Chapter 3
Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies

Guiding Principles

The Regional Transportation Plan is founded on essential values that are true throughout the region, even if their expression may differ between city and town, port and transit, tribal nation and state, urban and rural, civilian and military.

These principles are regionally agreed upon and embrace the interdependent relationship between transportation and land use. They reflect the need for a balance among safety, mobility, community, and environmental goals. The principles acknowledge the need for cost-effective solutions and hope for informed and active participation from community members, transportation system users, and affected agencies and communities. These principles guide the region toward a transportation system that meets the evolving needs of residents and businesses with safe, affordable, and sensible choices.

Sometimes these principles may seem to contradict each other. Regional policymakers observe that individual projects or programs will rarely comply fully with all the values that guide local and regional decision-making. Instead, transportation issues, choices, and consequences must be weighed against the full range of principles to select the best alternative. No single value will always overshadow the rest. Effective transportation decisions must be sensitive to aspects of individual and government situations, functions, and constraints.

Thurston Regional Planning Council aims to develop a transportation system that offers safe, efficient, affordable travel choices for people and goods, while supporting land use plans and long-term quality of life objectives. To achieve this vision, transportation decisions and investments will be:

Safety Conscious

This means:

- Making the system safer for all users.
- Proactively identifying and addressing safety issues before incidents occur.
- Designing facilities that are appropriate to their intended use and location.
- Building redundancy into critical network links as emergency safeguards.

Sustainable

This means:

- Balancing our needs today with those of future residents.
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Implementing a transportation system resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Thinking broadly, regionally, and globally — and acting locally.
- Supporting community health and well-being with transportation options.
- Providing a transportation system which advances economic, personal, and environmental health.

Supportive

This means:

- Improving access for people of all races and ethnicities, ages, abilities, and incomes.
- Reflecting adopted community goals and plans.
- Integrating transportation and land use decision-making processes.
- Increasing viable, affordable travel choices for people and goods.
- Moving people efficiently and cost-effectively among diverse destinations.
- Promoting local economies without compromising other core values.
- Making investments that contribute to a community's character.
- Providing transportation infrastructure that meets the region's transportation needs.
- Complying with Washington State's Growth Management Act requirements.
- Complying with all other state and federal requirements.

Responsive

This means:

- Providing practical, visionary leadership that maximizes future opportunities while recognizing today's realities.
- Revising direction as necessary to adapt to changing situations or objectives.
- Responding to important issues as they arise.

Fiscally Responsible

This means:

- Making cost-effective investments that result in best-value solutions for the community.
- Ensuring system funding supports a range of transportation choices.
- Being realistic about financial capacity and prioritizing accordingly.
- Maintaining existing investments.
- Supporting efficient use of transportation resources and facilities.
- Evaluating the full cost of alternatives and recommendations.

Environmentally Sensitive

This means:

- Identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of transportation programs, policies, and activities on people of color and households with an income 80% or less of the area's median income.
- Minimizing impacts on air and water quality and natural habitat and resources.
- Mitigating or minimizing impacts on neighborhoods.
- Making investments that add lasting value to our communities and their overall function.
- Reducing the generation of transportation-related greenhouse gases.

Collaborative

This means:

- Fostering ongoing and inclusive community involvement and education.
- Ensuring affected parties understand issues related to transportation decisions.
- Promoting coordination among local, regional, tribal, state, and federal authorities.
- Coordinating with neighboring regions to identify workable strategies that ensure cross-regional consistency.

Goals and Policies

Goals and Policies translate the region's Guiding Principles into a more detailed framework for transportation decision-making at all levels of government. Central to this Plan are the people using the transportation system. The 20 goals in the plan address four aspects of transportation planning and implementation: transportation relationships, system management, system components, and process. Each goal area has one or more goal and policy that focuses on the impacts to or outcomes for system users.

Each goal area is arranged similarly:

- Statement of the goal.
- Policies for implementing the goal.
- Importance and challenges, providing context in meeting the goal.
- Related projects that provide examples of goal-supporting actions in the region.

Transportation Relationships

These policy elements describe transportation's most essential relationships: between transportation and people's ability to connect with their community; between transportation and land use; and between different transportation modes.

1. **Transportation and Land Use Consistency** – Ensure the design and function of transportation facilities are consistent with and support sustainable, healthy urban, suburban, and rural communities.
2. **Multimodal Transportation System** – Work toward an integrated, multimodal transportation system that supports adopted land use plans, reduces overall need to drive, and encourages transit and active transportation as choices.
3. **Barrier-Free Transportation** – Provide a transportation system that supports equitable transportation access and service for people of all ages, races and ethnicities, incomes, abilities, English language proficiencies, and other demographic characteristics as appropriate.

System Management

These policy elements describe the essential functions associated with owning and operating the transportation system. They address enhancing safety and maintenance; increasing system efficiency through demand management; harnessing technologies to improve safety and efficiency; and improving freight mobility.

4. **System Safety and Security** – Enhance the safety and security of those who use, operate, and maintain the system.
5. **System Maintenance and Repair** – Protect investments that already have been made in the transportation system and keep life-cycle costs as low as possible.
6. **Transportation Demand Management** – Increase overall operating efficiency of the transportation system through the effective use of measures that reduce the need to drive.
7. **Transportation Technologies** – Use technology-based approaches to address transportation congestion, safety, efficiency, and operations.
8. **Freight Mobility** – Promote efficient, cost-effective, timely, and safe movement of freight in and through the region.

System Components

Transportation in the Thurston region encompasses many different forms — or modes. These policy elements describe each of the specific modes considered in the plan.

9. **Streets, Roads, and Bridges** – Establish a street and road network that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while supporting adopted land use goals.
10. **Public Transportation** – Provide a robust level of reliable, effective public transportation options to increase the share of all trips made by public transportation.
11. **Bicycling** – Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by bicycling.
12. **Walking** – Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by walking.
13. **Rail** – Ensure the continued long-term viability of existing and rail-banked rail lines in the region for future freight and passenger rail travel.
14. **Aviation** – Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the general aviation needs of residents and businesses in the region.
15. **Marine Transportation** – Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the region's marine transportation needs.

Process

These policy elements describe the various processes that are integral to transportation decision-making in this region.

16. **Public Involvement** – Build a community of an engaged and informed public that contributes ideas and supports actions to create a highly functional multimodal transportation system consistent with the goals and policies in this plan.
17. I**ntergovernmental Coordination** – Ensure transportation facilities and programs function seamlessly across community borders and between regions.
18. **Environmental and Human Health** – Minimize transportation impacts on the natural environment and the people who live and work in the Thurston region.
19. **Performance Measures** – Develop performance measures that are realistic, efficient to administer, effective in assessing performance, and meaningful to the public.
20. **Transportation Funding** – Secure adequate funding from all sources to implement the goals and policies of this plan.

1. Transportation and Land Use Consistency

Goal: *Ensure the design and function of transportation facilities are consistent with and support sustainable, healthy urban, suburban, and rural communities.*

Policies:

1.a Commit to the development and implementation of land use plans, development patterns, and design standards that encourage active transportation, transit use, and transportation options other than driving alone.

1.b Provide transportation facilities that support the location of jobs, housing, schools, industry, and other activities as called for in adopted land use plans.

1.c Meet mobility, access, and economic goals in designated Strategy Corridors with an appropriate combination of investments, policies, and land use measures.

1.d Design and invest in transportation projects that have a lasting positive impact, promote sustainability, reflect the goals of the people who live and work in the area, and contribute to a sense of place and community.

1.e Support policies, programs, and procedures that promote urban infill, and make transportation investments that support increased urban densities.

1.f Provide transportation facilities and services which appropriately support urban development in cities and urban growth areas, and help maintain rural character outside urban growth areas.

1.g Ensure adequate transportation capacity to address growth consistent with adopted comprehensive plans.

1.h Preserve and promote awareness of our historic, cultural, and natural heritage.

1.i Minimize high noise levels.

1.j Create vibrant city centers and activity nodes along transit corridors that support active transportation and housing, jobs, and services.

1.k Create safe and vibrant city and town centers that foster a sense of community and place, entrepreneurship, active transportation, and civic pride.

1.l Create safe and vibrant neighborhoods with places that build community and encourage active transportation.

1.m Protect the region's farms, forests, prairies, and open spaces while providing appropriate transportation services.

1.n Site major public facilities that generate substantial traffic near major transportation corridors.

1.o Ensure land use decisions consider network efficiency and impact on vehicle miles traveled, especially when siting large employment generators.

1.p Coordinate long-term plans with transit agencies to project where increased density would support more transit corridors and connections.

Importance and Challenges

What can — or cannot — be supplied in the way of transportation facilities, services, and programs is directly related to the kind of community that is built. Low-density, segregated land uses are auto-oriented, regardless of whether multimodal transportation facilities are provided. Using transit and active travel modes like walking and rolling are more feasible in compact, mixed-use developments. When people can live close to the places they work, shop, and meet up with others, they make fewer, and shorter, driving trips — this is how increased density leads to reduced greenhouse gases. These development patterns reinforce other approaches for reducing transportation emissions, by improving the viability of transit, and making it safer and easier to get around by foot or bicycle. Shorter trips and convenient connections depend on compact development with a mix of housing types, and appropriate-scale commercial and civic uses. Transportation should work with other elements to contribute to creating a sense of community and place. It's also a cost-effective and efficient way for government to provide a robust transportation system.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support transportation and land use consistency include:

- A1 – Lacey Hawks Prairie Business District Commercial Corridors (Lacey)
- S8 – Neighborhood Centers Study (TRPC)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

TRPC regularly engages in a variety of activities and projects to support the work of member agencies. Activities that support transportation and land use consistency include:

- **Urban Corridors Status Report** – Periodically, TRPC updates policymakers on the status of the region's urban corridors.
- **Transportation and Economics Monitoring** – TRPC monitors and participates in the development of economic policies and activities that have transportation infrastructure implications — such as corridor work or efforts to strengthen rural communities.

2. Multimodal Transportation System

Goal: *Work toward an integrated, multimodal transportation system that supports adopted land use plans, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and overall need to drive, and increases the share of trips using transit, walking, bicycling, and other active modes.*

Policies:

2.a Provide for quality travel mode options appropriate to existing and future land uses, including active transportation, public transportation, rail, and motor vehicles, including freight.

2.b Ensure that development of transit transfer centers, activity centers, employment centers, schools, rail stations, the waterfront, and the airport accommodates multiple modes of travel and safe, efficient connections among those modes of travel.

2.c Set goals for mode shift and invest in mode-specific strategies that contribute to the overall development of an integrated, multimodal transportation system.

2.d Promote public education on the rights, responsibilities, and ways to travel together efficiently and safely for drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and other active transportation users.

2.e Identify and address connectivity gaps for safe bicycling and walking.

Importance and Challenges

The transportation system must meet many different travel needs safely and efficiently. A multimodal transportation system recognizes all travel needs and supports the movement of people as well as freight. It increases choice and opportunity.

We can't afford to build our way out of congestion — it's something to be managed, not solved. One way of managing congestion is to build communities that offer safe and convenient travel options. No one relies exclusively on driving. It's often easier to travel between multiple, close destinations by foot, bicycle, or bus than by driving. Many people who need to travel can't drive — people under the age of 16, people 65 and older, and some with physical disabilities. Increased use of walking, bicycling, and public transportation will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and overall vehicle miles traveled and improve air quality. Sometimes government is criticized for investing in multimodal options, like trails or transit. These investments help meet multiple needs and goals, like helping people who can't drive, improving efficient use of the system, and promoting healthy communities.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support a multimodal transportation system include:

- C17 Fones Road Improvements (Olympia)
- C28 Carpenter Road Widening from Martin Way to Britton Parkway (Lacey, Thurston County)
- S1 Bicycle Connectivity Strategy (TRPC)
- S9 Regional Multimodal Level of Service (TRPC)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

TRPC regularly engages in a variety of activities and projects to support the work of member agencies. Activities that support a multimodal transportation system include:

- **Multimodal Improvement Inventory** – TRPC develops information and methods that transportation partners use to enhance multimodal transportation systems, including inventorying missing links (data/maps), identifying walk sheds and bike sheds, and helping to prioritize projects.
- **Regional Trails Plan Update** – TRPC periodically updates the Regional Trails Plan to consider changes in connectivity and access to existing trails, open spaces, and major community destinations. This plan was last updated in 2023.

3. Barrier-Free Transportation

Goal: *Provide a transportation system that supports equitable transportation access and service for people of all ages, races and ethnicities, incomes, abilities, English language proficiencies, and other demographic characteristics as appropriate.*

Policies:

3.a Ensure transportation facilities comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3.b Construct public transportation stops and walkway approaches that are accessible for those with disabilities.

3.c Provide appropriate transportation services, facilities, and programs that reduce barriers for people who read or speak Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, or other languages.

3.d Present information and provide public participation opportunities for everyone, including people with physical disabilities and/or people with limited literacy skills.

3.e Promote land use policies that provide a variety of housing types in core areas near employment and services.

3.f Ensure the transition to electric vehicles does not overburden households that rent and households with an income 80% or less of the area's median income.

The intent of these policies is to support implementation of state and federal regulations for barrier-free transportation.

Importance and Challenges

Transportation is considered an essential factor in maintaining independence, economic self-sufficiency, and dignity, and in preventing isolation. Many residents face physical, economic, or linguistic hurdles — such as negotiating curbs and uneven sidewalks; arranging transportation to work, the doctor's office, and the grocery store; and reading transit schedules and street signs. Barrier-free transportation is based on thoughtful design, diverse travel choices, and policy awareness that reduces these mobility challenges.

The Thurston region population is aging rapidly. Fit and healthy baby boomers in their prime wage-earning years are retiring. As the trend of "aging in place" increases, more people will want to stay in the Thurston region. The portion of the population 65 and over will grow from 20 percent in 2025 to 23 percent by 2050. It will become even more important — and challenging — to provide transportation options that meet the needs of this changing demographic.

Those services and barrier-free improvements to transportation infrastructure are already underfunded and unable to keep up with current demand. Although it's important, simply trying to retrofit existing facilities, as called for in the Americans with Disabilities Act, is beyond the means of most communities without federal and state financial support. Supporting the independence of people 65 and older depends on the success of establishing cost-effective, convenient travel options and community development patterns.

As electric vehicles increase in popularity in the region, households that rent and those with an income 80% or less of the area's median income may have more difficulty charging electric vehicles due to the associated charging expenses or the inability to conveniently charge at their place of residence. To support barrier-free EV adoption, our region will need conveniently located, reasonably priced, reliable public and private charging stations.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support barrier-free transportation include:

- S2 Environmental Justice and Social Equity Study (TRPC)
- T2 Expansion of Urban Transit Services

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

The Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan serves as a comprehensive blueprint for addressing transportation choices, gaps, and solutions for the region's people — who because of age, income or ability — may face mobility issues. As required by federal law, TRPC updates this plan at least every four years; the next update is anticipated to occur in 2026.

4. System Safety and Security

Goal: *Enhance the safety and security of those who use, operate, and maintain the transportation system.*

Policies:

4.a Use a combination of education, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation to maintain and enhance the transportation system.

4.b Add or widen shoulders, or use other measures as appropriate, on narrow, high-volume, and high-speed rural roads.

4.c Design transportation infrastructure to encourage safe user behavior.

4.d Support projects that improve passenger safety and security on public transportation and at associated facilities like park & ride lots and transit centers.

4.e Provide for safe routes for children to walk and bicycle to schools.

4.f Retrofit key transportation facilities to improve their ability to withstand a major earthquake or other natural disaster.

4.g Build in system redundancy to support emergency response, increase system resiliency, and reduce community disruption during disasters.

4.h Encourage coordination between transportation system providers and emergency response providers who rely on that system.

4.i Reduce the number of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Thurston County's roadways to zero by 2030. Track progress through the following performance measures:

- Number of fatalities on all public roads
- Number of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on all public roads
- Number of serious injuries on all public roads
- Number of serious injuries per 100 million VMT on all public roads
- Number of non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads (e.g., bicyclists and pedestrians)

Importance and Challenges

In 2023, 34 people died and another 113 experienced serious injuries as a result of the more than 4,000 crashes recorded in the Thurston region. The ability to travel safely — regardless of mode — is recognized as the most basic of transportation needs. It's challenging to design and build transportation systems that accommodate driver error, lapse of attention, high-risk behaviors such as speeding and impairment, and poor weather conditions without loss of life or injury to travelers. This is especially difficult to manage in urban areas with frequent conflict between motorized and nonmotorized travel, especially when the infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists is not fully built out. Rural roads also pose specific safety challenges. High travel speeds often result in more serious damage when vehicles lose control, as well as endangering others using the system.

In 2025, TRPC began developing a comprehensive safety action plan for the Thurston region. The project will establish a safety task force, conduct a safety analysis, identify specific policy and process changes that can be made, and develop a list of priority projects and strategies to improve and prioritize the safety of all users.

Several local jurisdictions received federal funding in 2023 to update their safety plans. This project will build on those efforts. TRPC anticipates updating the Regional Transportation Plan in the future to incorporate the findings of the safety analysis and relevant strategies and policies from the Regional Safety Action Plan once complete.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support the transportation system safety and security include:

- S6 Emergency Incident Management Detour Route Improvements Study (TRPC)
- S14 Transportation Recovery Strategy (TRPC)
- S15 Regional Transportation Safety Action Plan (TRPC)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

5. System Maintenance and Repair

Goal: *Protect investments that already have been made in the transportation system and keep life-cycle costs as low as possible.*

Policies:

5.a Prioritize maintenance, preservation, operations, and repair of the existing transportation system.

5.b Use preventative maintenance programs to ensure lowest life-cycle costs.

5.c Use street restoration standards, and coordinate utility and street projects, to minimize the destructive impact of utility projects on streets. Where possible, leverage investments for both project types to deliver more cost-effective public facilities.

5.d Explore innovative programs that reduce infrastructure life-cycle costs or increase efficiency of service delivery, including use of new materials, technologies, and resource partnerships.

Importance and Challenges

Maintenance and repair are needed to protect investments already made in the system.

Maintaining the system keeps life-cycle costs low, minimizes hazards resulting from deteriorating pavement or debris, and reduces the need for costly reconstruction projects.

Local budgets cannot adequately maintain the transportation system, let alone rebuild it. Without sufficient funding to take care of existing facilities and make structural investments, like shoulder additions that keep travel lanes from eroding, the challenges of the transportation system will only grow worse.

6. Transportation Demand Management

Goal: *Increase overall operating efficiency of the transportation system through the effective use of measures that reduce the need to drive.*

Policies:

6.a Promote transportation-efficient development and redevelopment, and site services and facilities where transit, walking, and bicycling are now or will be viable options instead of driving.

6.b Encourage use of public transportation, ridesharing, bicycling, and walking by improving access, convenience, and reliability.

6.c Sustain and expand private and public sector programs and services that encourage employees to commute to work by means other than driving alone, or to change commuting patterns through teleworking, flex-time, or compressed work weeks.

6.d Manage parking to improve consistency with transportation demand management objectives.

6.e Use technologies that enable people to meet their needs without having to travel.

6.f Use transportation demand management techniques to provide alternatives during temporary congestion, such as during major construction.

6.g Mainstream telework as a primary transportation demand management strategy among public and private employers.

6.h Strive to meet state Commute Trip Reduction targets for the region.

6.i Decrease annual per capita vehicle miles traveled in the Thurston region to:

- 30 percent below 1990 levels by 2035
- 50 percent below 1990 levels by 2050

Importance and Challenges

The transportation system is a resource, like water or power. To create more capacity, we can either build or conserve. Transportation demand management — also known as TDM — focuses on conservation. TDM is a central element of local, regional, and state transportation mobility strategies. The state's Commute Trip Reduction law is an example of a statewide TDM strategy.

An effective mix of TDM strategies helps people manage the impacts of congestion on their own lives by changing when, how, or why they travel. TDM may be tailored to specific needs in a corridor or downtown area, or applied regionwide. Its success hinges on a variety of factors, such as how we build our communities, good access to public transportation, supportive public policy, and widespread participation.

TDM offers benefits beyond improving system efficiency. It supports healthier communities by promoting bicycling and walking. It saves money by investing less in building and maintaining new infrastructure. TDM improves mobility and opportunity for everyone, including people under the age of 18, people 65 and older, and people with disabilities.

It lessens environmental impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions. TDM reduces the need for office space and parking, broadens the available workforce, and reduces employee absenteeism and turnover.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support transportation demand management include:

- T5 Regional "Park-and-Pool" Plan and Implementation Strategy (Intercity Transit)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

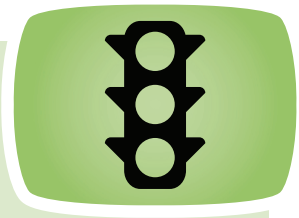
Other Regional Planning Priorities

Transportation Demand Management Program

TRPC is responsible for developing best practices and policies that encourage mobile work (telework, compressed work weeks, flexible work hours, etc.) in the region. As part of this effort, TRPC heads up the Commute Trip Reduction program that provides assistance to public and private employers in their efforts to incorporate and encourage a mobile work environment, including using travel options for their commute.

Learn more at www.trpc.org/289/Thurston-Commutes-CTR

7. Transportation Technologies



Goal: *Use technology-based approaches to address transportation congestion, safety, emissions, efficiency, and operations.*

Policies:

7.a Use transportation technologies to more effectively utilize the existing transportation system.

7.b Use transportation technologies to better integrate transportation modes.

7.c Make short-range technology investment decisions that support future technology implementation strategies.

7.d Look for opportunities to integrate transportation technology considerations in all projects.

7.e Recognize that transmittal of electronic information is an important function of a transportation system, and integrate this into transportation system evaluation, policies, and implementation strategies.

7.f Support the widespread adoption of electric vehicles and other zero emission vehicles, including into public fleets.

Importance and Challenges

Those who provide, maintain, operate, or use transportation facilities are finding increasing benefit from the use of technology — for improved communications, increased coordination within and among government agencies and other organizations, and safer and more efficient travel conditions. Emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) promise to provide powerful new tools to improve system safety, efficiency, and sustainability. Remote sensing and mobile technology have the potential to provide more robust and cost-effective data on active transportation patterns that can help the region better understand and plan for multimodal system needs.

Effective deployment of technology strategies requires coordination among and within agencies, and compatible protocols for system design, which may mean relinquishing proprietary systems to accomplish the full benefit of these investments. Because they are new, emerging technology can pose novel safety, security, and privacy concerns and lack regulatory safeguards. Partners across the region will need to balance the opportunity posed by new technologies within the limits of resources and experience.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support transportation technologies include:

- T1 Smart Corridors Phase 4

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

TRPC regularly engages in a variety of activities and projects to support the work of member agencies. Activities that support transportation technologies include:

- **Transportation Technology Monitoring** – TRPC regularly updates policymakers on changing transportation technology and its impact on mobility.

8. Freight Mobility

Goal: *Promote efficient, cost-effective, timely, and safe movement of freight in and through the region.*

Policies:

8.a Support freight access to and from highways and other major freight corridors, and between the region's intermodal facilities and industrial areas.

8.b Support efforts to increase the amount of freight that is moved by rail to enhance efficiency, productivity, safety, and mobility.

8.c Explore strategies to reduce conflict and optimize safety for all transportation system users where industrial/commercial land uses are in highly urbanized areas.

8.d Promote policies and design standards that support economic vitality by allowing delivery trucks to serve businesses and services while minimizing impacts on local streets.

Importance and Challenges

The ability to efficiently move goods to and from market in a timely manner is a critical element of a sound economy. Whether that means transporting raw materials to manufacturing centers and finished products out or moving goods and supplies on time to local retailers, the specific mobility needs of freight must be considered.

As traffic increases, so do the impacts of big trucks on roads, so more investments are needed in the system to accommodate freight. Online retailers continue to change the way people and businesses receive the goods they need, impacting travel patterns for freight, decreasing demand for retail space, and increasing demand for distribution centers located near urban areas.

As population increases, the number of freight trips also increases, and there is growing demand for commercial truck parking in the Thurston region.

Rail can only serve a portion of the region's freight mobility needs. Even if more freight rail opportunities were available, the need for highway access would still be strong. While some freight moves at night, much is moved by day — leading to conflicts on highways and local roads. Heavy trucks contribute to increased road wear, which requires more frequent repair to keep the roads safe.

Related Projects

Regional projects that freight mobility include:

- S3 Freight Mobility Strategy (TRPC)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

9. Streets, Roads, and Bridges

Goal: *Establish a street and road network that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while supporting adopted land use goals.*

Policies:

9.a Design and construct multimodal, context-sensitive, complete streets and roads.

9.b Ensure that street, road, and bridge projects are integrated with pedestrian amenities in districts and neighborhoods, adding lasting value to the community.

9.c Coordinate with jurisdictions on new regional connections that provide more direct routes and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.

9.d Avoid widening any local arterial or collector to more than two through lanes in each direction and auxiliary turn lanes where warranted (five lanes maximum mid-block width) to preserve an acceptable community scale and minimize transportation impacts on adjacent land uses.

9.e Use new technologies or alternative designs for safely and efficiently managing the flow of traffic, such as roundabouts as alternatives to traffic signals or stop signs.

9.f Use access management techniques to improve roadway capacity and operating efficiency, and increase overall safety.

9.g Develop an interconnected grid of local streets and roads to increase individual travel options and neighborhood connectivity, while improving efficient use of the overall regional network.

9.h Incorporate alternative strategies to address congestion where road widening and traffic control devices are not acceptable, particularly along Strategy Corridors.

9.i Design roadways to reduce weather-induced weight restrictions on streets, roads, and bridges that are important freight routes.

9.j Meet two-hour p.m. peak Level of Service (LOS) standards:

- LOS E or better in urban centers and corridors.
- LOS D or better in rural or other urban areas.

In strategy corridors, LOS may exceed adopted standards. (See Maps 3.1 and 3.2 for reference.)

9.k Develop multimodal level of service standards that gauge performance of the system for all users.

Definitions

Level of service (LOS) is a mechanism used to determine how well a transportation facility is operating from a traveler's perspective. Typically, six levels of service are defined and each is assigned a letter designation from A to F, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions, and LOS F the worst. For more information on LOS, see Appendix I, Level of Service Standard and Measurements.

Strategy corridors are places where road widening is not a preferred option to address congestion problems. This may be because the street or road is already at the maximum number of lanes, or that adjacent land uses are either fully built out or are environmentally sensitive. In strategy corridors, LOS may exceed adopted standards, suggesting instead that a different approach is needed for maintaining access in these areas.

In urban areas, these approaches can include:

- Increased transit service
- More sidewalks or bicycle facilities
- A complete and connected street grid
- Transportation technology measures that improve system operating efficiency
- Access management
- Parking management
- Incentives for employees to telework or carpool

In rural areas, alternatives to road widening can include:

- Intersection improvements
- Connections to regional trails
- Extended/increased transit service

Importance and Challenges

Streets, roads, and bridges are the backbone of the region's transportation network. They support the mobility needs of people and goods. Streets and roads connect residences to businesses and activity centers, providing access for essential services such as waste disposal, emergency response, and mail delivery. Complete streets enable safe access and travel for all users — pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit users, and travelers of all backgrounds.

Congestion is a daily challenge for many people. Sufficient funding to take care of existing streets, roads, and bridges is a growing challenge for government. Another challenge is moving growing numbers of vehicles through neighborhoods without having undue impact on the quality of life in those neighborhoods.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support streets, roads, and bridges include:

- A25 Ensign Road Connection (Olympia)
- A20 E Street Extension (Tumwater)
- A29 Mosman Avenue SE (Phase 3) (Yelm)
- O1 I-5 Tumwater to Mounts Road Alternatives Analysis (WSDOT)
- O4 I-5 Nisqually to Mounts Road (WSDOT)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

10. Public Transportation

Goal: *Provide a robust level of reliable, effective public transportation options to increase the share of all trips made by public transportation.*

Policies:

10.a Provide safe, convenient, and cost-effective transportation services to youth, people over age 65, and people with disabilities.

10.b Increase awareness of public transportation options and how to use them through expanded education and public information tailored to various groups and interests.

10.c Support a broad range of public transportation programs and services that ensure a full mix of options for meeting transportation needs as they evolve.

10.d Support Intercity Transit's long-range plan, which emphasizes trunk and primary routes serving core areas along designated strategy corridors, with supportive land use and appropriate design standards developed by local jurisdictions.

10.e Increase the share of trips made by public transportation.

10.f Invest in regional commuter vanpool programs to provide cost-effective, flexible alternatives to commuting in single-occupancy vehicles.

10.g Develop inter-regional partnerships for high-capacity transportation options to and from Thurston County. Identify opportunities to coordinate with and support other regional transportation providers serving Thurston County.

10.j Explore public transportation options for newly emerging urban centers, including innovative partnerships and programs, where fixed-route service is not currently feasible or sustainable.

10.k Plan for the long-term countywide funding needs of the region's public transportation systems.

10.l Support future expansion of high-frequency transit options along urban corridors, including extension of Bus Rapid Transit.

Importance and Challenges

Public transportation can be a very efficient way to move people in urban communities, stimulate compact urban development, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Besides supporting urban mobility, public transportation is a critical part of the social safety net that ensures access and independence for many members of the community, including those who do not own or drive a car. A good public transportation system is an indicator of a well-developed, complete urban network.

The Thurston region contains large expanses of relatively low-density residential areas isolated from activity and employment centers. While this type of land use is difficult and expensive to serve with public transportation, people living in low-density and rural communities still rely on public transportation.

To support transit, adopted land-use plans promote urban infill, mixed-use development, and siting facilities with good access to major transportation routes. Unfortunately, achieving these goals may conflict with other values. For example, residents may worry that infill will change the neighborhood's character. Developers may site facilities in areas outside centers to keep land and construction costs down, but this can ultimately drive up the ongoing transportation costs. Siting large government facilities and major employment sites in the region's urban cores and corridors results in more efficient, less expensive transit service.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support public transportation include:

- O3 I-5 Hard Shoulder Running (WSDOT)
- T7 High Frequency Corridor Service or BRT "Light" (Intercity Transit)
- T8 E Martin Way Gateway Transit Facility (Intercity Transit)
- T10 Nisqually Tribe Transit Access and Circulation Study, Implementation Strategy (Intercity Transit)
- T14 Expansion of Intercounty Express Service (intercity Transit)
- T15 Expansion of Local Express Service (Intercity Transit)
- T16 West Olympia Transit Study (Intercity Transit)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

ruralTRANSIT (rT) Program

A grant-funded program managed by TRPC, rT connects South Thurston County communities of Bucoda, Grand Mound, Rainier, Rochester, Yelm, and Tenino, and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation to destinations in Thurston and Lewis counties. rT is essential to help rural residents with limited transportation options get where they need to go. On February 3, 2020, rT began fare-free service. Learn more at www.trpc.org/rt.

Zero-Fare Demonstration Project

On January 1, 2020, Intercity Transit began a five-year "zero-fare" demonstration project. Passengers on buses and Dial-a-Lift vehicles pay no fares. The Intercity Transit Authority found that zero-fare offers the most economical, effective, and fastest way to deliver change and services voters want. Learn more at https://www.intercitytransit.com/plan-your-trip/zero-fare.

11. Bicycling

Goal: *Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by bicycling.*

Policies:

11.a Develop a continuous, safe, and convenient regional bicycle network that functions as an integral part of the overall transportation system.

11.b Provide safe and convenient bicycle routes to all schools in the region, and encourage their use.

11.c Invest in a regional network of contiguous and connected north-south and east-west dedicated shared-use trail corridors to serve as the backbone of the non-motorized system.

11.d Provide bicycle parking facilities at transit centers, park & ride locations, train stations, and other multimodal facilities.

11.e Provide short- and long-term bicycle parking and other supporting facilities at locations such as schools, employment sites, and activity centers.

11.f Support education programs for motorists and bicyclists to increase understanding of bicycling laws, and encourage safe and lawful sharing of the road.

11.g Support regional long-term strategies for funding bicycle facilities and services.

Importance and Challenges

A well-balanced transportation system offers a variety of safe and convenient travel options. Many people are able to take advantage of bicycling for some of their trips — for example, children pedaling to school and urban commuters riding to work. Bicycling also furnishes independence for those who are not able to drive. It is a "clean" mode of transportation that is good for the environment and the health of the bicyclist, and an integral part of the overall regional transportation strategy. State law recognizes bicycles as vehicles, and many local governments provide safe facilities consistent with overall traffic demands and local resources.

However, many people still see bicycling solely as a recreational endeavor, instead of a legitimate mode of transportation. They oppose spending transportation funds on bicycle facilities. Despite compliance by a majority of riders, bicyclists who don't obey the rules of the road create negative public opinion. The bicycling experience — much like that of walking — is influenced greatly by the actions of drivers and the built environment. Additionally, the difference in speeds between driving and bicycling can create an intimidating travel environment for bicyclists, which limits the willingness or ability of people to bicycle.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support bicycling include:

- B2 Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail Extension (Thurston County, Bucoda, Tenino)
- B6 Deschutes Valley Trail (Tumwater)
- B7 Gate-Belmore Trail (Thurston County)
- B8 Yelm Prairie Line Trail (Yelm)
- B9 Karen Fraser Woodland Trail Phases 3 and 4 (Olympia)
- S1 Bicycle Connectivity Strategy (TRPC)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

12. Walking

Goal: *Increase the share of all trips made safely and conveniently by pedestrians.*

Policies:

12.a Provide a direct, safe, interconnected pedestrian network that supports existing and desired land uses.

12.b Construct and maintain safe and accessible sidewalks, and effective crossings, within an appropriate radius of every school in the region, and encourage their use.

12.c Provide frequent pedestrian crossings, especially in urban areas, along primary transit routes, and near activity centers.

12.d Develop and encourage connections for pedestrians to shorten trip lengths to transit routes, schools, parks, trails, activity centers, and other destinations.

12.e Require pedestrian-friendly building design in activity centers, and pedestrian-oriented or high density zoning districts.

12.f Provide street lighting, pedestrian buffers, trees, benches, and other elements that support a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment.

12.g Encourage neighborhood planning efforts to refine and identify pedestrian corridors and promote walkability.

Importance and Challenges

Every traveler is a pedestrian at the beginning and the end of the trip, since even drivers need to move safely and conveniently to and from the car. Beyond this most basic need, though, walking is often the only way that some members of the community can visit parks, shops, libraries, or neighborhood friends. This is important not just for their independence and mobility, but also as an effective way of countering the effects of the nation's sedentary lifestyle. When it comes to city centers and activity centers, pedestrians are sometimes referred to as the "indicator species" of a healthy downtown. Often, in a well-designed and established downtown area, travel is much easier on foot than by car. Walking is healthy, easy on the environment, cost-effective, and, with the right facilities and community design, a pleasant way of traveling.

For decades, communities built around the car, often resulting in an inhospitable environment for walkers. However, more recently, significant advancements have been made in regionwide walkability. Increasing density in some areas and speed in others creates the need for facility improvements to support access and safety for walkers. Until recently, sidewalks were sometimes viewed as an optional amenity to be funded and maintained by adjacent property owners, not as an integral part of the transportation network. Fast moving vehicles operating along larger streets and roads can make walking unpleasant and often dangerous. Effective measures are needed to discourage speeding and unsafe driving, such as stricter law enforcement or innovative street design that encourages different driving behavior.

A complete sidewalk network can still be challenging to navigate for pedestrians when the sidewalks are narrow, damaged, or uplifted and uneven. Crossing streets and driveways can also present challenges.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support walking include:

- B1 Karen Fraser Woodland Trail Extension (Thurston County)
- C5 Mottman Road Improvements (Olympia, Tumwater)
- C6 Wiggins Road Reconstruction (Olympia)
- C39 Brewery District Transportation Project (Tumwater)
- C17 Fones Road Improvements (Olympia)
- S23 Pedestrian/Walkability Strategy (TRPC)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

13. Rail

Goal: *Ensure the continued long-term viability of existing and rail-banked rail lines in the region for future freight and passenger rail travel.*

Policies:

13.a Support appropriate opportunities for the potential shared use of freight rail lines for passenger rail opportunities.

13.b Facilitate the acquisition and continued operation of short-line railroads by local jurisdictions where needed to support current and future economic development needs.

13.c Use design techniques, technology (ITS), and operations coordination to minimize potential conflicts between trains and other modes of transportation, and between trains and adjacent land uses.

13.d Consider the acquisition of railroad rights-of-way threatened with abandonment in order to preserve these corridors for transportation use in the future.

13.e Consider future potential rail opportunities during long-range planning to include planning of sites that may have the opportunity for future rail, and reserve areas for future rights-of-way as appropriate.

13.f When appropriate, participate in the partnerships necessary to foster efficient, high-speed passenger rail service in the Pacific Northwest rail corridor.

13.g Continue efforts to position the Thurston region for a future commuter rail connection to central Puget Sound.

Importance and Challenges

Rail offers one of the most cost-effective and efficient forms of transportation for many mobility needs. Freight trains can quickly and profitably move many raw and finished materials long distances. Heavy goods like gravel and logs can be shipped by rail, reducing significant wear on roads. Commuter trains offer predictability and affordability to long-distance commuters in major metropolitan areas like Seattle. Intercity passenger rail is increasingly popular for travel between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, B.C., helping to ease pressure on highways and airports. Rail service also benefits some community development patterns. It stimulates complementary land use activities, such as industrial growth in an area served by freight rail, or transit-oriented development in areas served by commuter rail.

A pressing regional challenge is the loss of transportation corridors through rail line right-of-way abandonment by BNSF Railway or Union Pacific, the region's two primary rail owners. Without a sufficiently funded, proactive acquisition strategy, these difficult to assemble corridors could be lost to future transportation uses including passenger rail service. Another challenge is establishing passenger rail service on tracks owned by the major railroads, whose primary business is moving freight. Making shortline connections to the major railroads, for either freight or passenger movements, can be challenging, as is maintaining shortline tracks to keep them operational. Land use patterns in the western United States dictate that rail travel complements — not replaces — car, bus, and truck travel, requiring good intermodal transfer locations and facilities.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support rail include:

- O4 I-5 Nisqually to Mounts Road (WSDOT)
- S4 High Capacity Transportation Study (TRPC)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

14. Aviation

Goal: *Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the general aviation needs of residents and businesses in the region.*

Policies:

14.a Encourage coordination between the Port of Olympia, the cities of Olympia and Tumwater, and Thurston County to maintain consistency between adopted land use plans and long-range airport development strategies, and to encourage land use compatibility in affected areas adjacent to the airport.

14.b Maintain and develop the Olympia Regional Airport in accordance with the current Airport Master Plan.

14.c Support regional passenger air service at the Olympia Regional Airport.

14.d Support multimodal access to the Olympia Regional Airport and to Sea-Tac International Airport.

Importance and Challenges

Air travel in the Thurston region serves passenger and freight, and provides expedient options for time-sensitive missions like helicopter med-evac, or for access to remote areas. For certain freight delivery needs, air travel into and out of a small regional facility like the Olympia Regional Airport is a timely alternative to highway delivery.

State and federal laws govern the kinds of land uses that can be located within a certain distance of public use airports. These laws necessitate increased coordination and communication between airports and their surrounding jurisdictions. Once located at the outskirts of the urban area, the Olympia Regional Airport is increasingly surrounded by industrial, office, and residential uses. Many people are concerned about the environmental impacts of increased air travel, whether from the high fuel consumption, or pollutants and noise impacts on nearby neighborhoods. If aircraft size and flight frequencies increase, even long-established neighborhoods and communities far from the airport will feel increased impacts.

The Port's ability to retain a commercial air carrier has been challenged over the years by insufficient market demand. This makes it difficult to establish the facilities and critical user base needed to ensure such a venture remains profitable. The existence of threatened species or their habitat will make expansion of facilities and businesses at the airport more difficult.

The City of Tumwater and the Port of Olympia are developing a Habitat Conservation Plan to balance growth and preserve three endangered species protected by the Endangered Species Act, including the Mazama pocket gopher (Olympia subspecies). Much of the airport property owned by the Port of Olympia is on soils preferred by the pocket gopher.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

Airport Master Plan

The Airport Master Plan helps define future aviation and non-aviation needs for the Thurston Region and the airport. Learn more about the Olympia Airport at www.portolympia.com.

15. Marine Transportation

Goal: *Provide an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the region's marine transportation needs.*

Policies:

15.a Maintain a marine terminal for water-borne freight movement.

15.b Encourage coordination among the Port of Olympia, the City of Olympia, and other interested parties to maintain consistency between adopted land use plans and long-range marine terminal development strategies, including adequate truck and rail access.

15.c Consider long-term strategies for integrating maritime passenger service into the regional transportation system as viable alternatives develop.

Importance and Challenges

Puget Sound waterways are natural transportation corridors. Historically, marine transportation has been vital to this region and continues to be important for passengers, and domestic and international trade. Passenger ferries on Puget Sound have been replaced with other modes of travel, whereas shipping continues through the Port of Olympia's marine terminal, as well as privately owned facilities on Budd Inlet. Marine terminals, while situated at sensitive environmental locations on the water's edge, can serve a vital national purpose in facilitating marine transportation of people and cargo.

Marine cargo moving through the Port of Olympia is challenged by its location at the southern terminus of Puget Sound. Major ports of call in Seattle and Tacoma offer shorter trips and larger facilities designed to handle the massive trans-oceanic ships arriving from or departing to Asia. The current trend in cargo shipping is toward consolidation of containerized freight through the Ports of Tacoma and Seattle. The Port of Olympia has a reputation as a "specialty port" catering to the needs of break-bulk and project cargo shippers.

The Port peninsula is bordered by downtown Olympia, as well as its own Swantown and Market districts. As downtown becomes more active, it will be more challenging to balance freight train and truck traffic access to the Port with other commercial and residential traffic downtown.

16. Public Involvement

Goal: *Build a community of an engaged and informed public that contributes ideas and supports actions to create a highly functional multimodal transportation system consistent with the goals and policies in this plan.*

Policies:

16.a Ensure communities that have been disproportionately impacted by current and historic inequities have meaningful opportunities to inform the planning process.

16.b Provide broad-based, early, and continuing public involvement in all aspects of the transportation planning process.

16.c Ensure equal access to participation for all users of the transportation system.

16.d Promote increased community understanding of the relationship between sustainability, land use choices and transportation consequences facing communities at local, tribal, regional, and state levels.

16.e Engage in consultation with Tribal governments within the region to ensure Tribal participation.

16.f Explore innovative participation techniques to increase overall public involvement.

16.g Comply with applicable state and federal non-discrimination and accessibility requirements for public involvement.

Importance and Challenges

When it comes to transportation policies and investments, the region faces difficult choices and trade-offs. The public has a vested interest in the outcome, whether in 20-year regional decision-making processes or day-to-day local decisions. Effective public input informed by an understanding of issues and choices produces better decisions and results.

To realize effective involvement, we must provide meaningful opportunities for interested parties to learn about, speak to, and impact the decision-making process.

Government is challenged to make the best use of the public's time with meaningful process, clear and effective materials, and sincere consideration of input. Special efforts are needed to make information available in a variety of formats (social media, website, TV, radio, personal outreach, mailing, phone calling, open houses, etc.), and languages. It is important to continue outreach to young people to help them become life-long informed transportation consumers.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support public involvement include:

- S20 Lilly Road Safety Study (Olympia)
- S22 Martin Way Crossing Strategy (TRPC, Olympia, Lacey, Thurston County)
- S28 Ruddell Road Corridor Study (Lacey)
- S32 Olympia Street Connectivity Studies (Olympia)
- T13 Innovative Service Zone Study (Intercity Transit)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

17. Intergovernmental Coordination

Goal: *Ensure transportation facilities and programs function seamlessly across community borders and between regions.*

Policies:

17.a Encourage coordination among the local, regional, tribal, state, and federal governments in operation of the transportation system.

17.b Work with government agencies to coordinate land uses, implement countywide planning policies, and refine the tools needed to accomplish land use plans.

17.c Coordinate street and road projects of all our local jurisdictions and Intercity Transit where appropriate.

17.d Coordinate the development and updates of local, regional, state, and federal transportation plans to ensure consistency.

17.e Exchange ideas, information, and issues among local jurisdictions, tribal, state, and federal transportation authorities, and economic development interests to facilitate informed, reasoned decision-making processes.

17.f Maintain relationships with tribal governments within the region to encourage coordination of land use and transportation plans.

Importance and Challenges

Travelers expect a high level of transportation service throughout the region and seamless transitions between communities. Therefore, the transportation network should function like a single system, not a collection of independent systems. Governments at the federal, state, tribal, local, and regional levels must coordinate their investments, policies, operations, and standards to ensure this continuity.

To function seamlessly across community borders, the transportation system must be planned, funded, and constructed in a coordinated way.

This requires coordination among more than a dozen traditional transportation providers in the Thurston region alone and many service providers who rely on that system to supply assistance and mobility programs. Coordination of facilities and services is challenged by differences in funding abilities and processes, land use pressures, prioritization processes, time, and other government needs. A key challenge is the competitive nature of much of the region's transportation funding, which often pits one community against another in the effort to secure scarce transportation revenue.

Related Projects

All projects in the RTP require intergovernmental coordination. Regional projects that support intergovernmental coordination include:

- C28 Carpenter Road Widening from Martin Way to Britton Parkway (Lacey, Thurston County)
- O2 SR 507/Bald Hills to SR 702 Intersection Improvements (WSDOT, Yelm, Thurston County, Pierce County)
- S9 Regional Multimodal Level of Service (TRPC)
- S21 Regional Trails Work Program (TRPC)
- T12 New West Oly Transit Facility (Intercity Transit)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

TRPC regularly engages in a variety of activities and projects to support the work of member agencies. Activities that demonstrate intergovernmental coordination include:

- **Regional Transportation Model Maintenance and Improvement** – Gathering relevant information from our many transportation partners, TRPC ensures the regional transportation models are up to date and reflect changes in the region's transportation network. TRPC also works with data from neighboring counties to ensure our models are calibrated to take into consideration changes in the Puget Sound's wider transportation network.

18. Environmental and Human Health

Goal: *Minimize transportation impacts on the natural environment and the people who live and work in the Thurston region.*

Policies:

18.a Ensure people of color and households with an income 80% or less of the area's median income do not incur disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects from transportation programs, policies, and investments.

18.b Protect water quality from the impacts of stormwater runoff by minimizing impervious surface area using low impact development methods where feasible, and effectively treating and managing unavoidable runoff.

18.c During transportation planning, design, and construction, proactively address fish barrier removal, taking into consideration the habitat of fish bearing streams and environmentally sensitive areas.

18.d Develop a transportation system supporting compact, mixed-use development policies and non-motorized travel that curbs growth in miles of motor vehicle travel to increase energy efficiency, reduces environmental impacts, and encourages physical activity and community health.

18.e Promote the use of alternative fuels and technologies that reduce pollution and other environmental impacts from motorized vehicles.

18.f Ensure federal Clean Air Act transportation requirements are met.

18.g Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Thurston region to:

- Achieve 45% reduction of 2015 levels by 2030
- Achieve 85% reduction of 2015 levels by 2050

18.h Reduce the impacts of transportation infrastructure on the natural environment during construction, retrofit, and maintenance.

18.i Acknowledge that changing weather and climate patterns will impact the human, natural, and built environment, and plan for impacts such as increased flooding, extreme heat, and sea-level rise.

Importance and Challenges

Transportation investments should add to — not detract from — the quality of life for people, regardless of how they utilize the transportation system. Disproportionate environmental and health impacts have been detrimental to some in our region because of:

- Past racist practices, such as redlining.
- Prioritizing investment in areas that are wealthier over those that have lower incomes.
- Disrupting, damaging, or breaking up overburdened communities when siting transportation infrastructure (e.g., the interstate system).

- Prioritizing investment in urban areas over rural communities.
- Prioritizing infrastructure for motorized vehicles over multimodal infrastructure.

The Thurston region also has a legal responsibility to ensure that transportation investments don't reverse the good results achieved in air quality over the past 25 years. It's also important to ensure the negative impacts of the transportation system on the social and built environment don't outweigh its benefits.

Transportation is the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the Thurston region, and the largest source statewide — driven by continued dependence on fossil fuel technologies. The way the region developed created many mobility needs.

Related Projects

Regional projects that support environmental and human health include:

- C2 5th Avenue Bridge Reconstruction (DES, Olympia)
- S24 Regional Carbon Reduction Strategy (TRPC)
- T9 Alternative Fuel Infrastructure and Fueling Services Project (intercity Transit)

See Appendix J, Regional Project List Detail, for more information.

These fossil fuels, and the many square miles of impervious surface required to meet daily travel needs, have long impacted air and water quality, wildlife habitat, healthy lifestyles, and community livability.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

TRPC regularly engages in a variety of activities and projects to support the work of member agencies. Activities that demonstrate intergovernmental coordination include:

- **Transportation, Land Use, and Public Health Connections** – TRPC provides support for community and partner agency efforts that seek to improve public health through better transportation and land use planning.
- **Climate Action Plan** – TRPC worked with local jurisdictions to develop a Climate Action Plan for the Thurston Region, which is comprised of two parts: climate adaptation (2018) and climate mitigation (2020). The Climate Action Plan established regionally consistent methodologies for evaluating climate-induced environmental impacts, assessing vulnerabilities, understanding the sources of regional greenhouse gas emissions, and identifying priority actions.

19. Performance Measures

Goal: *Develop performance measures that are realistic, efficient to administer, effective in assessing performance, and meaningful to the public.*

Policies:

19.a Use transportation performance measures that reflect priority regional objectives, such as consistency of transportation and land use decisions, improved mobility and access, adequate maintenance and repair of the existing system, environmental protection, and safety.

19.b Use transportation performance measures to evaluate, monitor, and respond to the performance of regional policies and investments.

19.c Develop performance measures that reflect the contribution of all modes of travel.

19.d Where feasible, use performance measures consistent with those used by other organizations to enable comparisons.

Importance and Challenges

Performance measures can be useful tools in evaluating how well policies and investments support key transportation objectives. These measures provide a basis for understanding current situations, assessing decisions and outcomes, and perhaps making future course corrections. This can be helpful in prioritizing issues, allocating resources, and marking progress on complex issues. Performance measures can also be powerful tools for explaining issues, strategies, and outcomes to constituents and other interested parties.

A serious downfall of many programs is the urge to develop too many performance measures. Unless key objectives are narrowed and meaningful measures developed for those select priorities, collecting data, monitoring, and reporting on performance measures can be time consuming and expensive. It is difficult, but essential, to prioritize among the list of objectives and select only a few performance measures.

Another challenge is posed by the limited availability of reliable data that can be updated periodically. Again, measures that rely on creation of new data are likely to be costly or difficult to maintain over time. Regional performance measures may be different from many measures implemented at the local, tribal, or state levels because missions and priorities differ. Without a commitment to monitor, report on, and evaluate performance measures in a meaningful way, the public and other interested parties will grow disillusioned. A thoughtful process is needed to establish measures that identify appropriate objectives and avoid over-committing resources.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

TRPC regularly engages in a variety of activities and projects to support the work of member agencies. Activities that support performance measures include:

- **Sustainable Thurston Monitoring** – TRPC regularly monitors and reports on progress achieving Sustainable Thurston Plan targets, helping the region track how our transportation and other investments are impacting our ability to develop and maintain socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable communities.

20. Transportation Funding

Goal: *Secure adequate funding from all sources to implement the goals and policies in this plan.*

Policies:

20.a Ensure that transportation investments are equitable to all segments of the community in terms of costs (such as relocations, adverse health impacts, and land use disruptions), and in terms of benefits derived from the system (such as levels of service or travel choices).

20.b Provide timely and comprehensive public information about transportation funding issues and opportunities to better enable citizens to participate in complex funding decisions.

20.c Prioritize the maintenance and preservation of the existing transportation system to minimize life-cycle costs.

20.d Consider costs and benefits in the allocation of transportation funds to ensure best long-term investment decisions.

20.e Make strategic transportation investments that reinforce land use and transportation decisions consistent with the goals and policies of this plan.

20.f Support efforts to improve the availability, predictability, and flexibility of transportation revenues for all modes.

20.g Use transportation funding policies and investments to make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.

20.h Continue local policies that require new development to pay for its impacts on the transportation system.

Importance and Challenges

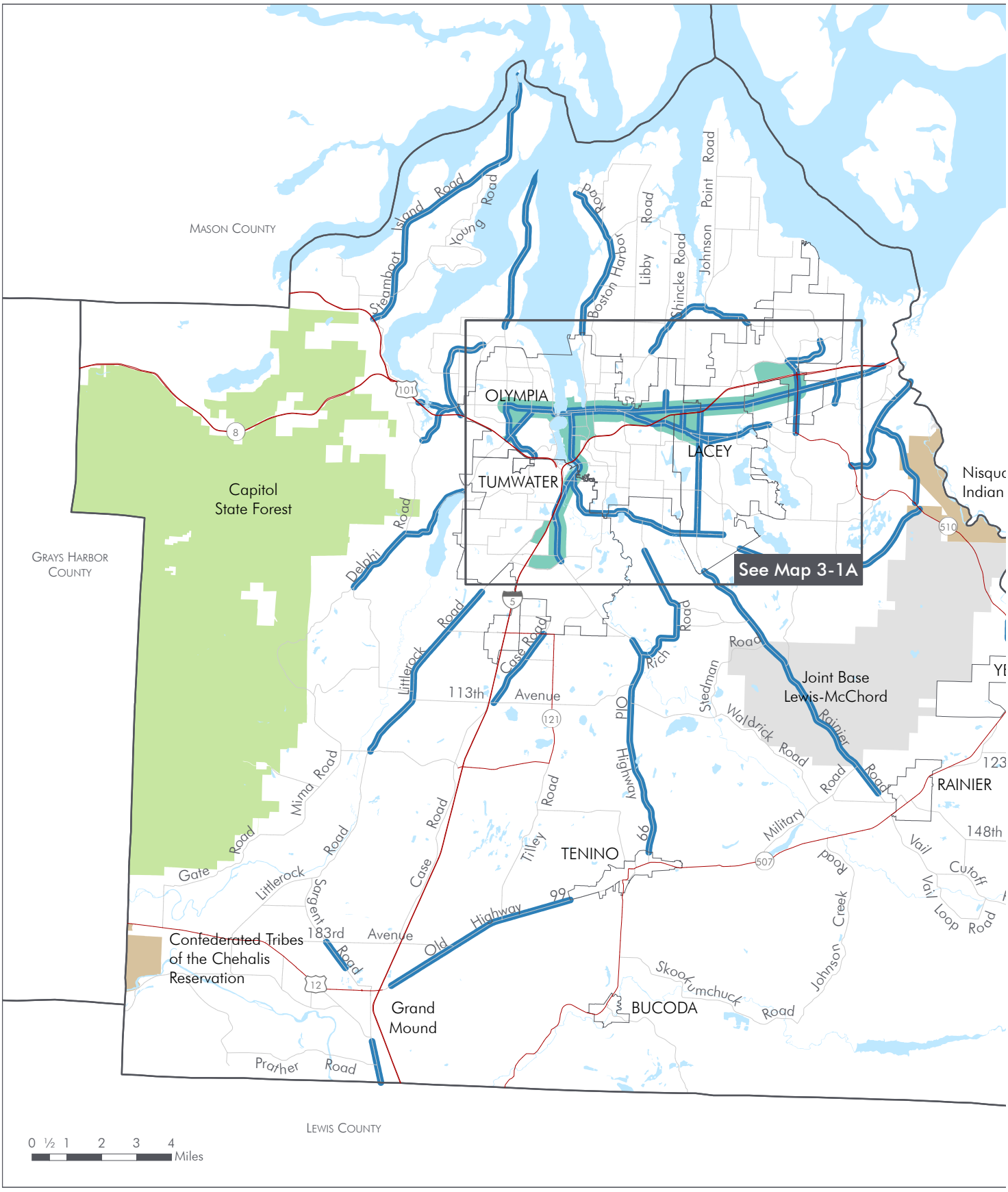
The facilities that are built, the programs and services that are implemented, and the education and outreach that is conducted all rely on sufficient funding. No single funding source is available for governments to build, maintain, and operate the region's transportation system. Instead, funding is pieced together from a variety of revenue sources. This challenges orderly and thoughtful prioritization and implementation strategies.

Voters in Washington State and Thurston County alike have been divided on the subject of transportation funding in recent years, often along rural/urban lines. Recent state gas tax and local sales tax increases do not offset earlier losses of revenue sources or inflationary effects on fixed revenues. In some cases, delaying program investments — as in pavement preservation programs — results in higher life-cycle costs later. Funding issues are further compounded by the lack of true market mechanisms to manage demand for travel. Unlike utilities, few pricing structures are available for effectively balancing supply and demand, and those that exist are rarely politically feasible.

Other Regional Planning Priorities

TRPC regularly engages in a variety of activities and projects to support the work of member agencies. Activities that support transportation funding include:

- **Transportation Funding Analysis** – When funding becomes available, TRPC will complete an analysis of how transportation facilities and services will be funded in the future based on changing technology and funding sources.



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Map 3-1: Vehicle Level of Service Standard 2-Hour PM Peak

This map illustrates the adopted vehicle Regional Level of Service (LOS) policy by which the transportation system (roadway) network performance is judged to meet or exceed operational efficiency.

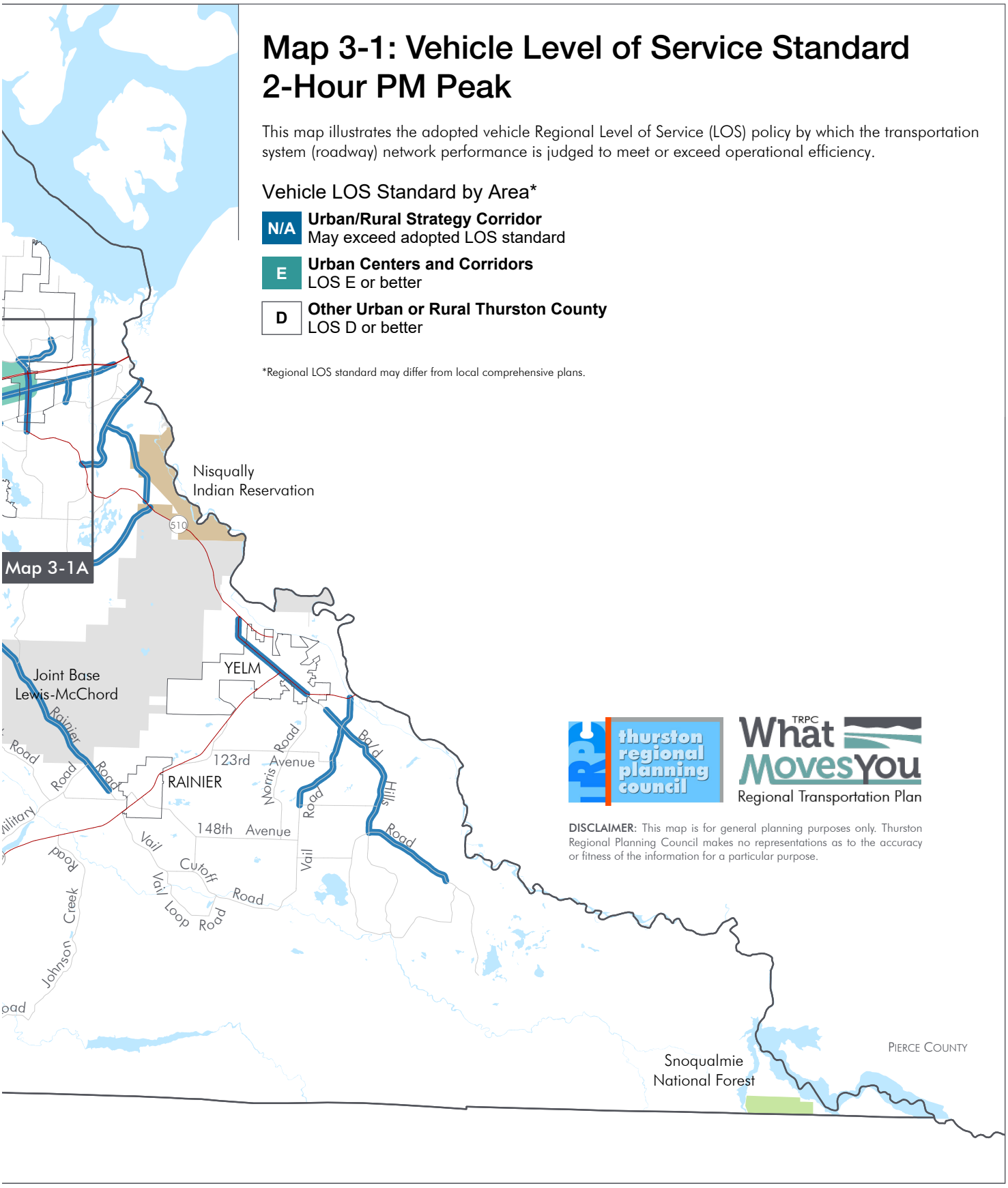
Vehicle LOS Standard by Area*

N/A **Urban/Rural Strategy Corridor**
May exceed adopted LOS standard

E **Urban Centers and Corridors**
LOS E or better

D **Other Urban or Rural Thurston County**
LOS D or better

*Regional LOS standard may differ from local comprehensive plans.



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TRPC What MovesYou Regional Transportation Plan

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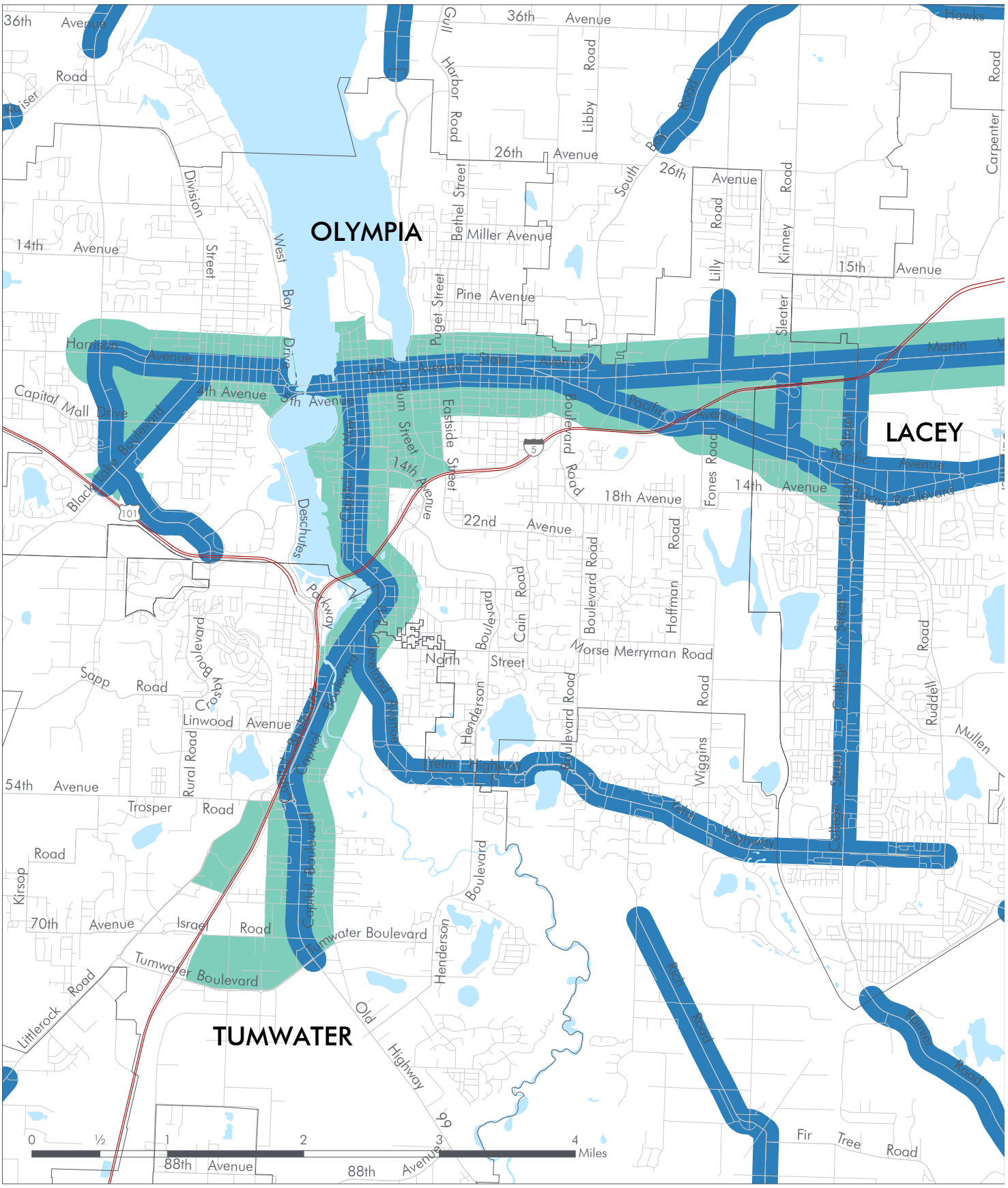

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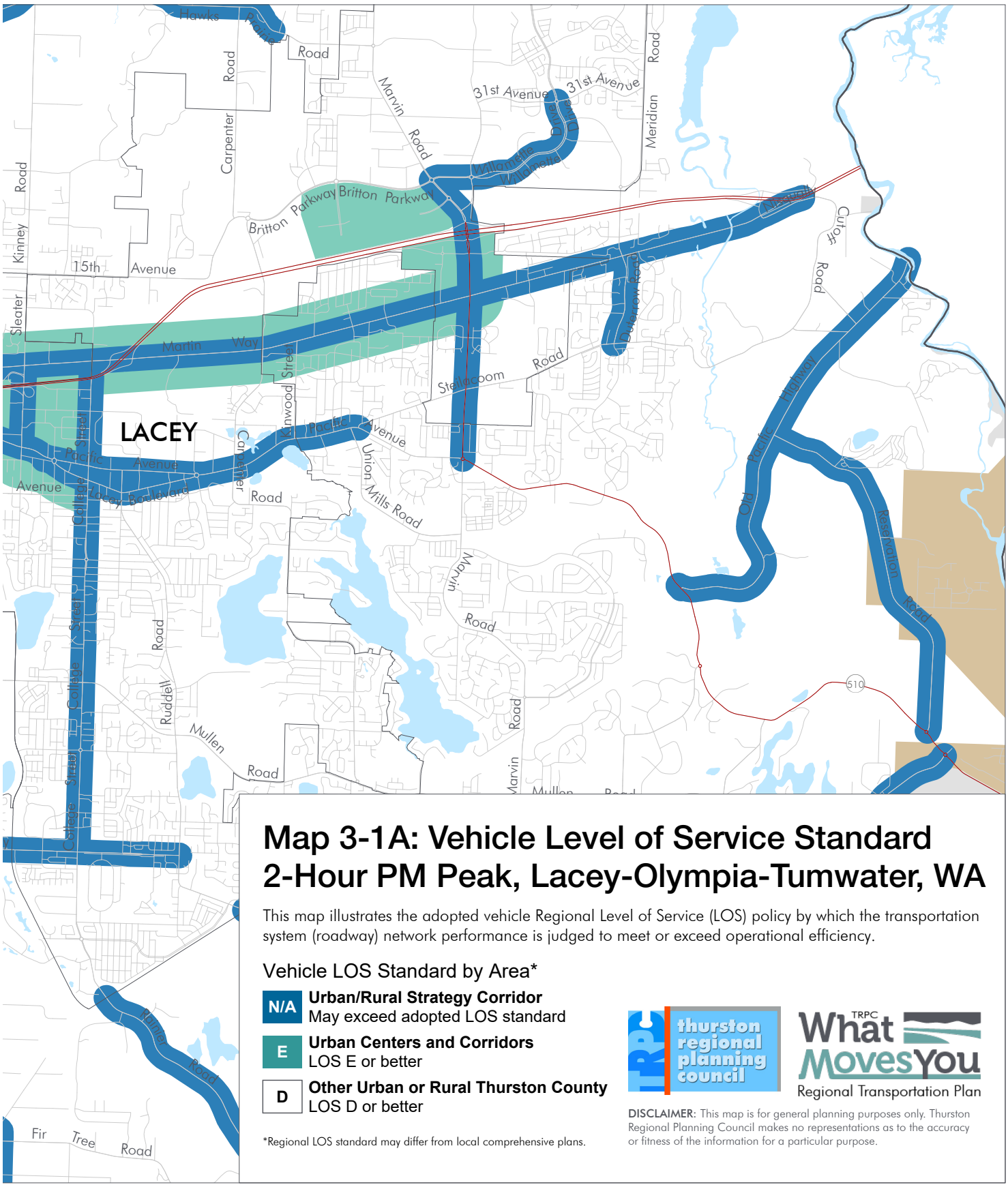

Map 3-1A: Vehicle Level of Service Standard 2-Hour PM Peak, Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater, WA

This map illustrates the adopted vehicle Regional Level of Service (LOS) policy by which the transportation system (roadway) network performance is judged to meet or exceed operational efficiency.

Vehicle LOS Standard by Area*

N/A **Urban/Rural Strategy Corridor**
May exceed adopted LOS standard

E **Urban Centers and Corridors**
LOS E or better

D **Other Urban or Rural Thurston County**
LOS D or better

*Regional LOS standard may differ from local comprehensive plans.

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TRPC What MovesYou Regional Transportation Plan

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