C. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WAC 468-63-060(2)(b)(ii)(A-C)

1. Sources of Information

Information	Date Published
Central Puget Sound Regional Growth Centers 2002	2002, PSRC
The Transportation Strategic Plan (TSP) Update	2005, SDOT
City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan, A Plan for Managing Growth 2004-2024	2004, City of Seattle, Dept. of Planning & Development
Six-Year Transit Development Plan	2004, King County Metro
Parking, Your Guide to Parking Management	2001, City of Seattle
Bridging the Gap City of Seattle Capital Investments	2006, City of Seattle

2. Background Information

a. Description of the geographic boundaries of the GTEC. Initially, the City of Seattle would designate a GTEC in its Downtown Urban Center. The Downtown Urban Center (DUC) consists of 952 acres of land that is bounded on the west by Elliot Bay, on the north by Denny Way, on the east by Interstate 5 and South Main Street and on the south by South Royal Brougham Way. The Downtown Urban Center includes Belltown, the Chinatown-International District, the Commercial Core, Denny Triangle and the Pioneer Square Historic District. Seattle chose this as its first GTEC because:

- Employment density in the DUC is the greatest in the state. Reducing SOV and VMT in the DUC will make the greatest contribution toward reducing traffic volumes and delay on streets and highways.
- Citizen support for mass transit: Seattle and the region are making their greatest capital investments in mass transit infrastructure, transit service, and facilities that support bicycle and pedestrian access. Both the City of Seattle's "Bridging the Gap" and King County Metro's "Transit Now" funding initiatives gained voter approval in 2006. Both initiatives received substantial support from the DSA and individual downtown businesses.
- Policies of Support: Seattle's Comprehensive and Transportation Strategic Plans include land use, parking, and transportation policies that reduce incentives and the need to drive alone. Resolution No. 30915, Bridging the Gap. Council Bill 115861 Seattle's Complete Streets policy, state guiding principles and practices so that transportation improvements are planned, designed and constructed to encourage walking, bicycling and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users.
- Local Organizational Support: The City of Seattle, King County Metro and the Downtown Seattle Association have formed the Downtown Transportation Alliance, which is committed to supporting this effort. CTR-Affected Employers (112) participate in networking groups in order to share transportation information and promote trip reduction in the DUC.
- Local Funding: Up to $100,000 from King County Metro, $100,000 from the City of Seattle, and $100,000 from the Downtown Transportation Alliance, a total of $300,000 per year in direct funds. (Additional resources appear in Section E, Sustainable Financial Plan.)

- Expanding the CTR Plan: The City would focus its efforts on densely populated, high-rise buildings, extending the programs and services it now provides to major employers to smaller employers.

b. Documentation that the urban centers and proposed GTEC are located within the jurisdiction's urban growth area can be found in The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan, a Plan for Managing Growth 2004-2024.

3. Land Use and Transportation Context (WAC 468-63-060 (iii) in the Downtown Urban Center (DUC):
   - Population: In 2004 the population of the DUC was 15,700 households, or 16 households per acre. In 2002 there were 165 jobs per acre, a total employee population of 156,960.

   a. Existing land use conditions: Seattle's Downtown Urban Center (DUC) is divided among the following primary land use functions: Office, retail, mixed-use commercial, mixed-use residential and harbor-front. The DUC is fully built with a mature transportation system, where land use and transportation are fundamentally related and mutually supportive.

      The City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) recognizes the land use-transportation relationship by focusing redevelopment in concentrated rather than linear patterns, directing transportation investments to link pedestrian-oriented activity centers, and providing more opportunities for walking and bicycling.

   b. Existing transportation network.
   - The DUC is served by Interstate Highways No. 5 and 90, State Highways 99, 509, 519, 520, and 522, the Washington State Ferry Terminal at the Coleman Dock in the Central Business District, and the King Street Train Station.
   - The DUC is served by Community Transit of Snohomish County, King County Metro Transit, Pierce Transit (Sound Transit operated) and Sound Transit, Amtrak, Greyhound and the Washington State Ferry System. These agencies provide an array of public transportation facilities and services, including local and express bus, commuter rail, vanpool programs, park and ride lots, intercity bus and ferry service. Maps that display these services and links may be found in the Appendix, pages 8, 13 and 14.

   c. Economic development Plan.
      DUC: Seattle's Comprehensive Plan outlines a general economic development plan for the DUC. In order to maintain downtown Seattle as the most important of the region's urban centers—a compactly developed area supporting a diversity of uses meeting the employment, residential, shopping, culture, service and entertainment needs of the broadest range of the region's population.

4. Projected Future Conditions and Characteristics that will contribute to reduced use of private vehicles in the GTEC. (WAC 468-63-060 (iii)(B)
   a. Population and employment growth to the year 2024. The following tables display growth targets for the DUC to 2024:

Downtown Urban Center	HH Number	HH Density	Overall Employment	Jobs Per Acre
DUC Existing (2004)	15,700	16 HH/Acre	156,960	165
DUC Growth Target	10,000	27 HH/Acre	29,015	30
DUC Total Projected (2024)	25,700	43 HH/Acre	175,975	195

   - Traffic in Seattle is forecast to increase from 76 million VMT per day in 1998 to 106 million VMT in 2020, a 39% increase. To analyze the transportation effects of the Comp Plan's gals and policies, Seattle diverged from the traditional "micro-level" focus on intersection Level of Service (LOS) analysis in order to recognize the broader geographic impacts of development and travel patterns and to reflect the ability and behavior of motorists to select routes based upon a wide variety of factors. This yielded a forecast of Volume/Capacity (v/c) ratios that are below 1.0 standard LOS in the DUC. (Refer to page T-A21—A27 of the Comp Plan for a complete discussion.)

- Mode split/share: The 2000 Census reported the following commute mode splits in four of Seattle's urban centers:

MODE	Downtown	South Lake Union	First Hill/ Capitol Hill	Uptown
SOV	44%	70%	54%	66%
Car or Vanpool	14%	14%	15%	13%
Mass Transit	36%	10%	20%	14%
Bike	1%	2%	1%	2%
Walk	4%	3%	7%	4%
Telework	0%	1%	2%	0%
Other	1%	1%	0%	1%

- Seattle's investment in mass transit infrastructure, increased frequency of transit service, and improved facilities and amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians will significantly reduce reliance upon private vehicles and increase the use of alternative modes.
- Parking: 85% of the decision about whether to drive or use alternative transportation modes is determined by the price of parking. A scarce supply of parking, accompanied by a relatively high price to do so, is more likely to generate increased use of mass transit than all other efforts combined. Parking is a scarce commodity in Seattle, and while the cost to park is high in most employment centers, it is especially high in the DUC, where demand for parking is highly inelastic. Seattle expects parking will become even more scarce and costly as employment and population grow and the City's eliminates minimum parking requirements for new development. These circumstances will contribute greatly to shifts away from the use of private vehicles, making the DUC a viable target for promoting alternative commute modes.

b. Forecasts of traffic delay. PSRC provided the City with the most recent forecast of traffic delay hours for 2010 for Interstate 5 and SR-99. The boundaries for the forecast are: I-5 from the Interstate 90 to the SR 520 interchange; and SR 99 from Spokane Street to Mercer Street.

HOURS OF DELAY
2010

Times of Day			A.M.	M.D.	P.M.	EV	NI		All Day
Interstate 5	HOV	NB	0.8	1.1	.5	2.0	0.0		4.4
		SB	0.9	23.1	56.9	32.3	0.0		113.2
	GP	NB	541.8	997.6	1059.3	301.4	14.6		2914.7
		SB	459.8	1002.0	1154.7	419.2	35.6		3017.3
SR-99	HOV	NB	1.2	2.0	4.3	1.4	0.0		8.7
		SB	0.0	0.7	30.7	13.7	0.0		45.1
	GP	NB	318.5	407.6	239.2	65.7	0.3		1031.3
		SB	70.5	423.6	729.1	291.1	0.0		1514.3
Totals by Time Period			1,393.5	2,657.7	3,274.7	1,126.8	50.5		8,703.2

c. Plans, policies and capital projects.

- The City has committed $214 million in capital projects and programs that reduce the need to drive alone. (See page 23.) These include: A light rail line that will serve the Seattle Downtown Urban Center in the first phase of regional Link light rail rapid transit service under the Sound Transit Sound Move ten year plan. The first phase of Central Link, running from Downtown Seattle to the northern tip of the SeaTac urban center is expected to be in operation in 2009.
- The City also plans to spend $1.8 million to raise the level of safety and visibility on bike trails that connect to the DUC.
- The City is developing a Downtown Transportation Plan.

- The City is engaged with the State of Washington and PSRC on a plan to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct.
- The City is engaged with the State of Washington in a major improvement to the Coleman Dock Ferry Terminal.
- The City plans to make investments in non-motorized transportation facilities such as installing "pedestrian countdown signals" along Pike and Pine Streets between First and Seventh Avenues in the DUC and implementing recommendations of the Bike Master Plan.
- Seattle has a new transit only lane planned for Stewart Street for 2007.
- The Alaskan Way Viaduct team is considering infrastructure and transit service investments that support transit operations in the DBD as part of a construction transportation mitigation plan that it is developing.
- In 2007 the City adopted an employee tax that allows employers to take deductions for their employees' HOV use.
- In 2007 the City adopted a tax on commercial parking.

e. Parking and Land Use: The City of Seattle strives to balance the diverse and competing needs for curb spaces uses. Therefore, its Comprehensive and Transportation Strategic Plans consider the adjacent land uses both with respect to each specific block and the larger surrounding area. The City's priorities with respect to current and future land use policies and parking, especially in the DUC, do not support the use of on-street parking for long-term commuter parking. In business or commercial areas, including blocks with mixed-use buildings containing residential units, the priorities for curb space use are:

- transit use (bus stops and spaces for bus layover),
- passenger and commercial vehicle loading zones , and
- short-term customer parking (time limits and paid parking for one or two hours);

Seattle also is considering introducing performance based parking management on downtown on-street pay stations as a demand management strategy.

f. Minimum parking requirements: In 2006 Seattle passed Ordinance No. 122054, which reduced or eliminated minimum parking requirements for developers and allows changes in the conditions of a TMP to reflect current conditions and mitigate any parking and traffic impacts. The ordinance established a maximum parking limit for nonresidential uses to a maximum of one parking space per 1,000 square feet.

g. Bicycle Parking & Amenities: Ordinance No. 122054 also changed the City's Land Use Code, to require developers to provide bicycle parking, showers and locker facilities in all new nonresidential structures over ten thousand square feet in the Downtown Core and to existing structures where more than ten thousand (10,000) square feet of nonresidential use is proposed to be added.

5. Gap Analysis. (WAC 468-63-060(2)(B)(iv) The CTR Plan, Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Strategic Plan and the proposed GTEC Program describe Seattle's extensive investments in its transportation infrastructure, transit service improvements, cycling and pedestrian facilities, parking management, land use and transportation policies, and programs designed to reduce reliance upon automobiles to travel into and through the DUC. Summary descriptions of these investments appear on pages 50-53; Seattle's parking policies and ordinances, street design standards and concurrency requirements appear on page 22; development and construction mitigation policies appear on page 24; exhibits of current transit service begin on page 8 of the Appendix, while Seattle's Future Transit Network appears as Exhibit # 13 on page 18 of the Appendix.

While these demonstrate that the City of Seattle already has made major investments in policies, programs and infrastructure that promote the use of mass transit and reduce reliance on the automobile, the City has identified a significant gap in its "package" of improvements, and that is the City's capacity to provide TDM

support to large, densely populated buildings that house many small employers. With the advent of new and improved public transportation service into the DUC within the next two years, the timing is appropriate to make that effort now

a. Services: A gap exists in the City's capacity to provide TDM products and services to small employers—individually or in groups. With the implementation of LINK light rail in 2009, projected improvements to Metro Transit service, and higher utilization of existing transit capacity, Metro forecasts that sufficient transit capacity will be available to meet the GTEC's HOV goals through 2011.
b. Policies: Although Seattle adopted transportation demand management into the land use and transportation elements of the Comprehensive Plan, the City has not included its CTR Plan (SMC 25.02) in its Transportation Strategic Plan. There is a gap in local funding to support the basic CTR Plan and for implementing Transportation Management Programs (TMPs), for ongoing monitoring and enforcement, and for engaging managers and tenants of TMP-affected buildings in order to coordinate their requirements with the City's CTR Plan.
c. Programs: Since 1980 the City has required owners and managers of certain properties to develop, implement and maintain transportation management programs, but it does not provide funding to monitor their effectiveness, to coordinate these requirements with CTR-affected employers, or to assist building managers in the same way that the City provides services and products to major employers who are affected by the CTR Law.