

# (DRAFT)

## Washington Transportation Plan Update

### Transportation Access

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*This presentation is a public  
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**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

# Those Without Access to a Car Lack Basic Mobility

We are a “car-dominated” society and those persons without access to an automobile or the ability to drive face increasing isolation and the inability to have access to basic necessities, or activities enhancing the quality of their lives.

This presentation focuses on the population that cannot drive, how they access the transportation system, and what strategies can be employed to address their needs.

Persons with special transportation needs fall into four broad groups:

- The elderly
- People with disabilities
- Children
- People with low incomes

The individuals with special needs use services from a variety of transportation providers. These providers can be formal: transit, paratransit (demand response), taxi, intercity bus, ferry, carpool and vanpool; or informal: volunteers, church groups, program staff (caseworkers), self-drive, service groups, informal carpools.

*What we know is that we do not know specific detail about people in Washington who have special transportation needs. We do not know where they live, where they need to travel to, or whether they face barriers (financial, physical or geographical) in accessing the transportation they need.*

*Not all people who fit one or more of the 4 groups have a special transportation need, nor do they need financial assistance to access transportation. More information is required to better assess needs.*

*For the moment, this presentation relies on data from the US Census, Licensing and on people accessing financial assistance from public agencies. We elected to provide this information so as to reduce the potential for double-counting to the greatest extent possible.*

***Much of the information in this presentation is preliminary and requires further refinement.***

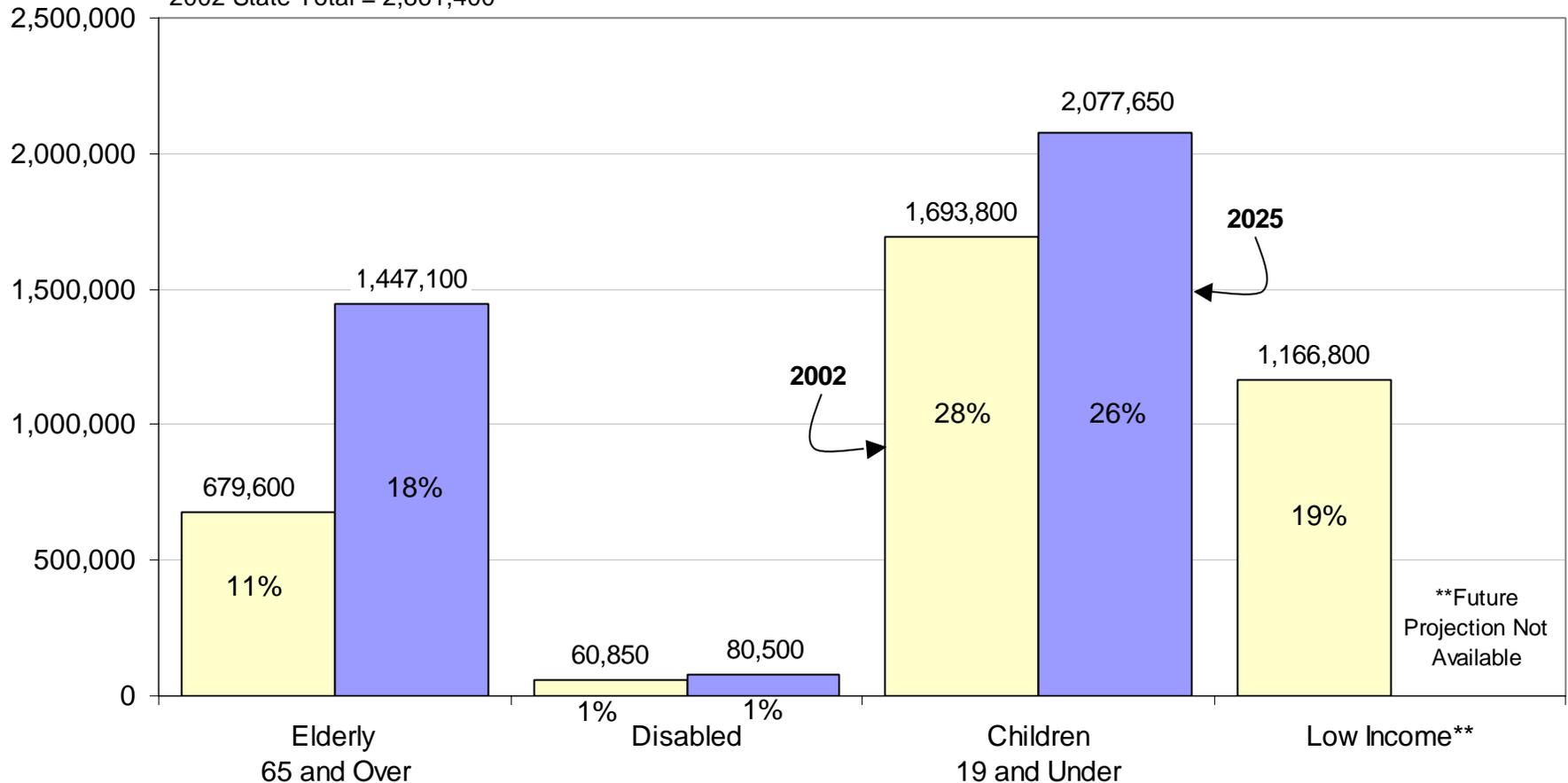
# Who Needs Help Accessing Transportation?

Not all people who are elderly, low income, persons with disabilities, or kids lack mobility but a portion of these population groups do.

Source: OFM for people over 65 and Children; DSHS for Persons with Disabilities and Low Income

## People with Potential Transportation Access Needs

2002 State Total = 2,861,400\*



\*Adjusted for Double Counting

\*\*Future Projection Not Available

# Our Older Population is Growing

*Age is not a good indicator of a person's ability to access transportation. However, for statistical purposes, age 65 and older was selected to reflect the older population.*

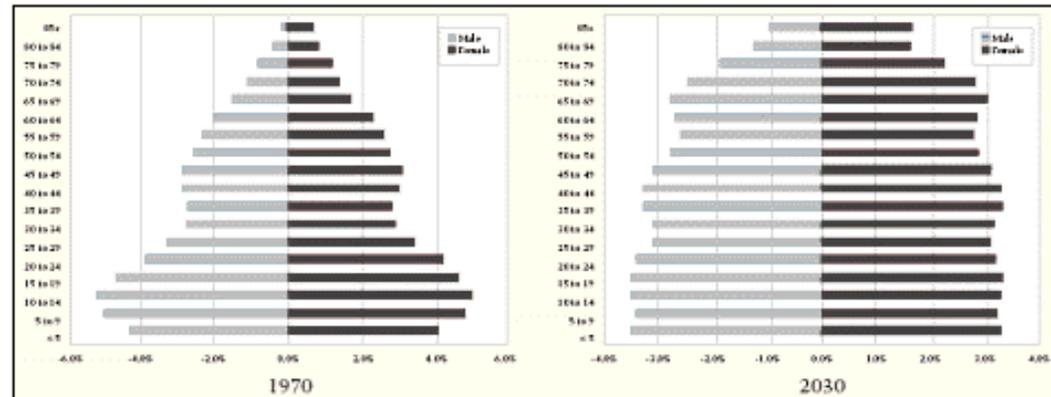
The percentage of people over age 65 has grown at a greater rate than the rest of the U.S. population for the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century. The number of older individuals will more than double by 2050, reaching an estimated 78 million across the country.

## Older population is rapidly increasing

Washington State is among the fastest-aging states in the country, ranking 20<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states. During 1990-2000, the population 45 and older grew 37% and 85 and older grew 50%. These numbers are critical because by year 2020, people 45 and older in 2000 will have reached the age of 65.

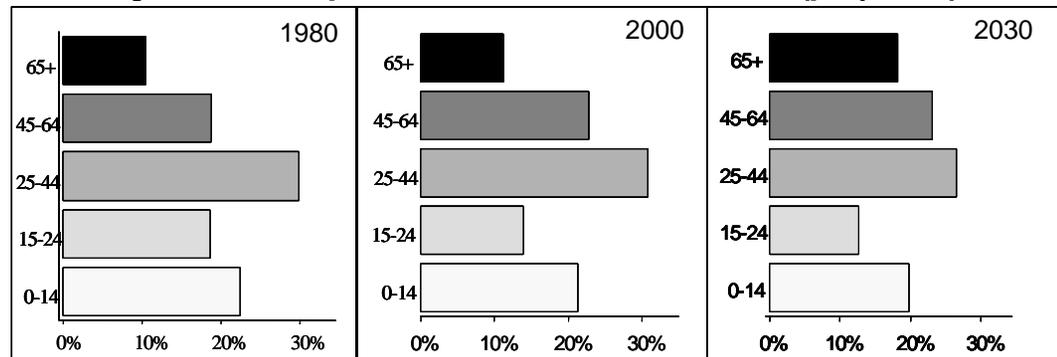
**Increased income and improvements in medical care, public health, and increased education are the major reasons people are living longer.**

## Squaring of the Population Pyramid



US Population – Female and Male, 1970 and 2030 (projected)  
Source: US Census

## Washington State Population in 1980, 2000 and 2030 (projected)

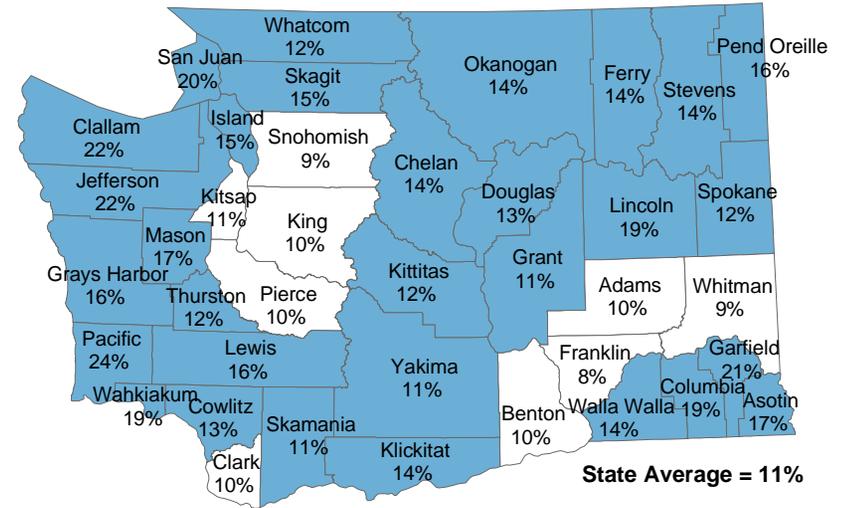


Note: Table for Washington Population with male/female breakout under construction

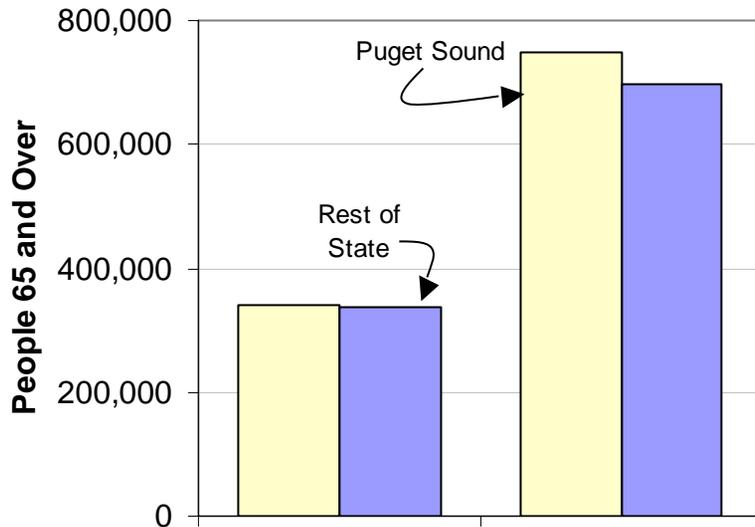
Data Sources: US Census, OFM and DOH

# Washington's Older Population

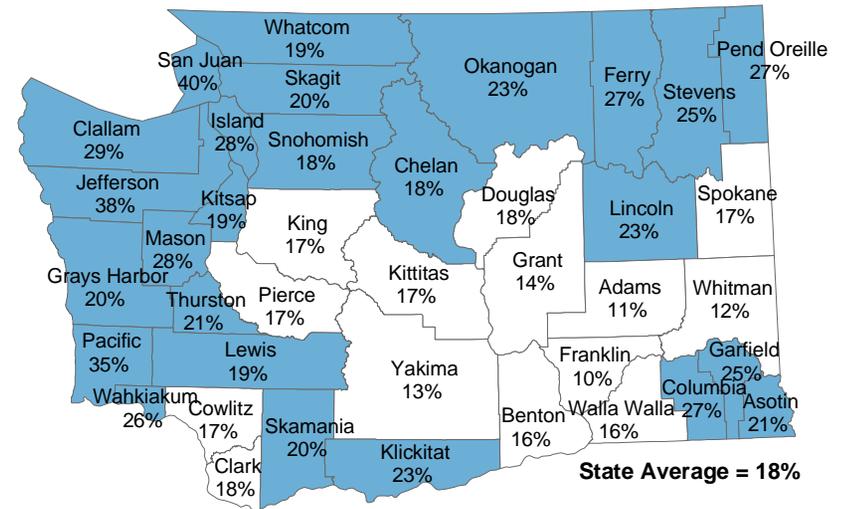
For purposes of context, this page presents the demographic changes associated with Washington's aging "baby-boomer" population. A slight majority of the total number of people age 65 and over resides in the Puget Sound region. However, the counties with the largest percentages of residents age 65 and over are located in retirement or rural areas in the Upper Olympic Peninsula, Northeast, and Southeast parts of the state.



**People Over 65 Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State**



Data Source: OFM



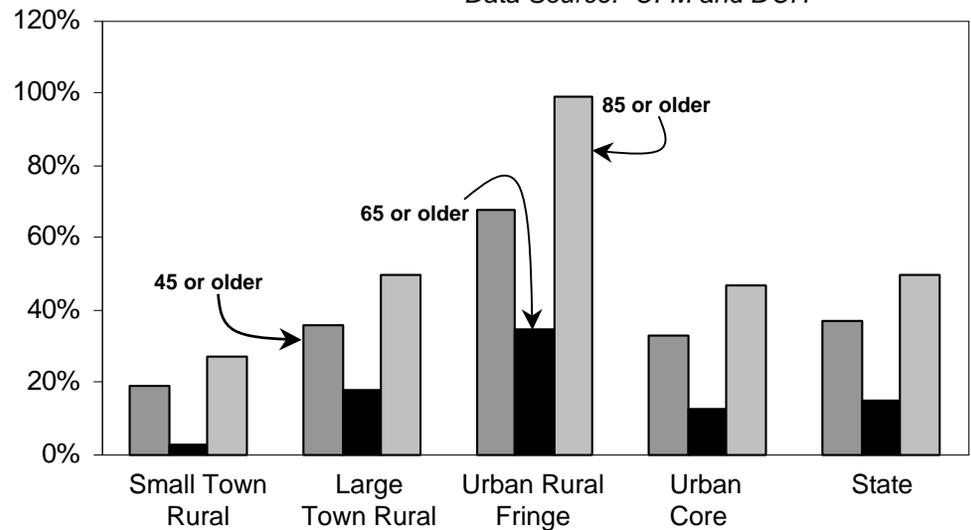
**% of County Population 65 and Over in 2025**  
Below State Average Above State Average **5**

# Washington's Older Population By Location of Residence

- The number of people age 65 and older is growing fastest in suburban areas. This reflects the aging of the suburban population.
- Older people are remaining in their homes and are tending to stay in the types of areas that they've lived in.
- Older Washingtonians are continuing to drive.
  - Most have been driving their entire lives and may not stop until they need curb-to-curb public transportation.
  - 79% of Washington's older population maintains a driver's license.

Data Source: DOL

**Percent Change in Elderly Population by Rural Classification**  
Washington, 1999-2000  
Data Source: OFM and DOH



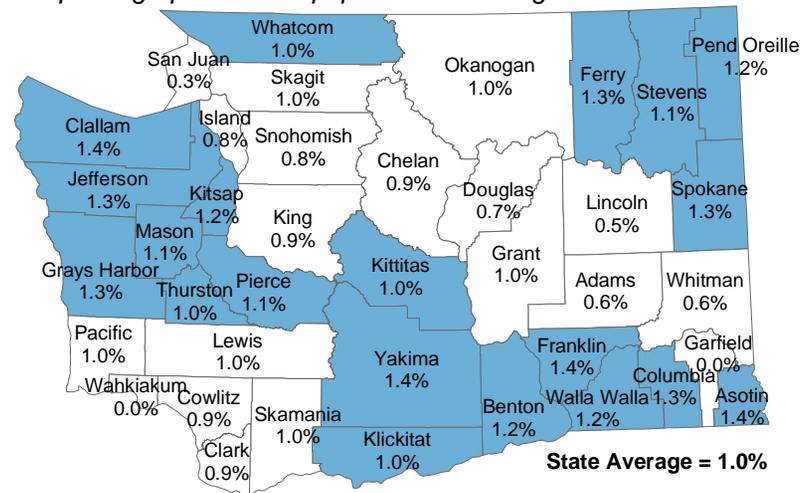
## The growing elderly population has distinct transportation needs:

- Transit service in suburban/rural areas is less available due to high costs and lower ridership
- More demand response service for growing suburban elderly
- Rural transportation for isolated elders
- Roadway safety improvements targeted at senior drivers

# Persons with Disabilities in Washington

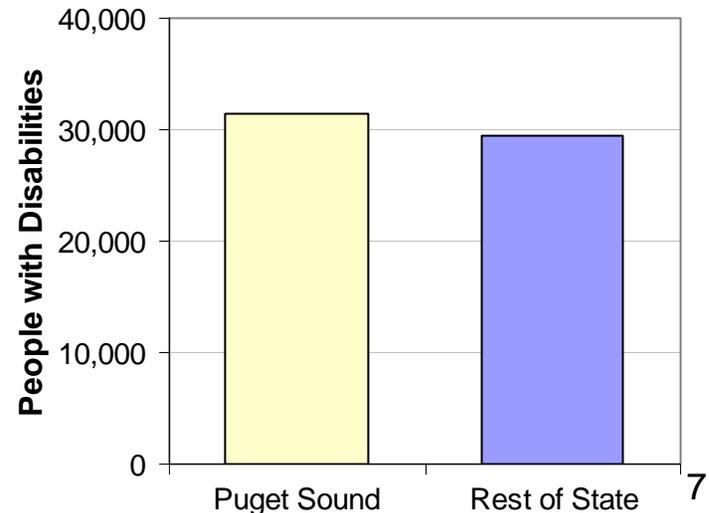
- US Census identified nearly one million people over age 5 in Washington have some form of disability.
- There are a total of 60,850 persons with disabilities receiving assistance from the DSHS Division of Developmental Disabilities and Vocational Rehabilitation.
- According to the National Health Information Statistical database, in Washington:
  - Sensory limitations severe enough to affect everyday life afflict about 5% of the adult population.
  - About 228,000 have physical disabilities that affect their ability to walk and get around outside of the home.

Map and graph illustrate population receiving DDD/DVR assistance



**% of County Population with Disabilities in 2002**  
 Below State Average     Above State Average

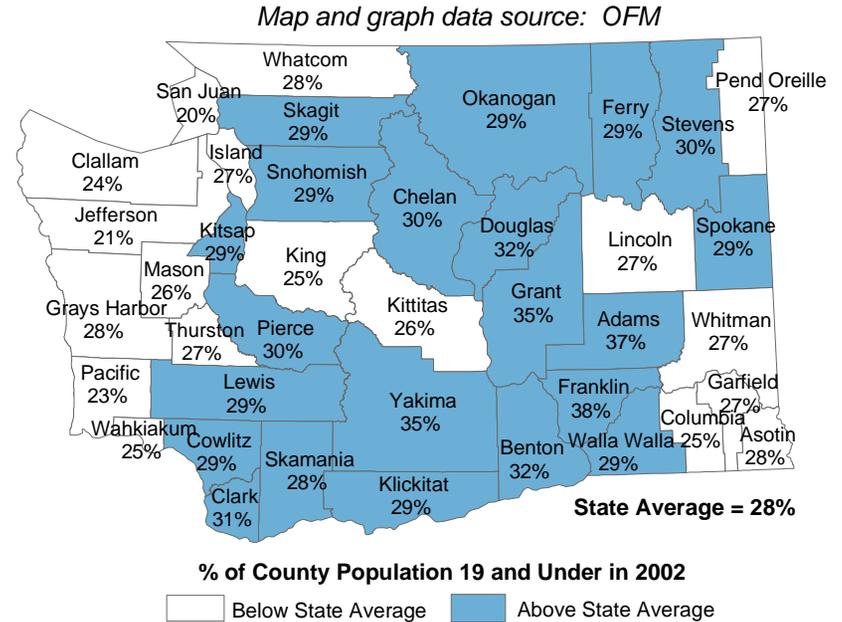
**People with Disabilities Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State**



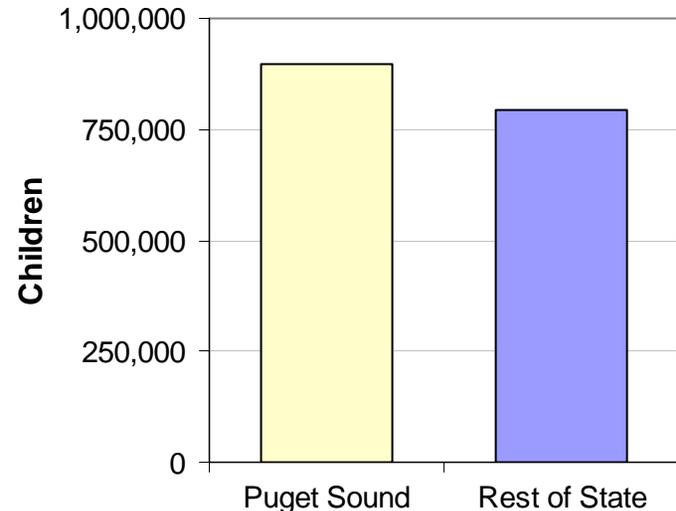
# Washington's Children

For purposes of context, this page presents children in Washington to illustrate the locations that may see impacts as this population moves into the next demographic group.

- Children, age 1 through 19 account for nearly 28% of the total state population.
- From 1990-2000, the number of children age 19 and under increased 20.5% statewide.
- Over 1 million children attend school in Washington and state funding covers 65% of the school districts' transportation costs.
- Transportation for childcare and after school programs is often limited, particularly for kids in rural communities.
- Homeless children have transportation difficulties when transitioning from temporary housing locations.



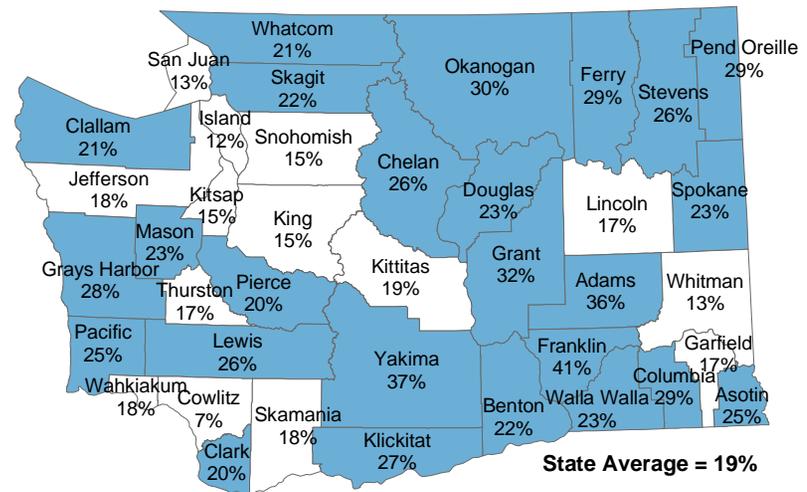
**Children Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State**



# Washington's Low Income Population

- US Census identified nearly 11% of Washington's population, or 650,000 live below the poverty level.
- In 2002, 1.16 million people with low incomes were assisted by DSHS, totaling \$2.45 billion in assistance.
- Low income residents spend a higher percentage of their income on transportation than others. However, many people on public assistance subsidies receive transportation support.
- Low income people in some rural counties and Tribal Nations may not have access to public transportation services.
- Food stamp grants increased 53% between 2000 and 2003 to \$382 million. DSHS caseloads increased 38% during the same time period.

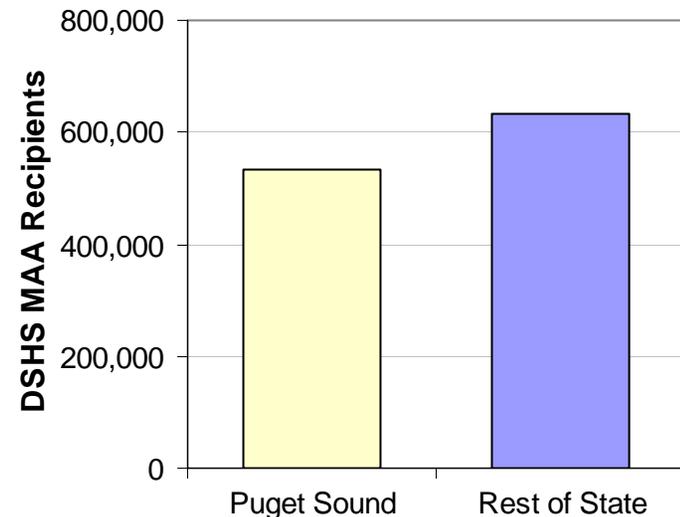
Map and graph illustrate population receiving MAA assistance



DSHS MAA Recipients as % of County Population in 2002

Below State Average Above State Average

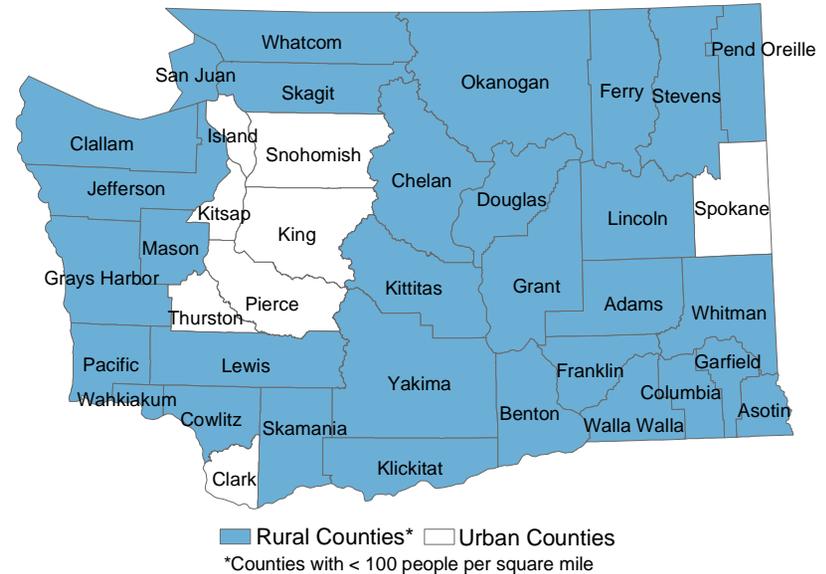
DSHS MAA Recipients Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State



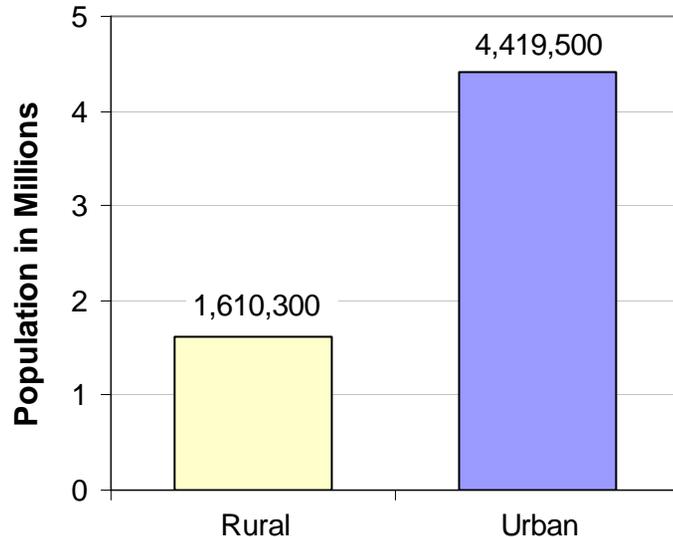
# Transportation Challenges in Rural Areas

To maintain economic viability of rural communities, people in these communities must maintain access to the urban centers for banking, commerce, law, engineering, medicine and other specializations. Of particular concern is access to medical care

In rural areas, this access is normally provided by automobile. With limited options, and long distances, providing this access to people who cannot drive is a challenge.



**Population in Rural Areas vs. Urban Areas**



## Rural Counties in Washington\*

Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Clallam, Columbia, Cowlitz, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lewis, Lincoln, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, Whatcom, Whitman, and Yakima

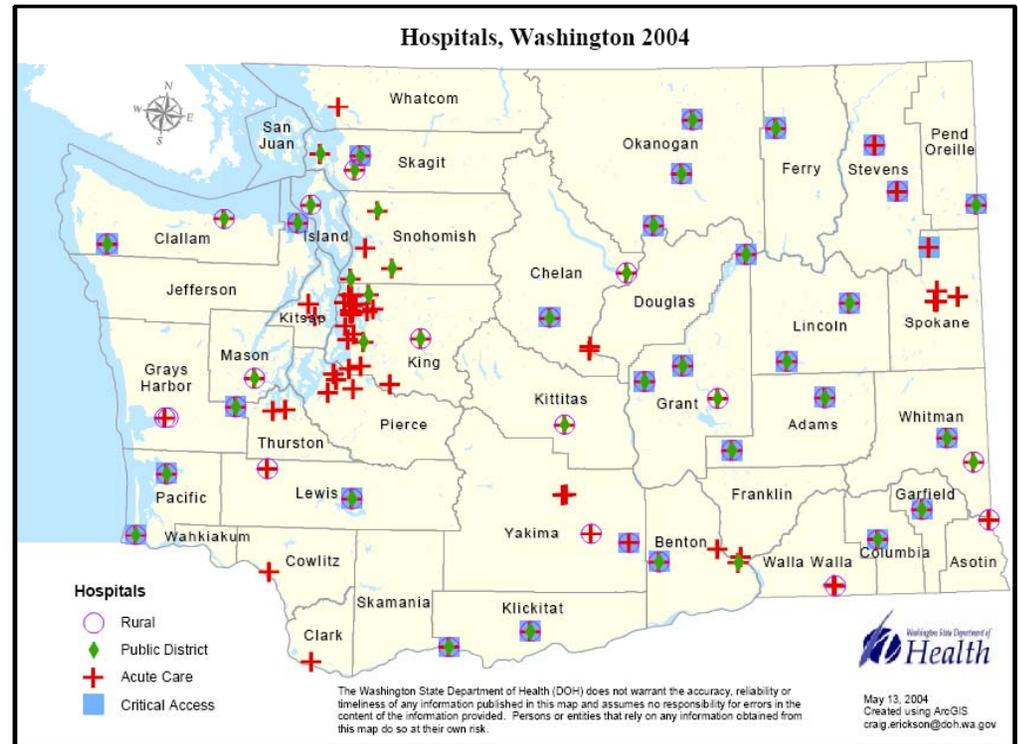
\* Per RCW 43.160.020, 43.168.020  
 List effective through June 30, 2005, OFM

# Rural Health Care Challenges

With the consolidation of medical services in urban areas -- due to the high cost of new medical technology and the difficulty of recruiting and keeping personnel -- rural hospitals must send many patients on to hospitals that can offer the specialists and equipment required by specialized treatment.

Many of the rural hospitals in Washington are not equipped to treat the most complex injuries or repetitive medical treatments. Many patients are transported to urban facilities - often by air.

People who need access to transportation in rural communities find it difficult to seek frequent treatments such as dialysis and chemotherapy/radiation. If conditions go untreated due to a lack of access, they may escalate to more emergent problems.



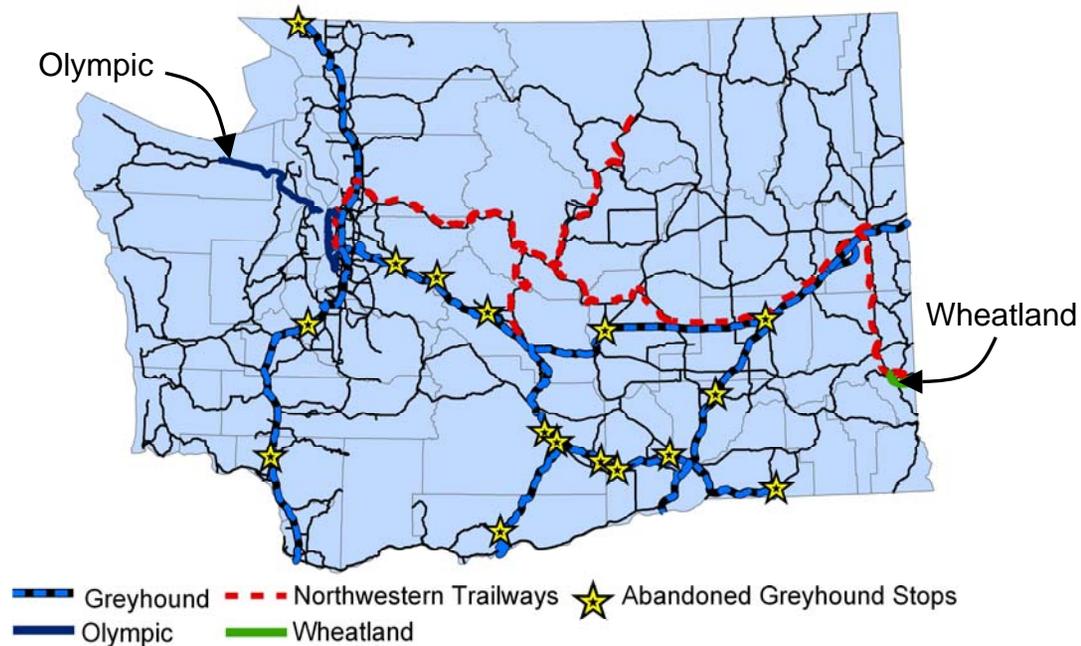
# Intercity Bus Service

Intercity bus services provide the only connections to urban centers for many rural communities.

The main providers are Greyhound, Olympic, Northwestern Trailways, Wheatland Express and Amtrak. The recent changes in Greyhound's service design and their emphasis on serving larger communities puts pressure on local and state funded services to connect the smaller communities to the larger ones.

In the few rural areas where it exists, fixed route service can provide connections between communities for residents and visitors, linking rural hubs with urban services and providing regional connections to the intercity transportation services. However, some communities have no alternatives, significantly impacting their residents.

Community connectors (locally based van or bus operators) can also fill in the gap to provide continuing access to the rail, bus, and air services needed by rural residents.



## Abandoned Greyhound Stops

(effective August, 2004)

Blaine, Camas, Castlerock, Cle Elum, Connell, Ft. Lewis, George, Goldendale, Grandview, Lyle, North Bend, N. Bonneville, Prosser, Richland, Ritzville, Skamania, Snoqualmie Pass, Toppenish, Walla Walla, Wapato, and Washougal

# State and Federal Laws Associated with Access to Transportation

## **Americans with Disabilities Act**

The 1990 Act mandates that transit agencies provide accessible fixed route service, and paratransit service for persons with disabilities at a level that is comparable to the fixed route services available to the general public. The act defines what constitutes comparability.

## **FTA Section 5310**

The Federal Transit Administration provides funding for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation. The funds pass through the Department of Transportation to providers.

## **FTA Section 5311**

Provides funding for rural public transportation grants for operating public transportation in rural areas. The funds pass through the Department of Transportation to providers.

Special Needs grants in the 2003 Legislative Package for \$18 million in 2003-2005.

## **Coordinating Special Needs Transportation**

RCW 47.06B.010 established a program to coordinate different transportation services in order to meet the needs of more people with special transportation needs by removing inefficiencies and coordination barriers.

In addition to defining persons with special needs, **RCW 47.06B.010** outlines “Special needs coordinated transportation” and developed through a collaborative community process involving transportation providers; human service programs and agencies; consumers; social, educational, and health service providers; employer and business representatives; employees and employee representatives; and other affected parties.

## **Rural Mobility Grants**

State grants for public transportation in and between rural communities to alleviate isolation.

# Public Transit Services that Support Access

Public transit has a significant role in transporting people who do not drive through their fixed routes, dial-a-ride services, and special bus fares for the elderly, children and persons with disabilities.

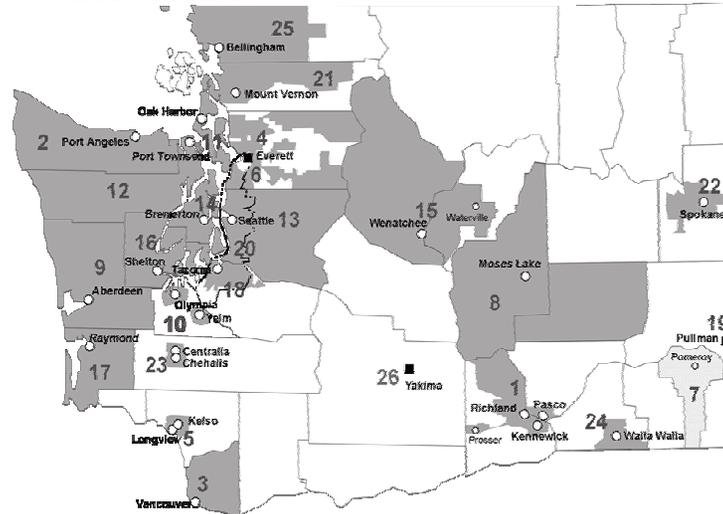
Pupil transportation funds aside, public transit contributes 90% of the dollars spent for special needs transportation.

Public transit agency spending represents a majority of funding for access services. We don't know how much of this spending is for special needs groups, nor do we know the number of special needs people who use fixed route services.

*As indicated in the map, public transit districts do not cover all areas of the state.*

## Washington State Public Transportation

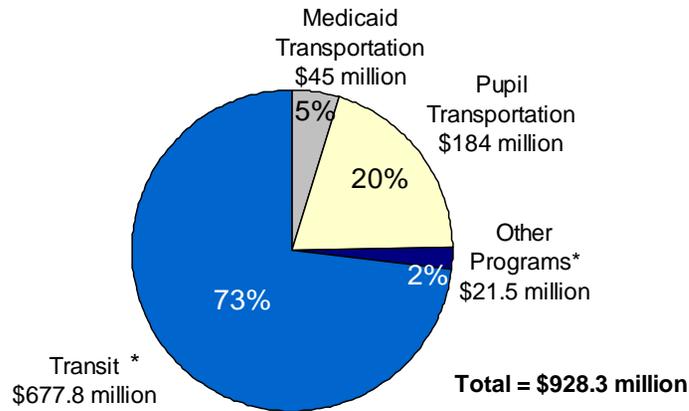
Transit Authorities



Legend

- Transit Systems
  - Regional Systems
  - City Systems
  - Unincorporated County
  - Transportation Benefit Area
  - Central Puget Sound
  - Regional Transit Authority
- 1 Ben Franklin Transit (Benton-Franklin Counties)
  - 2 Clallam Transit
  - 3 C-TRAN (Clark County)
  - 4 Community Transit (Snohomish County)
  - 5 Cowlitz Transit Authority (Longview/Kelso)
  - 6 Everett Transit
  - 7 Garfield County Transportation
  - 8 Grant Transit Authority
  - 9 Grays Harbor Transportation Authority
  - 10 Intercity Transit (Thurston County)
  - 11 Island Transit
  - 12 Jefferson Transit Authority
  - 13 King County Metro
  - 14 Kitsap Transit
  - 15 Link (Chelan-Douglas Counties)
  - 16 Mason County Transportation Authority
  - 17 Pacific Transit System
  - 18 Pierce Transit
  - 19 Pullman Transit
  - 20 Sound Transit
  - 21 Skagit Transit Authority
  - 22 Spokane Transit Authority
  - 23 Twin Transit (Lewis County)
  - 24 Valley Transit (Walla Walla County)
  - 25 Whatcom Transportation Authority
  - 26 Yakima Transit

## Transportation Access Public Funds



\*Amount includes fixed route operations, deviated route, demand response and other.

# Demand Response Service Provided by Public Transit Agencies

- Public transit systems are the only source of transportation for most people who do not drive or do not have access to an automobile.
- Public Transit Agencies contribute nearly \$100 million a year or 16% of their annual budget for demand response service.
- In 2001, fixed route service averaged \$3.44 a trip in urban areas and \$4.86 in rural locations. Demand response service averaged \$15.13 in small cities and \$24.66 in urban areas.
- Transit agencies must provide all requested qualified ADA trips.
- At the current rate of growth, and with current funding levels, public transit agencies cannot keep up with the mandatory demand responsive service, without negatively impacting fixed route service.

*The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that transit agencies provide paratransit service for persons with disabilities at a level that is comparable to the fixed route services available to the general public.*

## Demand Responsive Service provided by Transit

	Urbanized	Small City	Rural	Statewide Totals
<b>Service Area Population</b>	3,718,165	848,666	659,284	5,226,115
<b>Total Vehicle Hours</b>	1,251,550	373,661	166,128	1,791,339
<b>Total Vehicle Miles</b>	19,196,997	5,531,921	2,456,762	27,185,680
<b>Passenger Trips</b>	2,948,484	1,088,530	524,217	4,561,231
<b>Operating Cost/Revenue Hour</b>	\$66.77	\$54.30	\$53.40	\$64.63
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	\$72,089,574	\$18,692,426	\$9,030,135	\$99,812,135

*Demand response or dial-a-ride service is public transportation service characterized by flexible routing and scheduling of relative small vehicles to provide door-to-door or point-to-point transportation at the passenger's request.*

# Broad Network of Public and Private Transportation Services

- In addition to public transit agencies, a broad network of public and private non-profit agencies and private for-profit companies provide specialized transportation services.
- 39 large and small public and private non-profit agencies provide these services, and face considerable challenges with:
  - Insurance
  - Reliable, long-term funding, often based on grants
  - Difficulty finding volunteers
  - Program costs vs. transportation funding.
- To better coordinate Medicaid-related transportation (\$40 million spent per year to purchase 2.6 million trips) across this network, nine medical assistance brokers, covering 13 brokerage areas, match up clients with providers.
- In addition, many small private for-profit companies are engaged in providing specialized transportation services, including cabulances, taxis, and others.

## Role of Brokers

- Establish call centers for clients and caseworkers to contact when a ride is needed
- Maintain current eligibility information on client populations
- Screen riders to determine the most appropriate, least costly mode of transportation
- Central processes for distributing and grouping rides
- Collect data and bill the funding source for the trip.

# Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation

The legislature created the nine member Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) in 1998, including: WSDOT, DSHS, OSPI, CTED, Association for Pupil Transportation, Community Transportation Association of America-Northwest, Washington State Transit Association, and two citizens.

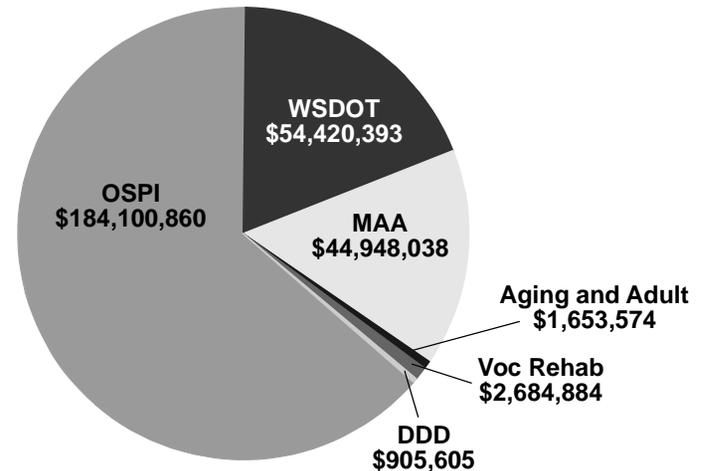
## What are we trying to achieve with coordinated transportation?

Remove barriers to access transportation through coordinated transportation services statewide. Significant local, state, federal and private money is spent on accessing transportation. We cannot afford to have needs unmet due to uncoordinated spending.

## Why is coordination so important

- It leverages all public and private funds together to improve effectiveness of the return on investment
- Reduces duplication and unnecessary service trips
- Makes it easier for users to access essential services

2003 State Funded Special Needs Transportation Allocation



Sources: WSDOT, OSPI, DSHS

### Key to Chart

OSPI: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction  
DSHS: Department of Social and Health Services  
DDD: DSHS Division of Developmental Disabilities  
Voc Rehab: Vocational Rehabilitation Services  
MAA: Medical Assistance Administration

# Current Funding Efforts to Improve Access

Isolation can be an urban and rural phenomenon. Depending on the circumstances, persons with special needs in urban and suburban areas or individuals living in rural communities may need transportation assistance to connect them to basic services.

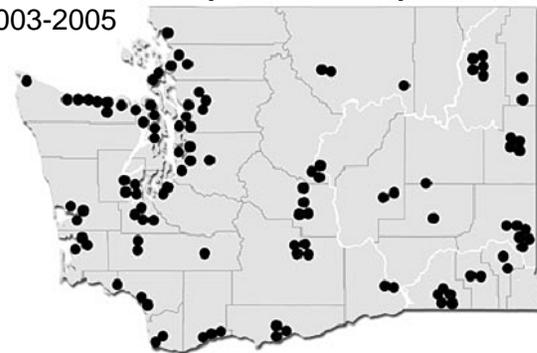
In 2003-2005, the Washington State Legislature allocated \$30.9 million for rural mobility, special needs and paratransit programs.

- \$6.9 million for competitive Rural Mobility capital and operating grants
- \$6 million for formula allocation to rural and small urban transit agencies
- \$14 million for Special Needs/Paratransit for the 26 Transit agencies
- \$4 million for Special Needs/Paratransit for non-profit agencies in urban and rural areas.

WSDOT also administers the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants. In 2003-2005, FTA is providing \$11 million.

- \$7.2 million for rural public transportation
- \$1.2 million for Intercity transportation
- \$2.6 million for the elderly and persons with disabilities.

**Location of Competitive Transportation Grants  
2003-2005**



# Emerging Issues in Transportation Access

- Is there a State interest in ensuring access to transportation and if so, what should the State role be:
  - With the increasing demand for door-to-door service, particularly hard to serve suburban locations?
  - With the lack of funding predictability, particularly for rural and special needs transportation?
  - With transit agencies' dilemma of trading-off between demand response service and fixed route service under current funding levels?
- Continuing focus on better coordination between services is needed to minimize duplication and make the most of available revenue.
- As rural areas continue to lose travel options and basic community services, transportation access for rural special needs groups will grow as an unmet need.
  - What should the State's role be when private intercity bus companies abandon communities in need?