic routes such as the Bountiful Byway.
- **T.5B.2:** Consider economic vitality in the prioritization of transportation investments.

**Goal 6:** Support a rail network that provides viable options for passenger, freight, and shared-use rail.

**OBJECTIVE 6A:** Increase safety and efficient use of existing rail system.

**POLICIES:**

- **T.6A.1:** Use design techniques, technology (ITS), and operations coordination to minimize potential conflicts between trains and other modes of transportation.

**OBJECTIVE 6B:** Expand use of existing rail system to improve passenger and freight travel.

**POLICIES:**

- **T.6B.1:** Support appropriate opportunities for the potential shared use of freight rail lines for passenger rail opportunities.
- **T.6B.2:** Consider the acquisition of railroad rights-of-way threatened with abandonment in order to preserve these corridors for transportation use in the future.
- **T.6B.3:** Support 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.
- **T.6B.4:** Support efforts to position the Thurston County region for a future commuter rail connection to central Puget Sound.
- **T.6B.5:** Support high-capacity transportation options such as upgraded interstate passenger rail service.

**Goal 7:** Support appropriate infrastructure to meet the aviation needs of residents and businesses in the region.

**OBJECTIVE 7A:** Encourage sufficient airfield capacity to accommodate existing and future demand.
POLICIES:

T.7A.1. Support regional passenger air service at the Olympia Regional Airport.

OBJECTIVE 7B: Maintain compatible relationships between airfields and surrounding land uses and transportation facilities.

POLICIES:

T.7B.1. Coordinate with the Port of Olympia, as well as with the cities of Olympia and Tumwater, 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.

T.7B.2. Support multimodal access to the Olympia Regional Airport and to Sea-Tac International Airport.

Goal 8: Support appropriate marine infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the region.

OBJECTIVE 8A: Encourage sufficient marine capacity to accommodate existing and future demand.

POLICIES:


T.8A.2. Coordinate 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.

T.8A.3. When appropriate, participate in the partnerships regarding long-term strategies for integrating maritime passenger service into the regional transportation system as viable alternatives develop.

Goal 9: Ensure transportation facilities and programs function seamlessly across community borders and between regions.

OBJECTIVE 9A: Coordinate among local, regional, tribal, state, and federal governments in the planning and operation of the transportation system.

POLICIES:

T.9A.1. Coordinate with jurisdictions on new regional connections that provide more direct routes and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

T.9A.2. Work with government agencies to update and implement county-wide transportation planning policies to support existing land use plans.
T.9A.3. Coordinate street and road projects of all our local jurisdictions and transit agencies, where appropriate.

T.9A.4. Exchange information among local jurisdictions, tribal, state, and federal transportation authorities, and economic development interests to facilitate informed, reasoned decision-making processes.

T.9A.5. Maintain government-to-government relations with tribal governments within the region to encourage coordination of land use and transportation plans.

**Goal 10: Minimize transportation impacts on the natural environment and the people who live and work in the Thurston County region.**

**OBJECTIVE 10A:** Reduce the impacts of transportation infrastructure on the natural environment during construction, retrofit, and maintenance.

**POLICIES:**

T.10A.1. Protect water quality from the impacts of stormwater runoff by minimizing impervious surface areas by using low-impact development methods, where feasible, and effectively treating and managing unavoidable runoff.

T.10A.2. During transportation planning, design, and construction, proactively address fish barrier removal, taking into consideration the habitat of fish-bearing streams and environmentally sensitive areas.

T.10A.3. 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.

T.10A.4. Promote use of alternative fuels and technologies that reduce pollution and other environmental impacts from motorized vehicles.

T.10A.5. 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.

T.10A.6. Comply with federal Clean Air Act transportation requirements.

T.10A.7. Support policies and actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**VII. ACTIONS**

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The following section identifies specific actions that Thurston County should take to achieve its transportation goals, objectives, and policies. Each action is linked to a policy, which is italicized and noted in brackets.

**Action 1:** Explore forming a cross-cutting, inter-departmental traffic safety technical advisory team to evaluate crash trends, emerging issues, and opportunities to implement the “4E” approach. [Relates to Policy 1A.2]

**Action 2:** Update the County Public Works roundabout policy to prioritize roundabouts instead of traffic signals when intersection traffic control changes are being considered. [Relates to Policy 1A.8]

**Action 3:** Adopt a “complete streets” policy. [Relates to Policy 2B.2]

**Action 4:** Form a regional partnership and secure funding to develop Martin Way Corridor Strategy with the purposes to evaluate the intersection of safety, mobility, and land use across on Martin Way E (Martin Way/I-5 Interchange to SR 510). [Relates to Policy 2B.9]

**Action 5:** Develop a “plain talk” Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). [Relates to Policy 2C.5]

**Action 6:** Merge similar transportation planning functions into one document (e.g., CFP adopts TIP, etc.). [Relates to Policy 2C.5]

**Action 7:** Update the Concurrency Ordinance to include Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures as a way to meet concurrency. [Relates to Policy 2B.8]

**Action 8:** Update TCC 17.10, the Transportation Facilities Concurrency Management System. [Relates to Policy 2B.8]

**Action 9:** Prepare a rural mobility strategy that will develop a concurrency strategy for the rural urban transition area and primary rural routes. [Relates to 2B.8]

**Action 10:** Consider return-on-investment analyses (qualitative or quantitative) into project planning and/or design reports. [Relates to Policy 4D.3]

**Action 11:** Incorporate land use policies into Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) decision-making process. [Relates to Policy 4D.4]

**Action 12:** Consider transportation equity, freight mobility, and economic vitality into Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) priority programming decision-making process. [Relates to Policies 4D.5, 5A.1, and 5B.2]

**Action 13:** Develop a motorist information policy to support tourism. [Relates to Policy 5B.1]

**Action 14:** Continue to participate in the regional transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) through TRPC. [Relates to Policies 9A.2 and 9A.4]

**Action 15:** Periodically review the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan to ensure its consistency with regional, state, and federal plans. [Relates to Policy 9A.3]
Action 16: Develop a fish barrier removal program that identifies high-priority projects.  
[Relates to Policy 10A.2]

Action 17: Include in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prioritization process steps to ensure that federal Title VI requirements for environmental justice are met.  
[Relates to Policy 10A.5]

Commented [MT17]: Action Items 1-17 are removed from this chapter.