Chapter 4
WSDOT Facilities

This chapter takes a broad look at state and federal transportation facilities in the region. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is responsible for building and maintaining such facilities, which are an integral and vital part of the region's transportation system.

With a growing population and new technologies, WSDOT and local government approaches to managing the entire transportation system are evolving. Better data improves decisions, helping WSDOT, Thurston County, and its cities and towns maximize the transportation system's capacity.

WSDOT's Transportation System Policy Goals

The following are WSDOT's policy goals for the planning, operation, performance of, and investment in the state's transportation system.

- **Economic vitality.** To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.
- **Preservation.** To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services.
- **Safety.** To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.
- **Mobility.** To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington state, including congestion relief and improved freight mobility.
- **Environment.** To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.
- **Stewardship.** To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.

Public investments in transportation should support achievement of these policy goals.

WSDOT's Vision and Mission

Vision – Washington travelers have a safe, sustainable, and integrated multimodal transportation system.

Mission – We provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective transportation options to improve communities and economic vitality for people and businesses.

Goals – Diversity, equity, and inclusion; resilience; and workforce development.

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.** Through Inclusion, WSDOT is strengthening its commitment to diversity and engagement in all WSDOT business processes, functions, and services to ensure every voice is heard. This goal has both an internal and an external focus to assure that WSDOT has an inclusive and diverse workforce, while at the same time meeting Disadvantaged Business Enterprise goals and creating opportunities for underrepresented populations to do business with WSDOT.
- **Resilience.** By planning and/or investing resources, WSDOT strives to improve its ability to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to emergencies; combat climate change; and build a transportation system that provides equitable services, improves multimodal access, and supports Washington's long-term resilience. This includes enhancing the resilience of critical infrastructure to seismic events, managing assets to reduce vulnerabilities, and improving climate preparedness. Additionally, WSDOT leads efforts to combat climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions both within the agency and across the transportation sector, promoting sustainable and equitable transportation choices that enhances healthy communities.
- **Workforce Development.** WSDOT wants to be an employer of choice by hiring, training, and retaining skilled workers to meet Washington's transportation needs. As part of its Workforce Development goal, WSDOT listens and acts on employee feedback and continues the building of a flexible and mobile work environment through technology and innovation. At the same time, WSDOT evaluates market trends to offer competitive compensation and ensure succession.

Through collaboration, WSDOT and local transportation agencies can better balance transportation, community, economic, and land use needs to manage a comprehensive multimodal transportation system.

We live in a resource-constrained environment. Collaboration between our local governments and WSDOT is key to prioritizing innovative, timely, and cost-effective solutions that help keep us all moving — whether on our local roads or on the region's highways.

Complete Streets

WSDOT is commited to ensuring that state highways are designed and managed to enhance the safety, mobility, and accessibility for everyone. One of the primary methods of doing so is by approaching transportation projects from a "complete streets" perspective.

Taking a complete streets approach means planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining the transportation system to enable comfortable and convenient access to destinations for all people regardless of how they travel. State transportation projects costing $500,000 or more must consider the needs of all system users - whether they walk, bicycle, roll, use transit, or drive. While emergency repairs are exempt, this applies to projects that preserve, alter, or expand the transportation system.

For WSDOT, using a complete streets approach can include (but is not limited to):

- Connected sidewalks that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- Dedicated bicycle facilities.
- Appropriate and efficient pedestrian crossings.
- Taking into consideration speed and the roadway's land use context, separating drivers from active transportation users in both space and time.

Complete streets elements are systematically incorporated into the planning, design, and maintenance of state routes. By embedding complete streets considerations early in project development, WSDOT ensures that state transportation facilities in the Thurston region are designed to meet diverse needs from the outset. This proactive investment improves immediate safety and access and contributes to the long-term effectiveness of the road network.

Maintaining a State of Good Repair

Maintenance and preservation of the state's transportation assets is a top priority investment area for WSDOT. Doing this work keeps the most heavily used roads in the state open to the traveling public and provides all the benefits of a working transportation system. Maintaining a state of good repair covers everything from clearing snow and ice to keep the economy moving, to repairing pavement and bridges in a timely manner to minimize costs, to painting lines so drivers can see the lanes, and even caring for the plantings alongside the road.

According to WSDOT's 2025–2027 Capital Improvement and Preservation Program Overview, transportation system preservation is a critical unfunded need with current investment at 40 percent of what is really needed. Over the next 10 years, WSDOT estimates that $3 billion is needed for infrastructure preservation.

Because maintenance needs are not fully funded, WSDOT cannot maintain all its facilities in a state of good repair. This results in lower performance and higher costs for Interstates, U.S. Routes, and State Routes. Every dollar spent on maintenance, keeping a road in good condition, saves between $6 and $14 compared to rebuilding the road.[1] When the initial repair isn't funded and that rebuilding work is not done, drivers will experience more roadways with rough surfaces, more frequent closures for emergency repairs, and some routes may risk complete closure, resulting in lower performance and higher costs to everyone. For drivers, this means even higher costs for vehicle maintenance and reduced fuel efficiency as well as delays and longer routes when traffic is diverted.

[1]National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2012. Communicating the Value of Preservation: A Playbook. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/168322.aspx

Road Pavement

WSDOT uses the lowest life-cycle cost process to maximize the life of assets at the least expense by prioritizing risk-based preservation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction projects. With strategically timed maintenance treatments, the lifespan of asphalt pavements can be extended, substantially reducing the average annual cost of maintaining a section of pavement.

For example, a one-lane-mile section of asphalt pavement costs $250,000 to resurface. Under certain conditions, spending $20,000 on maintenance can increase the lifespan of a lane-mile of pavement from 12 years to 15, reducing the average annual cost of the pavement by 12 percent.

WSDOT uses strategic maintenance to cost-effectively increase pavement life spans. Pavement treatments are divided into three categories:

- **Maintenance treatments**, such as crack sealing, are the least expensive, but also provide the shortest extension of pavement life.
- **Rehabilitation treatments**, such as resurfacing asphalt pavement, are more expensive than maintenance but can extend pavement life by 10 to 20 years, depending on surface type.
- **Reconstruction treatments**, the most expensive option, extend pavement life by between 15 years (for asphalt pavement) and 50 years (for concrete pavement).

Maintaining road pavement in good working order requires an integrated approach to preservation. Most pavement maintenance deals with cracking, rutting, faulting, and road roughness. WSDOT times preservation activities to maintain a state of good repair to extend pavement's life cycle and — where possible — avoid a state where repair is unaffordable. To this end, WSDOT strategically maintains road pavement through preventive, strategic, emerging, and reactive preservation:

- **Preventive Preservation.** Planned and coordinated maintenance programs performed after recent paving to extend pavement life one to six years include Strategic Preservation and Emerging Preservation.
- **Strategic Preservation.** Maintenance performed to prevent signs of wear. Examples of preventive maintenance include sealing cracks in asphalt pavement and laying asphalt and aggregate (chip sealing) only in wheel paths where ruts in the road typically form.
- **Emerging Preservation.** Maintenance performed without which pavement is predicted to fail in the next year. Emerging preservation is intended to reduce the need for future reactive preservation activities, thereby extending pavement life. Examples include smoothing out the road surface, fixing potholes, and addressing other pavement defects.

Figure 4-1: Wheel-path Chip Sealing

Source: WSDOT
Wheel-path chip sealing is a preventive maintenance treatment used to extend pavement service life by applying asphalt to wheel paths where cracks, ruts, potholes, and other defects are most likely to occur. Aggregate is applied immediately following application of emulsion (an asphalt cement suspended in water).

- **Reactive Preservation.** Unplanned maintenance performed to correct immediate needs. Reactive preservation is typically a short-term fix used until more extensive pavement work is performed.

WSDOT reports pavement condition on National Highway System (NHS) roads to the Federal Highway Administration to ensure progress is being made related to maintaining pavement condition. To avoid penalty, less than five percent of Interstate roadways must be rated in poor condition. In 2021, only 1.9 percent of statewide Interstate roadway pavement was rated in poor condition; only three percent of Interstate 5 (I-5) in Thurston County was rated in poor condition during the same period.

I-5's Portland cement concrete pavement, which dates back to the late 1950s, is still functioning well today. While engineers estimated a service-life of 20 years before rehabilitation or replacement would be required, this product has proven to be exceptionally strong, performing much better than anticipated. Coupled with WSDOT's proactive preservation, roughly 89 percent of the pavement on I-5 in Thurston County is in fair condition or better.

Bridges

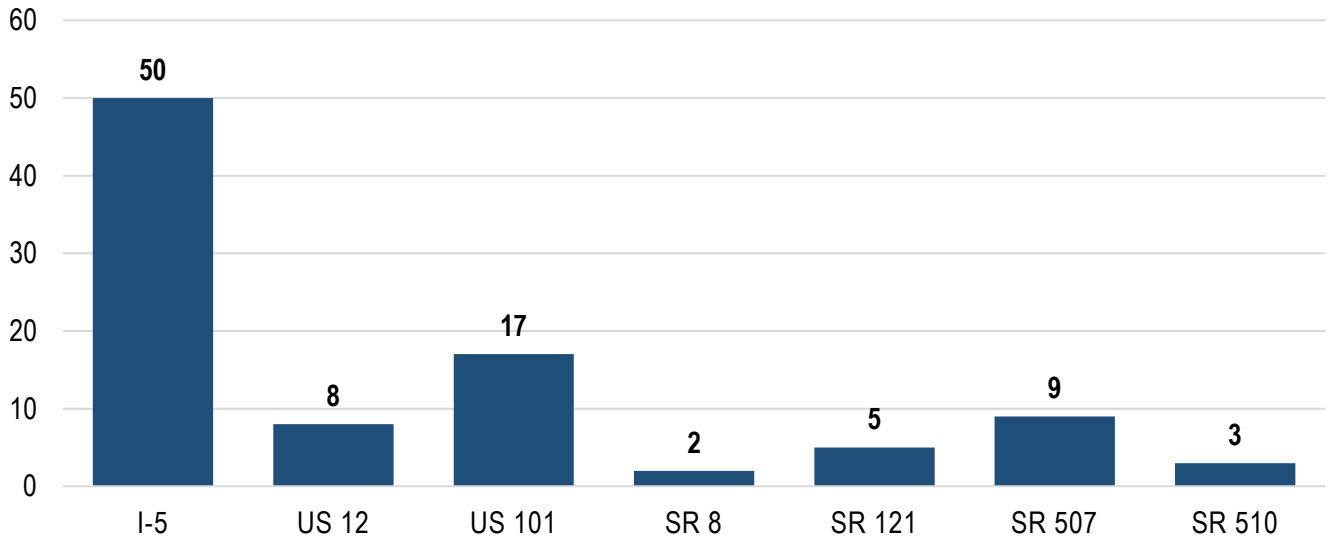
Like road pavement, bridges are an integral part of the road network. They provide crossings for and over roads, railroads, pedestrian pathways, rivers and creeks, and other natural and engineered features. Maintaining a state of good repair for bridges requires considering the bridge's age, whether it is functionally obsolete, and the overall condition of the bridge structure. Of the 96 bridges in Thurston County

maintained by WSDOT, many were constructed in the 1950s and rebuilt in the 1980s and 1990s. WSDOT inspects bridges every two years to ensure a state of good repair.

Age. When a bridge has been in use for 80 or more years, WSDOT must consider whether it is necessary and appropriate to replace it. As of 2024, only one WSDOT bridge in Thurston County is 80 years or older (U.S. 12 bridge over Scatter Creek, constructed in 1926); by 2050, 29 WSDOT bridges in Thurston County will be over the 80-year mark (Figure 4-3, Map 4-1), and WSDOT will need to consider whether replacing these bridges is appropriate.

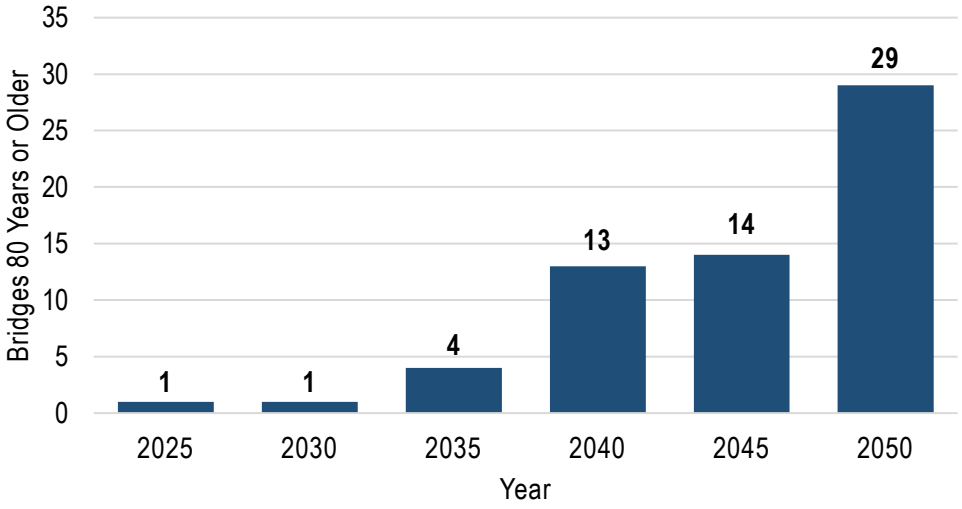
Condition. There are 30 bridges that help I-5 cross over rivers, streams, roads, and other features; another 20 help other roads and features (like pedestrian bridges) cross over I-5. Through biennial inspections, engineers look at the state of each bridge's deck, superstructure, and substructure. Bridges in poor condition are not considered unsafe for travelers or in danger of collapse, but WSDOT must address advanced wear and tear to prevent bridge closure due to safety concerns. As of 2024, two WSDOT bridges in Thurston County were considered in poor condition: the Plum Street on-ramp to northbound I-5 and the Capitol Boulevard bridge over I-5.

Figure 4-2: WSDOT-Maintained Bridges in Thurston County



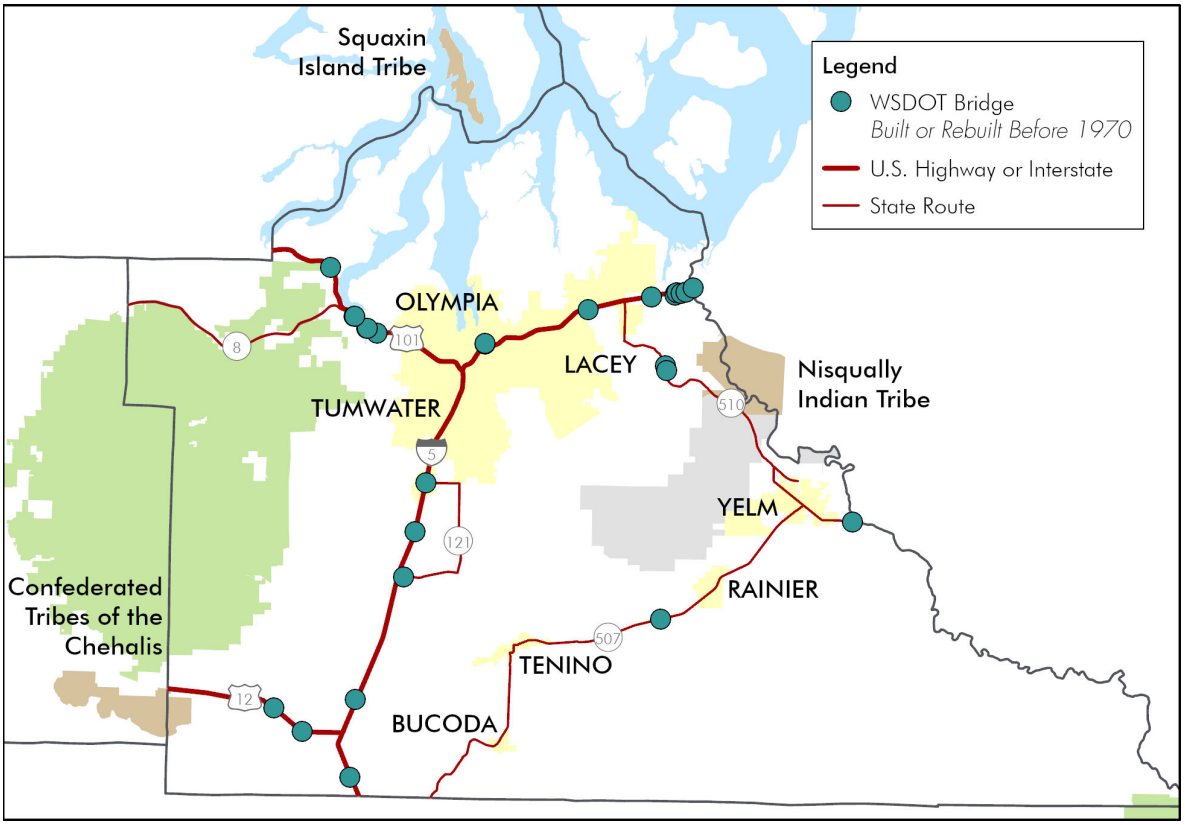
Source: WSDOT All Bridge and Tunnel Inventory (State & Local). Federal performance targets require Washington State to maintain its NHS bridges so no more than 10% are rated in poor condition (Appendix G, System Performance Report). As of 2024, only 3.2% of the state's bridges were classified in poor condition, and only 2.6% of NHS bridges in Thurston County were classified in poor condition.

Figure 4-3: WSDOT Bridges in Thurston County 80 Years or Older



Source: WSDOT All Bridge and Tunnel Inventory (State & Local).

Figure 4-4: WSDOT Bridges Built or Rebuilt Before 1970



Source: WSDOT All Bridge and Tunnel Inventory (State & Local).

Seismic Preparedness and Resilience

WSDOT actively participates in emergency management and resilience programs, routinely working with the federal government, neighboring states, tribal governments, regional agencies, and local stakeholders. Through collaboration, WSDOT and other partners are able to maximize resilience across transportation modes and networks. The 2012 *Resilient Washington State Report* included recommendation to strengthen regional transportation networks:

- Define critical state routes into and out of ports, airports, and other key areas. In a collaborative manner, identify priority routes for retrofitting/hardening and perform site risk evaluations, ensuring all affected governments are consulted in the decision-making process.
- Facilitate collaboration between state and local jurisdictions to identify regional lifeline routes and prioritize retrofitting of city and county roads and bridges. Incorporate this into the Transportation Improvement Program.
- Develop interagency agreements between WSDOT and local jurisdictions to facilitate the rerouting of traffic following an earthquake.
- Require that transit agencies (both large and small) develop robust continuity of operations plans.

Figure 4-5: 93rd Avenue Bridge (2015)

The 93rd Avenue Bridge over I-5 in Tumwater was struck by an over-height load in 2015. Such low I-5 overpasses are considered functionally obsolete.

Emergency Management

Other examples of WSDOT's participation in emergency management include:

- **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)** – WSDOT has a plan to provide continuing operations in the event of a large disaster.
- **WA State Emergency Management Division (EMD)** – WSDOT participates in several Emergency Management Division planning efforts and work groups including development of a Catastrophic Incident Plan, the Statewide Catastrophic Incident Planning Team, and the Infrastructure Resilience Sub-Committee.
- **Seismic Safety Committee** – WSDOT is part of the multi-jurisdictional committee under the guidance of the Emergency Management Council.
- **Local emergency planners** – WSDOT meets with Thurston Regional Planning Council, Thurston County, Port of Olympia, City of Lacey, City of Olympia, City of Tumwater, and others through the Thurston County Emergency Management Council; topics include seismic vulnerabilities and assessment and identification of local lifeline corridors.

Needed Investments

As part of maintaining a state of good repair, WSDOT has estimated the needed investments in Thurston County. Limited funding jeopardizes opportunities to minimize life cycle costs because WSDOT may miss the proper time for preservation treatments.

WSDOT estimated in 2025 that state facilities in Thurston County needed about $29.2 million in investments annually to maintain a state of good repair. In 2025, only $9 million was available (Table 4-1).

Table 4-1: Estimated Need & Funding for State Facilities in Thurston County (2025)

	Estimated Need	Estimated Funding
Targeted Safety Investments (historical and planned investments from 2000 to 2020)	$2,600,000	$1,900,000
Highway Maintenance	$7,800,000	$4,200,000
Pavement/Roadway Preservation	$7,800,000	$3,600,000
Bridge Preservation	$2,900,000	$500,000
Other Maintenance (drainage, slope stabilization, rest areas, weigh stations, etc.)	$1,300,000	$500,000
Seismic Resilience	$1,300,000	$0
Traffic Operations (signals, signal timing, cross walks)	$300,000	$100,000
Environmental Retrofitting	$6,500,000	$600,000
TOTAL	**$30,500,000**	**$11,400,000**

Source: WSDOT. Figures are based on estimates as of June 2025. Figures may not add up due to rounding.

Infrastructure investments must be delivered in a balanced manner that considers regional transportation system demand.

- WSDOT must plan out projects to ensure enough time and staff to accomplish the needed work — whether it is maintenance, rehabilitation, or reconstruction. Too much work in any given year means additional staffing/ contract costs.
- The state must balance needs to lower overall preservation costs.
- Investments must be planned and balanced geographically to minimize construction fatigue for drivers and other facility users. Asset management can only ensure a balanced delivery with sufficient funding.

State Facilities in Thurston County

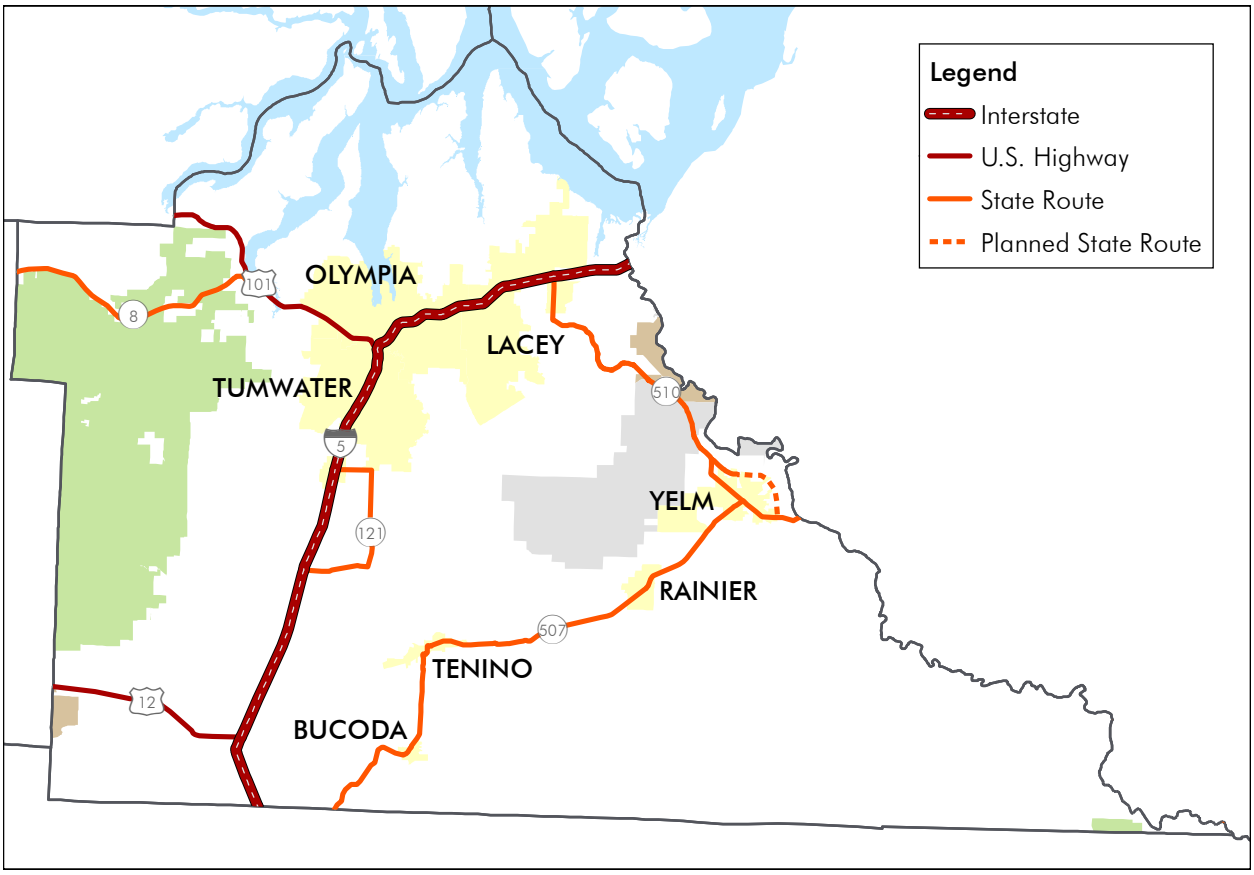
Thurston County's seven state facilities help move people and goods in the Thurston Region: Interstate 5 (I-5), U.S. 12, U.S. 101, State Route (SR) 8, SR 121, SR 507, and SR 510 (Table 4-2 and Figure 4-4). Many of these highways are also part of the National Highway System (NHS) and designated Highways of Statewide Significance (HSS). NHS routes are important to the nation's economy, defense, and mobility while HSS routes connect major communities in the state. These state transportation facilities provide over 391 lane miles for Thurston County. Repairing and maintaining these state transportation facilities key components of a resilient transportation system.

Table 4-2: State Transportation Facilities in the Thurston Region

Transportation Facility	Estimated Lane Miles	Designated an NHS/HSS Route?
I-5 (NHS)	182.0	Yes
U.S. 12 (NHS)	27.4	Yes
U.S. 101 (NHS)	43.6	Yes
SR 8 (NHS)	40.5	Yes
SR 121	15.3	No
SR 507	50.5	No
SR 510	32.1	No
Estimated Total	**391.4**	--

Source: WSDOT

Figure 4-6: State-maintained Facilities



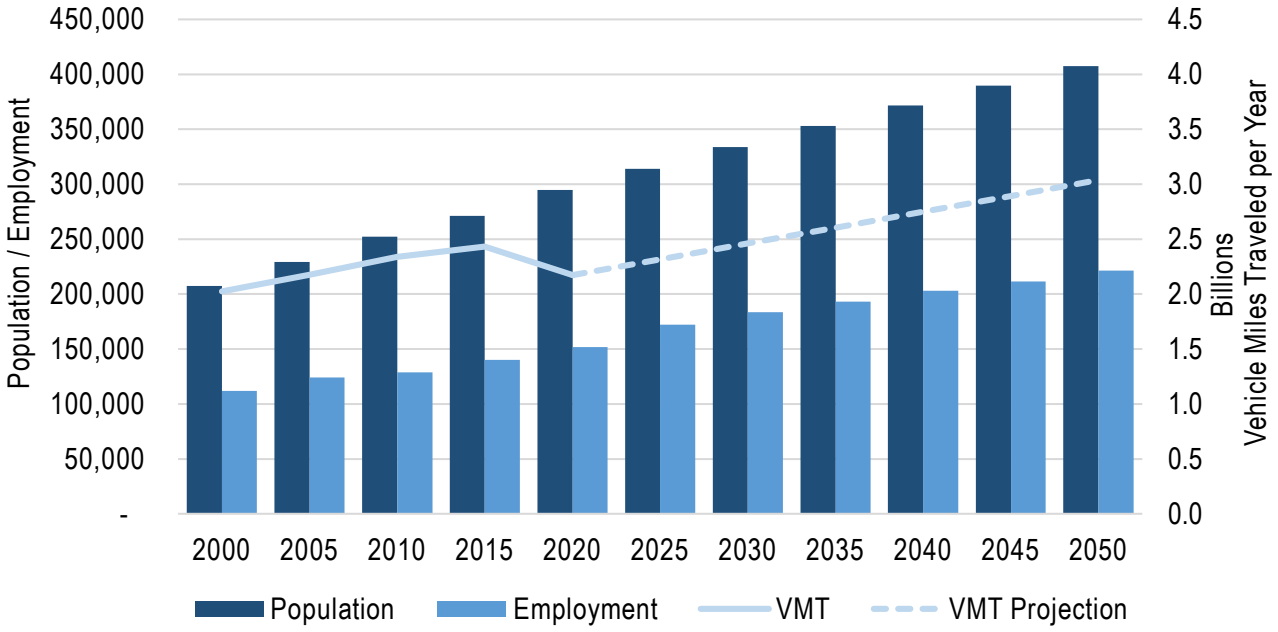
Increased Demand

Over the past decade, the Puget Sound region experienced significant growth in population and employment. This growth resulted in increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT) (Figure 4-6), even though on a per capita basis, VMT is decreasing. Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) forecasts indicate that population and employment will continue to grow significantly between now and 2050.

In addition to population growth, other factors contribute to increasing demand on state facilities:

- **Sparse arterial network.** In Rainer, Tenino, Yelm, and Bucoda, the local street network is not built out or the state route functions as the community's main street. As a result, traffic tends to funnel onto state highways because they are the primary (sometimes only) connection for traveling within the community.

Figure 4-7: Thurston Region Growth Trends and Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled



Source: TRPC (employment and VMT projection); Washington State Office of Financial Management (population); WSDOT (VMT)

- **Exemption from concurrency.** Highways of statewide significance — such as I-5, U.S. 12, U.S. 101, and SR 8 — provide needed connections between major communities. Such highways are exempt from Growth Management Act concurrency requirements, and a development can move forward without improving congested state highways in the immediate area.
- **Limited capacity.** Many highways have limited ability to absorb large increases in traffic.
- **Limited access control and coordinated signal timing.** Unlike I-5, local priority highways — such as U.S. 12, SR 507, and SR 510 — provide local access. Traffic is slowed by vehicles entering the highway from driveways or businesses and by traffic signals that are not coordinated to maximize traffic flow.

- **Pass-through traffic.** Many local priority highways are important routes for regional and inter-regional travel. As the region has grown, so has travel on these highways, including freight and goods traffic that passes through local communities.

Implementing highway improvements that reduce congestion must be balanced with other local conditions, including safety objectives, and right-of-way limitations. As property adjacent to highways is developed, the increase in bicyclists, pedestrians, and other modes of travel may warrant lower speed limits and more frequent crossing opportunities. Expanding the highway right-of-way to accommodate additional lanes of traffic is often constrained by existing development and natural features such as wetlands, streams, and steep slopes.

Challenges

Puget Sound freeways have very little spare capacity to handle more traffic. The interstate system is essentially complete, with often significant and sometimes insurmountable constraints to widening due to limited rights-of-way and environmental concerns. Funding is also limited. Maintaining aging infrastructure is a higher priority than expansion.

In some locations, increasing capacity of local priority highways will exacerbate congestion on the freeways they feed into. This presents a dilemma. On one hand, local mobility improvements should not be held up just because freeways are congested. On the other hand, downstream impacts on congestion need to be taken into consideration when evaluating net benefits. Regional policies that seek to balance land use and transportation may affect choices between managing demands versus increasing capacity.

Pricing strategies — such as congestion pricing and tolling — can improve system performance significantly but need consideration in the context of equity considerations and a larger regional system management strategy.

Safety

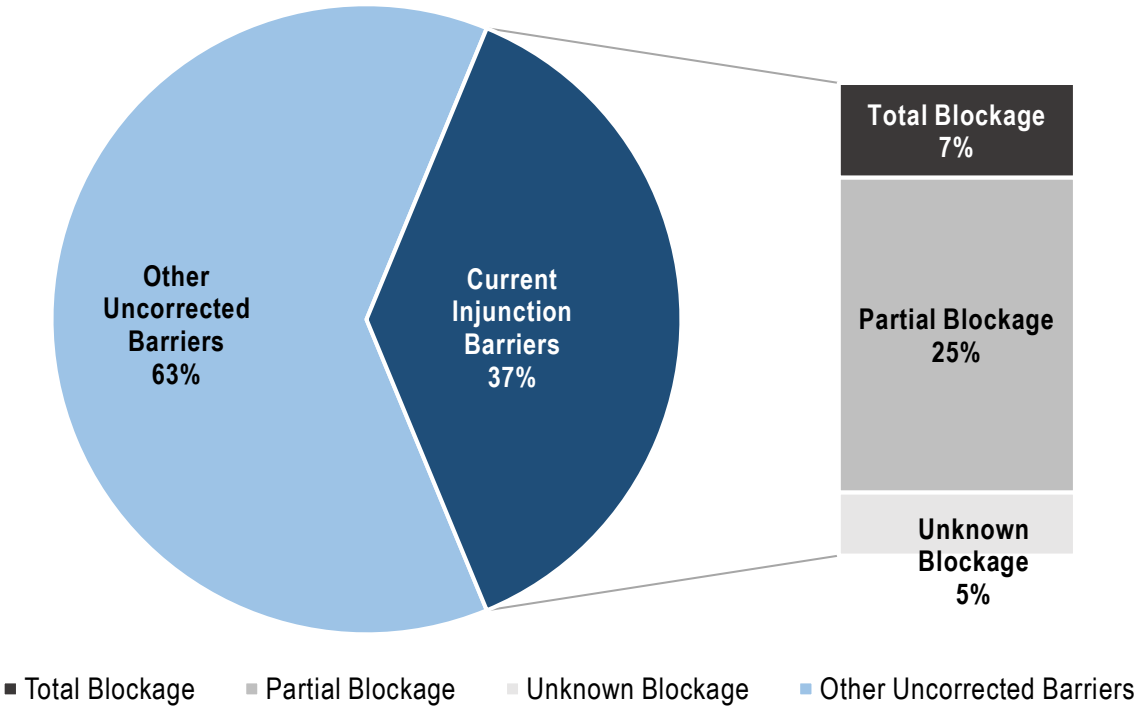
Safety is a priority investment area for WSDOT. Every MPO in Washington has elected to support WSDOT's safety performance target of zero fatalities or serious injuries by 2030. Roundabouts are a proven strategy to improve safety at road intersections. Multiple roundabouts have been constructed or are funded for construction on WSDOT facilities in the Thurston region:

- SR 510/Rockcress Drive SE/McAllister Court SE (construction scheduled 2025-2026)
- SR 510 (Yelm Ave)/Killion Road SE (construction scheduled 2026-2027)
- SR 507/Bald Hill Road SE (construction scheduled 2025-2027)
- SR 507/Vail Road SE (construction scheduled 2025-2027)

Fish Passage Correction

A 2013 federal court injunction requires WSDOT to correct culverts in western Washington that are barriers to salmon and steelhead by 2030. WSDOT is also correcting barriers outside the injunction area which are either failing or prioritized for other reasons. In Thurston County, only 15 out of 40 total barriers on state facilities are part of the injunction (Figure 4-7). Removing fish passage barriers is a priority investment area for WSDOT. A significant portion of WSDOT's resources will be dedicated to resolving fish passage barriers until the injunction is resolved.

Figure 4-8: Fish Passage Barriers on State Facilities in the Thurston Region



Source: WSDOT Fish Passage Inventory

Interstate 5

Interstate 5 (I-5) is the most important north-south freight corridor in the Puget Sound region. I-5 through Thurston County carries more than 10 million tons of freight each year. Maintaining and preserving this vital route is critical to the state's economic well-being and to the economic strength of the communities it passes through and serves.

Completed in 1958 (Thurston County portion only), I-5 was built to handle traffic projections anticipated for 1975. To put this in context, Thurston County's population was about 55,000 at the 1960 Census, and the Washington Office of Financial Management estimates Thurston County's population was about 90,000 in 1975. Since construction, WSDOT has invested in two major improvements in Thurston County: widening from Tumwater to Nisqually (1980s) and widening from Centralia to Tumwater (2010s). Today, up to 147,000 vehicles travel the Thurston County stretch of I-5 every day.

The Washington State Legislature funded I-5 corridor improvements between Steilacoom-Dupont and Thorne Lane in the 2015 Connecting Washington transportation revenue package. These improvements will add an additional lane on I-5 in each direction from Mounts Road to Thorne Lane; add auxiliary lanes or connectors in certain segments, including from Mounts Road to Dupont; rebuild three interchanges; and build a shared use path between Berkeley Street to Steilacoom-Dupont Road. This project is currently under construction.

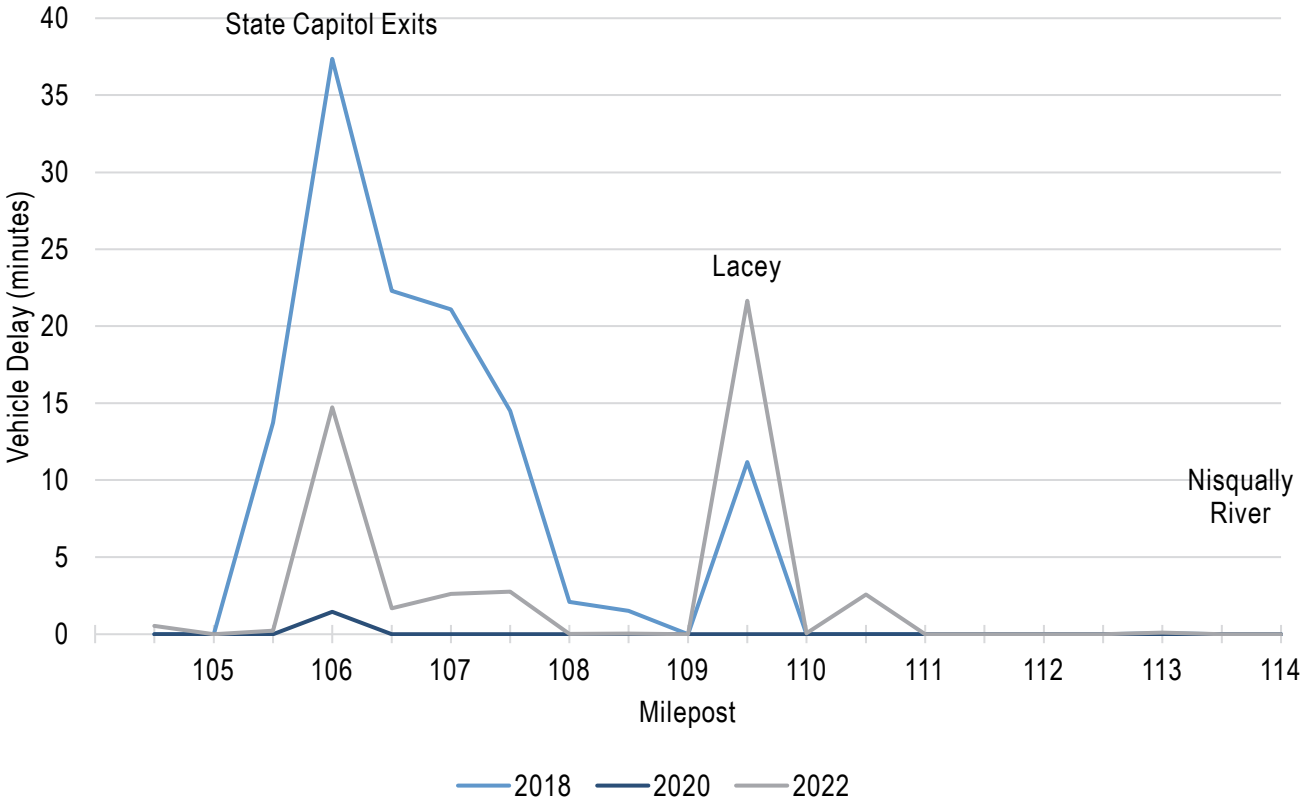
Operational Performance

Traffic along the I-5 corridor is rapidly increasing, creating delays and impacting the route's reliability. For the segment of I-5 between Olympia and Tacoma, WSDOT has documented several performance issues pertinent to the Thurston region:

- Increased travel times between Olympia and Tacoma
    - 5 more minutes during the northbound morning commute
    - 2 more minutes during the southbound evening commute
- More delays near Olympia, Lacey, the Nisqually River, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord
- Routine congestion near the:
    - Nisqually River during the northbound morning commute
    - State Capitol during the southbound evening commute
- Reduced vehicle throughput southbound near U.S. 101

Between 2018 and 2022, delays on southbound I-5 in the Thurston region changed significantly (Figure 4-8). While delays near the State Capitol exits decreased significantly, delays near the city of Lacey increased. During this same time, Thurston County's population grew by nearly 15,000 people. As data continues to be updated in the years after the COVID-19 pandemic, more changes to vehicle delays on I-5 are expected.

Figure 4-9: Average Daily Vehicle Delay on Southbound I-5 in Thurston County



Source: WSDOT Multimodal Mobility Dashboard. WSDOT considers traffic delayed when average speeds are 80 percent or less of the posted speed limit (51 miles per hour when speed limit is 60). Mileposts include those generally between U.S. 101 and the Nisqually River.

Current Planning Efforts

By 2050, an additional 100,000 people are expected to call Thurston County home. The anticipated growth, combined with the improvements to the north, have led to a series of local planning efforts to identify near-, mid-, and long-range strategies for addressing congestion on I-5 between Mounts Road and Tumwater.

Near-Term Strategies

In 2017 and 2018, WSDOT convened local partners to develop a set of near-term (0–4 years) strategies to address mobility issues on I-5 between Mounts Road and Tumwater. This pilot project was part of a broader effort to look at mobility on I-5 between Marysville and Tumwater. Six strategies for the Thurston Region were identified and five of the strategies have largely been implemented:

- Expand the regional transportation model to develop refined I-5 solutions.
- Install ramp meters in Olympia at key on-ramps.
- Assess feasibility of peak shoulder running on I-5.
- Upgrade signals and implement transit signal priority on Martin Way and Capitol Boulevard (as of 2024, this strategy has only been partially implemented).
- Expand the use of telework, compressed work weeks, and flexible work hours on the Capitol Campus.
- Expand vanpool use through peer-to-peer marketing and new markets.

Mid- and Long-Term Strategies

In 2018, the Legislature funded a planning study to develop mid- and long-term strategies for improving how I-5 functions between Tumwater and Mounts Road. Using the practical solutions approach, WSDOT, TRPC, and project partners identified a range of strategies to address mobility issues in the corridor. The study team modeled 10 scenarios ranging from changing land use to increasing transit to building infrastructure projects. Some of the early conclusions of the study were that the improvements being made in Pierce County to the north will simply move the congestion point down to Mounts Road for southbound traffic, as I-5 will narrow from five lanes to three. There will also be severe mobility issues in the southbound direction approaching the U.S. 101 exit.

The report and recommendations were finalized in 2020. The next step in this ongoing effort was to conduct a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study to evaluate the recommendations stemming from the mid- and long-range strategies. The PEL study is a collaborative and integrated approach that takes into consideration environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process. The information and data gathered during a PEL study will be used to inform the environmental review process. Added benefits include strengthening relationships with project stakeholders, improved project delivery times, and a more responsive and effective transportation solution. The PEL study also provides information that can be used in a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. The PEL report for the Tumwater to Mounts Road study was completed in 2022.

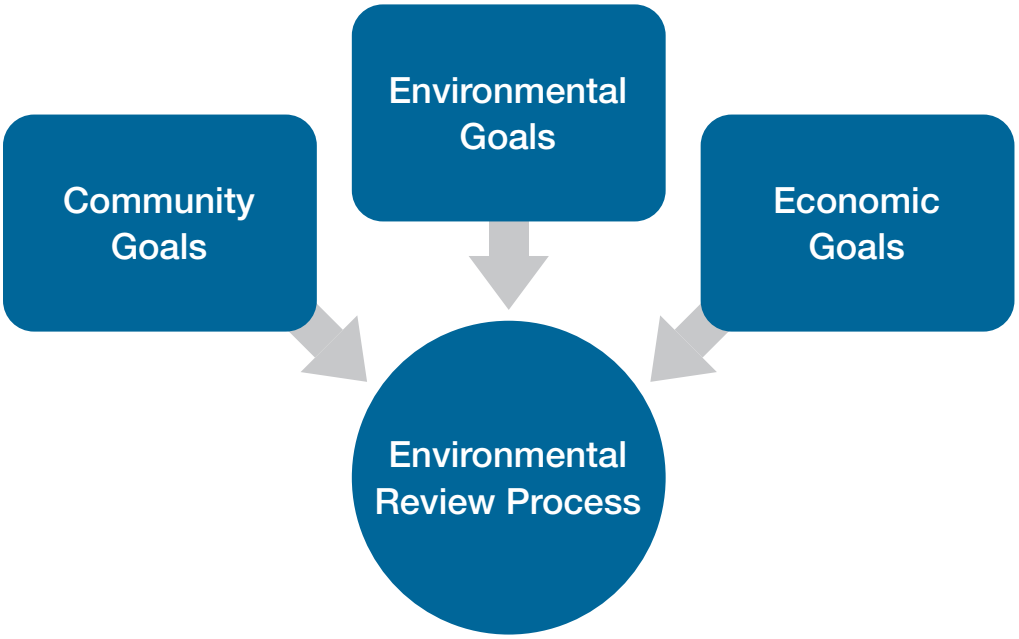
A parallel and related effort — the Marvin to Mounts Road Study — was funded by WSDOT and the Nisqually Indian Tribe to help determine:

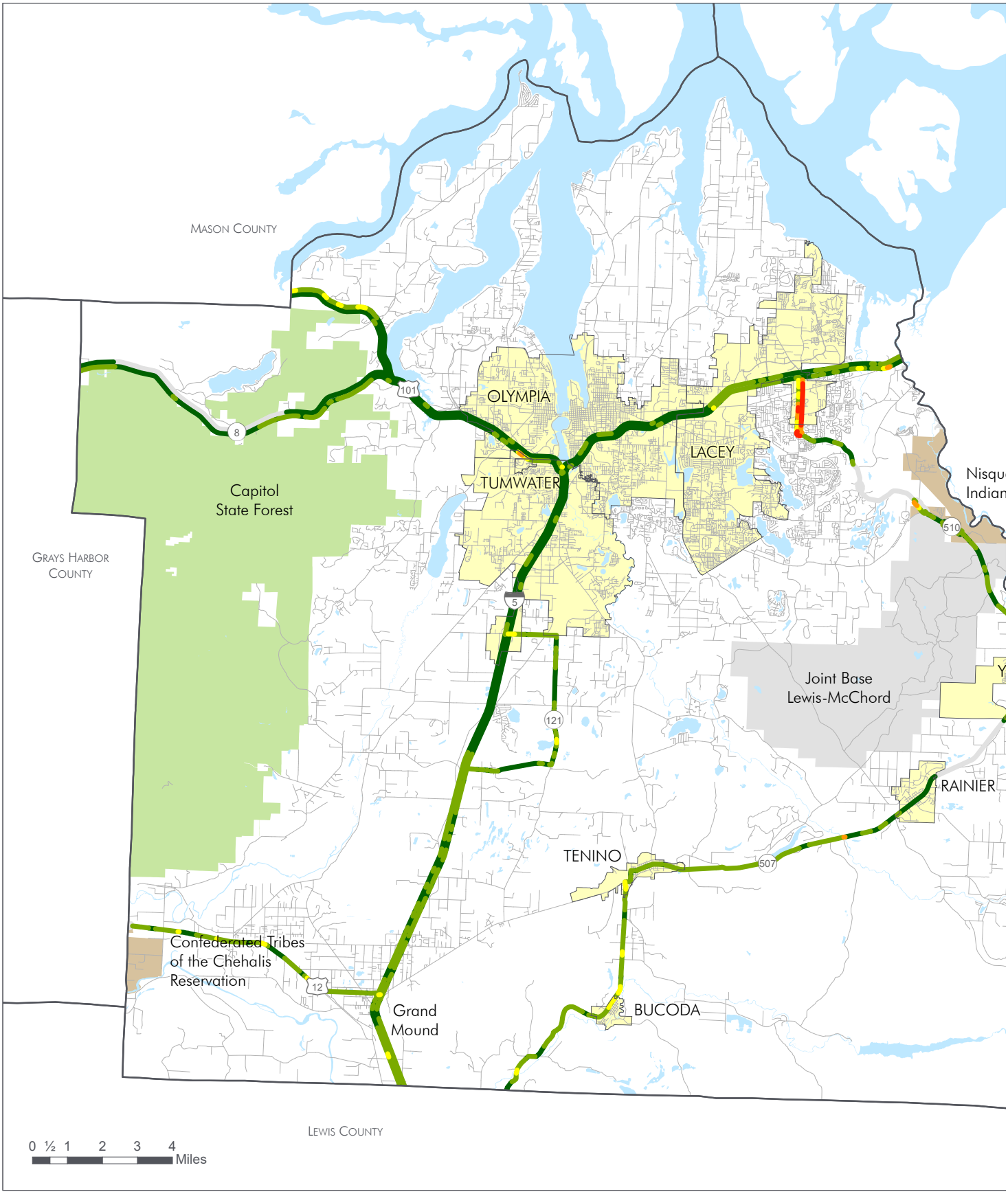
- The extent to which the I-5 bridges in the Nisqually Valley may affect habitat in the river's delta and increase flood risk that threatens to inundate I-5 as early as 2040; and
- A long-term solution for I-5 between Marvin Road and Mounts Road that improves local and mainline I-5 system resiliency.

The study's PEL report was completed in July 2023.

In 2024, WSDOT began a NEPA Environmental Assessment to evaluate potential impacts on the built and natural environments. Key proposed improvements include adding high-occupancy vehicle lanes, replacing and constructing resilient bridges across the Nisqually River Delta, realigning McAllister Creek to enhance fish habitat, and building a shared-use path to connect Lacey and DuPont. The project also aims to address flood risks, improve mobility, and enhance ecosystems in the corridor. With $5 million in funding for preliminary engineering, design, and right-of-way acquisition, construction is not yet planned, and traffic remains unaffected. The draft NEPA report is expected in 2025, with the final assessment anticipated in 2026.

Figure 4-9: Planning and Environmental Linkages





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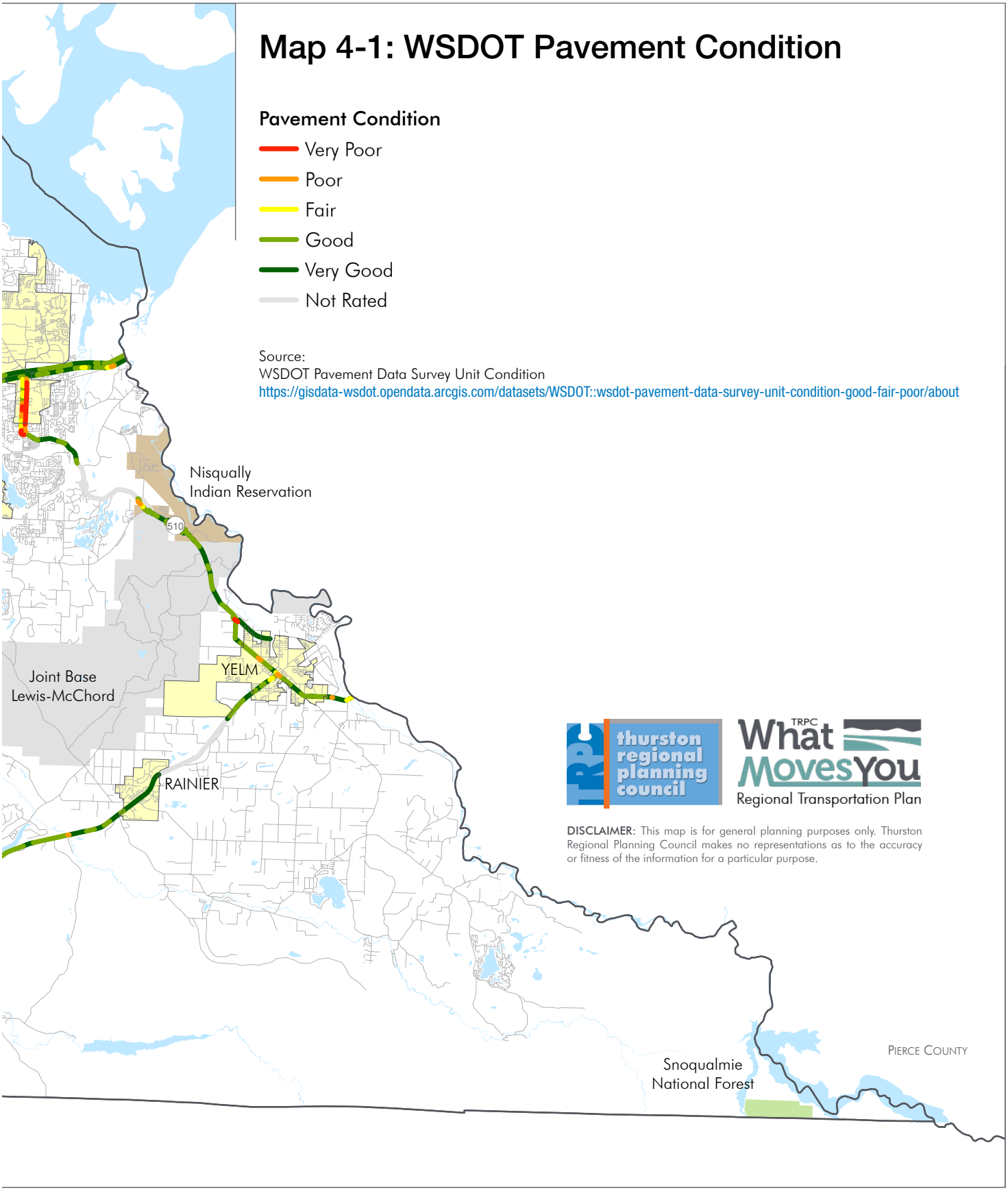
Map 4-1: WSDOT Pavement Condition



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