



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** IRTPO Technical Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** Thera Black, SCJ Alliance  
**DATE:** March 15, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Review of Outstanding RTP Details for Draft Development

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### Purpose

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and provide feedback on a handful of details needed to complete an internal working draft of *Island Access 2040* for review by the TAC and Executive Board.

### Background

An internal working draft of the long-range plan is being developed for review by the TAC and the Executive Board before it is revised, designed and formatted for a public review draft. That public review draft will hit the streets in May. Adoption of the plan is slated for June.

At your meeting on Thursday I want to review some things to be sure the approach I'm taking makes sense and works well from your perspectives. Following is a little background on each.

#### a. List of Regional Priorities

Maybe the biggest change to what you've seen before is that what had been a single statement to develop "coordinated network management plans for Whidbey and Camano Islands" is now 16 specific actions currently described as a System Management Work Program. This was the result of four scoping sessions between late October and late February. A few additional ideas also made the list. These resulted from the presentations and discussions at the Transportation Commission briefing, reviewing the final Human Services Transportation Plan adopted in February, and in talking with various stakeholders.

You'll find attached a working list of the draft action items currently slated for incorporation into the plan. You'll quickly see that some are more fleshed out than others. Know that the descriptions are somewhat fluid right now as I work to adapt them into action items with a consistent tone and format. As it stands now there are 33 actions plus an additional 14 that are now included in a Network Management Work Program. So depending on whether you count the Management Work Program as 1 or 14, we're looking at 34 or 47 recommended actions.



b. Project Description Formats

Up until now, discussions of project concepts have been just that – conceptual. To be fair, projects in long-range regional plans are conceptual compared to construction projects or service plans. But it's time to establish a formal, standardized format for each description.

I've developed a template that seems to work but I'd like to double-check that with you before I dive into this in earnest. I'm approaching this with the understanding that the RTP will be a regional implementation framework and want to be sure the template itself provides enough direction without being overly prescriptive or restrictive, given that we are still talking about fairly conceptual actions that have not been scoped out.

Also note that I'm using the term "action" instead of "project." This is primarily to avoid confusion between planning activities and construction-type projects, but it also reflects the reality that some of these measures really are actions.

c. Regional Priority Project Protocols

TAC members know that there are periodic requests of IRTPO for "a list of regional priority projects" to illustrate funding need or priorities or perhaps be considered for end-of-biennium funds. I want to talk through with TAC an approach that will allow IRTPO to always have in its back pocket a list of "regional priority projects" available for quick response to these requests. This is one of those very nuanced things that few will even notice but if there's a group that will understand it's importance and whether this approach makes sense, it's the TAC. We want to describe this process in the RTP.

d. RTP Format and Structure

Making long-range regional transportation planning interesting and relevant to people – outside of a small circle of interests such as the Technical Advisory Committee, the Executive Board, or the Multimodal Planning Office at WSDOT – is a tall order. For most, the RTP is as close as they'll ever get. The format and design of the plan can turn those people away or invite them in to think about mobility in a bigger context.

The plan needs to provide clear guidance and policy direction. There's more than one way to do that. Our goal in writing *Island Access 2040* is to make big regional transportation issues understandable to people who aren't in the business of transportation. We want it to be interesting to people who might think that they're not interested in planning. And we want it to be easy to maintain and update.

While the internal working draft is still under development, it is looking like a lot of the requisite information that it needs to address – point in time inventories of infrastructure, long-range funding forecasts, certifications, RTPO background and rules of engagement, etc – will be housed within the appendix. This will enable us to keep the story line a little less cluttered in the front end and better focus the context it provides



to support the policy element and action plan. This will also support streamlined updates, if needed, to keep the policy and action sections current without entailing a big rework of the whole document.

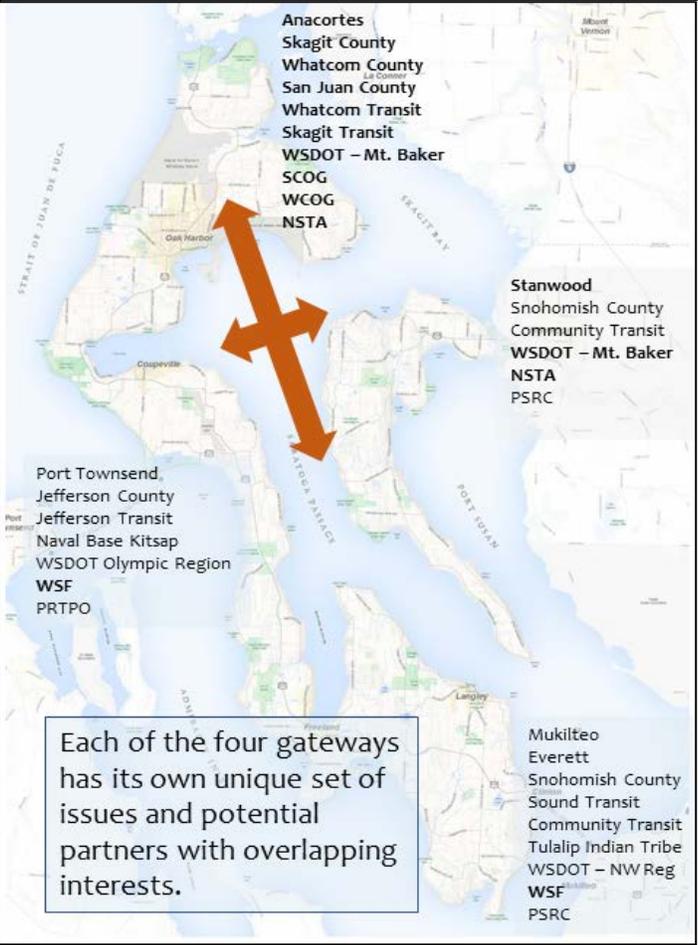
We are exploring some options to augment the traditional print document as another way of making the regional plan and planning process more relevant to more people.

We introduced *Island Access 2040* at the WSDOT transportation open house Tuesday night at the Oak Harbor High School. I'll bring copies to your meeting of the handouts we provided. While we didn't have lots of people stop to talk, those who did stopped for quite a long time and seemed to be genuinely interested in the planning process, supportive of the issues and opportunities that have floated to the surface, and interested in dialing in when the draft is available for public review.

#### Requested Action

Bring your ideas and questions, and discuss matters pertaining to projects and format for the draft plan, and next steps.

## Island Access 2040 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

ID	NAME																									
	<b>Strengthen Inter-regional Coordination</b>																									
<p><b>Intent:</b> Maintain existing partnerships and forge new alliances that advance mutual objectives.</p> <p><b>Planning Objective:</b> Apply 3-C Leadership – IRTPO Coordination, Collaboration, Cooperation</p>																										
<p><b>Need:</b> Each of the four gateways connecting the Island Region with the rest of Washington involves a different set of partners with whom to coordinate and collaborate.</p>																										
<p><b>Description:</b> Connections with the rest of the state and beyond is through four gateways. Each involves infrastructure and services provided by WSDOT and is influenced by decisions and actions made by others outside the Island Region. Fostering strong working relationships with the Island Region’s external partners is vitally important to gateway mobility and access. Inter-regional coordination helps to identify areas of overlapping interest and forges new partnerships to accomplish shared objectives. Collaboration with external partners can result in joint initiatives and exchanges with far-reaching benefits for IRTPO, its members, and interests. The Island Region currently has a number of strong inter-regional partnerships related to the Deception Pass and Camano gateways; fewer strong relationships at the Clinton or Coupeville Ferry Terminal gateways.</p>																										
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## Island Access 2040 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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	<b>Assess the Feasibility of a Regional PTBA for Intercounty Connector Service</b>																																																		
<p><b>Intent:</b> Find a more sustainable, fair way of funding critical inter-regional transit service.</p> <p><b>Planning Objective:</b> Conduct strategic regional planning.</p> <p><b>Need:</b> Transit funding mechanisms are tied to the particular Public Transit Benefit Area that a transit agency serves. But truly effective transit service crosses boundaries and makes efficient connections with other systems for its riders. Because it operates outside of Island Transit’s service area, essential services like IT’s Intercounty Connector Service are dependent on unpredictable grant funding.</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The PTBA format for fixed-route transit service doesn’t align with transit service needs that should be seamless across PTBA boundaries and service areas. Residents of Whidbey and Camano Islands need to go to services and job centers in Everett and Mt. Vernon. Island Transit routes that serve those two external stations are operated outside of its PTBA and in the service area of other transit agencies. A Regional PTBA feasibility study will engage IRTPO, IT, and interested partners from adjacent regions in exploring alternate funding models for inter-regional service to see if there are more sustainable and fairer funding models to support this service.</p>																																																			
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## **Island Access 2040 Working Draft Recommendations [for 3.14.19 TAC Discussion]**

[Bracketed numbers indicate notes at the end of this list, on the next page]

### Apply 3-C Leadership – Coordination, Collaboration, Cooperation [1]

- Strengthen Inter-Regional Coordination
- Maintain and Expand Regional Awareness
- Explore the Feasibility of an IRTPO Military Community Partnership [2]
- Address Barriers to Transportation-Efficient Communities
- Promote Universal Broadband Access

### Conduct Strategic Regional Planning

- Assess the Feasibility of a Regional PTBA for Intercounty Connector Service [3]
- Evaluate Marine Highway Needs and Opportunities for the Island Region [4]
- Explore Feasibility of a Rural TNC Ferry Connector Pilot Program
- Develop Transportation Master Plan for Ebey's Reserve [5]
- Develop Gateway Plans
- Implement the RTP Through the UPWP and the RTIP [6]

### Facilitate Development of System Management Plans

- Implement System Management Work Program [7]
- Complete a Regional Multimodal Safety Plan
- Develop a Regional Aviation Strategy [8]
- Explore South Whidbey Transit Center Opportunities
- Support System Preservation Programs [9]

### Assess and Optimize System Performance

- Conduct Travel Data Surveys
- Monitor and Evaluate Park-and-Ride Usage
- Establish and Monitor Regional Performance Metrics
- Review and Update Census Urban Area Boundaries [10]

### Support a Strong Economy

- Develop a Scenic Isle Way Action Plan
- Promote Active Recreation / Tourism Partnerships
- Develop a Regional Freight Mobility Plan

### Minimize Transportation Impacts on the Environment

- Develop an Electric Vehicle Action Plan
- Establish a Traveler Information Portal

- Support Demand Management Programs [11]

#### Increase Equity and Access

- Support the Human Services Transportation Program
- Evaluate Models of On-Demand First-Mile/Last-Mile Services
- Develop Mapping Tools and Database to Facilitate Coordinated Travel [12]
- Veterans Mobility Strategy [13]

#### Be Better Prepared for Future Uncertainties

- Conduct an Exploratory Scenario Planning Analysis [14]
- Develop a Vulnerabilities Response Plan
- Facilitate Development of Requisite MOUs for Mutual Assistance [15]
- Acquire Updated Regional GIS Data

#### Notes

[1] You'll recall that I've tried a couple of different ways of grouping these strategies, most recently trying to line them up by the four goals. That just didn't work well for grouping these. The structure that seems to work more effectively groups them by overarching planning objective, which is characterized by the header line at the top of each set of bulleted actions.

[2] This is a new concept that took shape based on my inreach interview with Brian Tyhuis, from his presentation to the Transportation Commission in November, and from unrelated discussions pertaining to consideration of military base issues in Washington State.

[3] This is a new concept that Commissioner Price-Johnson mentioned a couple of times but that I hadn't captured in previous versions.

[4] This started off to be focused on potential future inter-island connectivity for passengers but grew to include potential for restoring the old packet freighters, too. At the meeting on Tuesday night I described this as a study of what a 21<sup>st</sup> century Mosquito Fleet might look like.

[5] New, in response to multiple concerns expressed about the absence of transit pullouts, and biking facilities on parts of SR 20 and the challenges associated with providing those facilities within the Reserve.

[6] This is new, and is meant to not only give credence to the on-going IRTPO work program and underscore relationship between the RTP, the UPWP, and the RTIP, but it is also an opportunity to establish what a "default list" of regional funding priorities might look like. See extensive context notes highlighted in yellow in this section, as background for TAC discussion.

[7] Implement System Management Work Program is what resulted from the four scoping workshops focused on the multimodal issues a coordinated network management plan needs to address. This one

action item has 16 separate elements which are grouped together as a System Management Work Program.

[8] New, based on interest in aviation and lack of a cohesive overarching approach.

[9] New, resulting from the Camano Island stakeholder workshop discussion about disconnects between urban area designations and intended land use. Upcoming 2020 census creates opportunity to reconcile.

[10] New. Oversight on my part.

[11] New. Oversight on my part.

[12] New, based on Transportation Commission briefings, Camano workshop, and adopted HSTP.

[13] New, based on Camano/Stanwood Workshop and potential role for IRTPO to facilitate process that supports HSTP objectives

[14] Revamped from the original SWOT analysis to focus more on planning for uncertainties.

[15] New, based on adopted HSTP and insights gained from 2040 Washington Transportation Plan.

## **Working Language in Development for Each Action Item**

### **1. Apply 3-C Leadership – IRTPO Coordination, Collaboration, Cooperation**

- a. **Strengthen Inter-regional Coordination** foster strong working relationships with the Island Region’s external partners associated with each of its four gateways. This coordination helps to identify areas of overlapping interest and forges new partnerships to accomplish shared objectives. Collaboration with external partners can result in joint initiatives and exchanges with far-reaching benefits for IRTPO, its members, and interests. [Map identifying the partners at each gateway. Don’t forget North Snohomish County Transportation Coalition
- b. **Maintain and Expand Regional Awareness** acknowledges that IRTPO is involved in many different activities with adjacent regions, counties, WSDOT, and other RTPOs. Keeping its members informed on a wide range of issues relevant to the Island Region supports the Leadership goal, as does representing regional viewpoints in these other forums, and with state agencies and the Legislature. Similarly, IRTPO is well-positioned to apprise state and federal officials on issues and priorities of interest to the region and its members.

- c. **Explore the Feasibility of an IRTPPO Military Community Partnership** that would formalize a working relationship between the IRTPPO partnership and Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, building on shared interests around transportation to leverage opportunities for collaboration. Intersecting needs can create strategic opportunities that position the region, NASWI, and the Partnership to competitive and tactical advantage. Areas of potential collaboration include coordination of programs and infrastructure around the perimeter of the base through OEA funding, a Joint Land Use Study, incentives to promote transit use to/from the base, and measures to improve reliability of the Coupeville-Port Townsend ferry service.
- d. **Address Barriers to Transportation-Efficient Communities** to better harness land use opportunities, the most effective way of supporting regional transportation objectives. How and where we grow will shape future travel choices and how much they cost. It's a long-term proposition dependent upon market forces outside the control of IRTPPO's partners. Efforts to improve the capacity of Rural Areas of Intense Development (RAID) like Freeland, Clinton, and on Camano Island to better accommodate community-oriented development supports transit, walking, and biking, as do efforts to increase the density and mix of uses in cities and towns.
- e. **Promote Universal Broadband Access** to inform legislators about the important role that "always-on" 24/7 high speed internet access plays in meeting the region's access and mobility needs.

## 2. Conduct Strategic Regional Planning

- a. **Assess the Feasibility of a Regional PTBA for Intercounty Connector Service.** The PTBA format for fixed-route transit service doesn't align with transit service needs. Transit service should be seamless across PTBA boundaries and service areas. A Regional PTBA feasibility study will engage IRTPPO, IT, and interested partners from adjacent regions in exploring alternate funding models for inter-regional service.
- b. **Evaluate Marine Highway Needs and Opportunities for the Island Region** to explore near-, medium-, and long-term marine system needs and opportunities for the region, considering the long-term potential for restoration of passenger-only ferry service and inter-island packet freighters, and other water-borne travel opportunities that support regional mobility. Logical candidate for inter-regional coordination, and engagement of public and private sector interests.
- c. **Explore Feasibility of a Rural TNC Ferry Connector Pilot Program,** taking advantage of the regular arrival of state ferries at the region's two rural locations to evaluate whether a Transportation Network Company (TNC) ride-hailing service is a

feasible concept for connecting walk-on passengers into the transit system during times of vessel congestion.

- d. **Develop Transportation Master Plan for Ebey's Reserve**, bringing together Island County, Coupeville, WSDOT, Island Transit, and DAHP, and any other stakeholders to identify and reconcile competing interests that make it hard to support better transit, walking and biking opportunities in the National Historical Reserve. Goal is to find common ground on shared objectives and reach agreement on the processes by which supporting projects can proceed in a predictable manner. This has direct implications also for the Scenic Isle Way Action Plan and for USBR improvements.
- e. **Complete Gateway Studies** for each of the four access points to and from the region. Several study efforts are identified in the Network Management Work Program, but additional needs are anticipated. Each study adds to a more comprehensive, coordinated plan for the gateways that can be integrated with land use, economic development, and other decision-making as appropriate. Results of these studies will help ensure that coordinated decisions and investments work together over time to increase multimodal transportation system efficiency into and out of the region and help to better integrate transportation decisions with other land use and economic objectives.
- f. **Implement *Island Access 2040* Through the UPWP, the RTIP, and Active RTPO Engagement** – Discuss with TAC to ensure this provides the right balance between long-term structure/accountability and near-term flexibility/responsiveness, then work on clear but simple messaging for the action. This needs some context and support elsewhere in the body of the plan to explain the role of the other IRTPO products and how they directly support implementation.

Context: Explain in more detail elsewhere the important RTP-UPWP-RTIP relationships. Lay out the framework that will keep this long-range plan relevant to on-going programs at the local, regional, and state levels through the UPWP and the RTIP. Use this to illustrate the point that **practical solutions get their start in the RTP** and work their way through planning and project development to get at the right solution for the right issue.

Also, establish a default definition of '*regionally significant priorities*' that is built on this RTP-UPWP-RTIP relationship – IRTPO is periodically called upon to provide a list of unfunded project priorities. Due to timing of regular meetings and busy agendas, this inevitably creates a scramble to assemble a regionally sanctioned list of projects. This can be alleviated in large measure by defining in the RTP what a regional

"default list" of priorities includes but which of course can be modified if conditions or time warrant.

The point of all of this is to enhance accountability of near-term decisions in a long-range game plan while at the same time streamlining bureaucracy and making the process nimble and responsive to regional, local, and state needs.

- [Planning Program Projects] Clarify UPWP role in advancing the RTP through the annual planning work program but also – important - unfunded priorities identified in Appendix A. Appendix A will be the default used by IRTPO to respond to requests for a list of unfunded regional planning priorities for grant or other opportunities. UPWP discussion and public adoption every year by the Board is an opportunity to revalidate current priorities and if warranted, revise direction based on emerging needs and opportunities. Note that prior to adoption there is also a joint review meeting between WSDOT HQ, WSDOT MBA, and IRTPO which presents yet another opportunity for coordination prior to adoption.
- [Improvement Program Projects] RTIP role in advancing the RTP through the annually updated list of funding secured projects drawn from each six-year TIP but also – important – unfunded projects identified in a new Appendix A in the adopted RTIP. Appendix A will be the default used by IRTPO to respond to requests for a list of unfunded regional improvement priorities for grant or other opportunities. The 4-year RTIP directly incorporates the six-year TIPs developed annually by local agencies and WSDOT, and so reflects current project development status and cost estimates, as well as any strategic positioning underway by the agency. Projects – funded and unfunded – go through public review through the local TIP development process and then again through the RTIP development process before formal adoption by IRTPO. *Question for IT – is the six-year TIP the best source for near-term unfunded priorities or is the TDP potentially a better source?*
- [Programmatic Requests] The default response to any request for unfunded regional priorities will always include additional funding for programmatic maintenance and preservation of the transportation system, as well as additional resources to support delivery of coordinated human services transportation.

[Note – all this verbiage is for background and won't be included in description]

### 3. Facilitate Development and Implementation of System Management Plans

- a. **Implement Network Management Work Program.** Actions described in the Network Management Work Program found at the end of this section were identified during four network management scoping sessions to address local, regional, and state mobility concerns and opportunities. Actions are grouped into two buckets: Local-Interest State Route Actions and Coordinated Regional Actions. These are the 'next steps' towards improving the resiliency and connectivity of the multimodal transportation system and support WSDOT Practical Solutions project development processes. Results of these planning and operational studies will support implementation of practical solutions that improve multimodal access, safety, efficiency, and circulation while better integrating transportation and land use decision making across agencies.
- b. **Complete a Regional Multimodal Safety Plan** to identify programmatic measures and projects to make travel safer throughout the Island Region for all modes of travel. A regional plan can address opportunities related to technology, Safe Routes to School, "Main Street" highways, walkability in rural centers, transit and park-and-ride access, etc. It should evaluate proven, innovative technologies in use elsewhere to improve multimodal traveler safety in conditions similar to those in the Island Region. This may result in a safety program that promotes the introduction of new roadside or app-based technologies, including active signs, roadway sensors, and video analytics. Education, enforcement, and evaluation should be emphasized in addition to engineering strategies.
- c. **Develop a Regional Aviation Strategy** to assess the role and needs of small private airports across the region in supporting passenger and commercial travel needs, disaster response, and commercial development. A regional strategy can provide the basis for more targeted follow-up initiatives and enhance coordination with local land use and Comprehensive Plans as well as economic development activities.
- d. **Explore South Whidbey Transit Center Opportunities** in partnership with Island Transit and others to consider potential opportunities for coordinating land use, multimodal access, circulation, highway access and parking, and other long-term regional mobility interests with IT's own long-term efforts to establish a south Whidbey Island operating base.
- e. **Support System Preservation Programs,** looking for and promoting opportunities for regional collaboration similar to the current regional pavement preservation program funded through IRTPO's STBG funding. Collaboration can maximize efficiency and economy of scale for system preservation programs, and should

consider all parts of the transportation system including walkways, park-and-ride lots, trails, and local roads.

#### 4. Assess and Optimize System Performance

- a. **Conduct Travel Data Surveys** to understand how and why people come and go as they do into, out of, and through the Island Region, and to understand through traffic characteristics as well as those of trips originating or terminating in the region. A license plate cordon study with mailout surveys, coordinated with transit and ferry passenger surveys can be effective. If possible, coordination with one of the detailed passenger and commercial surveys administered by Washington State Ferries would extend resources significantly. Effort should be made to discern pedestrian traffic between the ferry terminal and Fort Casey State Park. Also, strive to better understand how much of the Deception Pass traffic comes into Oak Harbor or elsewhere in the region beyond the park itself. Survey data generates a detailed picture of traffic into and out of the region, essential input to short and long-range plans.
- b. **Monitor and Evaluate Park-and-Ride Usage** entails on-going collection and analysis of usage characteristics of all park-and-ride lots in the region to understand how these facilities are being used and their overall demand, as important input to local, state, and regional analysis and strategies.
- c. **Establish and Monitor Regional Performance Metrics** to identify meaningful regional metrics for evaluating the overall effectiveness over time of IRTPO goals, policies, and investments in promoting Island mobility and the overarching community-wide goals that transportation supports. Metrics would be tailored to reflect the needs of the Island Region and integrated as appropriate into IRTPO processes, to augment the VMT and xxx metrics required under RCW 47.80.xx.
- d. **Review and Update Census Urban Area Boundaries** to better align urban/rural designations in the region with desired land use and transportation contexts. Note that urban/rural designations play a role in the apportionment of federal funds and can also have impacts on things like design standards and stormwater requirements.

#### 5. Promote Strong Local Economies

- a. **Develop a Scenic Isle Way Action Plan**, refreshing the 2014 Scenic Isle Way Plan to incorporate emerging opportunities and partnerships, and developing an action plan for completing targeted strategies. This kind of detailed implementation plan was

called for in the original 2014 Cascade Loop Corridor Management Plan. This action plan will have numerous intersections with other regional work program elements.

- b. **Promote Active Recreation / Tourism Partnerships**, engaging regional tourism and economic development partners in exploring ways to better leverage the region's top notch non-motorized facilities, USBR designation, water access, temperate climate, and superb terrain and vistas to stimulate year-round interest in tourism with a light environmental impact.
- c. **Develop a Regional Freight Mobility Plan**, in collaboration with the region's largest employers and production sectors, the ports, and the EDC, to quantify the impacts of freight mobility to the region's economy and the effects of system performance on freight productivity, identify existing and future freight connectors, and provide insights on pass-through freight traffic using Whidbey Island's SR 20 as a reliable alternative to I-5.

## 6. Minimize Transportation Impacts on the Environment

- a. **Develop an Electric Vehicle Action Plan** to identify primary optimal routes for electrification with appropriate charging device recommendations suited to the character of the Island Region, funding strategies, and potential partnerships. Such a plan might include efforts to rectify legislative barriers prohibiting the use of IRTPO's regional funding authorities to implement electrification projects. Engage the utilities early on as a partner in this effort – their modeling and growth assumptions will be valuable as will their ability to assess viable business models for electric vehicle charging.
- b. **Establish and Promote a One-Stop Traveler Information Portal** that creates an integrated, one-stop multimodal trip planning resource for locals, tourists, and commercial traffic. This should be coordinated with 2-1-1 systems to maximize utility. It should facilitate the coordination of trips across modes and jurisdictions and link up with information portals maintained by other agencies.

## 7. Increase Equity and Access

- a. **Support the Human Services Transportation Program** and on-going activities by the Human Services Transportation Planning Committee in an effort to better understand, account for, and address the mobility needs of the region's most vulnerable populations, and help position the region's diverse array of mobility partners to secure funding for priority mobility needs. Look for ways, where

appropriate, to integrate HSTP planning efforts with those of the Community Health Improvement Program in order to advance shared objectives and opportunities. Support data collection needs such as those needed to document the socio-economic characteristics of special needs passengers, or improve the ability of the regional Mobility Manager to align rider needs with appropriate resources.

- b. **Evaluate Models of Rural On-Demand First-Mile/Last-Mile Service** being used in rural regions to extend access to transit and bridge service gaps between urban and rural areas. Characteristics of different service models can be evaluated for their effectiveness and efficiencies in accommodating the unique needs and constraints of the Island Region, and may intersect with the pilot program for rural TNCs.
- c. **Develop Refined Mapping Tools and Database to Facilitate Travel Coordination**, in order to better understand needs and gaps, and refine program strategies. This project will entail coordination between Public Health, Human Service, Planning, Public Works, as well as the regional Mobility Manager, Island Transit, and human services transportation providers. Finer grained mapping capabilities than census block geographies will facilitate transit and other service provider routing, and can inform the prioritization of non-motorized infrastructure project and outreach efforts.
- d. **Veterans Mobility Strategy** – facilitate discussions between representatives of the Veterans Administration with transit and transportation services coordinators to explore and pursue potential untapped opportunities to extend lifeline transportation services to veterans and increase the efficiency of the region’s human services transportation program.

## 8. Be Better Prepared for Future Uncertainties

- a. **Conduct an Exploratory Scenario Planning Analysis** to evaluate the region’s transportation system and its vulnerabilities, in collaboration with a diverse array of stakeholders. Considering effects on the transportation system of a range of plausible future uncertainties over which IRTPO and its members have no control can be revealing. Exploratory scenario planning can be very useful for understanding policy or infrastructure “blindspots” in our decision-making, and help fine-tune our thinking about resiliency and preparedness.
- b. **Develop a Vulnerabilities Response Plan** to address known or likely-and-highly-consequential disruptions in order to reduce or offset risks associated with those disruptions. This may point to the need for more targeted follow-up or collaboration with other entities, or identify necessary agreements and procedures that need to be

in place and include recommendations to address any gaps. It should address “crisis communications” needs with non-resident tourists in the event of a crisis.

- c. **Facilitate Development of Requisite MOUs for Mutual Assistance.** Emergency management plans identify key agencies, agency roles, communication protocols, and responsibilities for a range of emergency response measures. Transportation is one of four critical lifeline functions needed to respond to and recover from natural disasters, and is addressed in emergency management plans. Two agencies have formal emergency management plans in place – Island County and Oak Harbor. Naval Air Station Whidbey Island also has a plan in place to support base operations and Navy families. Joint planning is underway to strengthen coordination between agencies. While plans do exist, the required Memoranda of Understanding or interlocal agreements needed to execute some of the coordination that will be needed are not yet in place. These agreements will be essential to ensure evacuation of the region’s vulnerable populations and to facilitate sharing of resources between agencies.
- d. **Maintain and Acquire Updated Regional GIS Data to Support Regional and Local Analysis** to ensure periodic updates of essential GIS data coverages of value for a wide range of transportation planning activities including emergency management planning, and with value to IRTPO as well as its partners. (LiDAR, aerial)

### **Network Management Work Program**

Actions described in the following Network Management Work Program were identified during four network management scoping sessions to address local, regional, and state mobility concerns and opportunities. Actions are grouped into two buckets: Local-Interest State Route Actions and Coordinated Regional Actions. Local-Interest State Route Actions relate to the functioning of SR 525, SR 20, and SR 532 and its integration with local networks and services. Coordinated Regional Actions may be related to those facilities but are broader in scope and context. Several of the actions directly support Gateway Planning priorities identified elsewhere in the plan and are identified as such (and grouped together in this list).

Actions in this Network Management Work Program are the ‘next steps’ towards improving the resiliency and connectivity of the multimodal transportation system and support WSDOT Practical Solutions project development processes. Actions may be pursued or funded by IRTPO or its members, as appropriate. Descriptions in this plan are suggestive of the study effort to be conducted but the actual approach and outcomes will be scoped in more detail as funding or other opportunities allow. Implementation activities should not be constrained by

these descriptions as long as they are consistent with the overall intent of the actions or make progress on their implementation.

This list may be updated in the future through the RTP amendment process to reflect results of completed actions or respond to emerging conditions.

Results of these planning and operational studies are part of the *Island Access 2040* implementation strategy and will be considered a supplement to this plan as warranted. These actions support implementation of practical solutions that improve multimodal access, safety, efficiency, and circulation while better integrating transportation and land use decision making across agencies.

#### Local-Interest State Route Actions

- a) **Review and Update the Oak Harbor - SR 20 Corridor Management Plan** in collaboration with Oak Harbor transportation and land use planners, school district, NASWI, WSDOT, others to pre-position Oak Harbor for Connecting Washington project funding in 2027. This work will provide a Practical Solutions foundation. It will update earlier analysis but take a more multimodal systems-based approach and consider access, circulation, desired land uses, and economic vitality. Original corridor and system boundaries may be revised for updated evaluation. A systems approach should emphasize better use of the whole system and not just focus on increasing the capacity of SR 20 itself. Look at ways to direct more traffic to under-utilized corridors like Midway and Pioneer Way. A gateway roundabout at SR 20/Goldie/Midway would perhaps help balance local traffic better and also support the economic vitality of businesses off of SR 20. Consider camera or drone surveys of particular problem intersections like SR 20 at Swantown to better understand and assess the nature of the queueing and congestion issues. Consider potential designated alternate routes to support mobility needs during incident response or special events. Goal is to balance state highway through-traffic with local access and circulation needs, transit access, walkability, economic development, and other community objectives.
- b) **Develop a Coupeville-SR Multimodal 20 Safety, Access, and Circulation Strategy** to assess regional access and circulation issues for safe and convenient travel in and through Coupeville, with particular attention paid to safe pedestrian and bike mobility in the vicinity of highway traffic. Key intersections of concern include, but are not limited to, Broadway at SR 20 and Terry at Main. Access to and from the trail system is key, as is non-motorized access to and from transit, schools, the hospital, and commercial centers.

- c) **Develop a Greenbank-SR 20 Access and Alignment Strategy** to improve east-west connectivity and access for communities on either side of the highway. [Connie for more context]
- d) **Develop Freeland-SR 525 Freight and Multimodal Circulation Strategy.** Establish economic performance objectives tied with safe and efficient freight and multimodal access and circulation. Evaluate options to improve system performance and multimodal mobility at Scott and SR 20, and at Cameron and SR 20, and assess opportunities to improve non-motorized mid-block crossings at SR 20 and South Harbor. Coordinate with land use planning to anticipate and possibly help leverage future economic development objectives for this Rural Area of Intense Development (RAID). Identify priority opportunities to improve walkability in town and between transit stops and activity centers.
- e) **Evaluate Effectiveness of SR 525/SR 20 Speed Limits.** Posted speed limits on SR 525 and SR 20 typically reflect the rural and urban setting through which these highways pass; however, posted speeds regularly fluctuate up or down by 5 miles per hour. This can result in dissonance between drivers and inadvertently encourage risky driver passing behavior when some adhere to the changes in speed and others don't. There are also questions as to whether the posted speed limits in some urban settings are too high for the "main street" function the highway serves. The only permanent speed monitor is located on SR 525 adjacent to the entrance of the County's solid waste transfer facility which may not be indicative of typical speeds due to traffic slowing to enter or exit that facility.

*Gateway Actions (from the scoping sessions and which directly relate to Gateway Plans)*

- f) **Coupeville Ferry Terminal Study 1: Circulation and Access Management Assessment of Coupeville Ferry Terminal** – This study will look at vehicle storage, u-turns in the entrance to Fort Casey, use of the official turnaround, illegal u-turns, and impacts on other system users. It should consider the needs of freight traffic, passenger traffic, and non-motorized access as well as Fort Casey access. It should consider near-term needs for improvement as well as longer-term issues and opportunities associated with other Coupeville Ferry Terminal Study efforts. Partners include WSDOT, WSF, State Parks, Island County, Island Transit, and Coupeville. [Gateway Study]
- g) **Coupeville Ferry Terminal Study 2: Evaluation of Ferry Traffic Impacts on Coupeville** – includes effects of the commercial vehicle reservation system on the Coupeville-Port Townsend route, the intersection configuration of SR 20/SR 525, plus the distance factor. [Gateway Study]

- h) **Coupeville Ferry Terminal Study 3: Safety and Navigation Study of the Coupeville Ferry Terminal** to address growing unreliability issues. Silting, cross currents, and a very tight basin make it difficult for ferries to get in and out if there is any kind of weather, as well as during low tides. Special vessels are built for this run, meaning that the other vessels in the ferry system cannot be used if one of these vessels needs repair, or to add additional service. Need for this study is identified in the recently adopted 2040 WSF Plan to revisit earlier strategies for improving navigable waterways for this essential connection. Note that Naval Air Station Whidbey Island considers the Coupeville-Port Townsend ferry “essential” in terms of its access to the Kitsap Base in Bangor and should be consulted in this study. This route is part of the STRAHNET. [Gateway Study]
- i) **Deception Pass Study 1: Multimodal Circulation and Access Management Study**, from Fidalgo Island to park entrance. Includes evaluation of possible restricted use of the old park entrance, revisions to parking lot access, managing pedestrian movement, demand management, speed reductions, traffic cameras, etc. Regional considerations should address, at a minimum: impacts on transit service reliability; incident management and emergency response; freight mobility; non-motorized access. Include recommendations. Entails collaboration with WSDOT, WA State Parks, Island County, Island Transit, Skagit County, and SCOG (at a minimum) [Gateway Study]
- j) **Clinton Study 2: Park-and-ride Usage and Access Analysis**. Evaluation of impacts and effectiveness of park-and-rides, access to and from by vehicle, access to and from on foot, maintenance, etc. This should consider the long-term implications of the **Clinton Study 1: Develop Coordinated Long-Range Transportation and Land Use Master Plan and Implementation Strategy**, described below. [Gateway Study]
- k) **Clinton Study 3: Multimodal Access and Circulation Analysis**. Evaluate near-term and long-term opportunities to improve access and circulation for all modes, reduce impacts on adjacent businesses, address ingress/egress issues, and integration with land use plans and activities. Long-term measures should include consideration of future overhead ferry boarding for non-motorized travelers and other planned ferry terminal upgrades. Traveler information improvements should be considered, such as installation of traffic cameras, and an “Island Etiquette” public education focused on modifying driver behavior to reduce impacts on Clinton and other system users. [Gateway Study]
- l) **Camano/Stanwood Study 1: SR 532 Multimodal Corridor Action Plan for Camano and Stanwood**. This action plan will identify near-term, low-cost strategies and longer-term measures to improve multimodal access, safety, and system efficiency between Camano Island and the city of Stanwood. At a minimum it should look at key intersections for RAB

or other treatments to improve turning movements and circulation, pedestrian and bicycle access, and safety including SR 532 at Camano Drive, Old Pacific Highway, Marine Drive, and at 64<sup>th</sup>. The plan should evaluate and make recommendations on improving park-and-ride capacity and non-motorized access at Terry's Corner. Special emphasis is needed on pedestrian and bike access and circulation between the two communities, including the Bridge-to-Books trail identified by both Island County and Stanwood as a priority connection, as well as safe and efficient pedestrian access to/from transit across SR 532 and to/from parks, businesses, the library, and schools (Camano students attend Stanwood schools). Economic vitality is central to this planning effort and outcomes, and is tied to business recruitment, jobs-housing balance, and work force mobility. Efforts should be coordinated with Stanwood planning activities for SR 532 to improve its "main street" function for the city. Results should include low-cost/high-value quick fix strategies, partnership and funding opportunities, and identify harder issues warranting more detailed operational analysis. Planning efforts should engage at a minimum WSDOT, Island County, Stanwood, Island Transit, the Stanwood School District, and economic development interests from both Island County and Stanwood, and if possible include participation by Community Transit, the North Snohomish County Transportation Coalition, the North Sound Transportation Alliance, and as appropriate, PSRC. [Gateway Study]

- m) **Camano/Stanwood Study 2: SR 532/I-5 Transit Access Improvements.** To improve transit and HOV access to/from I-5 at SR 532, make transit service to Everett Station more efficient, and encourage more people to use transit or rideshare. Note that Island Transit provides the only access to Everett Station for residents of Camano Island and Stanwood. Unreliable access to/from I-5 is an impediment to business recruitment that could improve the jobs-housing balance in this area. This is also identified as a priority need by the North Sound Transportation Alliance. [Gateway Study]

#### Coordinated Regional Actions

- n) **Clinton Study 1: Develop Coordinated Long-Range Transportation and Land Use Master Plan and Implementation Strategy.** This master planning process will provide a long-range strategy for improving conditions for mixed-use, walkable development and economic opportunity in Clinton. This will look at land use, infrastructure, ferry service, economic development, community cohesion, and other factors to outline near-, medium-, and long-term measures to guide Clinton's growth and improvements. Transportation work will be coordinated with Island County planning efforts and will engage the local Clinton community, Island Transit, WSDOT, WSF, the Port of South Whidbey, and others. [Gateway Study]