

Plan Monitoring

Performance monitoring completes the link between plan policies and an investment strategy designed to implement those policies. Through evaluation, over time, the region can be sure that investments are achieving desired outcomes. In order to perform this function properly, the region must develop transportation performance benchmarks against which actual transportation system performance information can be compared. Benchmarks provide policy makers and the public a framework for evaluating progress toward implementing adopted regional policies. Benchmarks can be established by describing desired policy outcomes, identifying measurable indicators for each outcome, and setting targets for these indicators at various points in the future. Truly meaningful benchmarks need to be complex and flexible enough to reflect changing and uncertain conditions in the real world, but simple and reliable enough to allow comparison over time.

The successful implementation of *Destination 2030* will depend upon the development of a performance monitoring/benchmark system that provides early warning if current practices are not having the desired results. This system of performance monitoring is also useful for refining programming criteria and decision-making processes to ensure the region's investment strategy is supporting regional policy. Programming criteria, as they relate to programmatic investments, are discussed in Chapter 5, and the region's investment strategy is discussed in Chapter 3. Plan monitoring and assessment for *Destination 2030* will address all elements of the Metropolitan Transportation System, monitoring changes in growth and development as well as transportation systems and finance.

The Regional Council will pursue a framework for continuous review that focuses on monitoring progress towards growth management and transportation objectives. A series of topical implementation monitoring reports will focus on specific data relating to implementation of VISION 2020 and *Destination 2030*, including, but not limited to, information and trends related to land development patterns, congestion, accessibility, modal split for travel by auto, carpools/vanpool, transit and non-motorized travel (pedestrian and bicycle), public and private expenditures for transportation, regional transportation funding capacity, and benchmarks as may be recommended as a result of the work of the state's Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation.

PLAN POLICY AND GROWTH MONITORING

The Regional Council will assess regional development patterns and other growth indicators as they relate to capital investments, in order to measure progress toward preserving and making the most efficient use of transportation facilities. The Regional Council is required to certify that local transportation elements are consistent with both county-wide planning policies, and policies contained within *Destination 2030*. The Regional Council collects information about demographic, economic, and transportation trends in the region. These data have formed the foundation for analyses, policies and actions to manage growth and more effectively use transportation infrastructure dollars. Monitoring reports, such as *Regional Review*, document demographic and transportation trends, and monitor growth patterns to understand progress toward the implementation of adopted policies.

Knowledge derived from this type of monitoring should contribute to an understanding of the effectiveness of current policies, the likelihood of achieving regional goals, and in the future can be used to help refine policies and actions. Monitoring will track progress toward more integrated land use and transportation decisions, as described in Chapter 4, including:

1. Linking the regional Transportation Improvement Program programming process to growth management considerations.
2. Incorporating physical design guidelines into the policy and plan review process.
3. Identifying and communicating to local governments "best practices" for physical design guidelines, financial incentives, and development strategies.
4. Investigating issues related to concurrency and its impacts on encouraging or discouraging development where growth is desired.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MONITORING



Congestion is one of the major issues affecting the region's quality of life. It impacts the region's environmental condition, energy use and economic vitality. The 1995 MTP called for the development of a Congestion Management System (CMS) that would provide information to decision-makers about how well the transportation system addresses the needs of the region, better illustrate the root causes of traffic congestion, and identify possible solutions to specific problem areas. Since the adoption of the 1995 MTP, the Regional Council has published two CMS reports (in 1998 and 1999) on system performance in select corridors of the Metropolitan Transportation System. Future monitoring will include analysis of the Metropolitan Transportation System pursuant to new state requirements enacted in House Bill 1487, and will develop methods to reflect appropriate benchmarks consistent with

Destination 2030 policy and recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation.

The region's Congestion Management System (CMS) helps to identify congested transportation corridors, as well as potential solutions within those corridors. More detailed corridor specific studies could be developed that would include an inventory of solutions and initiatives that have been identified or are underway, and could consider cost-effectiveness of alternatives. A further objective of the CMS is to monitor system performance over time to aid in the evaluation of corridor investments. In this manner, findings from performance monitoring can help to refine future programming decisions and will be a key factor in the successful implementation of *Destination 2030*.



FINANCIAL MONITORING

As is emphasized in the financial element of the plan, the *Destination 2030* investment strategy is in many ways dependent upon the successful development of new state, regional, and local funding mechanisms that are flexible enough to allow investment in the full array of regional transportation priorities.

Regional financial capacity to implement *Destination 2030* is based on the adequacy of funds for each of

the five principal transportation programs – city streets, county roads, public transit, state highways, and state ferries. Under federal law, the regional transportation plan must make reasonable financing assumptions, accounting for existing or new revenue sources which can be expected to be available over the life of the plan (Title 23 USC 134). Current law revenue estimates are derived from forecasts of the principal transportation tax bases and other economic variables to estimate changes in general revenues. Future annual values for these tax bases are forecast using a series of models that rely upon outputs of the regional economic model. Forecasts of revenues are then converted to program revenue estimates, taking into account: 1) the dedicated or historical distribution of revenues to each program, and 2) the percent of generated revenues that are returned to this region. The Regional Council will continue to revise economic and financial forecasts as necessary to the tracking of financial performance over time.

Destination 2030 builds upon the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation, created by the Legislature and Governor in 1998 to conduct a comprehensive analysis of statewide transportation needs and priorities. The Blue Ribbon Commission *Final Report, December 2000* recommends that various statewide revenue sources be increased or developed. The *Final Report* recommends new regional approaches to transportation planning and programming. And, in addition to recommending the development of regional sources of transportation revenue, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation recommends additional local option taxing authority. The implementation of new revenue sources will clearly require that action be taken within a number of decision-making arenas, in the state legislature, within the region, and ultimately at the polls. Clearly articulated governmental roles and responsibilities, as well as greater performance accountability and decision-making transparency, are important elements of, and products resulting from, a regionally managed fund that is focused on ensuring that transportation improvements will be made. The Regional Council will track and report on progress made toward achieving the financial goals and objectives, outlined in this plan, that support the implementation of *Destination 2030*.

Plan Assessment

This section demonstrates how *Destination 2030* addresses key policy areas, and provides some basic information about current and forecasted transportation system performance. Travel demand modeling analysis was also conducted as part of the preparation of *Destination 2030*. The purpose of the modeling analysis was to examine the possible effects of improvements to the Metropolitan Transportation System. A detailed sum-

mary of the performance data from the regional travel demand model is contained in Appendix 8. Modeling analysis provides a snapshot of plan performance under static conditions, both current and future. Significant improvements over modeled results can be achieved through strategic management of investments, the built environment, and other factors influencing the travel environment. The Regional Council will develop periodic progress reports that update measures of transportation system performance. Continued plan monitoring will allow refinement of strategies that manage transportation systems for greater efficiencies and benefits.

In 1998 the region, with a population of 3.2 million, generated over 64 million miles of travel every day, or 20.5 miles per capita. Approximately one-quarter of the region's general purpose freeway lanes were congested during the average afternoon peak travel period, while 10 percent were severely congested. Almost 60 percent of the region's freeway high occupancy vehicle lanes were congested during the afternoon peak travel period, and nearly a third were severely congested. This congestion created over 130,000 hours of delay each day, or 6.4 minutes per household. Approximately 62 percent of all trips in the region were by single occupant vehicle, 35 percent were car pools, and just under 3 percent were transit. Northwest King County, including Seattle, currently has the region's highest level of transit use, with transit comprising 9 percent of all daily trips.



City of Seattle

The region's population will increase by over 1.5 million people, or nearly 50 percent by 2030. By 2030 there will be 800,000 net new jobs in the region, a 40 percent increase during this period. Vehicle miles

traveled will increase by over 50 percent over the next 30 years, from 64 million daily vehicle miles traveled to between 90 and 100 million daily vehicle miles traveled by 2030. Total daily trips in the region, on the other hand, will increase 60 percent by 2030. The region is beginning to turn the tide in the amount of per capita vehicle miles traveled. Over the life of the plan per capita vehicle miles traveled is expected to stabilize near current levels, for several reasons: (1) regional land use and development trends are causing a redistribution of jobs and housing, bringing them closer together, (2) growth management planning is reducing sprawl by encouraging growth inside the urban growth boundary, (3) the region is developing alternatives to single occupant vehicle travel, and (4) increasing costs and congestion are changing travel behavior.

Technical and policy analysis performed during the development of *Destination 2030* indicate that successful implementation of the plan will place the region well on its way to achieving its long-term growth vision. *Destination 2030* builds upon the 1995 Metropolitan Transportation Plan by advancing more complete and effective strategies to implement adopted multi-county policies. *Destination 2030* contains strategies and programs to help implement regional policies relating to maintenance, preservation, and operation of existing transportation infrastructure and services, transportation accessibility and mobility, growth management, and the regional economy. These are key regional policy areas that were utilized to select plan alternatives for environmental analysis and ultimately guided the development of *Destination 2030* (see Multi-county

CHAPTER 7. PLAN MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Transportation Policies contained in Appendix 1). In addition, the policy areas consider the planning factors set forth in the federal transportation legislation, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), as well as Regional Transportation Planning Organization guidelines spelled out in state growth management legislation. This chapter evaluates how *Destination 2030* addresses these key plan policy areas.

ADVANCING MAINTENANCE, PRESERVATION AND OPTIMAL USE OF FACILITIES

Maintaining and Preserving. *Destination 2030* identifies an investment strategy and funding options. If pursued and secured, the result will be more stable funding to ensure adequate levels of maintenance and preservation for transportation facilities and services. However, a shortfall to meet all currently identified needs remains. If, on the other hand, the revenues assumed by the investment strategy are not secured, the result will be an increased deficit in meeting local and regional transportation needs.

Managing Transportation Systems. *Destination 2030's* call for application of the latest available technologies and programs designed to optimize use of transportation systems that represents a financially prudent course in light of the high cost of adding additional capacity through infrastructure investment. *Destination 2030* calls for aggressive implementation of a coordinated regional ITS system architecture which will result in using existing and planned new infrastructure as efficiently as possible.

By supporting and expanding vehicle trip reduction services and incentives to influence travel, implementing *Destination 2030* will result in significant vehicle-travel reductions for the region over the thirty year planning horizon, allowing transportation systems to function more efficiently. For example, the state's Commute Trip Reduction law has proven that trip reduction programs can have a significant impact on the populations they serve. Between 1993 and 1999, the region reduced its single-occupant vehicle rate for work commutes of CTR-covered employees by 5.5 percent. However, only 22 percent of the region's jobs are covered by the law, and only 20 percent of the region's trips are work trips. Expanding CTR, and other trip reduction services and incentives, to other work commutes could result in vehicle-travel reductions for the region.

PROMOTING ENHANCED TRANSPORTATION ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY

Transportation plans often focus on the issue of mobility, and improving mobility through investment in transportation infrastructure. Measures of mobility, such as facility levels-of-service, travel time and measures of travel delay can provide information about how well transportation systems are functioning. These measures are included in Appendix 8. It is also important to understand the degree to which residents of the region have access to vital activities through a broad array of travel options. This is especially important for populations who are unable to rely upon the flexibility of the personal automobile. Accessibility and mobility are also important considerations for freight movement.

Investing in Increased Transportation Capacity. New capacity in *Destination 2030* comes balanced in the form of new roads, expanded local transit service, and better bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting and within urban centers, transit stations and activity areas. This multi-modal, strategic approach will help achieve the regional goal of converting major urban corridors from auto-oriented commercial strips into more multi-modal, mixed-use environments. While the 1995 Metropolitan Transportation Plan included major increases in transportation capacity, *Destination 2030* significantly adds to that previously called for. In addition, *Destination 2030* embraces a strategic investment program which will result in new capacity being focused in areas where the need is greatest.

While addressing regional transportation needs, the plan will also address specific problems and bottlenecks within major travel corridors. The preferred plan will improve travel (in real terms) in several corridors by 2010, increasing travel speeds on the following facilities:

- SR 16 HOV and transit lanes from I-5 to Bremerton (Tacoma Narrows Bridge)
- I-405 general purpose lanes from Tukwila to I-90
- SR 167 general purpose and HOV lanes from I-5 to I-405
- SR 520 HOV and transit lanes from Redmond to I-5
- SR 522 general purpose, HOV, and transit lanes from I-405 to SR 2
- SR 18 general purpose, HOV, and transit lanes from I-5 to I-90
- SR 525 general purpose, HOV, and transit lanes from I-405 to Mukilteo
- I-5 HOV lanes from Thurston County to SR 16

Improving Overall Accessibility and Mobility. *Destination 2030* promotes further development of a comprehensive region-wide multi-modal transportation system to provide more transportation options, improved mobility and accessibility, and greater transit utilization.

- *Destination 2030* includes improvements for general purpose travel, car pools, transit, bicyclists and pedestrians. Of the over 2,000 new freeway and arterial lane miles included in the plan, 79 percent will be for general purpose travel and 21 percent will serve car pools and transit. If the region were constrained by current revenues, we could build only 10 percent of the new lane miles shown in *Destination 2030*.
- If the region is limited to current revenue sources, by 2030 average daily vehicle delay will have increased fourfold, to nearly 30 minutes of delay per household. With the investments identified in *Destination 2030*, however, average daily vehicle delay per household will only increase slightly from 6.4 to 7.2 minutes.

- If planned improvements are not made (current law), average afternoon peak freeway travel speeds will decline to less than 20 mph, while freeway HOV lane speeds will decrease from 42 mph to 16 mph. If *Destination 2030* is implemented, however, average general purpose freeway travel speeds within the region will nearly hold constant, decreasing slightly from 40 mph in 1998 to 36 mph in 2030.

Providing Transportation Choices. Increasing transit use resulting from implementation of *Destination 2030* demonstrates the plan's ability to be responsive to the basic mobility needs of many of the region's citizens as well as transit-dependent populations. Implementation of *Destination 2030's* investment

strategy and programs would result in greater non-motorized travel opportunities than would otherwise be possible. *Destination 2030* recognizes that different parts of the region require different types of transportation improvements.

- Although very few general purpose roadway capacity improvements are planned in the Northwest King County subregion (which includes the city of Seattle), *Destination 2030* will provide significant HOV and transit facility and service improvements. This part of the region is forecast to double its current transit mode share, from 9 percent in 1998 to 18 percent in 2030. In the same time period this part of the region will reduce per capita VMT by 16 percent and average vehicle delay per household by 27 percent between 1998 and 2030.

City of Auburn Commuter Rail Station



City of DuPont



City of Renton



- *Destination 2030* calls for 80 percent more local transit service and significant investment in regional high capacity transit services, over the next thirty years. Under *Destination 2030*, transit would increase its mode share from 3 percent in 1998 to 5 percent, and would carry triple the current number of daily riders, from 285,000 in 1998 to 840,000 in 2030.
- *Destination 2030* identifies and makes significant investment in a range of regional non-motorized systems, including multi-use off-road trails, designated on-road bicycle facilities and pedestrian infrastructure. These investments will provide residents of the region with greater opportunities to make non-motorized transportation choices and provide greater access to transit services.
- *Destination 2030* guarantees continued investment in both auto and passenger ferry services. Ferry service provides an important alternative to using congested roadways to move between communities otherwise divided by Puget Sound. For example, if ferry service is discontinued and no improvements are made to the Narrows Bridge, delays in Pierce County would become intolerable, reaching over 95 minutes per day per household by 2030. Completion of the bridge and continuing ferry service avoids these significant negative impacts.

SUPPORTING GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Through the adoption of the Growth Management Act and VISION 2020, both the State of Washington and the central Puget Sound region have recognized the beneficial impacts of managing the location and phasing of growth. Reflecting the growth vision, *Destination 2030* improves mobility and accessibility through strategic investments, and responds to growth policies by encouraging development in patterns and locations that make the most efficient use of the regional transportation system.

Supporting Regional Growth Patterns. The region will see a shift in housing types over the next thirty years. Multi-family units will increase from 33 percent of all housing in 1999 to 40 percent in 2030, reflecting changing demographics. *Destination 2030* provides a clear focus on supporting development in centers through transportation investments aimed at increasing transit ridership, focusing new transportation infrastructure in already-urbanized areas, and providing additional information and tools to help implement the growth strategy. If centers do not develop as planned, the result will be increased urban sprawl, which is costly, less efficient, and contributes to loss of habitat and resource lands. *Destination 2030* promotes tools and development approaches that may assist centers and station areas to be more attractive, thereby fostering housing growth in non-auto dependent environments, and helping the region to meet its goals for housing development in centers, and for housing affordability.

Promoting Efficiency. *Destination 2030's* call for focused transit and non-motorized transportation improvements will further enhance the functioning of centers and improve overall efficiency of the region's transportation system.



MAKING STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Supporting Regional Economy. During the early 1990s regional public and private sector leaders participated in what came to be known as the Central Puget Sound Economic Development Strategy project. The result of this effort was a two-volume report titled *Foundations For the Future: An Economic Strategy for the Central Puget Sound Region*. Volume 2 of this report, *Strategic Opportunities and Institutional Capabilities*, outlined a broad strategic framework for guiding economic policy in the region as it prepared for the 21st Century. The following three central themes emerged from this strategic planning exercise:

- Pay attention to basic strategic issues like the education and training of the workforce and the quality of our infrastructure and institutions.
- Think about the region's economy as clusters of related enterprises, not as jurisdictional boundaries. Develop understanding of the clusters in which the region has advantage and work to strengthen those clusters.
- When evaluating public policies, business strategies and public-private actions, ask "Will this policy, strategy, or action contribute to innovation and improvement, will it strengthen our community, and will it increase our advantage as world class competitors?"

Adequate and well-maintained transportation infrastructure was recognized as playing an important economic role, by supporting the movement of people and goods in an efficient and cost effective manner. Strategic transportation investments will realize regional economic benefits. Freight investments can improve the positioning of the region compared to major port competitors, especially if the regional economy significantly adds value to traded goods. Investments that improve mobility for a large number of high value uses will realize the greatest economic benefits for the region. Individual transportation projects can have significant economic benefits relative to costs while only having a small effect on the regional economy. These projects are investments that realize high benefit returns, even though regional analysis may not directly register their influence. *Destination 2030* makes strategic transportation investments that will realize regional economic benefits as improved travel times are capitalized in the broader economy.

Freight and Goods Mobility. Delay due to congestion or other disruptions on major regional roadways can affect the timely and predictable movement of freight within and through the region. Infrastructure and programmatic improvements contained in *Destination 2030* will reduce rail freight and general purpose traffic conflicts through grade separation projects and will result in less arterial congestion. Rail track improvements will allow more efficient joint operation of passenger and freight rail services.

