

PENINSULA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (PRTPO)

The Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO) represents four counties — Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap,* and Mason Counties. The area is characterized by the Olympic National Park, historic small towns, forests, an alpine mountain range, the only rain forest in the contiguous United States, managed timber areas, rivers, bays, ocean shorelines, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The PRTPO — covering 4,190 square miles — is located in the northwest corner of Washington State. The peninsula reaches farther out into the North Pacific than any other point of the lower 48 states.



Olympic Mountains

Photograph from WoldfromtheWeb.com



Pacific Ocean & coastline from Rialto Beach

Major Transportation Facilities:

The geology of the area limits access to and from the Peninsula to three significant transportation facilities: SR 104 (including the Hood Canal Floating Bridge), US 101 Loop, and SR 3. Other critical facilities and services in this region are the four counties' transit systems, eight Washington State Ferry (WSF) routes, and the privately-owned Blackball ferry route linking Port Angeles to Victoria, B.C. SR 16, including the Tacoma Narrows Bridge located just outside the PRTPO area, also provides a critical link to the Kitsap and Olympic Peninsulas. More than 15,000

vehicles cross the Hood Canal Bridge every weekday and nearly 20,000 cross on weekend days.

Demographics:

The population of this four-county RTPO was 371,852 in 2000. This represents 6.3 percent of the state population. In Clallam (21.3 percent) and Jefferson (21.1 percent) Counties the 65 years and older population is nearly twice the state average of 11.2 percent.

	Population (2000)	Persons Per Square Mile	Median Household Income (1997)
Washington State:	5,894,121	88.6	\$41,715
Clallam County:	64,525	37.1	\$34,376
Jefferson County:	25,953	14.3	\$35,373
Kitsap County:	231,969	585.8	\$43,492
Mason County:	49,405	51.4	\$35,419

*Note: Kitsap County is a member of both PSRC and the Peninsula RTPO. Located between the Olympic Peninsula and the metropolitan Central Puget Sound region, Kitsap County provides a significant access corridor between these two areas. Additionally, many Kitsap residents who commute to the Seattle metropolitan area are affected by PSRC's transportation planning.

Freight Movement:

The regional economy is heavily dependent on the logging and tourism industries. The primary economic exports are wood and paper products, construction equipment, and recycled materials.

PRTPO Freight Facts:

- More than 80% of the freight truck trips originating from these coastal counties have destinations within Western Washington.
- The Port Angeles/Sequim area, Shelton, and Port Townsend are the largest generators of freight truck traffic within the PRTPO.

Eastern Washington Intermodal Transportation Survey November 1995

Truck Freight — Trucks are the main form of freight movement in the area and the majority of truck trips support the area’s timber-based economy and the needs of the local population. Seattle is the most frequent city destination (11 percent of truck trips), but wood and paper processing facilities in Port Angeles, Longview, Aberdeen, and other Western Washington communities are the main driver of local truck transportation needs. Only 18 percent of truck trips originating from the coastal region are intended for out-of-state destinations — most of these are intended for factories or distribution centers located in Portland or other Oregon communities. Freight

truck connections are closely tied to the I-5 corridor, with US 12, US 101, and SR 104 providing the key connecting highways for most of this region’s communities.

Rail Freight — The Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad provides rail service to the PRTPO. The types of transported freight are lumber products and United States Navy equipment.

Economic Trends:

Economic trends of the future may include increased business and employment as a result of advances in telecommunications. The PRTPO would like to diversify its economy and attract businesses and new employment centers to the area. Sequim supports a growing retirement community that relies heavily on medical services in the Puget Sound area — necessitating ferry service, a reliable link from the peninsula to the rest of Western Washington. Telemedicine programs — live video consultations with rural providers — are available to Kitsap County and may expand to serve Clallam County.

PRTPO Transportation Facts:

- Between 1970 and 1997 population grew 120%, while registered vehicles increased 189%.
- Between 1990 and 1997 population grew 21%, employment 10% and vehicle miles traveled grew 36%.
- Vehicle ridership on Cross-Sound ferry routes grew 23% between 1988 and 1993, while passenger ridership increased 17%.
- Between 1980 and 1990 the annual number of visitors to Olympic National Park increased by 49%.
- Clallam Transit currently has 6 vanpools in operation with plans to purchase 12 more.
- Jefferson Transit Authority currently has 7 vanpools.
- Kitsap Transit currently has 65 vanpools.
- Mason County Transportation Authority currently has plans to purchase 8 vanpools for their start-up program in 2002.

