For the 2011-2013 biennium, WSDOT worked with the U.S. and state Veterans Affairs departments and other partners to administer $1.5 million in grants from the Veterans Transportation Community Living Initiative. These grants are funding local projects that assist veterans, active members of the armed forces and military families by connecting them to jobs and services with better access to transportation options.

Current veterans initiative-funded projects include:

- **Hopelink**: A new smartphone application and a one-click website that connect veterans to community transportation providers; a King County needs assessment; and outreach and marketing for new technology and services for veterans.

- **Human Services Council**: Enhanced software and technology to support a future one-call-one-click center for southwest Washington; new information technology for partner vehicles; a Web-based trip module; and outreach to identify needs for veterans and military families.

- **Paratransit Services**: Upgraded scheduling software compatible with VA and nonemergency medical transportation systems; an outreach coordinator to work with VA medical centers; marketing; and staff training for new transportation kiosks.

- **Pierce County Community Connections**: Expanding the United Way/South Sound 2-1-1 transportation center for a one-call-one-click service; assessing veterans’ needs; identifying gaps; and measuring performance.

- **Way/South Sound 2-1-1**

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**More information**

www.wsdot.wa.gov/transit

WSDOT is improving transportation access for veterans through partnerships to broaden dialogue, coordinate services and identify needs and program gaps. Your assistance is needed.

For more information or to get involved, please contact:

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Winter 2013
Collaboration

In spring 2012, WSDOT formed a veterans transportation steering committee, including representatives from federal and state veterans affairs, transit agencies, private transportation providers and advocates. The committee meets monthly to further projects and initiatives and assess programs that tailor transportation options to veterans and their needs.

WSDOT also is working with partners to develop Washington’s first statewide Human Services Transportation Plan to connect a seamless network of accessible transportation service coordinated to reach every corner of Washington.

Coordination

WSDOT supports the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation by coordinating both public and private services and connecting veterans to accessible transportation options for travel. State legislators created the council in 1998 to remove the transportation barriers that many people face. The council’s assembly of elected officials, state planners and policy makers, service providers and consumer advocates work together to connect an efficient system that reaches veterans at their front door.

Investment

In the 2011-2013 transportation budget, the state Legislature allocated $6 million for vanpooling statewide, including $520,000 to be used solely to purchase additional vanpool vans to serve military personnel and civilian employees at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

Two grantees stepped up to meet the need for vanpools at JBLM through WSDOT’s Vanpool Investment Program. Intercity Transit proposed adding five vanpool vehicles, and Pierce Transit proposed adding 15. Both agencies later launched vanpool marketing campaigns at JBLM, which resulted in new vanpool commuter groups.

All four corners of the state are home to high concentrations of veterans. In fact, vets make up more than 17 percent of the population in Clallam, Jefferson, Mason, Kitsap, Pacific, Wahkiakum, Stevens and Lincoln counties. In addition to where they live, veterans’ age and gender also shed light on their needs. About 67 percent of our state’s veterans served in the Persian Gulf (Desert Storm) or Vietnam War, and many are entering retirement age.

Female veterans account for 11 percent of the state’s veterans; however, the number of aging female veterans is growing.

Veterans’ health care facilities are distinguished by the level and type of care they provide. Most are located in urban parts of the state. Veterans in need of specialized care often need specialized transportation, too. It can be a lifeline when a medical facility is outside the region where they live.

Washington veteran population

Total state population: 6,817,770
Total veterans: 607,501*
Wartime veterans: 464,340
Peacetime: 143,161
Gulf War: 196,265
Vietnam era: 209,476
Korean Conflict: 50,790
WWII: 33,736
Male: 540,219
Female: 67,282