Washington Transportation Plan Update

Sharing What We've Learned

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December 2, 2004

Washington State Department of Transportation

Presentation Organization

- Washington Transportation Plan Update
- Public Transportation & Rail-Public Transportation in Washington
- Aviation-2004 Update
- Highways & Local Programs-Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities Update

Aspiration for the 2005 Plan Update

- Data driven, analytically grounded and organized by major issue areas.
- Program and investment proposals advanced for the state for each major issue area.
- Investment and programs proposals prioritized into high, medium, and low priority categories.
- Scale of proposed investment constrained by financial realities.

What we're hearing…

"The WTP should be a collection of information and data from which decision makers can make choices."

"DOT's analytic capability must be strengthened so that we have better information on which to take the long view…The key word everyone has to keep in mind is prioritization…"

"We must prioritize and make choices. The debate is not about how to keep doing just about what we are already doing. It's about how to choose to spend the money we have on what we really want."

How is the Process Taking Shape?

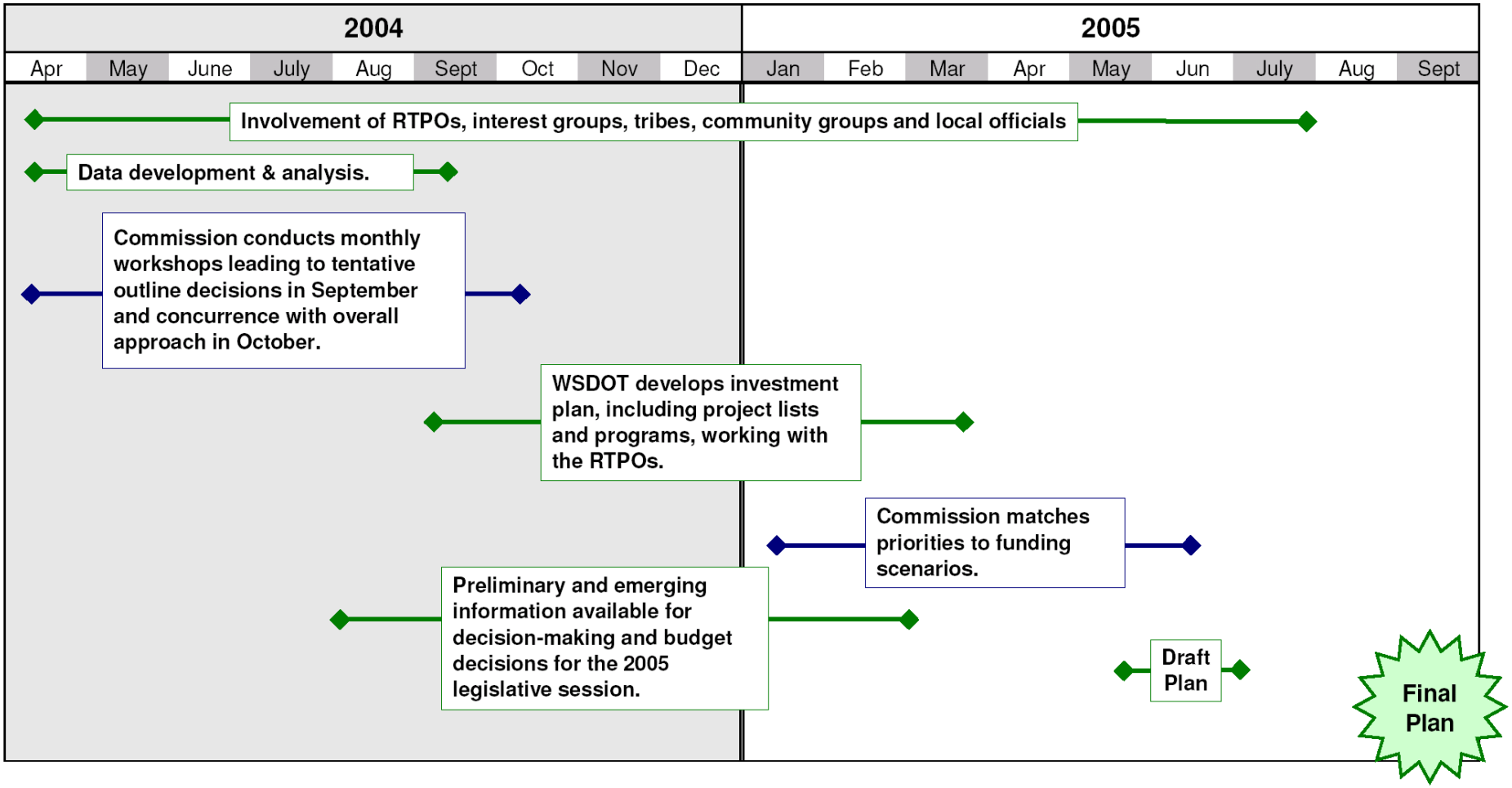
Phase 1: Data and Approach Development

- Build statewide transportation “data library.”
- Analyze statewide trends and system conditions.
- Identify key issues and choices.
- Share the learning and analysis with others.

Phase 2: Developing the Plan Update

- Commission guides tentative judgments on scale and direction of investment programs.
- WSDOT works with RTPOs and others to develop proposals for investment plans and funding scenarios.
- Commission matches priorities to funding scenarios
- Commission adopts the plan.

What's the Schedule?



Washington Transportation Plan Update

What you will hear over and over. . .

- **Demands on our state's transportation systems are up, and have not been adequately addressed for years.**
- **Funds for transportation are not there to do what needs to be done.**
- **Aging and deterioration of our state's transportation system will require spending more and more to "stay in place."**

How do we talk about and settle on our real priorities in light of these paramount realities?

The nine WTP Issues cut across modes and jurisdictions

- System Preservation
- Safety
- System Efficiencies
- Transportation Access
- Bottlenecks & Chokepoints
- Moving Freight
- Health & the Environment
- Strong Economy & Good Jobs
- Building Future Visions

- State Highways
- Local Roadways
- Freight Rail
- Intercity Passenger Rail
- Marine Ports and Navigation
- Public Transportation
- Aviation
- Pedestrians and Bicycles

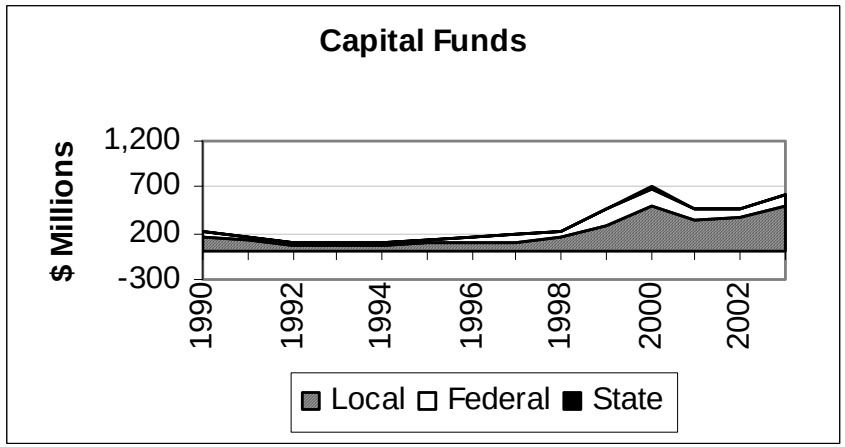
Public Transportation in Washington State

A working group of transit agencies was formed by WSDOT and WSTA to help define transit issues and challenges related to the nine WTP issue areas. The group identified system problems, approaches, implementation issues, and prioritization.

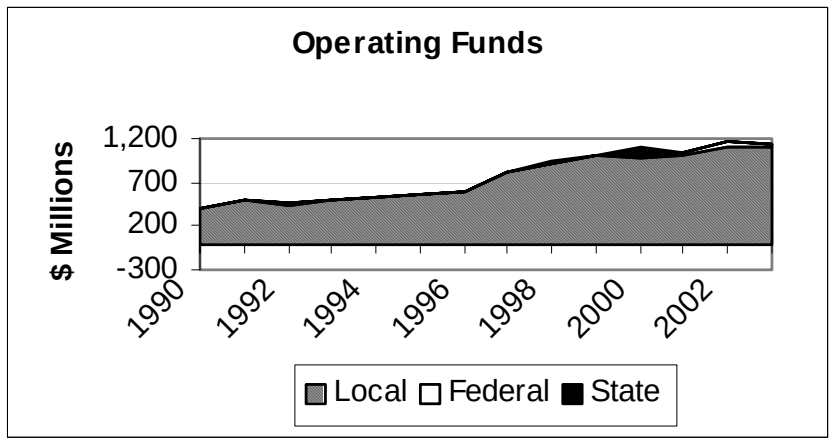
There are 26 transit systems currently operating in Washington State –
19 Public Transportation Benefit Areas
1 County Transportation Authority
1 Unincorporated Transit Benefit Area
3 City systems
1 Regional Transportation Authority

A PBTA as defined by RCW 36.57A is a municipal corporation of the state that may be less than city or countywide, or include more that one county.

Cities, counties, or PTBA may levy local sales and use taxes up to 0.9 percent for transit programs. Transit systems no longer receive matching motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) distributions as of January 1, 2000. Since that time, 15 transit systems approved local sales tax increases to mitigate the lost revenue.



Capital funds support vehicle acquisition, maintenance and facilities.



Operating funds support fixed routes, route frequency, demand response service, vanpools and ridesharing.

Washington State's public transportation system is broader that only PTBAs or other public transit systems – community transportation is an essential element in the mix that provides mobility for the people of Washington.

Existing Bus Operations

2002 Statewide
Fixed Route Statistics

- 93.9 million total vehicle miles
- 6.26 million total vehicle hours
- 148.8 million passenger trips

Infrastructure/Facilities

- 205 High Occupancy Vehicle lane miles since 1973
- 294 park and ride lots

Public Transportation

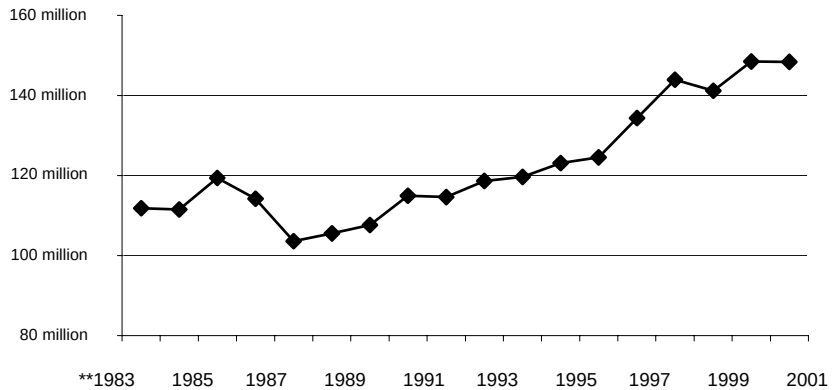
- Over 2,700 transit buses operating statewide
- 1,600 vans supporting vanpools across the state

Other Transportation Programs

- Transportation Demand Management
- Demand Response

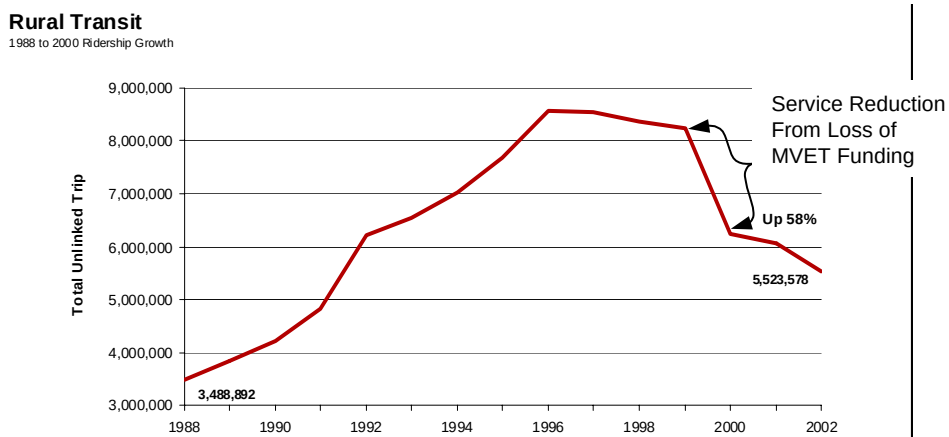
Buses, vanpools and carpools are High Occupancy Vehicles

Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips



Volumes noted are Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips. All data is from the National Transit Database (NTD). King County Metro includes: MB (Motor Bus) and TB (Trolley Bus) SC (Street Car) unlinked trips. All others are MB (Motor Bus) unlinked trips. *no data reported to the NTD for this year **In the 1980 US Census, some suburban population areas were reclassified as urban areas. As a result, the transit systems serving these areas were then required to begin submitting yearly operating data to the National Transit Database - many of these beginning reporting in 1983.

Rural Transit 1988 to 2000 Ridership Growth
Total Unlinked Trips



Source: WSDOT Annual Statistical Summary of Public Transportation (1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, & 2001)

Skagit Transit and Link Transit account for 2 million of the lost trips.

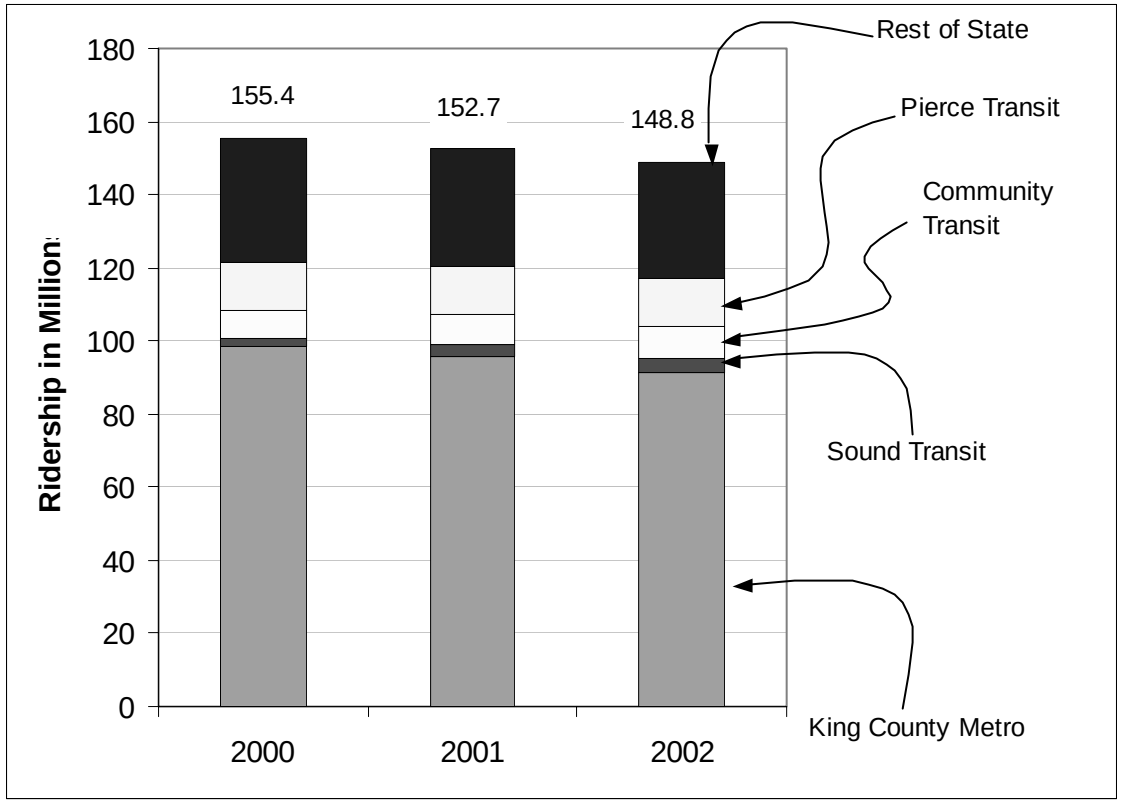
Puget Sound Transit Operations

Transit operations in King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties accounted for 79% of the statewide total in 2002.

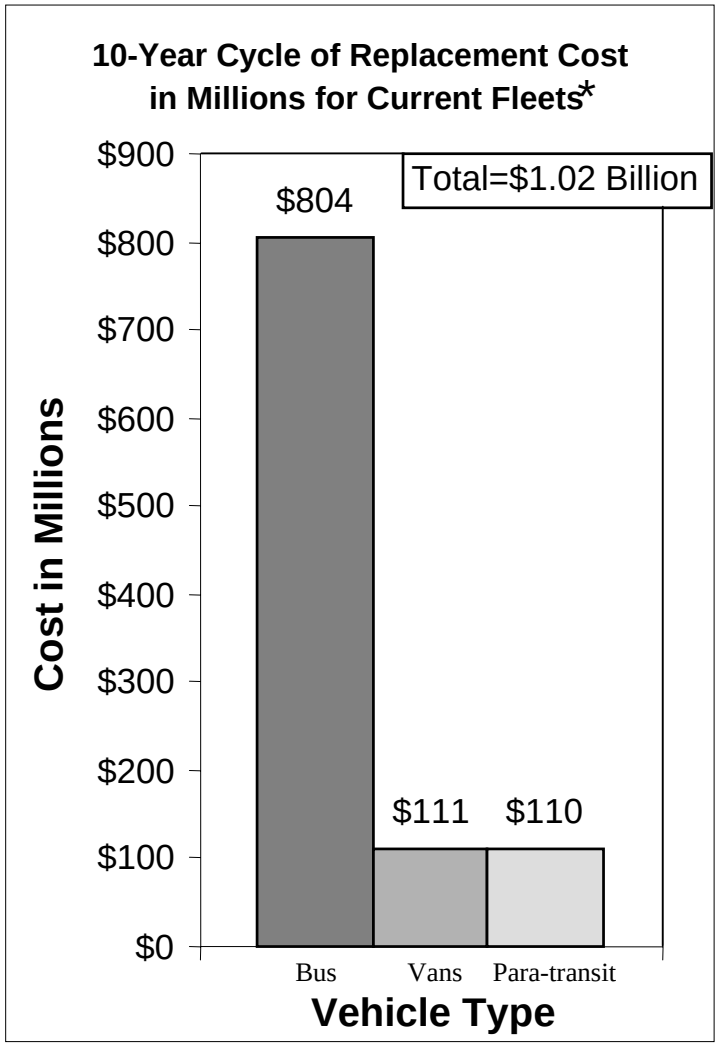
The largest provider is King County Metro.

- **91,591,399** passenger boardings
- **3,395,677** total vehicle hours
- **1,300** buses
- **856** vans in operation
- **1,793,814** vanpool ridership
- **1,076,755** Paratransit ridership
- **100** permanent and leased park and ride lots with **17,000** parking spaces

Statewide Transit Ridership



Fleet Replacement Cycles



Source: WSDOT Summary of Public Transportation – 2002 and King County Metro average estimates for vehicle cost.

FTA Vehicle Replacement Schedule

Buses	12 years
Paratransit	5 years
Vans	4 years

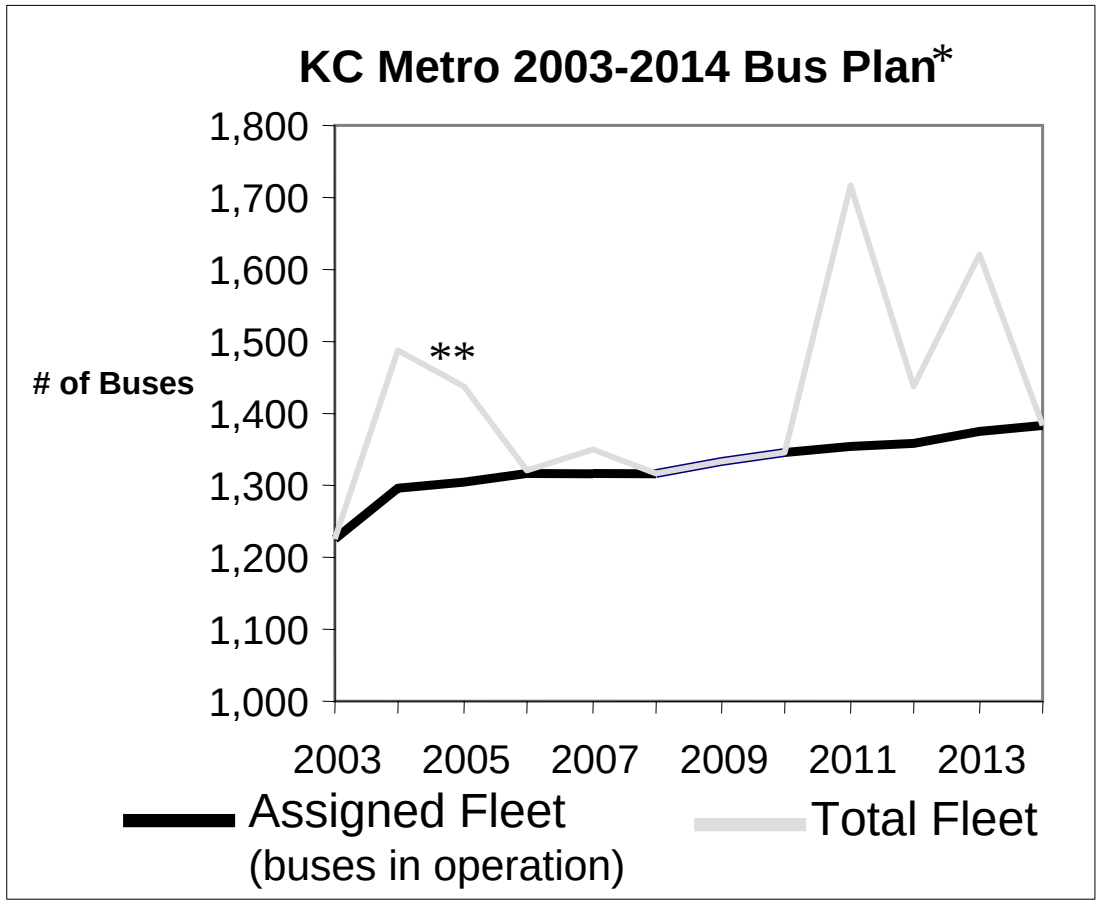
Note: Most transit agencies keep vehicles in operation longer through effective maintenance programs.

*Programmatic estimate to give an order of magnitude of vehicle replacement needs.

King County Metro's 10-Year Bus Plan

Transit agencies use a long range bus purchase and replacement plan to maintain the needed number of operating buses to ensure the smooth continuation of service. This illustration shows King County Metro's 10-year bus plan.

Because it is cheaper to buy buses in bulk, bus purchases occur in large quantities, at irregular intervals and are integrated into the operating fleet over time.



Source: King County Metro

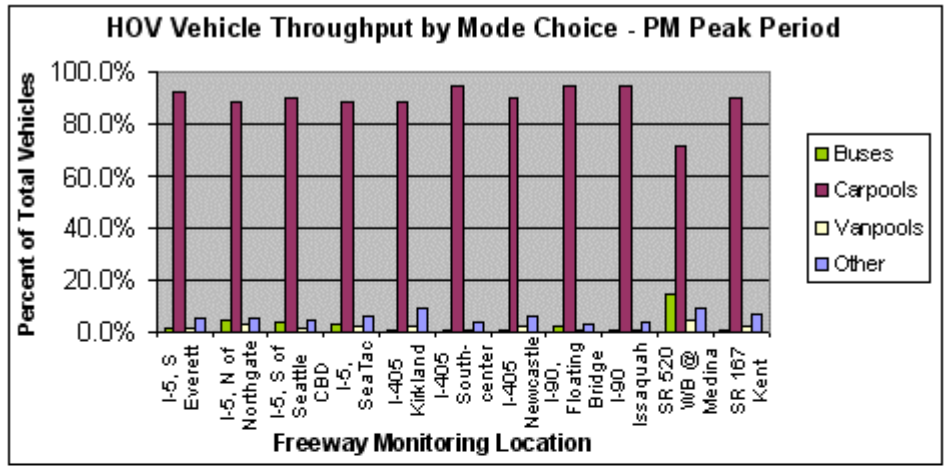
* This points out the importance of an asset management plan: Bus purchases need to precede bus retirements to keep the fleet operating.

** The peaking of bus purchasing points out the need for consistent and predictable funding for bus replacements.

Travel Conservation: Employing Today's Efficiency Tools

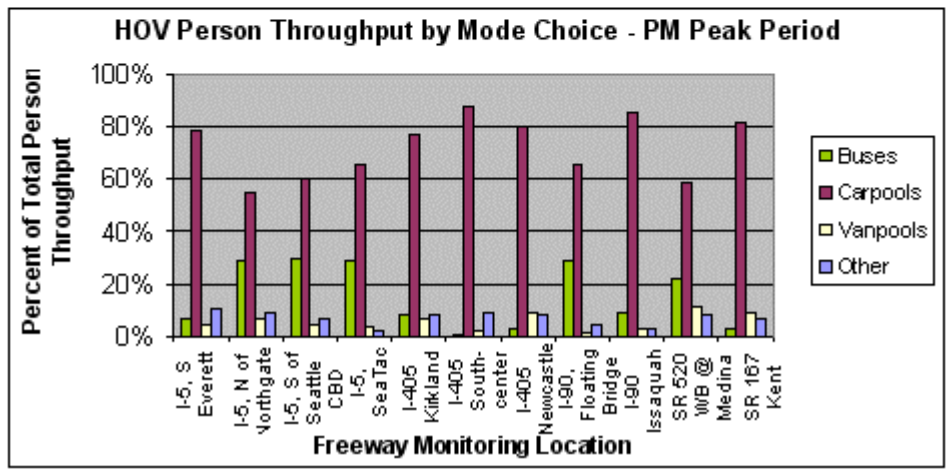
- What types of vehicles are using the HOV lanes during the PM peak period?
  - Buses: 3%
  - Carpools: 89%
  - Vanpools: 2%
  - Other: 6%

Non-weighted averages, TRAC 2002 volumes.

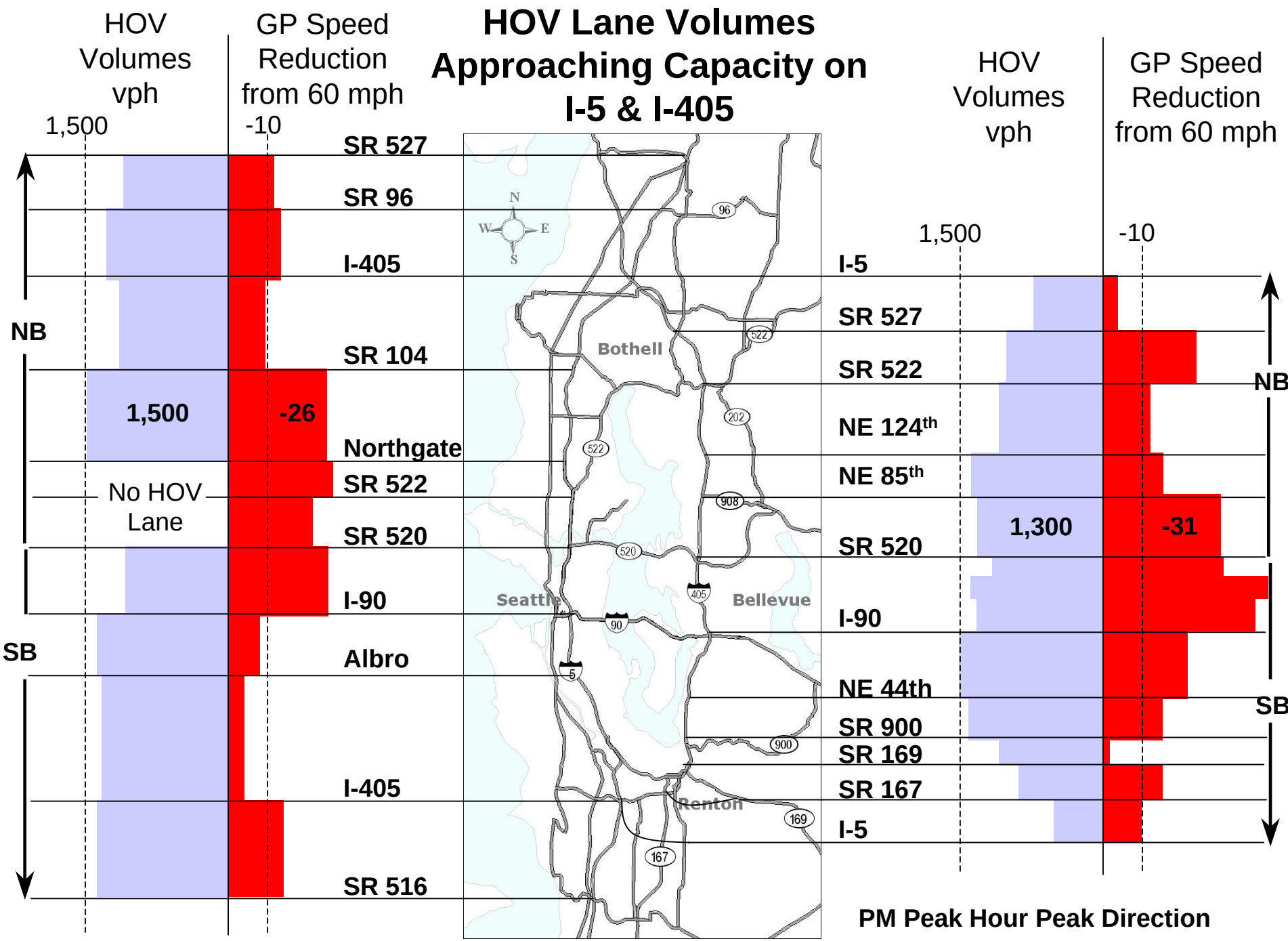


- What mode are people in the HOV lanes using during the PM peak period?
  - Buses: 15% (76% Buses on SR 520 during AM peak)
  - Carpools: 72%
  - Vanpools: 6%
  - Other: 7%

Non-weighted averages, TRAC 2002 volumes.



HOV Lane Volumes Approaching Capacity on I-5 & I-405



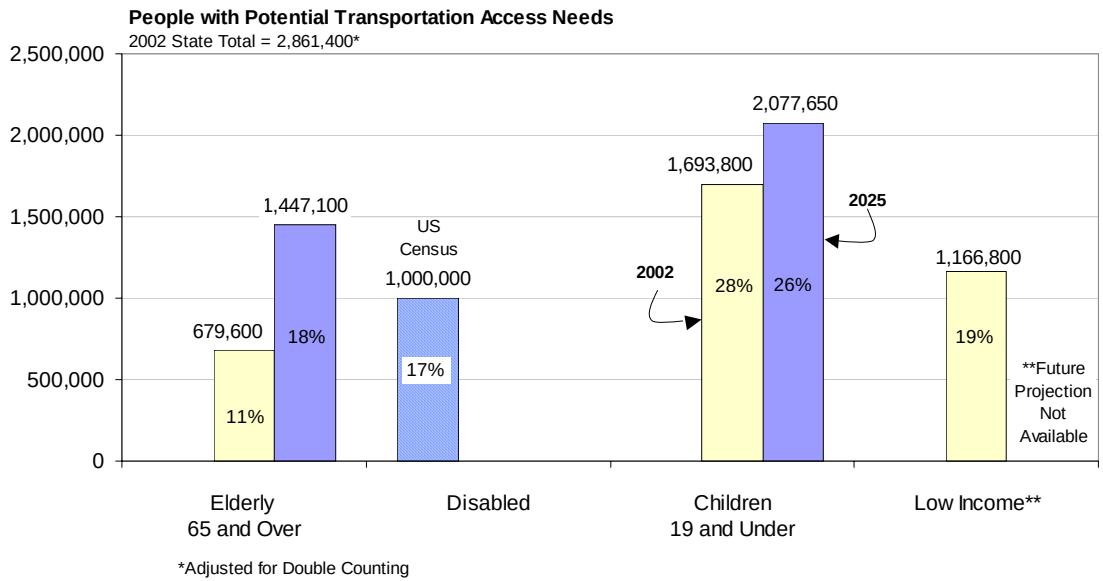
Improving Operations Through Communications

- ITS Automated Vehicle Locator
- 511 Traveler Information
- Transit Transponder use
- Interagency coordination of transit service
- Transit Signal Prioritization
- Queue jumps for transit buses
- Coordinated dispatch/radio equipment
- Trip Planner – online transit trip planning system
- Smart Cards

Transportation Access—What are we finding?

The growing elderly population:

- **Driving longer**
- **More are living past the driving age**
- **Growing suburban presence**



The demand for demand-response service is up:

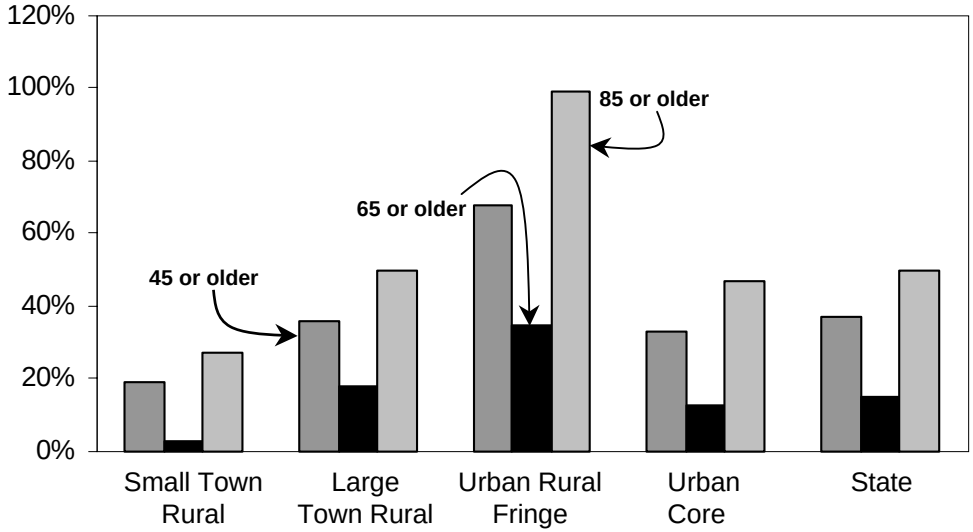
- **Expensive to provide**
- **Less availability in rural and some suburban areas**

Coordination among service providers is started but more is needed.

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.
- The citizens of Washington are living longer, driving longer and living past their ability 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.

Percent Change in Elderly Population by Rural Classification
Washington, 1999-2000



The growing elderly population has distinct transportation needs:

- Roadway safety improvements targeted at senior drivers
- More demand response service for growing suburban elderly
- Rural transportation for isolated elders

Demand Response Service Provided by Public Transit Agencies

- 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 for the same time period.
- 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
Service Area Population	3,718,165	848,666	659,284	5,226,115
Total Vehicle Hours	1,251,550	373,661	166,128	1,791,339
Total Vehicle Miles	19,196,997	5,531,921	2,456,762	27,185,680
Passenger Trips	2,948,484	1,088,530	524,217	4,561,231
Operating Cost/Revenue Hour	$66.77	$54.30	$53.40	$64.63
Operating Expenses	$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 providing these services include organizations such as:
  - People for People who provide service in Yakima County and Mason County
  - The Fremont Public Association in Seattle
  - The Okanogan Senior Center
  - The Makah Tribal Council

  Many of these organizations rely on volunteer drivers which provides cost savings.
- 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.
- Community Transportation provides a vital component of our broad transportation system. Funding is limited and unsecured due to grant based funding.

<u>Role of Brokers</u>

- 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

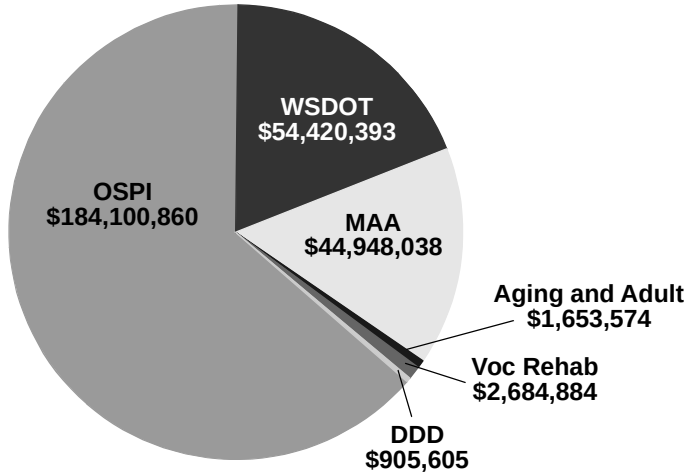
The legislature created the nine member Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) in 1998, including: WSDOT, DSHS, OSPI, CTED, Association for Pupil Transportation, Community Transportation Association of America-Northwest, Washington State Transit Association, and two citizens.

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

Special Needs Transportation Allocation 2003



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

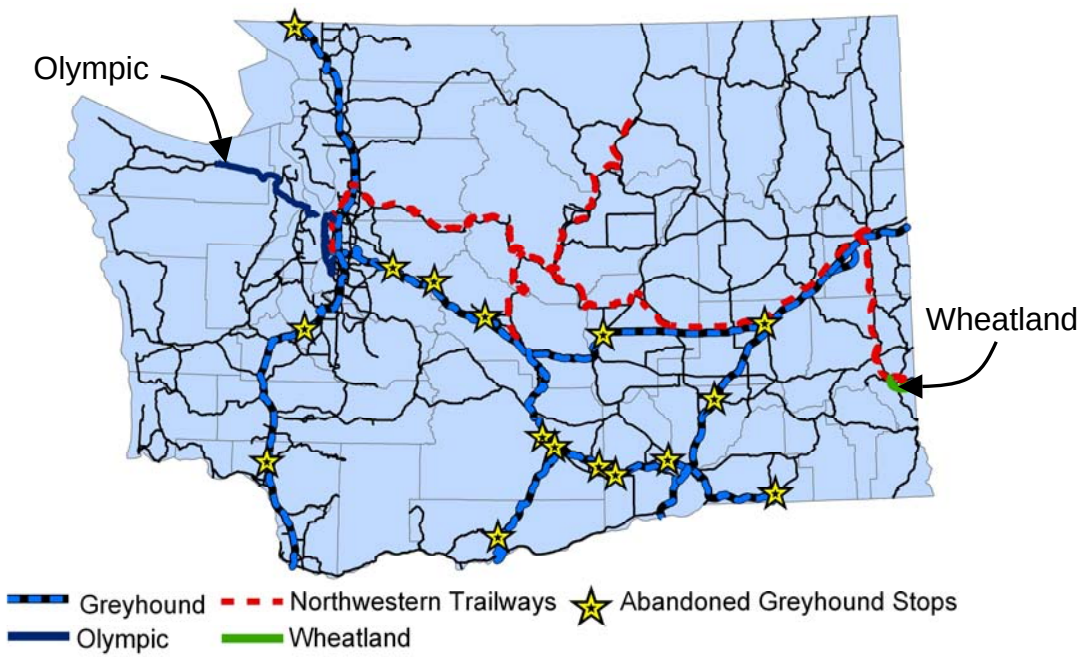
Intercity Bus Service

Intercity bus services provide the only connections to urban centers for many rural communities. Intercity bus service has been historically provided by private companies.

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. Current focus is in identifying the state's role in providing this service.

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.

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. This service has become more necessary with Greyhound's reduction in service.



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

The main intercity providers are Greyhound, Olympic, Northwestern Trailways, Wheatland Express and Amtrak.

Emerging Directions For Public Transportation

•Consistent funding and service levels for demand response service by both transit agencies and other providers need to be addressed. Lack of consistent funding acts as a barrier to efficient coordinated transportation service.

•The state should make it a priority to clarify its role and objectives in public transportation particularly as it relates to:

- •Support for the development and preservation of park and ride lots
- •Coordinating and supporting transit connections across jurisdictional boundaries within region
- •Providing additional transit service to address congestion in corridors
- •Coordinated transportation and defining department objectives in transportation access needs, especially in rural areas.

•The state needs to ensure preservation of the systems they own or manage that support transit, including HOV facilities and state-owned park and ride lots.

•Sustained system efficiency is dependent upon the inclusion of transit/TDM supportive features in highway project planning and corridor development. The department should pursue policies that more fully tap the potential of operational strategies to improve system efficiency, and integrate operational strategies with expansion plans.

•Traffic signal prioritization, queue jumps, adequate HOV capacity, and direct access ramps are traffic flow improvements that provide public transportation significant contribution to transit service effectiveness. Pricing strategies for the state highway system could contribute to the realization of transit efficiencies through maximized system use.

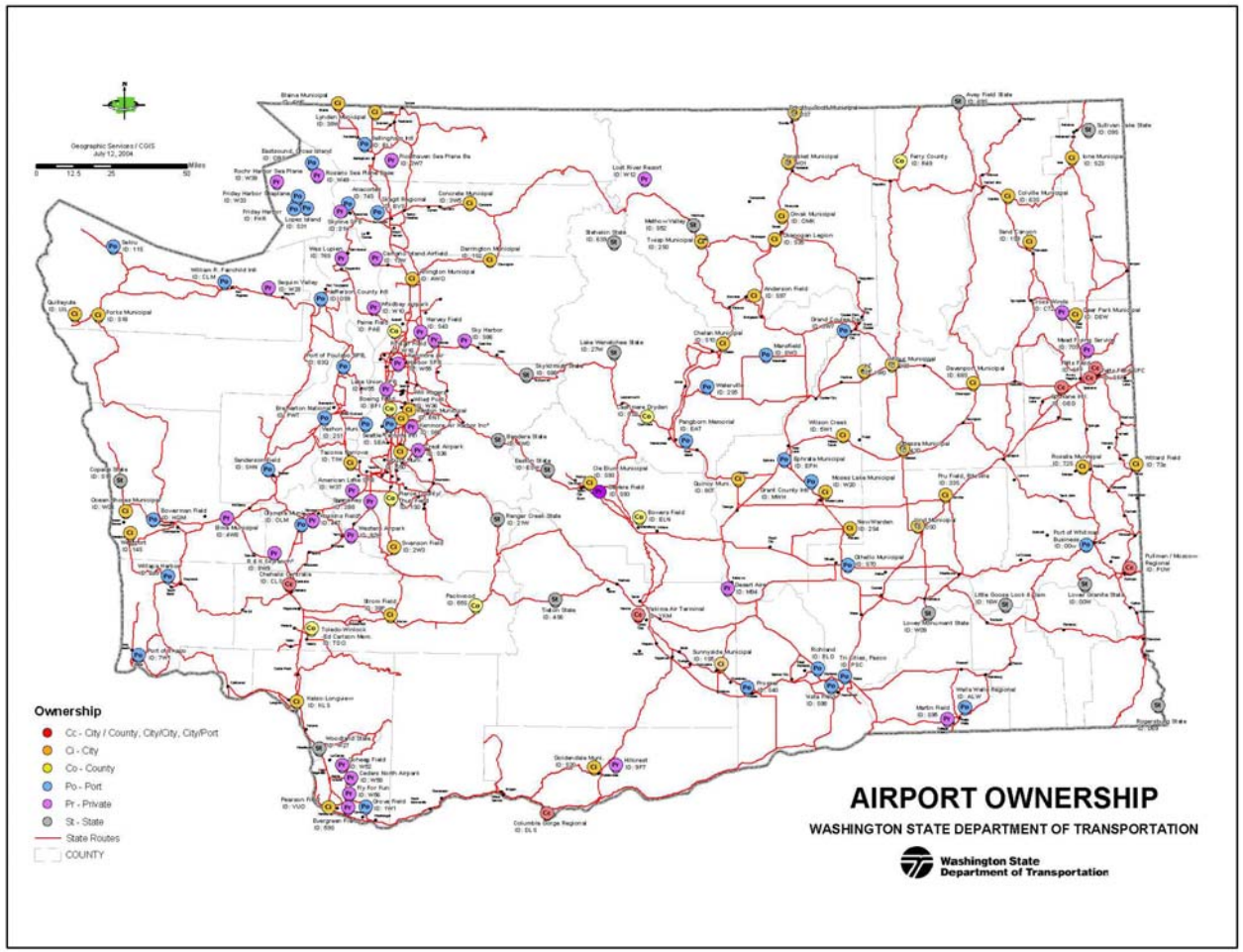
WSDOT Aviation Update 2004

- Priority Initiatives
- Aviation System Plan Update
- Airport Classification
- Washington Transportation Plan (WTP)
- Preserving and Funding the System

Why Update the System Plan?

- WSDOT Aviation has been directed to institute business planning processes to help the Legislature and Transportation Commission make informed funding decisions.
- Aviation Study Team Recommendations.
- WTP – state plan for multi-modal investments.
- Regional Transportation Plans - local plans for multi-modal investments.

What’s the State’s Aviation System?



Statewide Figures

- 7.1% population increase over the last six years.
- Over 8% increase in based aircraft over the last six years.
- 8.3% increase in airport operations over the last six years.

State Airports are Economic Engines

- Washington airports contribute to over 171,000 jobs per year.
- Washington airports contribute to over $4 billion in wages per year.
- Washington airports contribute to $18.5 billion in annual sales output.

Figures based on 2001 Economic Study

Recommended Airport Classifications

- Commercial Service
- Regional Airports
- Local Community Airports
- Recreation and Remote Airports
- Seaplane Bases

Examples of Airport Classifications

Regional Airport

Paine Field

Examples of Airport Classifications

Local Community Airport

Moses Lake Municipal

Examples of Airport Classifications

Remote Airport

Stehekin State Airport

Demand Factors

- Airport Facilities and Services
- Expansion & Preservation
- Access
- Economic Opportunities
- Multi-modal
- Emergency Medical

Building the System

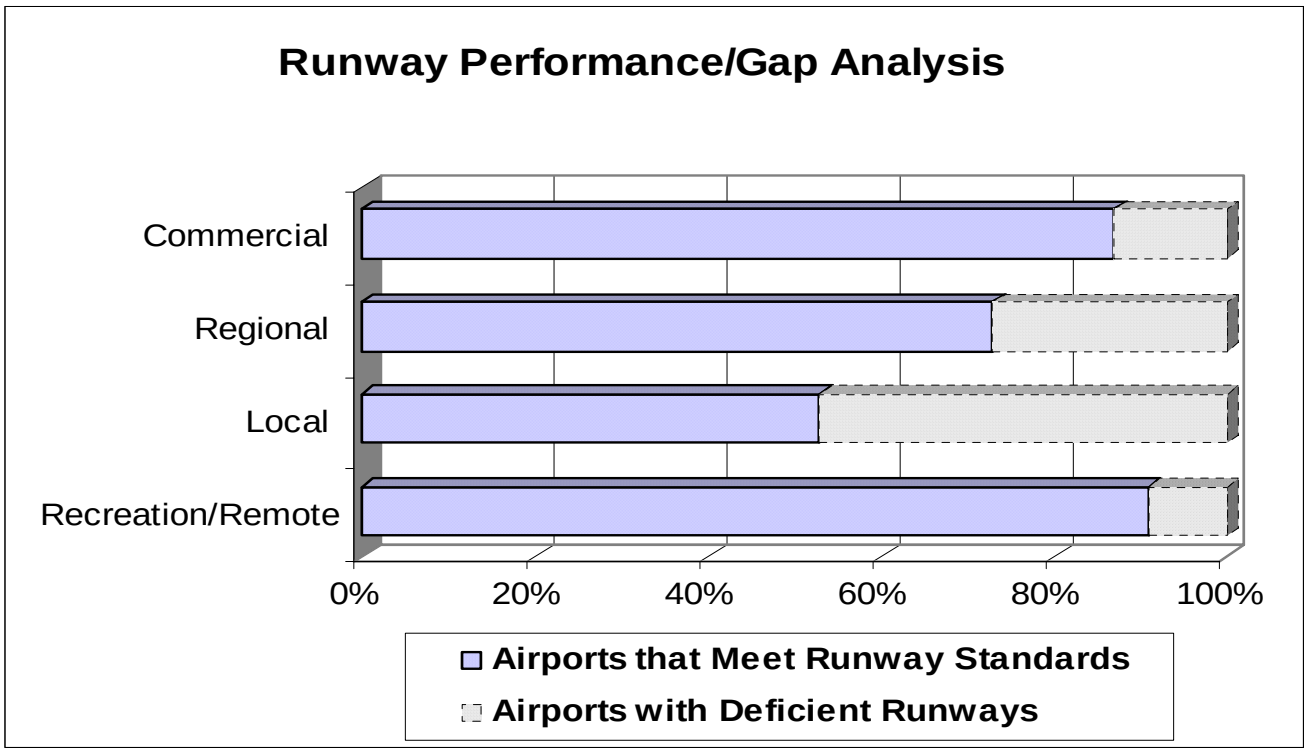
- Identify performance measures for each classification.
- Use performance measures to evaluate and guide the development of the aviation system.
- Focus on resolving system deficiencies.
- Determine costs and funding needs.

Performance Measures - Example

- Performance measures are determined by comparing the existing airport facilities and services to performance objectives.
- Airport Advisory Committee will identify performance objectives for each airport classification.
- Objectives include runway length and width, navigation aides, lighting, fuel, etc.

Performance Measures – Continued

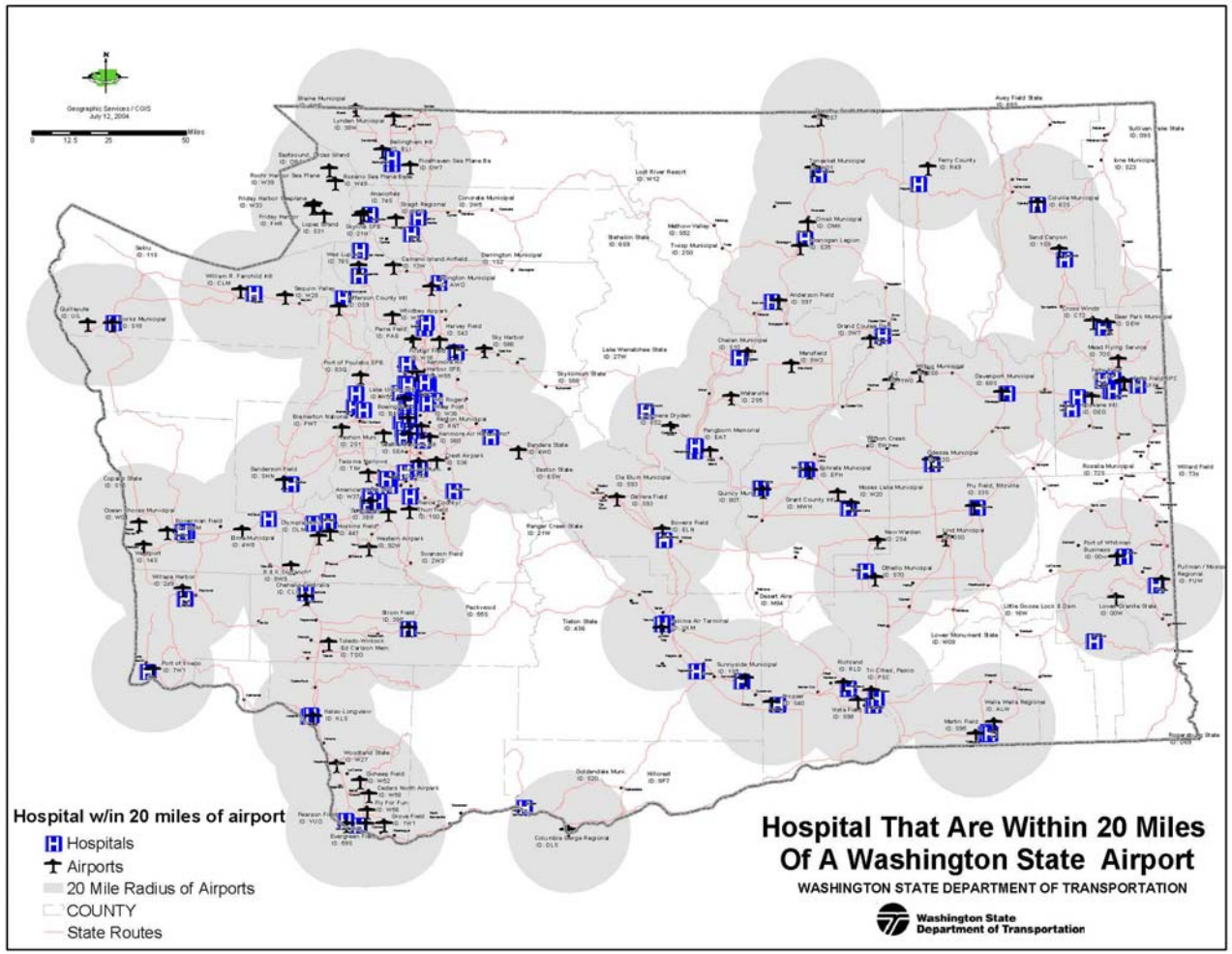
- Example – compared % of airports that meet runway length objectives with those that do not to determine system deficiencies.



Washington Transportation Plan (WTP)

- Identify significant commercial and regional airport facilities.
- Integrate Aviation System Plan with the State’s Transportation System.
- Provide continued guidance for development of the aviation system to the state, regions, airports, and local jurisdictions.

Emergency Medical



WTP Drives Decision Making Priorities

- Safety
- Capacity
- Preservation
- Environment

Identify Gaps and Deficiencies

- What are the most critical needs and gaps in the State Aviation System?
- What is the State’s role in addressing these needs and gaps?

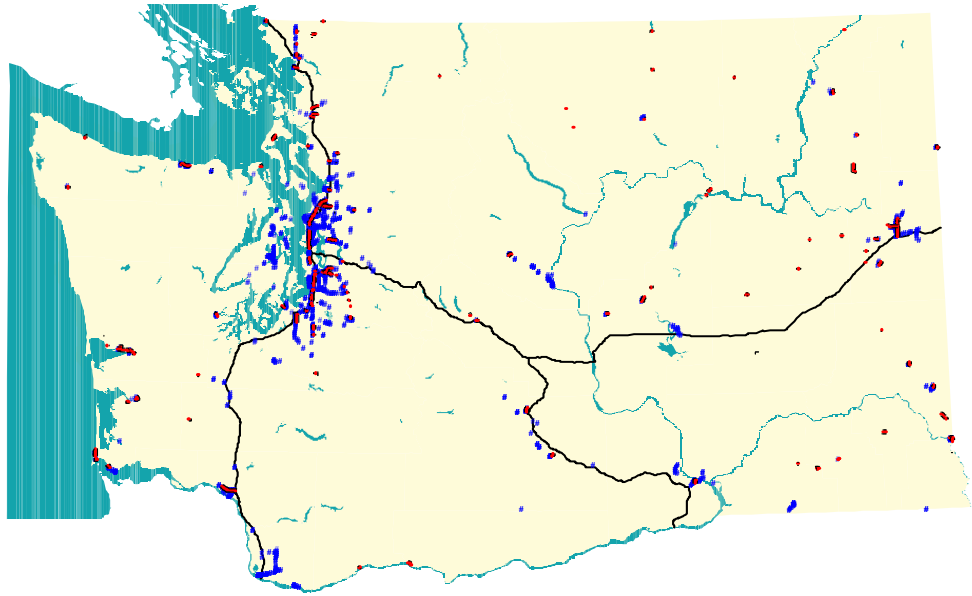
Next Steps

- Work with RTPO and locals.
- Develop ALPs for airports.
- Identify needs based on classification priorities.
- Identify funding levels required.
- Present funding request to legislature 07-09.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Update…

- Cities, counties and WSDOT build and maintain sidewalks (including ADA accommodations), crosswalks, over/under passes, and trails on or near their roadways.

- Washington leads the country with 970 miles of off-road bicycle and pedestrian trails. Public agrees these trails are in good condition, however, regular maintenance needs improvement.



Pedestrian Crossing Locations on State Routes

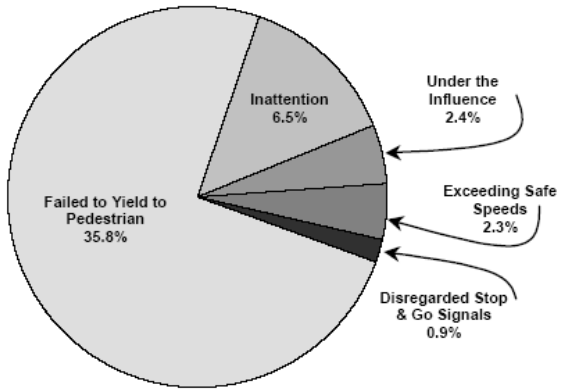
- There are 240 miles of sidewalk along state highways that are subject to multiple agreements for maintenance. This leads to inconsistent maintenance standards, which are further complicated by new ADA requirements.

- Working to collect more data on state, city, and county bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Pedestrian Safety Emerges As a Higher Priority in WTP…

- Over 11 percent of all fatalities and disabling injuries are pedestrians (disproportionate).
- Recent research provides possible explanations for pedestrian accidents including: roadway width, lack of illumination, traffic volume, lack of pedestrian facilities, lack of access management.
- Additionally, within King County, 80% of high pedestrian accident locations occur within 100 feet of a transit stop.
- WSDOT must work with local agencies and transit agencies to identify locations where pedestrians are at risk and take appropriate steps to insure pedestrian safety.

Circumstances Contributing to Pedestrian Accidents in Washington State
1996 - 2001



Pedestrians Run to Catch Bus – Shoreline, WA

WSDOT Programs Improving Walking Conditions

In addition to WSDOT's programs to improve pedestrian safety and provide for biking and walking as part of all new construction and re-construction projects…

Safe Routes to Schools

This program provides children a safe, healthy alternative to being driven by parents or riding the bus to school.
Eligible projects target:

- Engineering fixes
- Safety education curriculums
- Enforcement programs
- Community health and encouragement initiatives

Active Community Environments

This five year partnership with Departments of Transportation, Health, CTED and RTPOs seeks to incorporate transportation policy and infrastructure changes that improve walking and bicycling safety, and use urban planning approaches related to zoning and land use that promote physical activity with a particular focus on aging populations.

WSDOT Programs Improving Walking Conditions

Demonstration Project – State Route 7

State Route 7 is one of Washington's corridors where pedestrians find themselves most at risk, particularly older pedestrians as well as older drivers. This approximately three mile demonstration project includes the following improvements:

- Intersection improvements at Tule Lake Road
- Upgrade signals and modify signal cycles for pedestrians
- Construct sidewalks and medians
- Improve stormwater system
- Add lighting throughout the project length

SR 7 Before

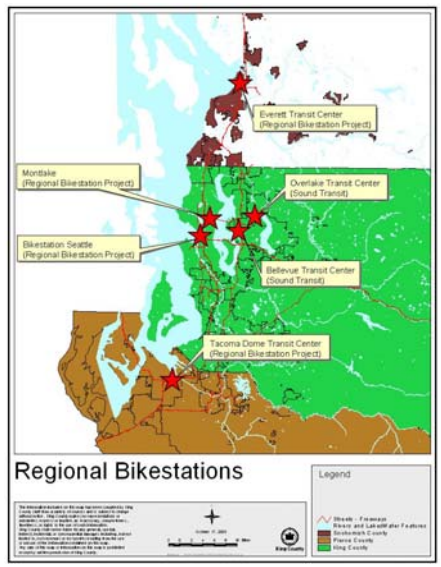
SR 7 and 180th Pedestrian Refuge Added

What Else Are We Working on?

Improving pedestrian safety and encouraging walking…

- Expanding the Safe Routes to School Program.
- ‘Completing the Streets’ - improving bicycle and pedestrian connections, especially around ferry terminals and transit stations.
- Locating transit stops for pedestrian safety.
- Adding medians, refuge islands and other traffic safety treatments, particularly in high accident corridors.

What Else Are We Working on?

Integrating biking into daily transportation…

- Implementing safe and creative solutions for sharing limited right-of-way in urban areas (e.g., Bus/Bike Only Lanes).
- Including bike racks on more buses and vans.
- Completing the regional bike stations and connecting them with the bicycle and pedestrian network.
- Increasing options through the addition of paths and trails.