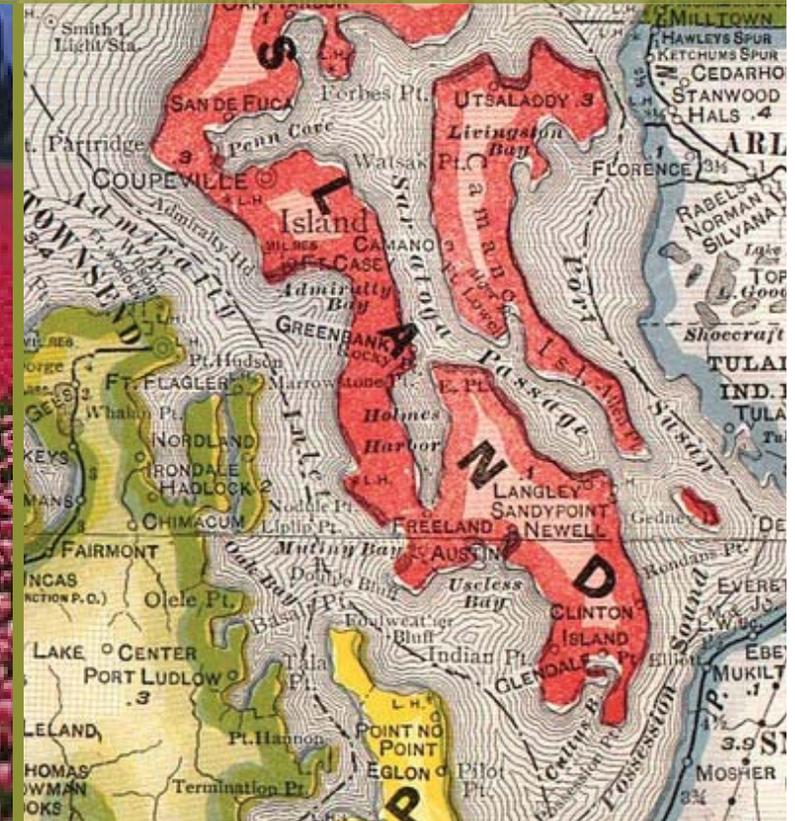


# Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan





*Skagit-Island Counties*  
**Metropolitan & Regional  
Transportation Plan**

**Prepared by:**

Skagit Council of Governments



**In Association With:**

Transpo Group



ECONorthwest



Berk & Associates



PTV America





## **Adoption of the Skagit Metropolitan and Skagit-Island Counties Regional Transportation Plan for 2010 - 2035**

The Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) is composed of the City of Burlington, City of Mount Vernon, City of Sedro Woolley, Port of Skagit, Skagit Transit, and Skagit County. The geographic area is made up of the urbanized areas of Skagit County including the cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, Sedro Woolley and their respective Urban Growth Areas, Skagit Transit and Port of Skagit. The SMPO is comprised of portions of the 10th and 39th legislative districts. The SMPO is federally mandated and cooperates with the state and local governments in developing transportation plans, and programs within the MPO Boundaries.

The Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SIRTPO) is state mandated and made up of two sub-regional planning organizations composed of local jurisdictions within Skagit and Island Counties. Each sub-regional planning organization is directed by a policy board comprised of elected officials and other members representing business, navy and transportation interests. State legislators from the 10th, 39th, and 40th legislative districts are all ex-officio members of the SIRTPO.

Beginning in December of 2009, public input was obtained through a series of visioning workshops, open houses and a project website ([www.scog.net](http://www.scog.net)). The Skagit MPO and SIRTPO Technical Advisory Committees (TAC's) for the Skagit MPO and each sub-region actively participated in the development of a Draft Plan that was released to the public for further comment during a 30-day review period from February 8 – March 8, 2011. The Final Skagit-Island Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan was formally adopted by the Skagit MPO and the Skagit RTPO Policy Boards on April 20, 2011 and on April 27, 2011 by the Island RTPO Policy Board.

The document is a long-range transportation plan for both the Skagit and Island County region. An update to the Plan is required every three years to maintain the region's eligibility to receive federal and state funding for transportation improvement projects. The Final Plan includes an extensive list of fiscally constrained transportation improvements for the region. These include both improvements on state highways and regionally significant roadways that will be implemented by local jurisdictions.

Included on the following page is a copy of the signed resolution acknowledging the Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization and Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization's adoption of the final Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan 2010-2035.



**SKAGIT/ISLAND REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**



P.O. Box 5000  
Coupeville, Wa 98239-5000

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RESOLUTION NO. 042711  
IN THE MATTER OF ADOPTION OF THE)  
2011 SKAGIT METROPOLITAN & SKAGIT /ISLAND REGIONAL)  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE)

WHEREAS, Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) and the Skagit sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (Skagit sub-RTPO) and the Island sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (Island sub-RTPO), here after referred to as the SMPO and S/IRTPO's are the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations for Skagit and Island Counties and the jurisdictions therein; and

WHEREAS, the SMPO and the S/IRTPO's have the responsibility of adopting, amending and updating Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plans for the Skagit and Island County region;

WHEREAS, the SMPO and the S/IRTPO's are responsible for meeting state requirements set forth under the Growth Management Act for Regional Transportation Plans; and

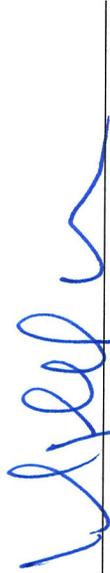
WHEREAS, SMPO and the S/IRTPO's certify that all requirements as enabled by federal law 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 of the Federal Transit Act, as amended and the Skagit/Island sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (S/IRTPO's) as enabled by Washington State law (RCW 47.80), Transportation Planning are met; and

WHEREAS, the SMPO and the S/IRTPO's certify that the Skagit Metropolitan and Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (SMTIP and S/IRTIP's) meets all Federal and State air quality requirements; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SKAGIT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION AND THE SKAGIT/ ISLAND SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS:**

Approves the scope and content of the 2011 Skagit Metropolitan and the Skagit/Island Regional Transportation Plan for submission to the Washington State Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

ADOPTED: April 20, 2011 (Skagit) and April 27, 2011 (Island)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Skagit SMPO Chairman  
Mayor Mike Anderson, City of Sedro-Woolley

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Island sub-RTPO Chairwoman  
Commissioner Angie Homola, Island County

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Skagit sub-RTPO Chairman  
Mayor Ramon Hayes, Town of LaConner

# Skagit Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (Includes former participating members)

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Island County

Commissioner Ken Dahlstedt  
Skagit County

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City of Anacortes

Mayor Ramon Hayes  
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Washington State Ferries

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*Section 1*  
**Executive Summary**

## Section 1: Executive Summary

The 2010-2035 Skagit-Island Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan (M/RTP) is a multimodal plan that establishes the strategic framework for meeting the Skagit-Island region's existing and future transportation needs. Developed through extensive coordination with affected agencies and public input, the M/RTP provides a "tool box" to facilitate cooperation and maximize resources to jointly select high-priority transportation projects and programs for regional funding and implementation through 2035

Serving as the link between local agency transportation plans and the Washington State Transportation Plan (WTP), the M/RTP was developed to be consistent with federal and state requirements. This will ensure projects will be eligible for funding through the widest range of programs.

### Agency Collaboration and Regional Priorities

The M/RTP was developed through a cooperative process that involved the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG), as lead agency for the MPO and RTPO, the Washington State Department of Transportation Northwest Region, the public, RTPO Technical Advisory Committees and ongoing transportation planning efforts of Skagit and Island Counties, 28 cities, five ports, two transit agencies, non-profit transit providers and tribal governments that constitute the two-county RTPO area. The priorities set for the regional transportation system are consistent with the policy goals established in the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) (See section 4 for policy goal definitions). They are as follows, in no particular order:

- Economic Vitality
- Preservation
- Safety

- Mobility
- Environment
- Stewardship

The M/RTP builds from and supports the WTP, local agency transportation plans and prioritization efforts. The Skagit-Island region has embraced working collaboratively and cooperatively to identify and address the highest priority regional transportation needs. The plan is organized to assist member agencies, DOT, the public and others with:

- Understanding how the M/RTP was developed
- Defining the region's transportation priorities
- Summarizing high priority transportation strategies and improvements for various parts of the region
- Noting potential environmental issues of the projects
- Identifying funding constraints and options

Over the next 25 years, the Skagit-Island region is expected to grow by more than 44,000 new residential households and approximately 18,000 employees. More than 70 percent of the new regional employment growth is expected to occur in Skagit County with almost 50 percent in the Skagit metropolitan area. More than 50 percent of the new regional residential growth is anticipated to occur in Island County and approximately one-third in the Skagit metropolitan area. As household growth is expected to outpace employment growth in the region, an imbalance of jobs to housing will result in longer commutes and increased traffic congestion in areas. The number of people commuting out of the region is also expected to increase.

The M/RTP highlights the intricate relationship between land use activities and transportation and the importance of coordinating planning efforts on all levels. It also addresses land use issues on a sub-regional level recognizing the unique differences and challenges

between Skagit and Island Counties. For example, there are specific concurrency requirements that apply only to Whidbey Island to ensure improvements or strategies are in place concurrent with development (RCW 36.70A.070).

Estimates of future transportation revenues are projected to be well short of funding agency improvement projects and programs identified in state, county, and local agency transportation plans. Funding for local agency MTP improvements are estimated to cover 5 to 10 percent of the 25-year project costs. Local agencies in the Skagit-Island region will only be able to fund 40 to 45 percent of their RTP transportation improvements, after funding maintenance and operations. Existing transit revenues will not be able to provide the same level of service in the future due to the impacts of inflation.

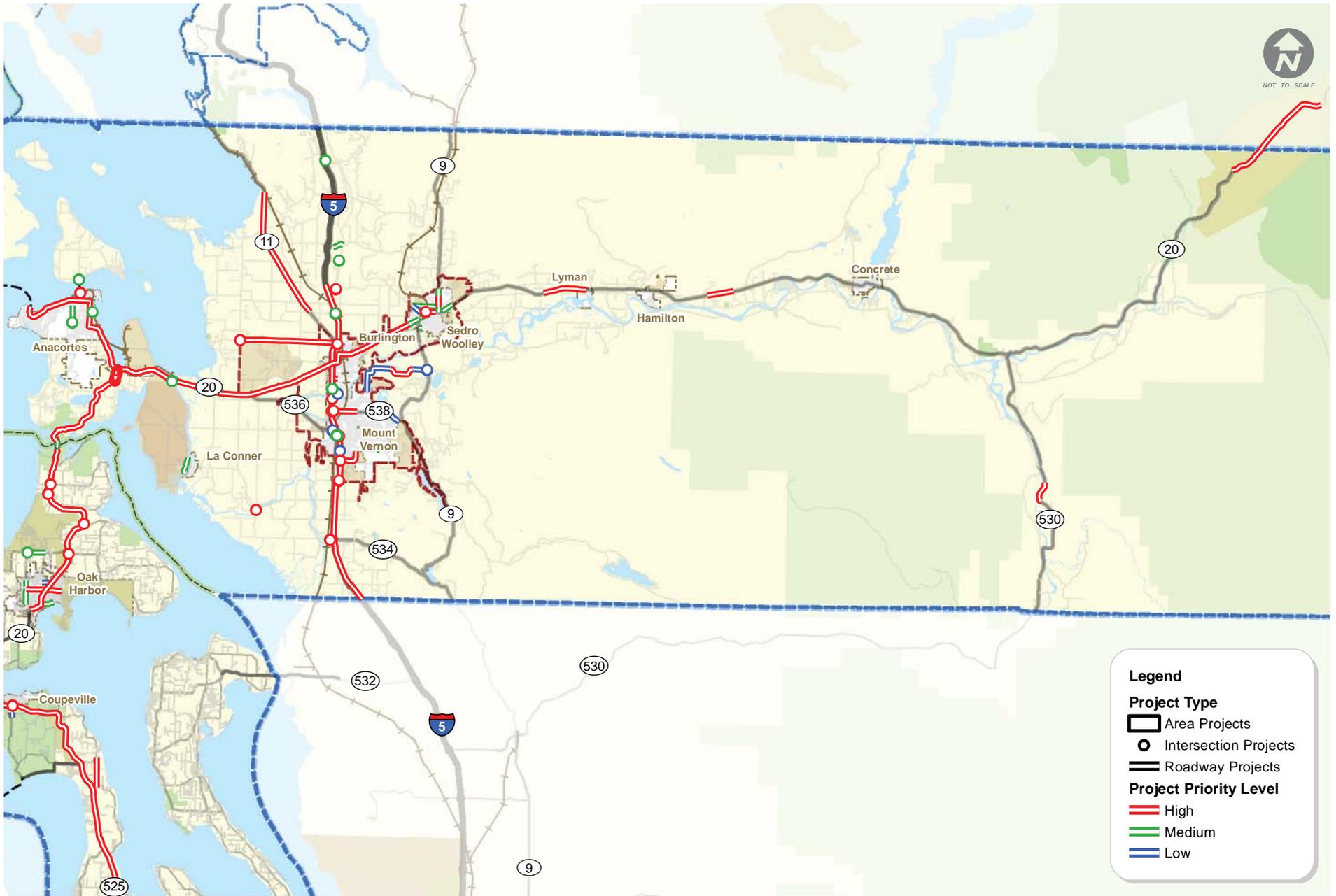
The difference between the available funding and costs of identified improvement projects and programs requires the region to set priorities and strategies for addressing the transportation needs. To guide the development and funding of the regional transportation system, the M/RTP establishes goals and priorities. Implementation of the M/RTP is also guided by a range of policies. The diagram below depicts the relationships between local and state plans and how the level of detail increases with local transportation planning efforts.



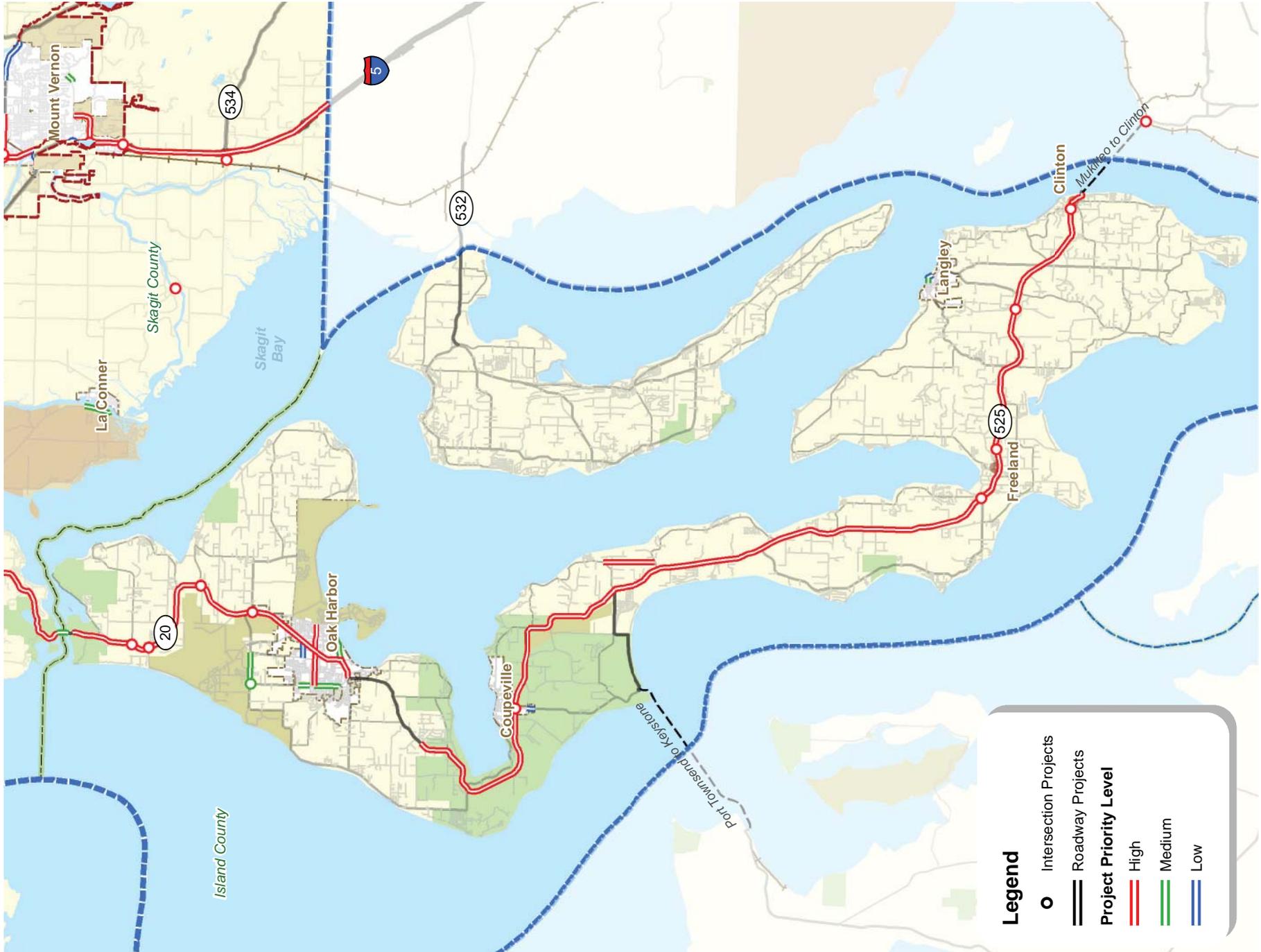
### Transportation Improvements and Programs

The M/RTP includes a listing of state highway projects and local agency regional transportation improvement projects. The lists were generated with input from the Skagit and Island RTPO Technical Advisory Committees and include a wide range of small to large scale projects. Types of programs and projects include interchange improvements, resurfacing, road widening, transit / multimodal facilities, non-motorized trails and bridge repairs. The region's priority transportation projects are organized by sub-region. Chapter 5 includes a listing of each project by region with associated maps, planning level cost estimates, and project time frames. Detailed project information is listed in the appendix.

The state highways serve as the backbone of the regional system and as a result many of the priority projects serve to strengthen and support the state transportation system. Moving forward there will be increased emphasis on maintaining and improving the efficiency of existing systems with fewer new projects and roads.



Skagit Sub-RTPO Improvement Projects

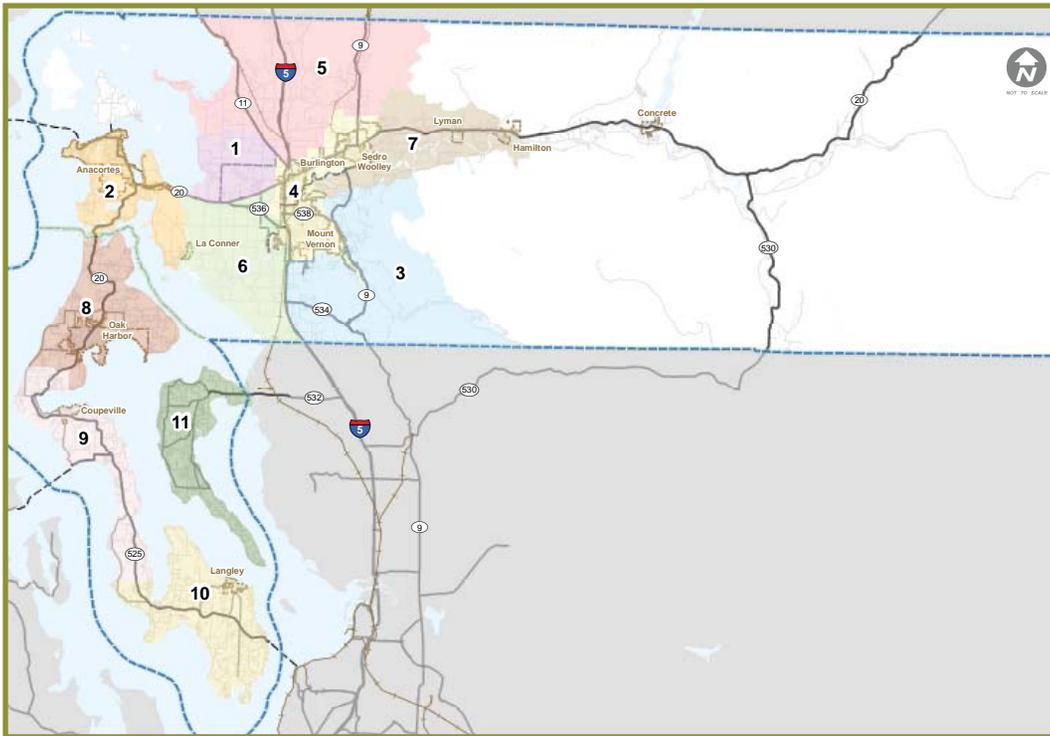


Island Sub-RTPO Improvement Projects

## Section 1: Executive Summary

The M/RTP summarizes regionally significant projects by 11 sub regions within the RTPO (7 in Skagit County and 4 in Island County)

Expanded promotion of carpooling and vanpooling is appropriate to serve the added residential growth in the MPO sub region and is being encouraged by local government in the entire region.



RTPO Subregions

## Environmental Constraints

The M/RTP identifies the potential for improvement projects to have significant environmental impacts. The analysis focused on state highway and local agency projects that significantly add to the footprint of roadways. The environmental constraints analysis for the M/RTP is not intended to identify specific environmental impacts of road projects included in the M/RTP, or to be used in determining environmental mitigation. It will be used by the region to understand potential issues that may affect implementation or costs of transportation projects. Analysis of specific direct and indirect impacts and potential mitigations will occur as individual transportation projects and programs are further defined and permitted.

### Financial Constraints

Federal and state regulations for Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plans require a financial analysis to show how the transportation improvements and programs can be implemented with reasonably expected funds. In addition, the regulations allow the M/RTP to identify how additional potential revenues could be generated to fund more projects or programs. The financial analysis for the M/RTP is based on historical trends for revenues and expenditures, and current rules and regulations controlling transportation funding programs. The estimates are used to establish a likely range of revenues for regional transportation improvements and programs. All revenues and costs are evaluated in terms of their “year of expenditure.” This accounts for the differences in the growth of project costs versus revenues over the 25-year horizon of the M/RTP.

### State Highway Funding

Almost \$2.6 billion in desired state highway improvements have been identified in the Skagit-Island region if financial constraints were not considered. Of that, more than \$2 billion in WSDOT project costs are identified as high priority projects. Another \$500 million in year of expenditure project costs are identified for medium and low priority improvements. State highway funding is appropriated by the State legislature and approved by the governor. Historical State spending may not be correlated to future spending.

### Funding Implementation: Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The federal metropolitan transportation planning statute (SAFETEA-LU) requires that the MTP include a fiscally-constrained project and program list. The fiscal constraint requirement is intended to ensure that long-range transportation plans reflect realistic assumptions about future revenues. Approximately \$190 million is needed to fully fund all

the local agency MTP capital improvements. Approximately 30 percent of the projects are identified as high priority. This represents \$54 million over the 25-year planning period. The available capital revenues for the Skagit metropolitan area are approximately \$12 million over the same time period. A funding gap of approximately \$42 million is estimated for funding the high priority projects. To address this difference, some of the high priority projects may need to be deferred to later years beyond the 2035 planning horizon, unless grants or other revenues can be accelerated.

### Funding Implementation: Regional Transportation Plan

More than \$430 million will be needed to fully fund RTP transportation improvement projects identified by the local agencies. Approximately 80 percent of these costs are identified as high priorities. This represents \$343 million during the life of the plan. A funding gap of almost \$160 million is estimated for funding the RTP high priority projects. Similar to the MTP, improvements may need to be deferred to later years beyond 2035, unless grants or other revenues can be accelerated.

### Transit Funding

Local transit sales taxes, fare revenues, and grant funding are the primary funding sources for Skagit Transit and Island Transit. The transit agencies require all of these available funds to provide the existing levels of transit service within the region. In inflation-adjusted terms, transit revenues are declining. Therefore, it will be necessary to secure new sources of funding, or the level of service will decline in the future.

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*Section 2*  
**Guiding the Plan**

## Section 2: Guiding the Plan

The Skagit/Island Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan (M/RTP) establishes the strategic framework for meeting the Skagit/Island RTPO region's existing and future transportation needs. The M/RTP serves as the link between local agency transportation plans and the Washington Transportation Plan.

The focus of the M/RTP is to provide a basis for jointly selecting the highest priority transportation projects and programs for regional funding and implementation. Transportation facilities and services cross jurisdictional boundaries and the traveling public sees the system as one set of continuous facilities that connect from point A to point B. They do not typically notice that the state controls one section, the county another, and a local city yet another segment of their trip.

There are specific federal and state requirements related to regional transportation plans. Federal policy requires preparation of a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the greater Mount Vernon urban area. The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) sets

forth the requirements for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Skagit and Island Counties.

The Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Organization (RTPO) is responsible for meeting both the federal and state requirements for the two-county region. Skagit and Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards member agencies (Skagit Council

of Governments (SCOG) and Island-Sub Region RTPO) understand the need to view transportation issues and needs collectively, so the MTP and RTP have been combined into a single regional transportation plan.

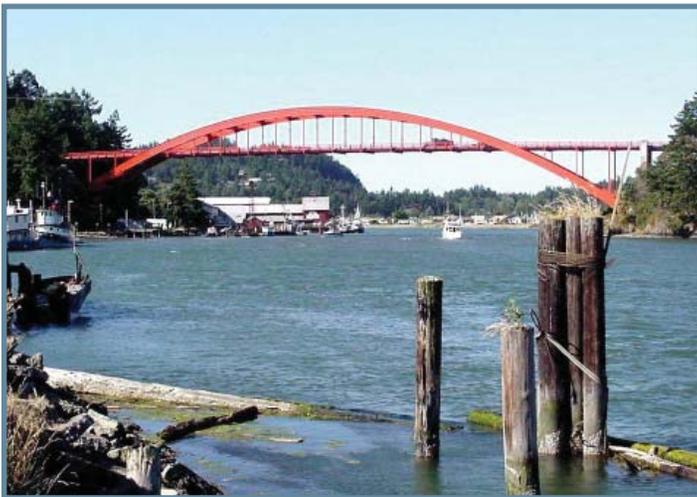
Both the federal and state requirements for the MTP and RTP require public participation in developing the plan. The Skagit and Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards and its member agencies support public input, because the success of any plan depends on the support of the community it serves.

The combined M/RTP examines the region's transportation needs over the next 25 years. It builds on strategies identified by state and local agencies to address short-, mid-, and long-term transportation needs for the region. The projects and programs in the M/RTP are, however, constrained by available funding. Therefore, the M/RTP identifies the priorities, policies, and strategic framework for defining and selecting improvement projects and programs. It is a multimodal plan, with individual projects and strategies serving multiple travel modes and meeting a range of regional priorities. Strategies for expanding funding for regional transportation needs are also identified.

### Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization

The Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) is made up of two sub-regional planning organizations composed of local jurisdictions within Skagit and Island Counties.

SCOG is designated as the federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, Sedro-Woolley, and their adjacent unincorporated urbanized areas. Federal regulations require MPOs to develop coordinated and comprehensive transportation plans to ensure consistency and efficient use of federal funds.



Rainbow Bridge, LaConnor

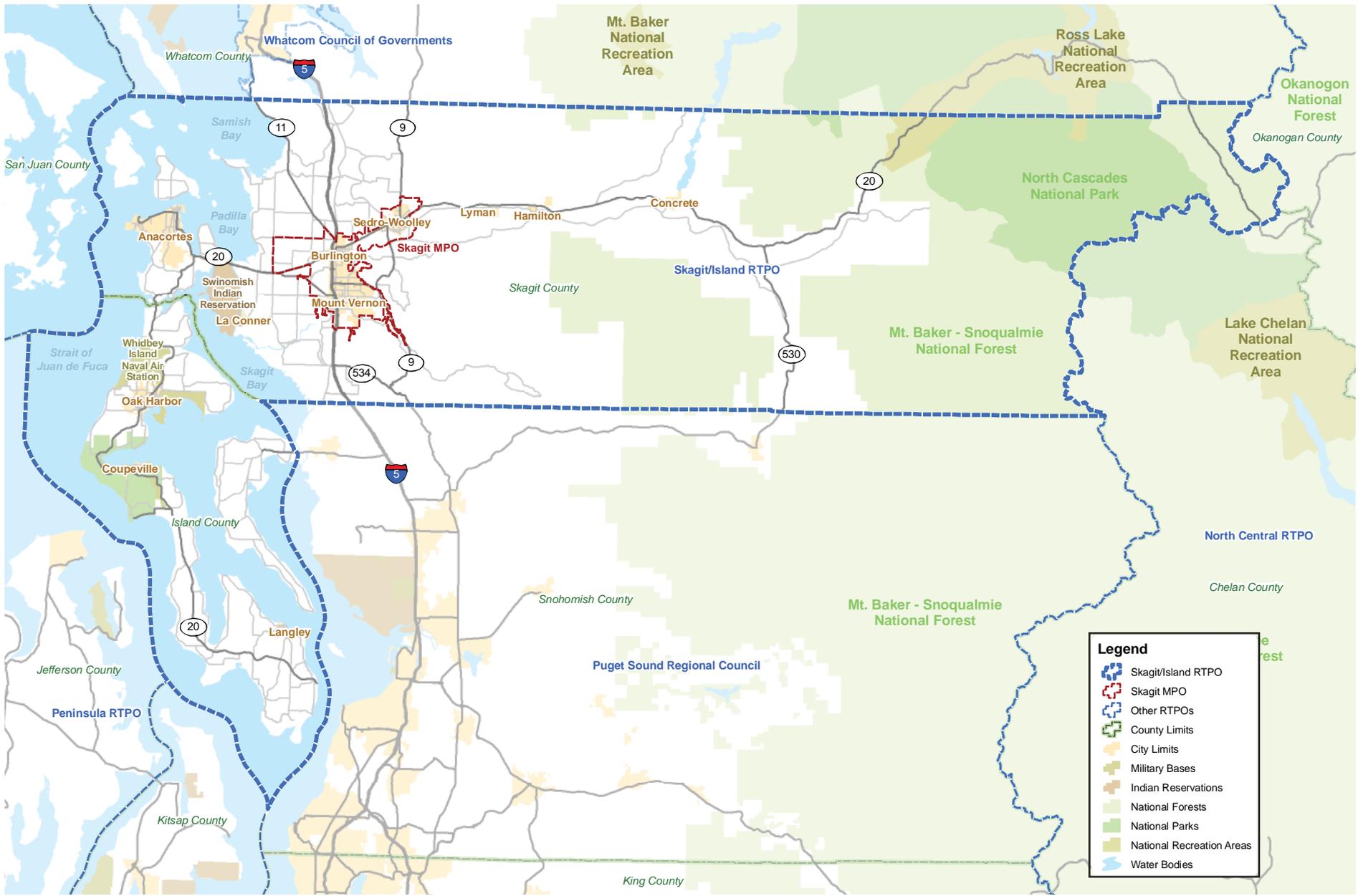


Exhibit 2-1 Metropolitan Planning Organization and Regional Transportation Planning Organization Boundaries

## Section 2: Guiding the Plan

### Under SAFETEA-LU, the metropolitan planning process “shall provide for consideration of projects and strategies” that will:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increases the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility for people and freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operations; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

SCOG is also designated as Skagit County’s lead agency for the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The Island Sub-Region RTPO is the lead agency for Island County. Combined, the two agencies encompasses all of Skagit and Island Counties. This designation was established in 1991. Exhibit 2-1 shows the boundaries of the RTPO and MPO. It also shows the local communities covered by the M/RTP.

The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) is a voluntary organization of local governments that serves as the lead agency for the Skagit Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) and the Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO). The SCOG Board is the ruling body for SCOG, and is comprised of elected officials from the following jurisdictions:

- City of Anacortes
- City of Burlington
- City of Mount Vernon
- City of Sedro-Woolley
- Port of Anacortes
- Port of Skagit
- Swinomish Tribal Community
- Samish Indian Nation
- Skagit County

- Skagit PUD
- Skagit Transit
- Town of Concrete
- Town of Hamilton
- Town of La Conner
- Town of Lyman

The Island Sub-Region RTPO is comprised of officials from the following agencies and jurisdictions:

- City of Langley
- City of Oak Harbor
- Island Transit
- Naval Air Station Whidbey Island
- Port Districts
- Skagit County
- Town of Coupeville

Development of the M/RTP is also supported by the Skagit-Island sub-RTPO Technical Advisory Committees (TAC). Both Skagit and Island sub-RTPO TACs are comprised of public works directors, transportation planners and engineers, and other staff from local agencies, as well as the Swinomish Tribal Community, and WSDOT. They provide input on local agency plans, projects, priorities, and other data for the regional transportation plan.

## Federal and State Transportation Planning Requirements

Federal and state requirements establish the specific needs for the regional transportation plan and overlap in many areas, including a goal for promoting multimodal transportation strategies based on land use plans and support of economic growth. Public involvement is also a key component of these requirements.

### Federal Planning Requirements

The Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) replaced the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) as the basis for federal surface transportation planning and funding. SAFETEA-LU builds on and expands planning requirements established in TEA-21 and prior legislation.

As of July 1, 2007, regional transportation plans and the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) that are based on the transportation plans must meet the requirements set forth in SAFETEA-LU in order to be eligible for federal transportation funds.

SAFETEA-LU builds off of the prior TEA-21 regulations. However, SAFETEA-LU includes several modifications and new provisions. These are summarized as follows:

- Encourages MPOs to consult and coordinate with other planning activities including those associated with growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, and freight movement.
- Promotes consultation with state and local agencies responsible for land use, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation as related to the MTP.
- Establishes safety and security of the transportation system as separate planning factors.
- Requires plans to add intermodal connectors as a transportation facility.
- Requires plans to include a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities, in consultation with federal, state, and tribal agencies.
- Requires that projects seeking funding from certain federal transit programs be derived from a locally developed public transit/human services transportation program.

- Requires that representatives of users of pedestrian walkways, bicycle facilities, and the disabled be included as parties to be provided the opportunity to participate in the planning process.
- Requires that public meetings on the MTP are conducted at convenient and accessible locations and times.
- Requires that visualization techniques be used to help describe the plans.
- States that the MTP and related public information are to be available in electronic formats, such as the internet.

SAFETEA-LU requires the transportation plan to be based on a 20-year forecast period. The plan must cover major roadways, transit, multimodal and intermodal facilities, with emphasis on facilities that serve regional transportation functions. The MTP should address capital projects, operational and management strategies to preserve and enhance the performance and safety of the region's transportation system. The transportation plan needs to include a financial analysis to show how the facility improvements and programs can be implemented. The financial analysis can also identify strategies to increase funding to support implementation of other regional transportation projects or programs.

SAFETEA-LU expired in September 2009 and is subject to reauthorization over the next two years. In the interim, Congress



Best-McLean Roundabout

## Section 2: Guiding the Plan



Bicyclists in Skagit County

is extending the provisions of SAFETEA-LU. It is likely that a new multi-year transportation fund bill will be in place, with new funding levels, new programs and new requirements during the life of this M/RTP and those changes will be reflected in future updates.

- Assess regional development patterns and define projects and programs to preserve the existing transportation system, improve the operation of the system, relieve vehicular congestion, and maximize the mobility of people and goods.
- Establish the regional approach to guide the development of an integrated, multimodal regional transportation system.
- Ensure that all transportation projects, programs, and transportation demand management measures in the region that have an impact on regional facilities or services are consistent with the RTP.
- Ensure that the regional Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) plan is consistent with and incorporated into the demand management elements of the RTP.
- Highlight specific state concurrency requirements for Whidbey Island.

### Washington State Planning Requirements

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) sets forth the state requirements for a regional transportation plan (RTP). As noted above, many of the State of Washington regional transportation planning requirements overlap with the federal requirements.

Under RCW 47.80.30, the RTP is to be prepared in cooperation with WSDOT, ports, transit operators, and local governmental agencies in the region. The RTP is required to:

- Be based on least-cost planning methodology that provides the most cost-effective transportation facilities, services, and programs.
- Identify existing and planned transportation facilities and programs that should function as an integrated regional transportation system.
- Establish level of service standards for state highways of regional significance.
- Include a financial plan showing how the regional transportation plan can be implemented.

Additional administrative guidelines are provided by the State to assist the RTPOs in preparing the transportation plan. The guidelines provide minimum standards for the RTP. They cover identification of application of data, identification of projects, financial evaluations, and agency and public coordination activities.

### Public Participation

The federal SAFETEA-LU legislation requires the development and implementation of a Public Participation Plan. The Public Participation Plan must be in place prior to MPO adoption of transportation plans addressing SAFETEA-LU provisions. SAFETEA-LU requires that the Public Participation Plan be developed in consultation with all interested parties. Furthermore, SAFETEA-LU requires that public information be made available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the internet. The adopted Public Participation Plan identifies outreach and involvement strategies.

Public participation is a key element of the regional transportation planning process. The Skagit and Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards developed a Public Participation Plan to:

- Build agreement among stakeholders, interested parties, agencies that make up the SCOG, and the public;
- Develop a Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Regional Transportation Plan that has the support of the community; and
- Ensure the success of the transportation planning effort.

### Public Participation Plan Goals

Federal regulations establish the following goals for the public involvement process:

- Maintain a proactive public involvement process.
- Support early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans.
- Provide complete information, timely public notice, and full public access to key decisions.
- Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives

of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects.

- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and open public meetings where matters related to the federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered.
- Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points.
- Consider and respond to public input received during the planning process.
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to low-income and minority households.
- Provide all interested parties with reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan.

In addition, the Skagit and Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards' public participation process for the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan was also designed to:

- Inform the community about the update effort, including the purpose of the plan, and the reasons for the update.
- Obtain input from members of the community, both at key decision points and throughout the planning process.



SR 9/SR 538 "Big Rock" Roundabout

## Section 2: Guiding the Plan

- Encourage two-way communication between the SCOG and the community.
- Meet SAFETEA-LU requirements for the use of visualization techniques in public participation efforts.
- Ensure that elected officials, staff, and consultants fully understand and consider the concerns of stakeholders, interested parties, and the community.
- Provide a decision-making framework for plan development.

### SAFETEA-LU defines “Interested Parties” as:

- Citizens;
- Affected public agencies;
- Representatives of public transportation employees;
- Freight shippers;
- Private providers of transportation;
- Representatives of users of public transportation;
- Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities;
- Representatives of the mobility-impaired;
- Providers of freight transportation services; and
- Other interested parties.

- Build lasting agreements among the parties involved.
- Ensure a broad base of public support for the update.

### Public Participation Plan Methods

SAFETEA-LU requires that, in carrying out the Public Participation Plan, the MPO shall, to the maximum extent practicable, hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, employ visualization techniques to describe plans, and make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the internet, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information.

To meet the goals of the Public Participation Plan and federal requirements, and to ensure that the process is efficient and effective, the following broad strategies were employed:

- Provide multiple methods of public engagement including general dissemination of information through media, large informational meetings, meetings in the different areas of the region, a

project web page, and an on-line public comment system.

- Build on member agencies’ existing outreach and communication processes.
- Establish and maintain consistent project messages throughout the planning and implementation processes.
- Emphasize visual communication techniques where appropriate, especially when working with the general public.
- Place a special emphasis on outreach to minorities and the rural population, including translation of project materials into Spanish and having Spanish speaking staff at meetings, as needed.

### Identification of Stakeholders/Interested Parties

A stakeholder is considered to be an individual or group affected by a plan, program, or project, including those who may not be aware they are affected. Stakeholders include the general public; environmental, health, neighborhood, citizen, and civic organizations; traditionally underserved populations such as people with disabilities, low-income, and racial and ethnic minorities; and affected public agencies. Stakeholders and interested parties were identified based on input from Skagit and Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards’ member jurisdictions and agencies, past planning processes, and local advocacy groups. In addition to the parties identified above, stakeholders may also include business owners, business groups, and property owners.

### Outreach and Public Information

The key components of outreach are established agency public notification procedures, the media, the project website, and project fact sheets. Spanish translations of outreach materials and other information were provided as requested.

**Notification.** All public meetings, key project decision points, and public review comment periods such as issuance of the Draft

Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan (M/RTP) for comment were preceded by general public notification via newspaper, newsletters, and press releases to local media, as well as through member jurisdictions and the project website. Notification also was sent directly to identified stakeholders. Notification occurred at least 10 days in advance of public meetings.

**Media.** News releases were sent to media contacts to announce the startup of public involvement, key decision points in the planning process, and public review and comment periods such as issuance of the Draft M/RTP for comment. News releases identified sources of further information and opportunities for comment, including information on how to request materials in alternative languages or formats. SCOG maintains a list of local media outlets including television, radio, and newspapers.

**Website.** The project website ([www.scog.net](http://www.scog.net)) included an overview of the project, project facts sheets, an online comment form, and notice of upcoming meetings. Materials from project meetings were posted on the website. The Draft and Final Public Participation Plan and the Draft M/RTP also were available on the project website. The project website identifies sources of further information and opportunities for comment, including information on how to request materials in alternative languages or formats.

### Meetings

Meetings of the following committees and the general public were key elements of the public participation process. All meetings were open to the public. In addition to the formal meetings scheduled as part of the Plan update, SCOG and Island RTPO staff provided status reports on the update at other meetings and forums, as appropriate.

**Technical Advisory Committee.** The Skagit and Island Sub-Regional

RTPO Boards have established sub-RTPO Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) for each sub-region to ensure coordination of the regional transportation planning process. Both TAC's made recommendations to their respective sub-regional boards at key points during the planning process. The TAC's had formal input on developing the M/RTP at meetings from October 2009 to January 2011.

**Sub-Regional Boards.** The Skagit and Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards are the formal decision-making body for matters relating to regional transportation planning and has the authority to adopt regional transportation plans. The Skagit and Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards meet biannually individually and the two sub-regional boards meet monthly or bimonthly. The Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan 2010-2035 was presented and discussed at four sub-regional board meetings (2 for each County), prior to its review of the Draft M/RTP. Board members included elected officials from member jurisdictions, a planning commission member at large (Skagit Co), Transit representatives and representatives from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

**Public Workshops.** Public workshops were conducted to gather input from the general public during the planning process. Workshops were held in December 2009 at two locations – Skagit Station in Mount Vernon and Island County Courthouse in Coupeville. To make the planning process accessible and meaningful to the general public, the workshops employed visual communication techniques. The workshops

### The seven sections of the M/RTP address the following elements:

- I. Executive Summary
  - II. Guiding the Plan
  - III. Relationship to Other Plans
  - IV. Transportation Framework & Policies
  - V. Transportation Improvements & Programs
  - VI. Environmental Constraints
  - VII. Financial Constraints
- Appendix

## Section 2: Guiding the Plan

included exhibits related to key issues and project alternatives, opportunities to discuss the project with representatives of the project team, and opportunities for comment.

### Public Input

Opportunities for public input occurred throughout the planning process, including during plan development and during the Draft M/RTP comment period. Input received during plan development is summarized in Appendix B. Input received during the Draft Plan comment period is also summarized and included in Appendix B.

**Public Input.** Input from the public, stakeholders, and interested parties was obtained via the public workshops, open houses, and project website ([www.scog.net](http://www.scog.net)).

**Comment Period.** Upon issuance of the Draft M/RTP, a comment period of at least 30 days was established prior to adoption of the M/RTP by the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards, with the comment period occurring from February 8, 2011 to March 8, 2011.

### Organization of the Plan

The M/RTP is organized to assist member agencies, WSDOT, the public, and others with:

- Understanding how the M/RTP was developed
- Defining the region's transportation priorities
- Summarizing high priority transportation strategies and improvements for various parts of the region
- Noting potential environmental issues of the projects
- Identifying funding constraints and options

### Plan Updates

Under federal law, Metropolitan Transportation Plans are required to be

updated every five years in air quality attainment regions. Therefore, the next scheduled M/RTP update will occur no later than August 2015. The Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards can, however, amend the M/RTP as changes occur during that time period.

Under the Washington State GMA, the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards are required to periodically update the regional transportation strategy. This review process is intended to keep the M/RTP up-to-date with changes in regional conditions, needs, or funding.



*Section 3*

**Relationship to Other Plans**

## Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans

The M/RTP is a document that is built upon the priorities and objectives established in local agency plans and the Washington State Transportation Plan (WTP). Regional transportation planning provides a unified blueprint to ensure that the efforts of all affected jurisdictions are coordinated and that the individual parts of the overall transportation system function as a whole. This plan is also built upon the efforts outlined in the previous plan as it established regional projects and priorities that have been completed or are underway.

Land use and transportation are forever interrelated, as decisions made in one realm affect the other and vice versa. Thus, while history and current commitments provide the initial basis for the M/RTP, the M/RTP also must consider future land uses and growth patterns. The M/RTP needs to match transportation resources to prioritize existing deficiencies, as well as serve forecast growth and support the economic development of the region.

Understanding the broad regional travel characteristics also assists in developing the M/RTP. In 2008, Whatcom Council of Governments and Skagit Council of Governments undertook a survey of travel characteristics of area residents. The survey provides insights on socioeconomic factors that affect travel in the region. A summary of findings related to trip rates, travel patterns, and use of alternative modes is summarized in this chapter.

The M/RTP also incorporates key strategies from the updated Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Plan. This plan is a separate SAFETEA-LU requirement that addresses transportation issues for special needs populations.

## Regional Land Use Growth

While the history of the region establishes the background for the M/RTP, forecast growth patterns will also affect priorities. The Skagit metropolitan area is anticipated to continue to be the focal point for residential growth within the Skagit-Island region. Employment growth, while focused primarily in the metropolitan area, will affect transportation needs throughout the region.

Local population dynamics are highly influenced by an area's employment climate. Generally, population growth is based primarily on migration, driven by people in search of, or taking, new jobs in an area. In large part, population growth depends on how favorable an area's employment opportunities are in relation to other areas. Stated simply, people follow jobs and in turn create demand for local goods and services, such as housing.

## Historical Population Growth

### Skagit County

Exhibit 3-1 shows historical population change in Skagit County and

**Exhibit 3-1**  
**Skagit County Population By MPO, UGA, and Unincorporated Areas**

|                                      | 2000           | 2010           | Average Annual Growth Rate |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Total in MPO Area                    | 48,300         | 56,900         | 1.7%                       |
| Total in UGAs                        | 67,600         | 78,900         | 1.6%                       |
| Total in Unincorporated/<br>Non UGAs | 35,400         | 40,400         | 1.3%                       |
| <b>Total County</b>                  | <b>103,000</b> | <b>119,300</b> | <b>1.5%</b>                |

## Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans

Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) within the County. Population in Skagit County grew by more than 16,000 people from 2000 to 2010, an increase of 16 percent at an average annual growth rate (AAGR) of 1.5 percent.

The UGAs with the most growth between 2000 and 2010 were Mount Vernon, which grew by about 5,000 people at an average annual rate of 1.6 percent, and Anacortes, which grew by nearly 2,200 people at an average annual rate of 1.4 percent.

Almost 70 percent of overall population growth in the County has located in urban growth areas over the 10 year period. Of that growth, approximately 75 percent located in the metropolitan area. Exhibit 3-2 shows the historical change in the share of Skagit County population. The distribution of population within the County did not change substantially over the last 10 years.

### Island County

Population in Island County grew by about 9,500 people over the 2000 to 2010 period, an increase of 13 percent at an average annual growth rate (AAGR) of 1.3 percent. The UGA with the most growth during the time period was Oak Harbor, with growth of about 3,500 people at an average annual rate of 1.5 percent. Over 55 percent of the population growth in the last 10 years has located in unincorporated areas, with growth of approximately 5,400 people.

Exhibit 3-4 shows the historical change in the share of Island County population. The distribution of population within the County did not change substantially between 2000 and 2010, with over one-third of population located in UGAs and almost two-thirds of people located in unincorporated areas in 2000 and 2010.

**Exhibit 3-2**

#### Percent of Skagit County Population by Incorporated and Unincorporated Areas

|                                   | 2000  | 2010  | Change in County Share |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|------------------------|
| Total in MPO Area                 | 46.9% | 47.7% | 0.8%                   |
| Total in UGAs                     | 65.6% | 66.1% | 0.5%                   |
| Total in Unincorporated/ Non UGAs | 34.4% | 33.9% | -0.5%                  |

**Exhibit 3-3**

#### Island County Population By Incorporated and Unincorporated Areas

|                                   | 2000          | 2010          | Average Annual Growth Rate |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Total in UGAs                     | 25,600        | 29,700        | 1.5%                       |
| Total in Unincorporated/ Non UGAs | 46,000        | 51,400        | 1.1%                       |
| <b>Total County</b>               | <b>71,600</b> | <b>81,100</b> | <b>1.3%</b>                |

**Exhibit 3-4**

#### Percent of Island County Population by Incorporated and Unincorporated Areas

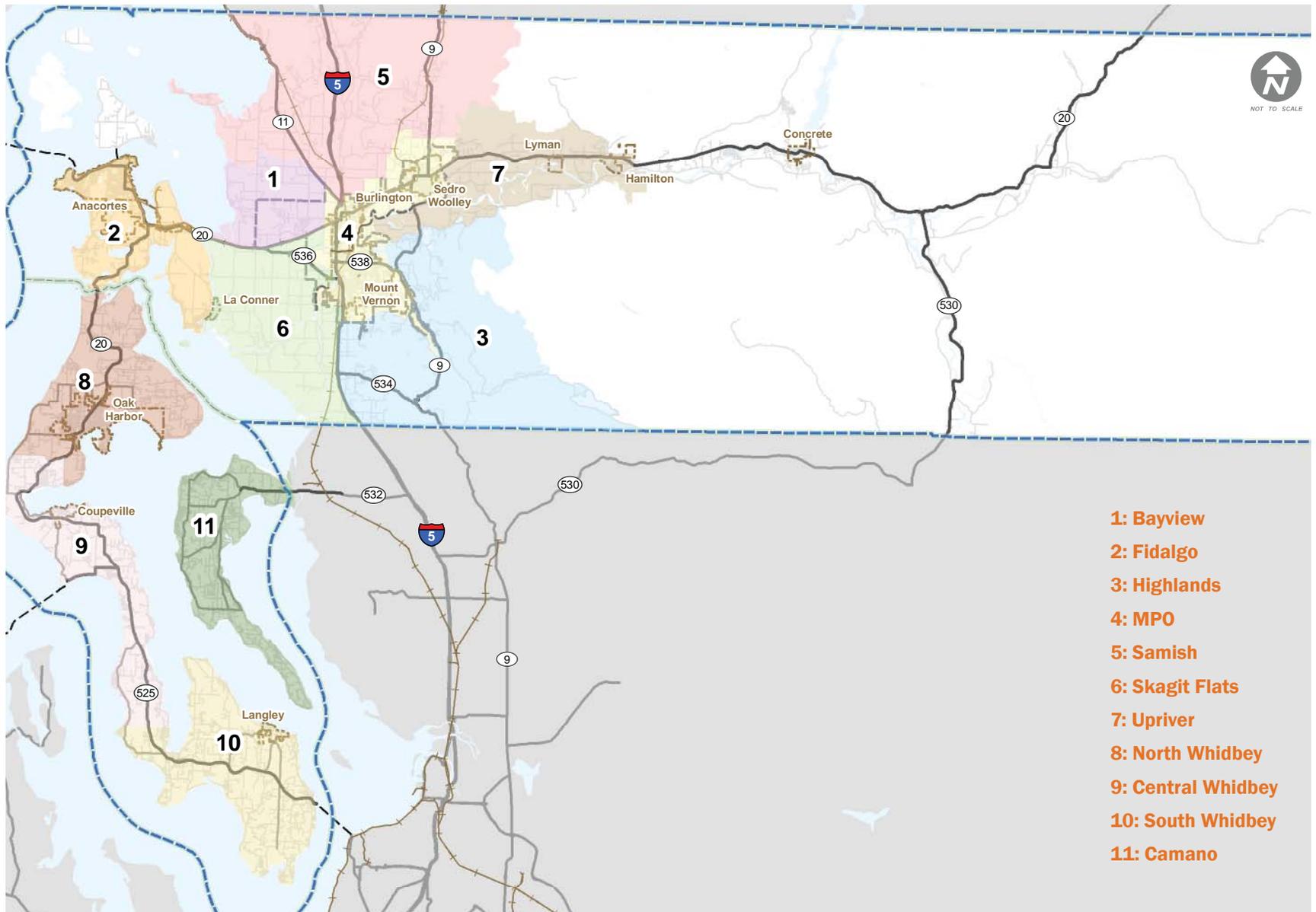
|                                   | 2000  | 2010  | Change in County Share |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|------------------------|
| Total in UGAs                     | 35.8% | 36.6% | 0.9%                   |
| Total in Unincorporated/ Non UGAs | 64.2% | 63.4% | -0.9%                  |

Exhibit 3-1 thru 3-4 Source: U.S. Census 1990 and 2000, 2008 Washington Office of Financial Management: <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/april1/finalpop2009.xls> and Small Area Estimates Program <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/smallarea/default.asp>

Note: AAGR is average annual growth rate

Note: The population estimates for are for the urban growth area, which includes the city limits and any unincorporated areas within the UGA.

## Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans



Subregion Land Use Analysis

# Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans

## Regional Residential Growth by Subregion

The charts and graphs in Exhibit 3-5 reflect overall residential growth, organized by planning subregion. While these forecasts may not exactly replicate the growth that is expected in local jurisdiction Comprehensive Plans, the overall trends are consistent with the expected growth rates across the Skagit-Island region.

The increased proportion of residential growth within the Skagit metropolitan area will add more travel to the regional arterials and state highways in and around the cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley. This will result in the need for adding capacity and upgrading existing roads to current urban standards.

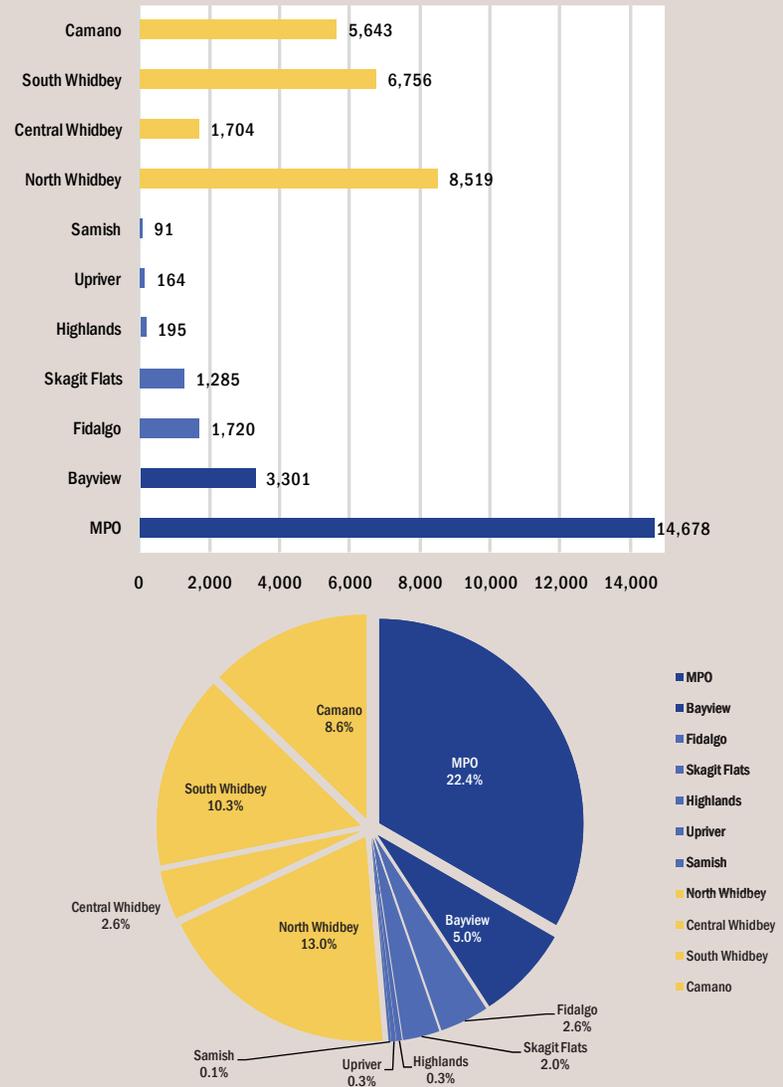
### Regional Residential Growth

Over the next 25 years, more than 44,000 new residential units are expected to be added to the Skagit-Island region. More than 50 percent of the new growth will occur in Island County and approximately one third in the Skagit metropolitan area.

Overall this represents an average annual growth rate of 1.5 percent for the Skagit-Island RTPO region. The forecast growth is consistent with the regions historical growth rate of 1.4 percent per year between 2000 and 2010.

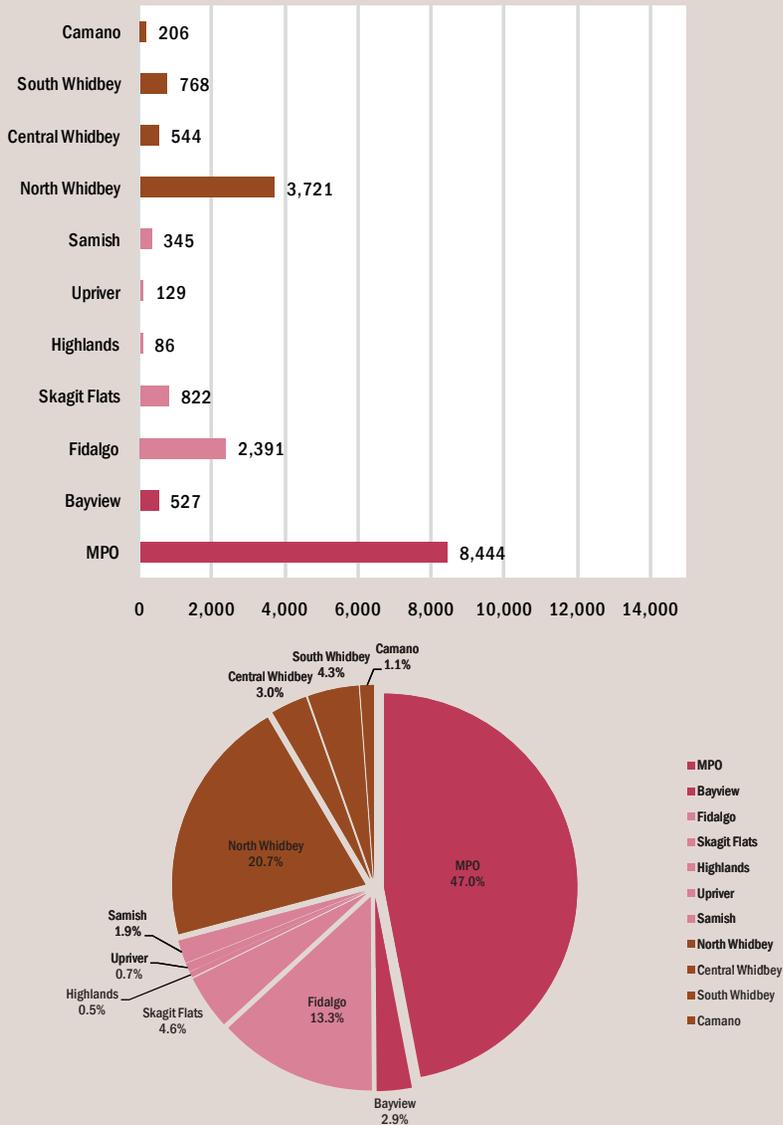
More than 60 percent of residential growth is expected to be in single-family residences within the Skagit-Island region. Multi-family residences are expected to grow at a faster rate (approximately 20 percent or residential growth) within the Skagit metropolitan area as compared to other areas within the region. Overall, the composition of the region's housing is not expected to change much within the next 25 years.

**Exhibit 3-5**  
Regional Residential Growth by Subregion (dwelling units) - 2010 to 2035



## Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans

**Exhibit 3-6**  
Regional Employment Growth by Subregion (employees) - 2010 to 2035



### Employment Growth

The charts and graphs in Exhibit 3-6 reflect forecasted employment growth for the region and are also organized by planning subarea. Almost 18,000 new employees are expected to be added to the Skagit-Island region over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent. The 0.7 percent growth rate in employment is lower than the historical growth rate of 1.3 percent between 2000 and 2008.

Household growth is forecasted to outpace employment growth in the Skagit-Island region. The ratio of jobs to housing is expected to decline in the future from 0.97 in 2008 to 0.78 in 2035. An imbalance of jobs to housing will result in longer commutes and increased traffic congestion in the future.

The charts show the relative change in employment sectors for the Skagit and Island Counties. Within the Skagit metropolitan area, employment in the services, government, and retail sectors is expected to increase in faster rates than employment in education and manufacturing sectors. The increase in services and retail employment may result in the need for improvements to the local arterials that serve these types of employment centers.

#### Regional Employment Growth

Almost 18,000 new employees are expected to be added to the Skagit-Island region over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent.

The 0.7 percent forecast growth rate is lower than the historical annual growth rate of 1.7 percent between 2001 and 2008.

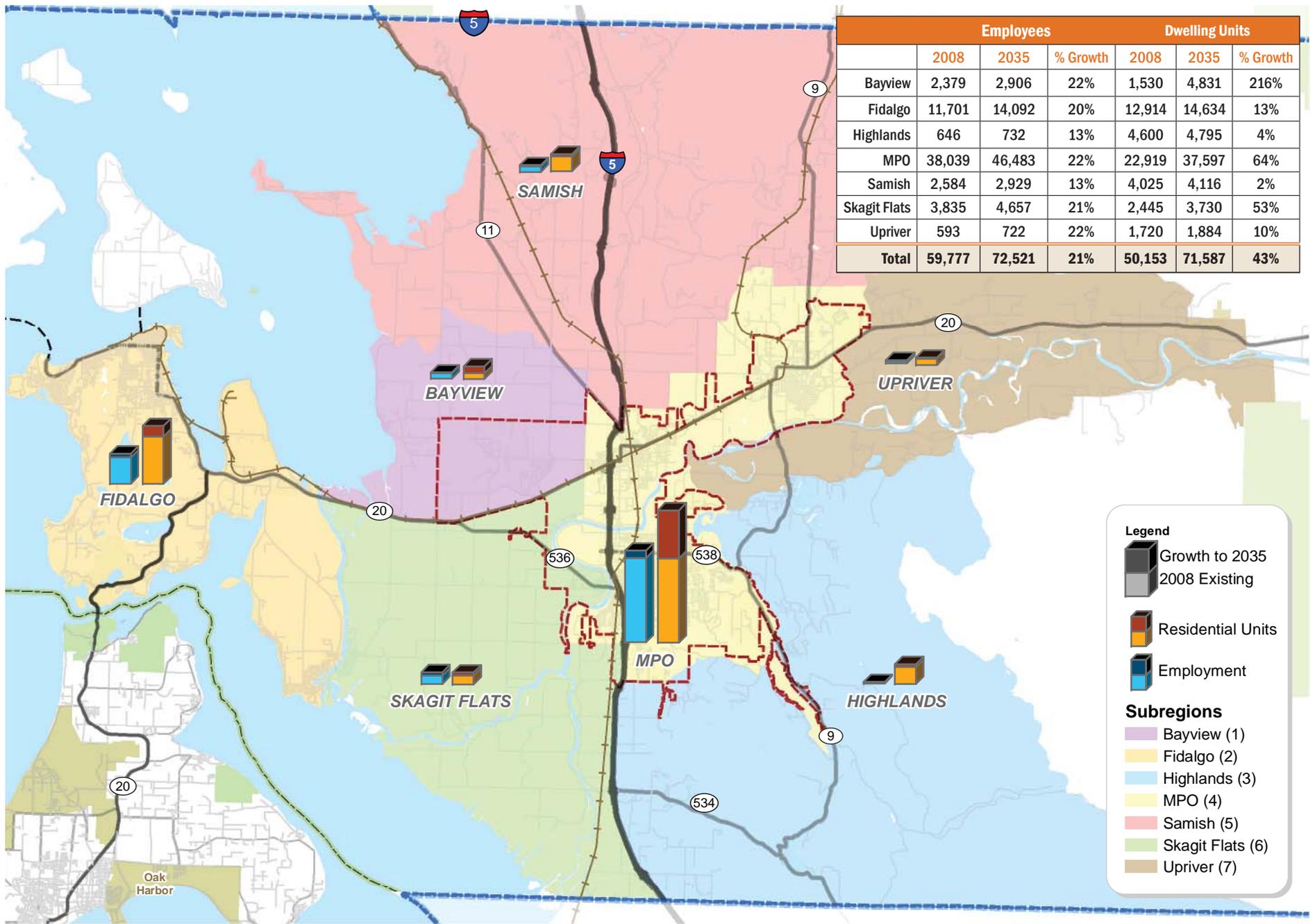
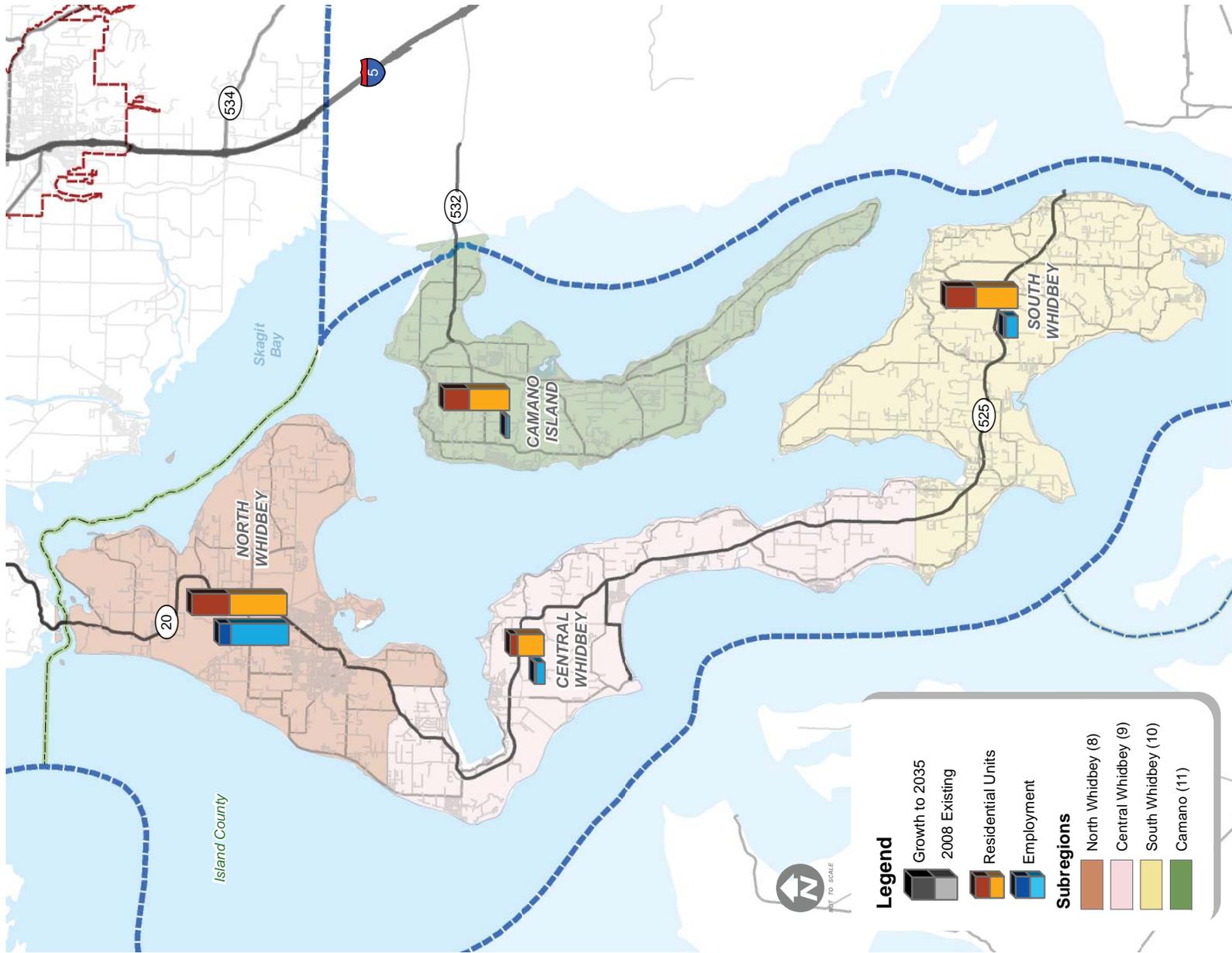


Exhibit 3-7 Skagit County Employment and Residential Land Use (2008-2035)



|              | Employees     |               |            | Dwelling Units |               |            |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
|              | 2008          | 2035          | % Growth   | 2008           | 2035          | % Growth   |
| Camano       | 993           | 1,199         | 21%        | 9,170          | 14,813        | 62%        |
| N. Whidbey   | 17,928        | 21,649        | 21%        | 13,063         | 21,582        | 65%        |
| C. Whidbey   | 2,623         | 3,167         | 21%        | 5,899          | 7,603         | 29%        |
| S. Whidbey   | 3,700         | 4,468         | 21%        | 9,573          | 16,329        | 71%        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>25,244</b> | <b>30,483</b> | <b>21%</b> | <b>37,705</b>  | <b>60,327</b> | <b>60%</b> |

Exhibit 3-8 Island County Employment and Residential Land Use (2008-2035)

### Regional Travel Patterns

In 2008, NuStats conducted a comprehensive study of travel behavior in Whatcom, Skagit, and Island Counties (2008 North Sound Travel Survey). The survey covered households throughout the three counties, including the metropolitan area around Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley; cities and towns outside of the metropolitan area; and unincorporated areas of the county. The survey was conducted to assist the agencies with understanding the socioeconomic factors that affect travel, which in turn are applied in updating the regional travel demand forecasting model. The resulting survey data and model outputs provide a technical basis for defining transportation improvement needs.

The results of the survey provide information on regional travel patterns which affect the need for transportation improvements. Key survey results are summarized below.

### Household Characteristics and Trip Rates

The number of people in a household affects the number and types of trips generated. A higher number of people in a household does not directly result in a higher number of trips generated per day. This is due to differences in income levels, the ages of household members, the number of vehicles, the number of licensed drivers, and other factors. The following summarizes the household and trip characteristics for the Skagit-Island region.

- Vehicle trip rates in the Skagit-Island region averaged 7.0 trips per household and 3.0 trips per person. Vehicle trips are trips made by individuals in a household driving a vehicle, and a vehicle trip rate is the number of vehicle trips per household.
- Households reported an average of 2.3 persons per household and 2.3 vehicles per household.

- Certain demographic characteristics were positively associated with higher rates of travel. These were household income, number of vehicles, number of workers in household, and number of students. Of these, the number of students had the greatest impact on trip rates.
- Households reported an average of 1.3 workers per household in Skagit and Island Counties. Households with no workers reported making 5.0 trips, while those with three or more workers reported making 14.2 trips.
- Households reported an average of 0.4 students per household. Households with no students reported 6.4 trips, while those with three or more students reported 18.2 trips.
- On average, females made more trips than males. The female trip rate was 3.7, while males averaged 3.4 trips.
- Persons aged 45 to 54 years had the highest person trip rate (4.1 trips) among all age categories.
- Employed persons, either part-time or full-time, reported making an average of 4.0 trips, compared to 3.1 trips for unemployed persons 16 years or older. Students took 3.2 trips.
- Most households (63.5 percent) reported making between one and ten trips within a 24-hour period. Only 9.1 percent reported making zero trips, while 22.5 percent of surveyed households made between 11 and 20 trips, and 4.9 percent made more than 20 trips per day.
- Approximately one third of all trip purposes (32.5 percent for Skagit County and 31.4 percent for



Specialized Paratransit Service

## Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans

Island County) were recorded as “personal activities at home”. Work accounted for the next most frequent reason for travel (14.3 percent for Skagit County and 11.3 percent for Island County) followed by shopping and personal business (12.5 percent and 8.7 percent respectively for Skagit County, 10.1 percent for both trip purposes for Island County).

- Overall Average Vehicle Occupancy for the Skagit-Island region was 1.6 persons per vehicle.

Exhibit 3-9 compares the region where the households and places of work are located for employed respondents. Island County has the highest percentage of workers (17.5 percent) who work outside of the region. The vast majority of workers do not cross county lines to get to their places of work. Exhibit 3-9 also compares shopping trips. Island County also had the highest percentage of shopping trips outside of the region 13.8 percent. More than 95 percent of Skagit County shopping trips stayed within the County.

Exhibit 3-9  
Cross-County Travel

| County Lives In            | Travels To |        |        |             |
|----------------------------|------------|--------|--------|-------------|
|                            | Whatcom    | Skagit | Island | Out of Area |
| <b>Travel for Work</b>     |            |        |        |             |
| Skagit                     | 3.3%       | 83.9%  | 2.3%   | 10.5%       |
| Island                     | 0.8%       | 5.3%   | 76.4%  | 17.5%       |
| <b>Travel for Shopping</b> |            |        |        |             |
| Skagit                     | 1.3%       | 95.5%  | 0.5%   | 2.7%        |
| Island                     | --         | 10.2%  | 76.0%  | 13.8%       |

### Travel Mode

As shown in Exhibit 3-10, based on the NuStats survey:

- Approximately two thirds (64 percent to 69 percent) of all trips were made by an auto driver, and approximately 20 percent were made by an auto passenger for all three areas.
- Transit trips in Island County comprised 2.3 percent of all trips and Skagit County just 0.3 percent. Overall, the Skagit-Island RTPO was 1.3 percent.
- Ferry trips in Island County comprised of 1.4 percent of all trips. Skagit MPO was just under one percent and Skagit County was less than a half of a percent of all trips.
- Non-motorized accounted for 8.2 percent combined in Island County, the highest of the three areas. Skagit MPO was 7.6 percent and was 6.4 percent. Walking trips were approximately 10 times higher than bicycle trips in all three areas.

Exhibit 3-10  
Travel Mode by Area

| Travel Mode        | Skagit-Island RTPO | Skagit County | Island County |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Walk               | 6.7%               | 5.8%          | 7.6%          |
| Bicycle            | 0.6%               | 0.6%          | 0.6%          |
| Drive Auto         | 66.6%              | 69.1%         | 64.0%         |
| Passenger Auto     | 19.8%              | 19.6%         | 20.0%         |
| Transit            | 1.3%               | 0.3%          | 2.3%          |
| School Bus         | 3.3%               | 3.5%          | 3.1%          |
| Taxi/Shuttle       | 0.1%               | 0.2%          | 0.1%          |
| Motorcycle/Scooter | 0.4%               | 0.3%          | 0.5%          |
| Ferry              | 0.9%               | 0.4%          | 1.4%          |
| Vanpool            | 0.4%               | 0.1%          | 0.2%          |
| Other Mode         | 0.1%               | 0.1%          | 0.1%          |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>100.0%</b>      | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

## Other Transportation Planning Efforts

The M/RTP builds from and supports the WTP and local agency transportation plans. The following summarizes how the M/RTP relates to these plans and implementation programs.

### Washington Transportation Plan

The Public Review Draft of the Washington Transportation Plan 2030, July 2010 provides the umbrella for all metropolitan and regional transportation plans.

The WTP sets forth the following six policy goals, in no particular order, for future investments in the transportation system:

- Economic Vitality;
- Preservation;
- Safety;
- Mobility;
- Environmental; and
- Stewardship.

The regional priorities set by the Skagit-Island M/RTP align with these State policy goals. The process for establishing regional priorities and identifying improvement projects within the fiscally constrained M/RTP support and are consistent with these WTP objectives.

**“By 2030, Washington’s transportation network connects people and communities, fostering commerce and operating seamlessly across boundaries and modes as an environmentally and financially sustainable system.”**  
*-WTP Vision*

### Statewide Transportation Concurrency Requirements

In 1998 the Washington State Legislature amended the Growth Management Act requiring “.....counties consisting of islands whose only connection to the mainland are state highways or ferry routes of statewide significance..” to meet concurrency requirements for facilities or services of statewide significance. Whidbey Island is the

only region in the state that is currently subject to this requirement for highways of statewide significance (RCW 36.70A.070).

The purpose of concurrency is to assure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development are adequate to serve the development at the time it is available for occupancy and use, without decreasing service levels below locally established minimums. Concurrency ensures consistency in land use approval and that the development of adequate public facilities are implemented; it also prevents development that is inconsistent with the public facilities necessary to support the development (WAC 365-198-840). Currently, all roads on Whidbey Island meet level of service standards, however a concurrency management program is required to address impacts from future development and population growth.

The inability to meet level of service standards for highways and for state ferry routes on Whidbey Island would have an impact on local growth management concurrency plans in Island County. Under state law (RCW 36.70A.070) the desirable outcomes would be to ensure transportation facilities and strategies are in place at the time of development, or that a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvements or strategies within six years (RCW 36.70A.070). If

## Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans

neither of these can be met the remaining options would be to petition the State to change level of service standards or place a moratorium on further development until a strategy is in place.

The Island County Sub-Regional RTPO is working closely with WSDOT to develop a concurrency management program for SR 20 and SR 525 on Whidbey Island. Island County and WSDOT recognize that work to address level-of-service standards and concurrency on Whidbey will continue. While the economic downfall has inadvertently helped maintain current levels of service by slowing down growth and development, numerous intersections will likely fail to meet LOS standards within ten years, if nothing is done. This may preclude further development from occurring until improvements are made or actions are taken to meet level of service standards. During the update of the County's Transportation Element in 2012 the County and Sub-Regional RTPO will coordinate with WSDOT, other affected agencies and the public to further develop a concurrency management plan reflecting updated population data, forecasts and traffic modeling.



Roundabout - SR 20, Sedro-Woolley

### Local Agency Transportation Plans

As required by the Growth Management Act (GMA), Skagit and Island Counties and their cities have prepared and regularly update their Comprehensive Plans. The Comprehensive Plans include Transportation Elements. The Transportation Elements set the communities' priorities and improvement strategies to address existing and future transportation

needs. These plans primarily focus on arterials and collector streets within the agency's jurisdiction; however, needs in designated urban growth areas (UGA) and connecting routes in other jurisdictions are also described in some of the plans.

The local Transportation Elements were reviewed to identify possible improvements and programs for the M/RTP. The M/RTP process combined projects from WSDOT and local jurisdictions into strategies to define the recommended framework for the regional plan (see Section 4) based on the region's priorities and policies. Island County will be updating the Transportation Element of the Island County Comprehensive Plan in 2011/2012 at which time the M/RTP will be revisited and possibly updated to ensure consistency between the regional plan and the County plan.

The M/RTP project list incorporates all regionally significant local agency projects for reference. The M/RTP must provide a financial analysis showing how the improvements and programs can be implemented; therefore, only the highest priority projects, based on the region's criteria, are included in the fiscally-constrained project list presented in the body of the M/RTP. The M/RTP also identifies projects that are a secondary priority for the regional transportation system, should additional funding become available or changes in regional needs occur prior to the next plan update.

The M/RTP also is consistent with and builds off of local land use plans and forecasts from the Comprehensive Plans. This process provides consistency between the local land use plans and the regional transportation system needs.

Development of the M/RTP included a review of agency Comprehensive Plan goals and policies. The objective was to ensure that the M/RTP goals and priorities and local plans and policies were in alignment. The analysis confirmed that local agency goals are consistent with and

## Section 3: Relationship to Other Plans

support the M/RTP goals.

### Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

SAFETEA-LU requires communities to prepare a Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan to be eligible for certain federal funding programs. The Coordinated Transportation Plan serves as a unified, comprehensive strategy that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited incomes. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is the designated recipient for federal funding programs aimed at achieving coordinated human service transportation in the state of Washington and is responsible for allocating federal funding. WSDOT requires that priorities be derived from a Coordinated Transportation Plan.

The plan, updated as part of the M/RTP update, was developed through consultation with the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG), Skagit Transit and Island Transit, and area stakeholders. The Plan recommendations were organized as coordination initiatives to better reflect the breadth and depth of strategies to achieve a fully coordinated system organized by policies, programs and projects. The Coordinated Transportation Plan identifies the following initiatives:

#### Policy Initiatives

- Organize an Information Clearinghouse
- Develop Coordinated Transportation Quality of Service Standards
- Maximize Rider-Based Federal Incentive Programs
- Regional Planning / Corridor Analysis
- Statewide Dialogue on Medicaid Brokerage Procedures

#### Program Initiatives

- Maintain Current Levels of Service

- Align Paratransit to Meet Needs of the Mobility-Impaired
- Fill Service Gaps to Unserved or Underserved areas
- Connections to adjacent communities

#### Project Initiatives

- Build Facilities to Transition Paratransit Riders to Fixed Routes
- Expand Specialized Paratransit Service Fleet
- Promote Technology Integration for Operations and Vehicles
- Develop Awareness-based Marketing Campaigns

The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan reflects the basic goals, objectives, and initiatives for public transportation service delivery in the Skagit-Island region. The M/RTP identifies how these services and programs fit as part of the overall transportation system.

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*Section 4*  
**Transportation Framework & Policies**

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

The Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan (M/RTP) is used to guide regional transportation investments over the next 25 years. It represents the efforts of government agencies serving the region to coordinate the planning of diverse transportation systems to support the region's anticipated growth and meet its priorities and goals. The M/RTP was developed through a cooperative process that involved the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG), as lead agency for the MPO and RTPO, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Northwest Region, the public, and ongoing transportation planning efforts of Skagit and Island Counties, including cities, ports, transit agencies and other service providers in the two-county region.

A wide range of transportation improvements and strategies have been identified by the region. These programs and improvements create a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system to serve the region for the next 20 or more years. The total costs of these improvements and programs will outstrip the likely available future funding. Because not all projects and programs can be funded over the next 20 years,



Anacortes Roundabout

the region established priorities for its transportation improvements. The priorities were used in the technical evaluation to establish a framework for the M/RTP. The framework essentially identifies the core transportation needs which other regional improvements will tie into. The framework was defined to help guide the development of a financially-constrained M/RTP.

### Regional Priorities

The M/RTP is used to guide regional transportation investments over the next 20 years. It represents the efforts of government agencies serving the region to coordinate the planning of diverse transportation systems to support the region's anticipated growth and meet its priorities and goals. The M/RTP was developed through a cooperative process that involved SCOG, WSDOT Northwest Region, Island & Skagit RTPOs, and the public, as well as ongoing transportation planning efforts of Skagit and Island Counties which includes 28 cities, five ports, two transit agencies, non-profit transit providers and tribal governments that constitute the two-county RTPO area. Through the public participation process, priorities were developed that focused on a systems approach to moving people, freight, and goods.

The priorities set for the regional transportation system are consistent with those established in the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The highest priorities for the Skagit-Island RTPO, in no particular order of priority, are economic vitality, preservation, safety, mobility, environment, and stewardship as key priorities.

**Economic Vitality:** *To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.*

The movement of freight and goods and supporting economic sectors that rely on the transportation system is a priority for the region. Freight movement plays an important role in the regional economy by transporting various raw materials and finished products to and from the region via rail, air, truck, and ship. The efficient movement of freight is, therefore, important for the regional transportation system. These elements are also necessary for providing access to business and good jobs in the region. Of equal importance is the improvement

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

of multimodal transportation networks for serving retail, service and tourism in our communities.

**Preservation:** *To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services.*

The region understands the importance of preserving the existing rail, bridge, pavement, transit, river, ferry and airport facilities and considers each a critical economic asset. However, revenues to the local governments that are directed toward transportation maintenance are inadequate. Governments at all levels find it difficult to transfer general revenues to maintenance when those funds are needed elsewhere. Consequently, long-term maintenance, such as pavement management, is being deferred.

**Safety:** *To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customer; and the transportation system.*

The safety and security of all individuals who use the transportation network are of high importance in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the transportation system. Improvements made to the transportation network that aim to reduce fatalities and injuries also lead to improved collision rates and improve traffic congestion. While efforts to improve safety should be taken across all modes of transportation, there is greater emphasis on improving roadway safety for auto drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians given the greater rates of fatalities in these modes.

**Mobility:** *To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout the region.*

### Six Highest Regional Priorities

**Economic Vitality**

**Preservation**

**Safety**

**Mobility**

**Environment**

**Stewardship**

Improving regional connections to facilitate the movement of people and goods in an effort to contribute to a strong economy and a better quality of life for citizens is crucial for continued growth. Attaining greater mobility for our communities involves balancing a multimodal network that integrates all modes and is able to contribute to an efficient network of services meeting varied user needs. Included in this is an emphasis on maximizing the operational aspects of existing facilities.

**Environment:** *To enhance regional quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.*

Improving the environmental quality of our neighborhoods and communities will lead to a sustainable transportation system and economic vitality. This includes finding ways to reduce environmental impacts that could potentially result from the expansion or creation of a project, as well as promoting environmentally efficient modes of transportation such as transit, vanpooling, car-sharing, bicycling, and walking.

**Stewardship:** *To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.*



Freeland Main Street

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

The integration of land use and transportation policies to protect and preserve essential public transportation facilities, while working to better manage the transportation system will provide for optimum efficiency and effective movement of people and goods.

While these are the six highest priorities, the M/RTP also considers a range of other factors in the selection of transportation improvement projects and programs. These factors include:

- Regional connections;
- Land use plans;
- Pedestrian & bicycle transportation;
- Transit, ridesharing, & other alternatives;
- Security & emergency response; and
- Costs.

These factors greatly influence the priority of a project or program for the region. The region will strive to ensure that the recommended

transportation projects and programs provide the best value for the least cost, consistent with least-cost planning practices.



Coupeville Pedestrian Overpass

### Framework for the Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Plan

A framework for the M/RTP was prepared based on the regional priorities. The framework establishes the key improvement projects and programs for the region. Other regional projects and programs were then added to the framework to complete the financially constrained M/RTP.

#### Evaluation of Roadway Improvements

The evaluation of future roadway improvements was based on 2035 land use forecasts and resulting travel demands. The Skagit-Island regional travel demand model was used to forecast levels of congestion on the transportation system in 2035. The regional model is a PM peak hour model and automobile based (does not account for non-motorized or transit modes). The lane miles of highway and arterial links were evaluated as either approaching or exceeding their planning level capacity.

Travel demand models are limited in how they represent human travel tendencies and choices. These models provide a tool for estimating likely outcomes, not definite scenarios. For this reason, some areas in the 2035 model may have higher congestion problems than will actually be experienced. Likewise, congestion in other areas may be underrepresented.

Due to significant residential growth on Camano Island and the single access point to the mainland, the regional model forecasts high volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratios and high vehicle hours of delay (VHD). This forecast traffic congestion distorts the overall county-wide performance measures as the Camano Island roadway network is separate from the rest of the regional system. As a result, Camano

# Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

Island was excluded from the performance measure charts in order to better represent the future performance of the county-wide roadway network.

While travel demand models are not crystal balls, they are effective for assessing the relative impacts of growth. Further analysis and professional judgment should be used when determining the future travel behaviors in specific locations to ensure the volumes predicted by the model are reasonable.

Performance measures provide policy makers and the public a framework for evaluating progress towards implementing regional transportation policies. The following performance measures were identified to assess the relative impacts of land use growth and the benefits of the M/RTP system improvements. It is recommended that performance measures be monitored over time to assess the regional investment strategy. The region should fully develop multimodal transportation system performance measures that address the region’s transportation policies.

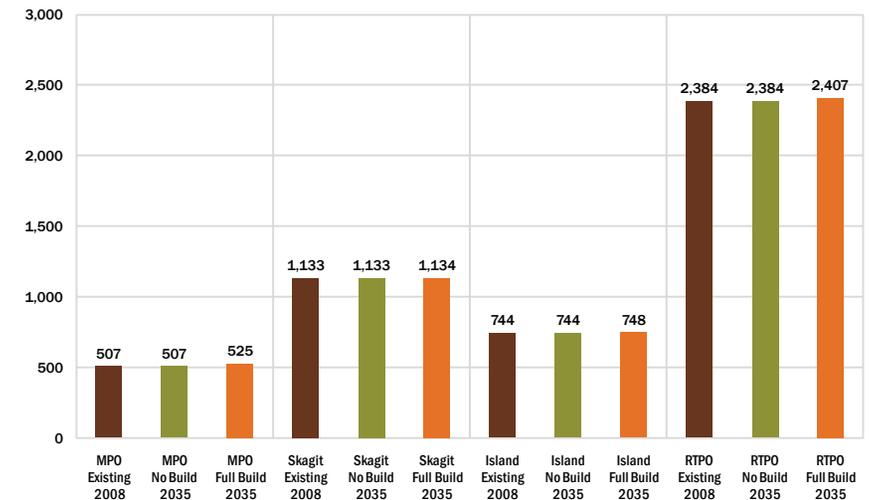
The following charts show the relative change in some key transportation performance measures for the metropolitan planning area (MPO area), Skagit County (non-MPO), Island County, and the combined Skagit-Island RTPO area. The charts show results for three different model periods or scenarios: (1) 2008 “Existing” conditions, (2) 2035 “No Build” that assumes future land use on the existing transportation network, and (3) 2035 “Full Build” that assumes the completion of the M/RTP project improvements.

## Skagit Metropolitan Planning Area (MPO)

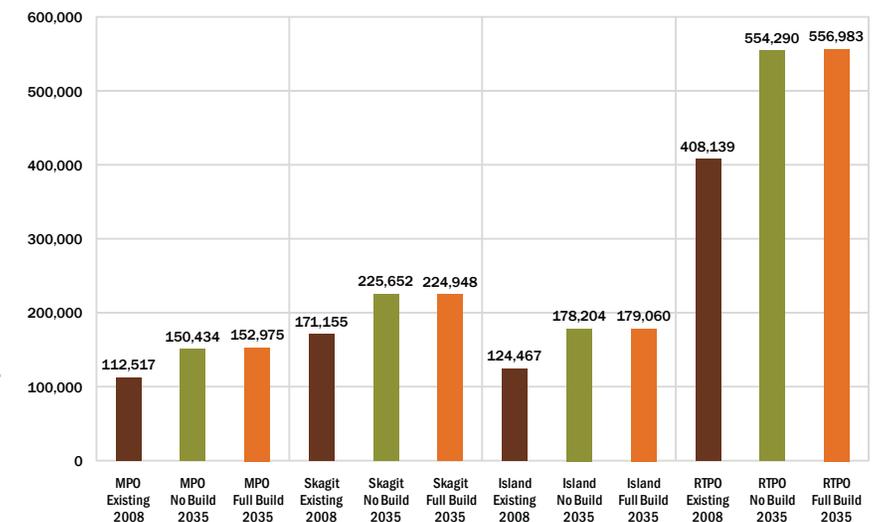
### Lane Miles

The number of lane miles for Existing and No Build conditions are the same because the transportation networks are assumed the same. In the MPO area, 18.5 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions. This includes additional lanes on Interstate 5, widened Skagit River Bridges, and new roadway connections in Sedro-Woolley. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects would not be reflected in this metric.

**Exhibit 4-1**  
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Lane Miles



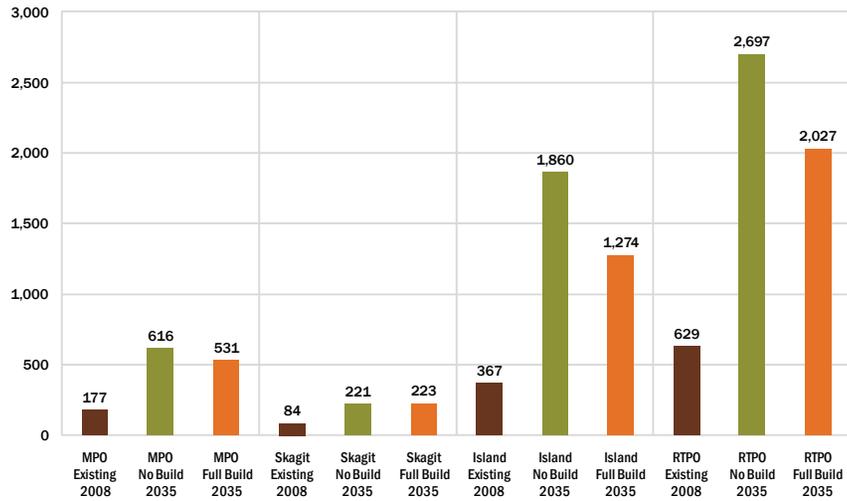
**Exhibit 4-2**  
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Vehicle Miles Traveled



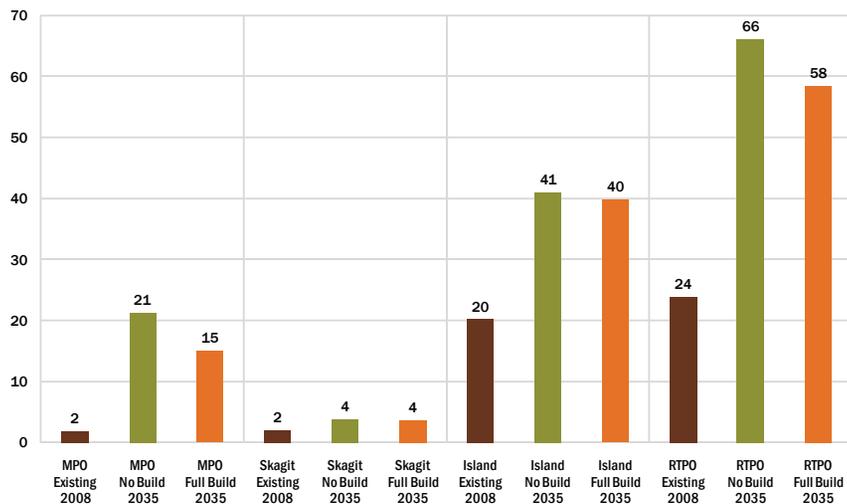
\*Note: Camano Island not included in Island County Data.

# Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

**Exhibit 4-3**  
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Vehicle Hours of Delay



**Exhibit 4-4**  
Comparison of 2008 and 2035 Lane Miles of Congestion



## Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 34 percent more vehicle miles within the MPO area traveled compared to Existing conditions, or an annual growth rate of 1.1 percent. There is a slight increase in VMT between future No Build and Full Build conditions, which reflects the increased ability to travel farther in less time due to planned roadway improvements.

## Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in the MPO area, there would be approximately 616 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The projects included in the Full Build scenario would reduce total VHD in the MPO area by 14 percent.

## Lane Miles of Congestion

Lane miles of congestion represents those roadways that have traffic approaching or exceeding capacity in the model. For the MPO area, congested lane miles increase from 2 in Existing conditions to 21 in future No Build conditions. This includes sections of Interstate 5, SR 20, Division Street, and other arterial corridors. With Full Build project improvements, the congested lane miles drop to 15, which represents a 29 percent decrease in congestion.

## Skagit County

### Lane Miles

The number of lane miles for Existing and No Build conditions are the same because the transportation networks are assumed the same. In the county non-MPO area, less than 1.0 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions. This includes improvements to the Cook Road I-5 Interchange area and Reservation Road. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects are not reflected in this metric.

### Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 32 percent more vehicle miles traveled within the county non-MPO area compared to Existing conditions, or an

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

annual growth rate of 1.0 percent. There is a slight decrease in VMT between future No Build and Full Build conditions, which reflect some rural circuitous routes becoming less attractive given improved traffic conditions on the more direct urban routes.

### Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in the county non-MPO area, there would be approximately 221 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The projects included in the Full Build scenario would not substantively change the total VHD in the county non-MPO area.

### Lane Miles of Congestion

Lane miles of congestion represents those roadways that have traffic approaching or exceeding capacity in the model. For the county non-MPO area, congested lane miles increase from 2 in Existing conditions to 4 in future No Build and Build conditions. In other words, lane miles of congestion in the county non-MPO area is relatively minor under No Build conditions. The Build project improvements in the county would improve spot congestion or make safety upgrades.

### Island County

#### Lane Miles

The number of lane miles for Existing and No Build conditions are the same because the transportation networks are assumed the same. On Island County, approximately 3 to 4 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions. This includes improvements to SR 20 in Oak Harbor and new county road connections. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects are not reflected in this metric.

### Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 43 percent more vehicle miles traveled in Island County compared to Existing conditions, or an annual growth rate of 1.3 percent. There is virtually no change in VMT between future No Build and Full Build conditions.

### Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in Island County, there would be approximately 1,860 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The bulk of this delay is on the heavily used SR 20 corridor. The projects included in the Full Build scenario would reduce total VHD in Island County by 32 percent, which reflects the impact even a few projects may have on overall system performance.

### Lane Miles of Congestion

Lane miles of congestion represents those roadways that have traffic approaching or exceeding capacity in the model. For Island County, congested lane miles increase from 20 in Existing conditions to 41 in future No Build conditions. Most of these miles are along SR 20 south of Oak Harbor. With Full Build project improvements, the lane miles drop to 40, which represents a 2 percent decrease. While overall delay has improved, the roadways with congestion remained about the same.

### Skagit-Island RTPO

#### Lane Miles

In the RTPO area, approximately 22 additional lane miles are added under Full Build conditions.



Double Bluff Rd.

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

The bulk of these additional lane miles are with the Skagit MPO area. Intersection improvements, additional turn-lanes, or shoulder widening projects are not reflected in this metric.

### Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Future land use growth in the region will add approximately 36 percent more vehicle miles traveled compared to Existing conditions, or an annual growth rate of 1.1 percent.

### Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

Under future No Build conditions in the RTPO area, there would be approximately 2,700 hours of vehicle delay (the total time added to travel due to traffic congestion-related delays). The projects included in the Full Build scenario would reduce total VHD in the RTPO area by 25 percent.

### Lane Miles of Congestion

For the MPO area, congested lane miles increase from 24 in existing conditions to 66 in future No Build conditions. With Full Build project improvements, the lane miles drop to 58, which represents a 12 percent decrease in congestion.

### Efficiency Strategies

Improvements to corridors that address existing and forecast safety and operational issues are high priorities in the plan. Also included are projects that widen and reconstruct existing arterials to current standards to better handle forecast traffic volumes and improve non-motorized facilities. These improvements focus on effectively reducing safety and operational issues along existing arterials. They also support a range of travel modes, as automobiles, trucks, transit, pedestrians, and bicycles use these key regional intersections and roadway links.

Transportation system management including signal timing upgrades, ITS, and access management strategies will also be incorporated in the existing corridors.

### Transit and Transportation Demand Management

The M/RTP framework includes strategies for increasing transit mode share and capacity to meet the future travel demands throughout the Skagit/Island region. Strategies to reduce peak period travel demands also are included. The transit and transportation demand management (TDM) strategies include:

- Improving transportation services for people with special needs;
- Expanding fixed-route service coverage in the metropolitan area;
- Extending service hours;
- Targeting service to larger employers; and
- Enhancing service to regional destinations.

### Other Projects

The M/RTP provides a transition between the local agency transportation plans and the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The M/RTP is a financially-constrained plan which must set priorities since available funding will not cover all identified needs during the 25-year time horizon. The M/RTP acknowledges that there are a range of needed improvements (both regional and local) that are desirable to meet the overall, transportation needs of the region. These projects are referenced in the M/RTP to help ensure that the total system needs are acknowledged and to support increases in future funding to help implement these projects.

### Key Corridors

In addition to the baseline improvements and efficiency strategies, the M/RTP framework identifies the need for improvements to existing corridors to address future transportation demands of the region.

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

### Transportation Plan Policies

The priorities framework for the M/RTP provides the general guidance to help direct available funding for regional transportation improvements. Policies were defined to help guide the region in implementing the Plan and focus on the six regional priorities, as well as coordination and implementation of projects and programs. The priorities and policies lead to overall improvement strategies, which are summarized in this section.

#### Policies

The existing goals and policies were reviewed and checked for consistency with the input collected from the public outreach effort and the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards' member agencies during the plan development process. As the project progressed and technical analyses was completed, these policies and goals were revised and consolidated to eliminate redundancy, address inconsistencies with technical findings and reflect the regional nature and purpose of the document. The policies should continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are reflecting the most current vision and direction of the region and metropolitan area. These policies, goals and strategies will guide and direct the regional transportation planning process for the next 20 years.

**1. Identify, encourage, and implement strategies and projects that will maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the metropolitan and rural transportation systems through a cooperative effort with MPO member agencies, the Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, the public sector, and State and Federal agencies;**

Goals and strategies for Policy 1 include:

1.1 Select and build the most efficient mix of modes and facilities based on the need to balance accessibility and demand;

1.2 Ensure that modes are interconnected in a manner that best serves the users by identifying missing links and connections and proposing projects that will provide needed linkages;

1.3 Consider strategies that recognize the future densification of urban areas as they grow and mature, while transitioning and connecting seamlessly with rural areas;

1.4 Support Skagit Transit and Island Transit in acquiring funding from outside sources to help implement strategies identified in the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan;

1.5 Provide a level of service across modes that meet the needs of the user while recognizing the uniqueness of the level of service standards for each mode;

1.6 Provide for the safety and security of the users on all modes, by participating in state and Federal programs to increase safety and security and placing an emphasis on projects that incorporate safety and security;

1.7 Provide accessibility to the transportation system through user friendly connections by ensuring that intermodal facilities are not designed and constructed in isolation. In particular, ensure that the urban area has interconnected opportunities for safe and convenient non-motorized modes;



Multi-Use Trail near Coupeville

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

1.8 Ensure transportation concurrency requirements are met in areas designated under GMA.

1.9 Provide accessibility to the transportation system through timely information by developing a regional ITS architecture that includes traveler information as a major component; and

1.10 Provide access to the transportation system in a manner that balances user convenience with safety and preservation of capacity. This includes developing and implementing access management plans where access issues are or are likely to become impediments to the safe and efficient operation of roadways for all vehicles and non-motorized users, within the context of a growing urbanized area.

**2. Provide a Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan that identifies significant transportation facilities and services that support local comprehensive plans and ensures ongoing evaluation necessary to keep current with local, regional, inter-regional, State, Federal, and public needs and requirements while recognizing the**

**inter-relationships within the contiguous urban area and areas immediately adjacent to it;**

**Goals and strategies for Policy 2:**

2.1 Provide a Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan that is up-to-date;

2.2 Develop a regional growth strategy that incorporates and expresses the growth management plans of the

individual jurisdictions. Consider the growth strategy when identifying and funding projects and programs;

2.3 Establish a plan amendment process that will accommodate changes in local, regional, state, federal, private sector, and public needs between plan updates.

**3. Protect the integrity of the investment in the existing transportation system by encouraging and prioritizing timely maintenance of the system;**

**Goals and strategies for Policy 3:**

3.1 Monitor the condition of existing transportation facilities by working with the Sub-RTPO's to identify critical facilities, develop metrics, and establish a data collection program;

3.2 Time replacement and rehabilitation of facilities to minimize investment by working with the Sub-RTPO's to develop a regional pavement management system. Require agencies to evaluate the timing of replacement and rehabilitation needs when proposing capacity improvement projects for the Transportation Improvement Program; and

3.3 Ensure that the operation, appearance, and functionality of the infrastructure meet the users' needs by ensuring that these elements are included in the scope of projects proposed for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program.

**4. Facilitate cooperation and information exchange amongst stakeholders in the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards.**

**Goals and strategies for Policy 4:**

4.1 Provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss and coordinate their transportation projects, programs, and plans with each other. Consider strategies that recognize the future densification of urban



Maintenance during snow

## Section 4: Transportation Framework & Policies

areas as they grow and mature;

4.2 Facilitate the involvement of the private sector in transportation planning issues by adding one or more non-agency positions to the technical advisory committees. Invite private representation on study review teams when relevant to the study; and

4.3 Identify sources of funding for transportation planning, programs, and projects that will implement the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan and assist in acquiring those funds as needed.

### **5. Maintain and execute an ongoing public participation program and plan to ensure the early, meaningful, and continuous participation of the citizens of Skagit and Island Counties in the planning process.**

#### **Goals and strategies for Policy 5:**

5.1 Develop and implement a public participation plan during the updating of the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan and ensure that the public has an opportunity to review and comment on proposed amendments;

5.2 Ensure a two-way communication process in the public participation process by presenting information in a number and variety of media and incorporating an appropriate number and variety of feedback methods;

5.3 Time public participation interfaces to provide public input into decisions before they are made and provide decision makers with an accurate assessment of public input;

5.4 Make the public participation process meaningful by considering public comments when making decisions; and

5.5 Maintain an on-going public participation process.

### **6. Consistent with Skagit and Island Countywide Planning Policies, encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.**

*Background: As noted in Chapter 3 of this document, each county planning under the Growth Management Act is required to develop a set of countywide planning policies. The policies are intended to help the jurisdictions within the county coordinate their GMA planning efforts. These policies provide an umbrella for all other planning in the county. The countywide planning policies for transportation are:*

6.1 Multi-purpose transportation routes and facilities shall be designed to accommodate present and future traffic volumes.

6.2 Primary arterial access points shall be designed to ensure maximum safety while minimizing traffic flow disruptions.

6.3 The development of new transportation routes and improvements to existing routes shall minimize adverse social, economic and environmental impacts and costs.

6.4 Comprehensive Plan provisions for the location and improvement of existing and future transportation networks and public transportation shall be made in a manner consistent with the goals, policies and land use map of the Comprehensive Plan.



**Roundabout Construction**

## *Section 4:* **Transportation Framework & Policies**

6.5 The development of a recreational transportation network shall be encouraged and coordinated between state and local governments and private enterprises.

6.6 The Senior Citizen and Handicapped transportation system shall be provided with an adequate budget to provide for those who, through age and/or disability, are unable to transport themselves.

6.7 Multimodal Level of Service (LOS) standards and safety standards shall be established that coordinate and link with the urban growth and urban areas to optimize land use and traffic compatibility over the long term. New development shall mitigate transportation impacts concurrently with the development and occupancy of the project.

6.8 An all-weather arterial road system shall be coordinated with industrial and commercial areas.

6.9 Cost effectiveness shall be a consideration in transportation expenditure decisions and balanced for both safety and service improvements.

6.10 An integrated regional transportation system shall be designed to minimize air pollution by promoting the use of alternative transportation modes, reducing vehicular traffic, maintaining acceptable traffic flow, and siting of facilities.

6.11 All new and expanded transportation facilities shall be sited, constructed, and maintained to minimize noise levels.

Consistency between the County Wide Planning Policies and the Regional and Metropolitan Policies and Goals is an important aspect of this plan.



*Section 5*  
**Transportation Improvements & Programs**

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

The regional multimodal transportation system consists of state highways and ferry services, county roads, city streets, park-and-ride lots, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transit facilities, airports, and railroads. This section of the M/RTP summarizes the state and local agency regional transportation improvement projects.

### Regional Transportation Facilities

The state highways form the core of the Skagit-Island regional transportation system and most city and county arterials provide some level of connection to the state highway system. The state highways connect the region with other parts of Washington and serve intra-county travel. Therefore, keeping them operating efficiently and safely is critical. WSDOT and local agencies have identified a wide range of improvements to these highways to address preservation, safety, congestion, operations, and other transportation system needs.

#### Defining “Regional Transportation Facilities”:

- State routes and ferry system
- Principal arterials and other arterials/collectors that serve a “regional” function (i.e. serves as a regional connection, serves a large employment center, serves an economic/trade center, etc).
- Regional transit routes
- Strategic freight facilities (FGTS T-1 and T-2 routes)
- NHS and Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) (i.e. military significance)

WSDOT conducts several ongoing region wide programs to enhance the regional transportation system. These programs supplement the targeted capital improvements and maintenance projects identified for the region’s state highway system. These ongoing programs include bridge scour prevention, roadway resurfacing, environmental mitigation, and safety enhancements.

#### State Highway System

##### Interstate 5

Interstate 5 (I-5) is the only interstate highway serving the Skagit-Island region and is the backbone of the region’s transportation system. To the north, I-5 connects the Skagit-Island region to Whatcom County,

Bellingham, and the border crossings to British Columbia. To the south, I-5 connects the region to Snohomish County and the central Puget Sound region. With a length of approximately 25 miles within Skagit County, the interstate highway provides access and connectivity to the population centers along the corridor. I-5 is classified as a Highway of Statewide Significance (HSS) and is part of the National Highway System (NHS).

I-5 is a multi-lane divided freeway with full access control. Within the metropolitan area, it serves the region with six interchanges, including its interchange with SR 20. These six interchanges are located within a distance of approximately seven miles.

Outside of the metropolitan area, interchanges along I-5 provide access to the smaller communities, agricultural lands, and recreation areas. The distance between interchanges along I-5 north and south of the metropolitan area is roughly one to five miles.

#### Existing and Forecast Conditions

**Traffic Volumes.** Within the Skagit metropolitan area, I-5 carries more than 70,000 vehicles per day (vpd). North of Chuckanut Drive (SR 11), existing volumes decrease to approximately 45,000 vpd. Growth in traffic volumes has been relatively flat over the last decade. The 2035 travel forecasts for the metropolitan area show an increase of more than 40 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 1.3 percent. The forecast growth in traffic on I-5 by 2035 will result in the freeway mainline operating near or at capacity during peak period demand hours. Unless improvements are made, the effect of this will be daily periods of two or more hours of congestion that backs onto the connecting local street system, resulting in long delays. The increase in traffic to and from the interchanges will also result in additional safety and operations issues.

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Freight Travel.** I-5 is classified by the State of Washington as a T-1 freight corridor, which means it carries more than 10 million tons of freight per year. This reflects both through truck traffic and local trucking and freight activities using I-5. All T-1 classified facilities are considered strategic freight corridors and receive priority for funding through the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB).

Within the Skagit metropolitan area, 9 to 11 percent of the daily traffic are trucks. This equates to an average of between 6,000 and 7,000 trucks per day on I-5 through the Skagit metropolitan area. North of SR 20, trucks account for less than 10 percent of the total daily volume, with between 3,500 and 4,500 trucks per day.

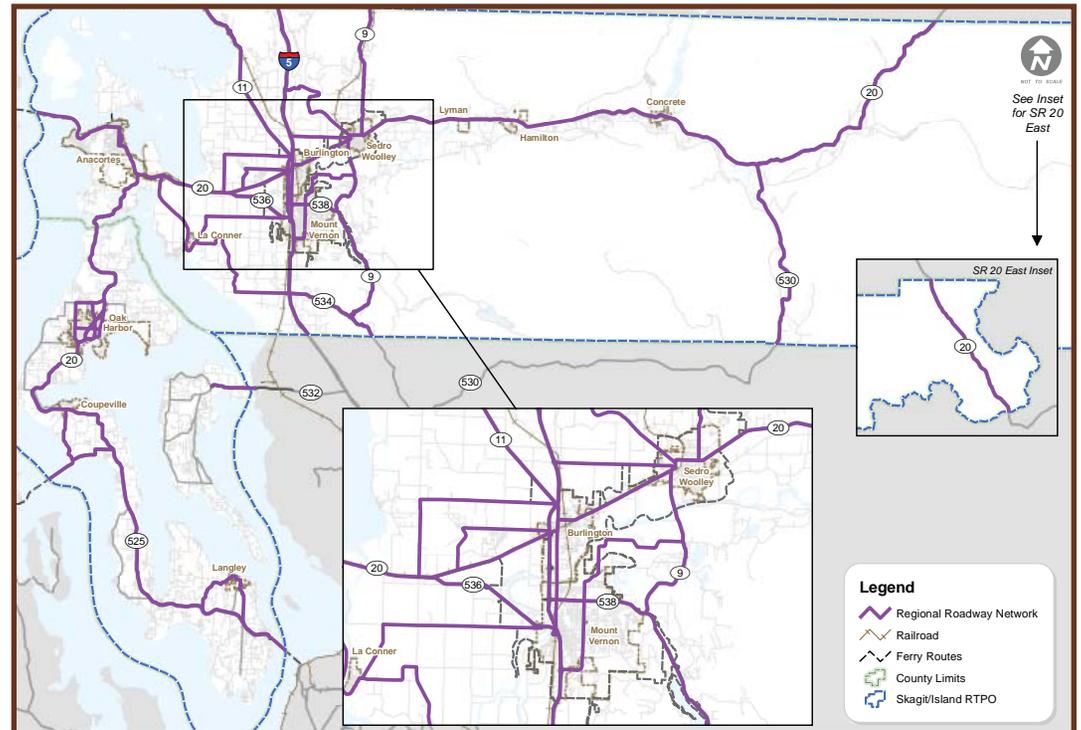
**Other Modes.** At certain locations, I-5 is a barrier for east-to-west non-motorized travel as people can only cross at existing interchanges or bridges. This can result in some out-of-direction travel for non-motorized travel crossing between the east and west sides of the interstate. The number of interchanges in the metropolitan area provides crossing points, but these are impacted by relatively high volumes of traffic, which can impact safety for non-motorized travel. The combination of lack of connectivity on non-arterial roadways and high traffic volumes near the interchanges discourage non-motorized travel across I-5.

### SR 20

SR 20 connects Skagit and Island Counties to I-5 and destinations east and west. Covering a length of almost 120 miles through both counties, it serves both rural and urban area transportation needs. In Skagit County, traveling east from I-5, SR 20 covers nearly 70 miles serving the communities of Burlington, Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, Hamilton, Concrete, and Rockport, as well as providing access to North Cascades National Park.

Traveling west from I-5 to the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, SR 20 is part of the federal Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET), a federal designation for facilities which have strategic defense significance. The SR 20 Spur branches off from Sharpes Corner to provide access to Anacortes and the ferry system. In Island County, SR 20 travels nearly 30 miles from the Deception Pass bridge to the Keystone ferry terminal, serving the communities of Oak Harbor and Coupeville.

SR 20 is classified as a Highway of Statewide Significance and a State Scenic & Recreational Highway the entire length within Skagit and Island Counties. This classification along with the STRAHNET designation makes SR 20 a higher priority than other regional



Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Facilities

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

roadways for some state and federal funding sources.

### *Existing and Forecast Conditions*

**Traffic Volumes.** In Skagit County, daily traffic volumes on SR 20 in range from 30,000 vpd near Sharpes Corner to roughly 5,000 vpd near Concrete. The 2035 travel forecasts show an annual growth rate on average along the corridor of less than 1.0 percent per year from 2008 to 2035. This compares to the approximately 1.0 percent per year over the past decade.

**Freight Travel.** SR 20 is designated as a freight corridor by the State of Washington. The highway is classified as a T-1 Strategic Freight Corridor between I-5 and Anacortes, carrying over 11 million tons of freight per year. South of the SR 20 spur, the highway is classified as a T-2 freight corridor, carrying between 1.3 million and 4.6 million tons of freight per years.

Along SR 20, between Concrete and the SR 530 junction, approximately 15 percent of the daily traffic are trucks. This equates to

approximately 400 trucks per day. On SR 20 west of the SR 536 junction, trucks comprise of about 18 percent of the 29,000 vpd, or over 5,200 trucks per day. On Whidbey Island, truck percentages on SR 20 range from 7 to 12 percent, or between 500 and 1,500 trucks per day.

**Other Modes.** SR 20 provides access to a range of recreational activities. Bicycling

occurs along sections of the highway. Skagit Transit operates several routes along SR 20, providing service to Anacortes, Burlington, Sedro-Woolley, and Concrete.

### **SR 525**

SR 525 traverses approximately 22 miles south from SR 20, providing access to/from the Clinton ferry terminal. It is designated as a Highway of Statewide Significance and a State Scenic & Recreational Highway by the State of Washington. SR 525 near the Clinton ferry terminal has two northbound lanes, a central turn lane, one southbound lane, and one ferry traffic holding lane. Washington State Ferries (WSF) provides ferry service for vehicles and pedestrians directly to Whidbey Island from Mukilteo through the ferry terminal located in Clinton.

### *Existing and Forecast Conditions*

**Traffic Volumes.** Daily traffic volumes on SR 525 range from 9,000 vpd to approximately 12,000 vpd at Bush Point Road. The 2035 forecasts show an increase of more than 25 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.9 percent. This is lower than the approximately 1.6 percent per year over the past decade.

**Freight Traffic.** SR 525 is a T-2 freight corridor, carrying between 1.3 million and 3 million tons of freight per year. Near the SR 20 junction, approximately 11 percent of the daily traffic are trucks. This equates to over 700 trucks per day. Near the Clinton ferry terminal, only 5 percent of the traffic are trucks.

**Other Modes.** SR 525 provides access to a range of recreational activities. Bicycling occurs along sections of the highway.

### **SR 9**

This north-south highway provides a parallel corridor to I-5, connecting Skagit County and Sedro-Woolley to Snohomish County to the south and to Whatcom County and the Canadian border to the north, serving



Intersection of S Fish Road & SR 525

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

a range of agricultural and residential land uses. From the south county border, it travels approximately 2 miles before it connects with SR 534 near Lake McMurray and continues north another 10 miles to connect with College Way (SR 538) in Mount Vernon. From College Way SR 9 travels approximately 6 miles to SR 20 in Sedro-Woolley, continuing north another 10 miles to Whatcom County.

### Existing and Forecast Conditions

**Traffic Volumes.** Daily traffic volumes on SR 9 range from 1,500 vpd at SR 534 to more than 10,000 vpd near SR 20 in Sedro-Woolley. The 2035 forecasts show an increase of more than 35 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 1.2 percent. This is higher than the approximately 0.7 percent per year over the past decade.

**Freight Traffic.** SR 9 is a T-2 freight corridor, carrying between 540,000 and 2.1 million tons of freight per year. South of SR 534, over 15 percent of the daily traffic on SR 9 are trucks. This equates to approximately 150 trucks per day. North of Sedro-Woolley, approximately 20 percent of the daily traffic are trucks, or 600 trucks per day.

**Other Modes.** SR 9 provides access to a range of recreational activities and is a popular bicycling route along some sections of the highway. Skagit Transit operates route 717 on SR 9 from College Way to Sedro-Woolley.

### SR 534

SR 534 is a two-lane east-west highway that connects SR 9 near Lake McMurray to I-5 near Conway. Although relatively short in length—only 5 miles, this facility provides an important link to I-5 to/from SR 9 south of Mount Vernon.

**Traffic Volumes.** Daily traffic volumes on SR 534 range from 1,000 vpd at SR 9 to more than 8,000 vpd near I-5. The 2035 forecasts show an increase of approximately 10 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.4 percent. This is lower than the approximately 1.6 percent per year growth rate over the past decade.

**Freight Traffic.** SR 534 is a T-2 freight corridor, carrying between 540,000 thousand and 2.1 million tons of freight per year.

**Other Modes.** SR 534 provides access to a range of recreational activities. Some sections of the highway are a popular route for bicyclists.

### SR 536 (Memorial Highway)

This east-west highway travels east from SR 20 approximately 5 miles to 3rd Street in Mount Vernon. This facility crosses the Skagit River to provide a direct connection from SR 20 to Mount Vernon.

**Traffic Volumes.** Daily traffic volumes on SR 536 range from 9,500 vpd at SR 20 to more than 20,000 vpd near the Skagit River bridge in Mount Vernon. The 2035 forecasts show an increase of approximately 13 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.5 percent. This is lower than the approximately 1.1 percent per year growth rate over the past decade.

**Freight Traffic.** SR 536 is a T-2 freight corridor, carrying approximately 2.5



I-5/SR 20 Aerial View

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

million tons of freight per year. Approximately 10 percent of the daily traffic are trucks.

**Other Modes.** SR 536 is used by the Island Connector route, operated by Island Transit.

### SR 538 (College Way)

This east-west highway travels east from I-5 approximately 4 miles, connecting to SR 9.

**Traffic Volumes.** Daily traffic volumes on SR 538 range from 7,500 vpd at SR 9 to more than 27,000 vpd near I-5. The 2035 forecasts show an increase of approximately 28 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.9 percent. Overall, the historical growth rate has been flat in the SR 538 corridor, an annual average growth rate of just 0.3 percent from 2000 to 2009.

**Freight Traffic.** SR 538 is a T-2 freight route from I-5 to Laventure Road and a T-3 route from Laventure Road to SR 9. Overall, SR 538 carries between 2.5 million and 5.1 million tons of freight per year.

**Other Modes.** SR 538 provides access to a range of recreational activities and is a well utilized bicycling route. Kulshan Trail runs

parallel to SR 538 and serves as a non-motorized trail. Skagit Transit provides bus service on this State Route.

### SR 11 (Chuckanut Drive)

Chuckanut Drive is two-lane north-south highway which connects I-5 near Burlington to Bellingham in Whatcom County. It is designated as a State Scenic and Recreational Highway.



Old Chuckanut Drive

**Traffic Volumes.** Daily traffic volumes on SR 11 range from 1,000 vpd at the north county border to approximately 4,500 vpd near I-5. The 2035 forecasts show an increase of approximately 10 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.3 percent. This is lower than the rate of approximately 1.4 percent per year over the past decade.

**Freight Traffic.** SR 11 is a T-3 freight corridor from I-5 to Cook Road and a T-4 route from Cook Road north to the county border. SR 11 carries between 280,000 thousand and 1.7 million tons of freight per year. Approximately 8 percent of the daily traffic are trucks.

**Other Modes.** SR 11 provides access to a range of recreational activities. Bicycling occurs along sections of the highway.

### SR 532

This east-west highway travels east from Camano Island approximately 3 miles, connecting to I-5. This highway provides the only connection to/from Camano Island to the mainland.

**Traffic Volumes.** Daily traffic volumes on SR 532 range from 17,000 vpd near I-5 to 20,000 vpd on Camano Island. The 2035 forecasts show an increase of approximately 45 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of approximately 1.4 percent. This is lower than the rate of approximately 2.5 percent per year over the past decade.

**Freight Traffic.** SR 532 is a T-3 freight corridor, carrying approximately 2.9 million tons of freight per year. Approximately 7 percent of the daily traffic are trucks.

**Other Modes.** Island Transit operates regional transit service on SR 532.

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

### Ferry System

Ferries play a key role in the overall regional transportation system by connecting workers and recreationists to various communities within the region and elsewhere in Western Washington. Whidbey Island has one bridge connecting to mainland, therefore residents and commuters rely heavily on ferry service for daily transportation. The ferry system is both a marine highway and high capacity transit system; supporting the region's land use and transportation objectives by promoting the utilization of transit and reducing vehicle miles traveled on the regional roadways.

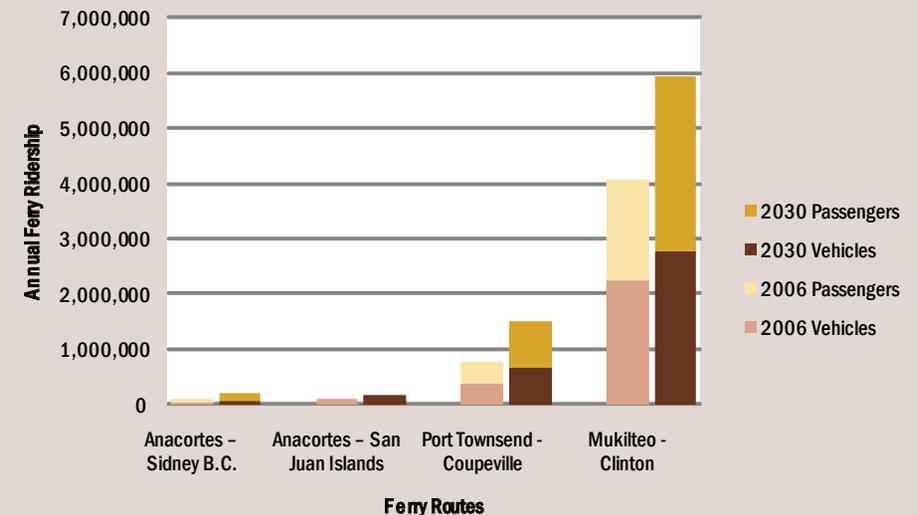
Washington State Ferries (WSF) operates four routes within the Skagit-Island region. These routes provide service to a mixture of automobiles and walk-on passengers. Vehicle trips on these routes are forecasted to increase by almost one third by 2030, which represents an average annual growth rate of 1.2 percent. Passenger trips are forecasted to increase by more than 80 percent during the same time frame, which represents an average annual growth rate of 2.5. Overall vehicle capacities on these routes are not expected to increase by 2030. As a result, passenger and walk-on riders are projected to contribute the largest share of projected growth. Exhibit 5-1 shows ridership forecasts for these routes.

The two Whidbey Island routes have the highest ridership, a combined total of nearly 7.5 million total riders in 2006. Ridership on the Mukilteo – Clinton route is projected to increase by more than 45 percent, which represents an average annual growth rate of 1.6 percent. Passenger-only trips are projected to grow faster on this route than vehicle trips and will account for almost 54 percent of all trips in 2030. Ridership on the Port Townsend – Coupeville route is forecasted to almost double by 2030, represented by an average annual growth rate of more than 2.8 percent.

Skagit County operates one ferry route to Guemes Island. The M/V Guemes carried 44,500 vehicles and 89,400 passengers in 2006. The primary users of the ferry system are the permanent and part-time residents of Guemes Island who rely on the ferry as their link to the mainland.

The Guemes Island Ferry is projected to experience approximately 30 percent growth in total ridership over the next 15 years. During this time, vehicle ridership is projected to grow faster than walk-on ridership, increasing by a third while walk-on ridership will increase by approximately a quarter during the same time.

**Exhibit 5-1**  
**Skagit-Island Region Ferry Ridership Forecasts**



Source: WSDOT Ferries Division Final Long Range Plan, June 2009

Note: Does not include Guemes Island Ferry route

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

### Transit System

Public transportation is a critical component to achieving the region's long-range growth management, economic, environmental, and transportation goals. The Plan promotes strategies for expanding transit to meet future travel demands throughout the region as it has provided residents of Skagit and Island Counties with transportation options to reach destinations within and outside the region. Skagit Transit and Island Transit operate over 30 routes in and through the region including local routes, inter-county commuter routes, vanpools, and specialized paratransit services.

The success of the public transportation system is dependent on integrating key elements that comprise the overall regional plan. Integration of the transit system with the ferry system,

intercity rail and bus services, street improvements, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities is critical to transit's success.

Both Skagit and Island Transit have experienced increases in ridership in recent years, as shown in Exhibit 5-2. Since 2003 annual Skagit Transit ridership has increased by over 150 percent and Island Transit ridership approximately 3.5 percent. Overall, transit ridership is higher in Island County than Skagit County due in part to the fact that Island Transit is a pre-paid, fare free system. As reported earlier, transit trips in Island County comprised of 2.3 percent of all trips, while Skagit County was just 0.3 percent.

#### Skagit Transit

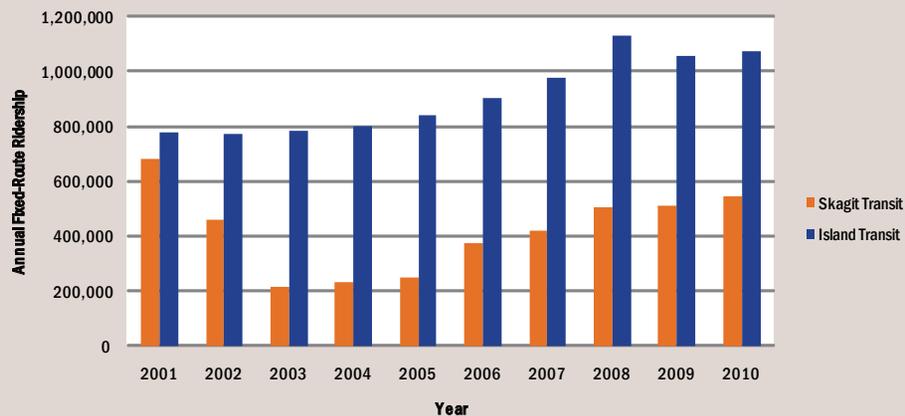
Skagit Transit is developing routes to serve working commuters better. After the Chuckanut Park and Ride opens in 2011, Skagit Transit is planning to have local routes connect with commuter buses there to take customers directly to and from Burlington, Sedro-Woolley and Anacortes. Skagit Transit is planning ahead for routes reaching further into new communities and to offer more frequency on established routes. Skagit currently operates off a local Sales Tax of 4/10ths of 1 percent on every dollar spent in Skagit County.

#### Island Transit

Island Transit is a pre-paid, fare free system. Typically, for smaller or rural transit systems, collecting a fare generates virtually no usable revenue because of the costs associated with the collection of the fare. Island Transit is pre-paid with a local Sales Tax of 9/10ths of 1% on every dollar spent in Island County.

The short term and long range plans for Island Transit includes increased services throughout Whidbey and Camano Islands; offering service every 20 minutes throughout the service area seven days a week to include service until midnight Monday through Saturday

Exhibit 5-2  
Skagit-Island Region Annual Fixed-Route Ridership



Source: Skagit Transit and Island Transit, January 2011

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

and limited Sunday service; a main spine SR 20/SR 525 Whidbey Solar Skyway System; increased regional connector services; and passenger-only ferry service. In addition, Island Transit will continue to coordinate with Washington State Ferries (WSF) to ensure transit connections when WSF implements plans to provide service every 20 minutes on the Clinton/Mukilteo ferry route, as well as with any additional services or changes on the Coupeville/Port Townsend ferry route. A Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Transit Parks and Pedestrian Facilities for Whidbey and Camano Islands has been developed. Two major Transit Parks (park and rides) opened in 2010 and several additional properties have been purchased and plans for construction are underway.

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Systems

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities play a vital role in the region's transportation environment. The M/RTP supports the development of a transportation system that provides more travel choices while limiting the transportation system footprint and preserving environmental quality and open space. A well established system encourages healthy recreational activities, reduces vehicle demand on roadways, and



Bicyclists in Skagit County

enhances safety within a livable community.

Walking and bicycling are key components of an integrated multimodal transportation system and are efficient and low

impact modes of travel that can reduce vehicle miles traveled, while lessening impacts to air pollution and traffic congestion. Greater accessibility to safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities provides improved mobility to the young, elderly, physically disabled, low-income, and others who may not have access to a motorized vehicle. A well connected and designed system provides increased and safer access to public transportation and schools. The Washington State Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan outlined the goal to decrease bicycle and pedestrian related collisions by five percent per year for the next 20 years, while doubling the amount of bicycling and walking.

Planning a development of well connected pedestrian and bicycle systems supports several state and national acts, including Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA), Clean Air Act, Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Act, the federal Clean Air Act, the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

### Rail Systems

#### Passenger Rail System

Amtrak operates Amtrak Cascades service over Burlington Northern Santa Fe's north-south main line. The alignment roughly parallels Interstate 5 and runs through Skagit County, connecting the region to Seattle, Canada, and destinations beyond. The Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, a federally-designated high speed rail corridor, has received federal and state funding to support higher rail speeds in the corridor. This 466-mile high speed corridor runs from Eugene, Oregon to Vancouver, British Columbia in Canada. Amtrak provides long distance service to Seattle and destinations beyond, as well as regional service to Oregon and British Columbia in the high speed corridor. Incremental improvements are planned to eventually support 110 mph service with greater frequencies on the corridor. Amtrak Cascades Service from

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

Eugene to Vancouver is Amtrak's seventh busiest route and carries the most passengers outside of the northeast United States and California, with more than 740,000 passengers in 2009.

Amtrak passenger rail service from Seattle to Vancouver, British Columbia has experienced increased demand in recent years. Two daily trains travel between Vancouver and Seattle. A second daily train to Vancouver began service in August 2009 and provided more travel options for passengers during the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The second train is to remain in service through at least October 2011. Skagit Station, owned and operated by Skagit Transit, is the multimodal transportation facility located in Mount Vernon where Amtrak connects with Skagit Transit, Greyhound, and Taxi. Amtrak Cascades began servicing the station in September 2004. Exhibit 5-3 shows historical

Amtrak Cascades ridership information at Skagit Station.

By 2023 passenger rail service provided by Amtrak Cascades is planned to include four daily trains between Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia. Travel times between Seattle and Vancouver will be reduced by a third from four hours to just over 2.5 hours. The plan to increase service frequency and improve train speeds requires a number of capital investments along the rail corridor, including:

- Upgrading grade crossings to ensure safe passage of trains, vehicles and pedestrians
- Increasing speeds to improve corridor capacity and travel times
- Enhancing train control signals to improve corridor capacity, increase train speeds, and enhance safety
- Purchasing new passenger train equipment to operate along the corridor to increase frequencies and decrease travel time
- Improving stations and their ability to serve neighboring communities and to provide connections to other modes of travel
- Upgrading tracks and facilities to relieve congestion, improve ride quality and safety, increase train speeds, and improve corridor capacity

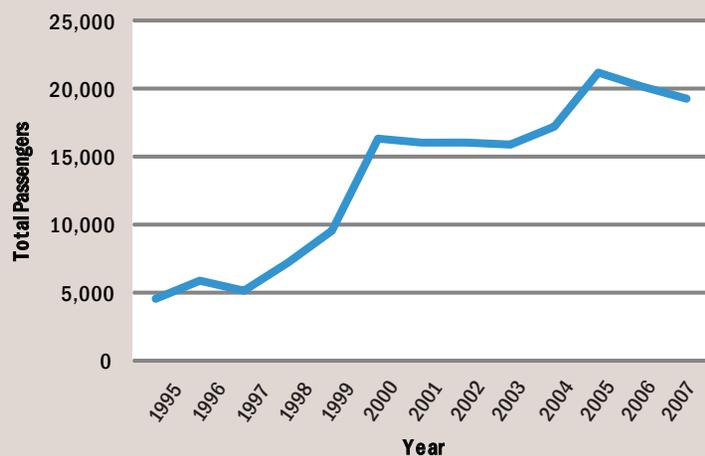
Source: Long-Range Plan for Amtrak Cascades, February 2006, WSDOT

### Freight Rail System

Freight rail is also growing as a mode of choice for moving manufactured and bulk commodities. There are currently ten major rail corridors in the State. One of these corridors is the Burlington Northern Santa Fe owned and operated Everett – Vancouver, British Columbia mainline. The importance of improvements to this corridor is critical to continued efforts to diversify the economy of the region. Where these railroad corridors intersect is important for switching and storage activities resulting in impacts on adjacent communities

Exhibit 5-3

### Amtrak Cascades Skagit Station On-Off Ridership



#### Notes:

Service restored between Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia in May 1995. New daily round-trip service between Seattle and Bellingham added September 1999. New Skagit Station opened September 2004.

Source: Amtrak Cascades Ridership and Station On-Off Information, March 2008, WSDOT

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

that are affected by at-grade crossings. Freight rail traffic along this corridor includes intermodal, forest and agricultural products, refuse, chemicals, and finished automobiles.

*Source: 2010 – 2030 Freight Rail Plan, December 2009, WSDOT*

### Regional Air Transportation System

The regional air transportation system in Skagit and Island Counties complements the rail, motorized, and non-motorized transportation systems in the movement of goods and people. The primary purpose of the regional air transportation system is to provide access to a broad national and international aviation network.

### Washington's Aviation System

Washington's 138 public-use airports represent an essential element of the state transportation system and provide critical support to its economy. The importance of air transportation in Washington is accentuated by the state's unique geographic and topographical features, which produce an unusually high reliance on aviation. Airports provide unique transportation access as part of Washington's multimodal transportation system. They are crucial on a local, statewide, national, and global level as they efficiently move people and goods, promote business and commerce, and contribute to a better quality of life. Washington's airports serve a wide range of transportation, economic and emergency activities, including:

- Disaster management
- Firefighting
- Emergency medical transportation
- Aviation-related business
- Search and rescue

- Access to remote communities
- Recreation

### National General Aviation Trends

In 2007, general aviation activity in the state accounted for an estimated 950,000 hours flown, making Washington the fourth most active state in the nation behind California, Texas, and Florida. General aviation has historically been dominated by single and multiengine piston-powered aircraft, used primarily for personal use, and flown by Visual Flight Rules (VFR). However, high performance aircraft used for business purposes and flown by Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) account for a growing portion of GA in the U.S. Increasingly, airports across the country are called to accommodate more demanding aircraft and more diverse types of GA activity. Three GA trends in particular have a significant effect on future demand for Washington's airport facilities and services. These trends include:

- Continued Growth in Business Jet Fleet
- Entry of Very Light Jets into the Market
- Technological Advances with the Next Generation Airport Transportation System

### Federal Airport System and Classification

#### *National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS)*

The National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) identifies airports that are significant to the national aviation system. These airports are eligible for federally funded improvement grants. Anacortes Airport and Skagit Regional are included in the NPIAS system, and classified as general aviation airports.

#### *Federal Airport Classification*

The federal airport classification system categorizes airports based upon the type of service they provide to the community. These

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

classifications include:

- Primary airports provide scheduled passenger service and have more than 10,000 annual enplanements.
- Commercial service- have between 2,500 and 10,000 annual enplanements.
- Reliever airports provide general aviation access to large metropolitan areas attracting smaller GA aircraft away from busy commercial airports.
- General aviation airports are the largest single group of airports in the U.S. system, and includes privately owned, public use airports that enplane 2500 or more passengers annually and receive scheduled airline service.

### Washington Airport Classification System

The State's airport classification system identifies the roles and service levels of Washington's public use airports. State airport classifications do not supersede FAA classifications, but supplement them by accounting for airports that may not be significant on a national level, but are important to the state aviation system. State airport classifications, along with the identification of facilities and services appropriate for each classification, are important in helping to identify and prioritize airport improvement and funding needs. The state's airport classification system categorizes airports in to six categories, they include:

- Commercial Service Airports and Regional Service Airports have the largest service areas, in terms of driving time and population. Airports in both classifications accommodate high levels of activity, are typically capable of handling high performance aircraft (regional/corporate jets and turboprops), and are mostly located in regional high-growth population centers.

- Community Service Airports serve medium-sized communities and accommodates a wide range of general aviation aircraft including VLTs. General aviation activities accommodated include agricultural support, business support, and emergency medical transportation and are important to the community's economic well-being and quality of life.
- Local Service Airports typically serve smaller communities with populations less than 6,000. Airports in this classification accommodates a narrower range of general aviation activities and aircraft.
- Rural Essential Airports and Seaplane Bases serve the narrowest scopes of general aviation. An airport in one of these two classifications typically develops due to geographic circumstances (e.g., a residential airpark, recreational destination, body of water, or emergency landing area in the mountains), rather than demand from the population within its service area.

### State Classification

Skagit County Airports:

- Anacortes – Commercial Service Airport
- Skagit Regional – Regional Service Airport
- Concrete Municipal – Community Service Airport
- Skyline Seaplane Base – Seaplane Base

Island County Airports:

- Camano Island Airfield - Rural Essential Airport
- A.J. Eisenberg - Local Service Airport
- Whidbey Airpark- Rural Essential Airport

Almost 85 percent of the region's total based aircraft, approximately 330 aircraft, reside in Skagit County. Skagit Regional Airport, owned and operated by the Port of Skagit, is the region's largest airport with over 165 based aircraft. Skagit Regional Airport is the State's third

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

busiest airport by air cargo tonnage with approximately 175,000 tons in 2010. By 2030 Skagit County's regional share of based aircraft is forecasted to remain around 85 percent. As shown in Exhibit 5-4, Skagit County-based aircraft is forecasted to grow by approximately 40 percent by 2030, which represents an annual average growth rate of 1.4 percent.

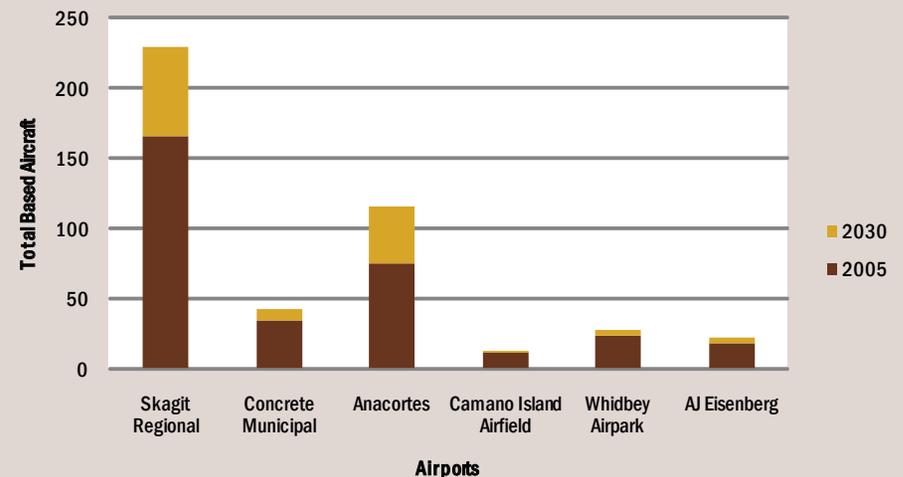
Approximately 15 percent of the region's 330 based aircraft reside in Island County. The largest airport in Island County is Whidbey Airpark with almost 25 based aircraft. A.J. Eisenberg (formerly Wes Lupien airport) currently has approximately 20 based aircraft. As shown in Exhibit 5-4, Island County based aircraft is forecast to grow by approximately 20 percent, which represents an annual average growth rate of 0.7 percent.

Based aircraft is one indicator of the level of activity present at an airport. Based aircraft are aircraft stored at a particular airport on an annual basis. Exhibit 5-4 shows total based aircraft by airport for the six regional public-use airports.

As Island County's population grows, the demand for commercial passenger airline services may likely increase. During the 1990's and early 2000's Harbor Air provided daily flights to SeaTac and the San Juan Islands from the A.J. Eisenberg airport. This service ended when the airline company reorganized and the airport facility was taken over by a new owner. The site continues to be zoned for airport uses and has the potential to provide small-scale commercial passenger air service in the future.

Exhibit 5-5 shows the location of the motorized multimodal transportation systems discussed in this section.

**Exhibit 5-4**  
Existing and Forecast Total Based Aircraft at Public Airports



Source: Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Study, July 2009, WSDOT

Note: No aircraft are based at Skyline Seaplane Base in Anacortes.

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### Facility Descriptions

**Anacortes Airport** is located in Skagit County, two miles west of the City. The airport has 76 based aircraft, including 68 single-engine, 4 multi-engine piston-powered, 1 jet, and 2 helicopters. Anacortes airport is classified as a commercial service-other airport. It is served by Kenmore Air, which provides service to East Sound and Friday



Anacortes Airport

Harbor using single-engine aircraft. Anacortes has one runway, Runway 18-36, which is 3,015 feet long and 60 feet wide, has an asphalt surface, and is equipped with pilot controlled medium intensity runway lights. Both ends of Runway 18-36 have visual approaches. Vertical guidance to both runway ends is provided by visual approach slope indicators.

**Skagit Regional Airport** is located in Skagit County, three miles west of Burlington. The airport has 165 based aircraft, including



Skagit Regional Airport

145 single-engine, 9 multi-engine piston-powered, 4 jets, 1 ultralight, and 6 helicopter. The latest available data indicate that Skagit Regional experienced 61,480 annual operations. Aeronautical Services, FedEx, Methow Aviation, and Ameriflite provide cargo service to the Airport. The airport has two runways. Runway 10-28 is 5,477 feet long, 100 feet wide, has an asphalt surface, and is equipped with pilot

controlled medium intensity runway lights. Runway 10 is equipped with runway end indicator lights (REIL) and visual approach slope indicators (VASI). This runway has non-precision NDB and GPS approaches. Runway 28 is equipped with REIL's and VASI's, and has a non-precision GPS approach. Runway 4-22 is 3,000 feet long, 60 feet wide, and has an asphalt surface, and has visual approaches to both ends.

**Concrete Municipal Airport** is located in Skagit County adjacent to Washington Highway 20, one mile south of Concrete. There are 39 single-engine aircraft and 1 multi-engine aircraft based at the airport.

The latest available data indicate that Concrete Municipal experienced approximately 7,000 annual operations. Runway 7-25 is the airport's only runway.

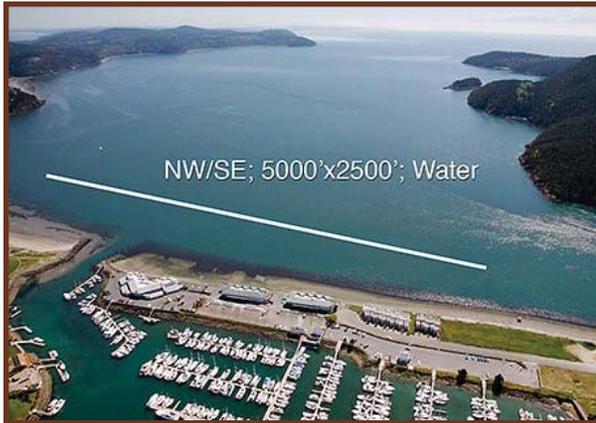


Concrete Municipal Airport

This runway is 2,580 feet long, 60 feet wide, and has an asphalt surface. Both runway ends have visual approaches. In addition to the runway, the airport has a 40-foot by 40-foot helipad designated as "H1."

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Skyline Seaplane Base** is located in Skagit County three miles west of Anacortes. No aircraft are based at the facility. The Northwest-



**Skyline Seaplane Base**

Southeast Waterway, the Seaplane Base's only waterway, is 5,000 feet long and 2,500 feet wide. Approaches to this waterway are visual.

**Camano Island Airfield** is located in Island County adjacent to Washington State Route 534 (SR 534), three miles northwest of Stanwood. There are 11 single-engine aircraft based at the airport. The



**Camano Island Airfield**

latest available data indicate that Camano Island Airfield experienced approximately 1,200 annual operations. Runway 16-34 is the airport's only runway. This runway is 1,750

feet long, 24 feet wide, and has an asphalt surface. Both runway ends have visual approaches.

**A.J. Eisenberg** is located in Island County adjacent to Washington State Route 20 (SR 20), one mile south of Oak Harbor. There are 17 single-engine aircraft and 4 multi-engine aircraft based at the airport. Runway 07/25 is the airport's only runway. This runway is 3,244 feet long, 25 feet wide, and has an asphalt surface. Both runway ends have visual approaches.



**A.J. Eisenberg**

**Whidbey Airpark** is located two miles southwest of Langley in Island County. The airport has 23 based aircraft, including 21 single-engine and 2 multi-engine piston-powered. The latest available data indicate that Whidbey Airpark experienced 14,423 annual operations. Runway 16-34 is the airport's sole runway. It is 2,400 feet long, 25 feet wide, and has an asphalt surface. The



**Whidbey Airpark**

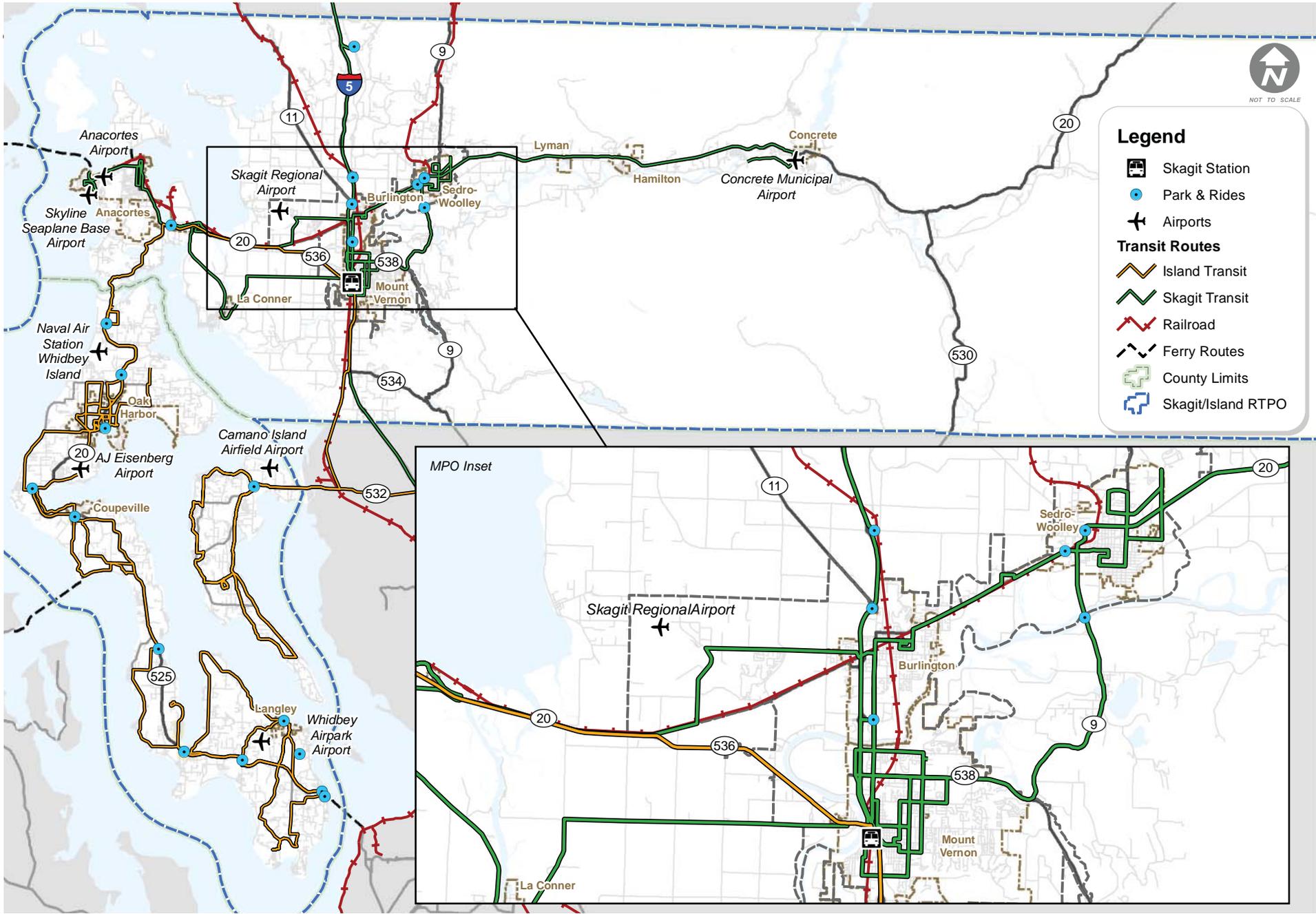


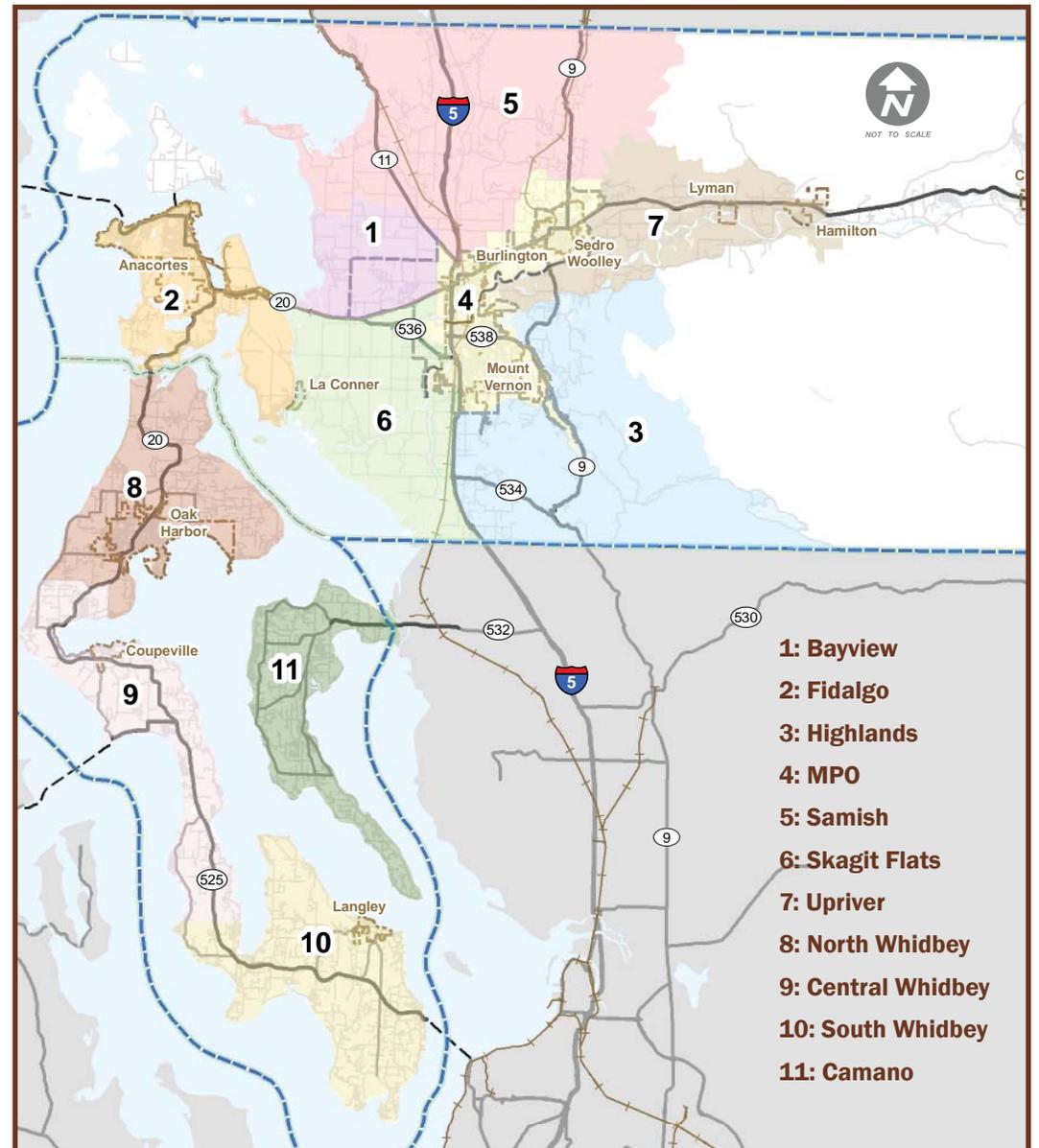
Exhibit 5-5 Multimodal Motorized Transportation Networks

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

### Regional Priorities by Subregion

The regional state highway system discussed in this chapter connects the Skagit-Island region to the other regions of Washington and accounts for the most significant levels of intra-county travel. Other arterials and collectors connect individual communities with the State highways and provide for travel between communities in the region. The needs for specific transportation improvements and strategies to meet the region's needs are summarized by subregion.

A summary of land use data is presented for each of the 11 subregions. The subregion boundaries are based on the transportation analysis zone (TAZ) boundaries from the regional travel demand model. The TAZ boundaries take into account census tracts, geographic features, and roadways. For each subregion, high, medium, and low priority transportation projects and strategies are summarized. These include the baseline improvements, efficiency strategies, and new corridor improvements that best meet the regional priorities.



Subregion Land Use Analysis

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

Exhibit 5-6  
MPO Subregion: Residential Growth

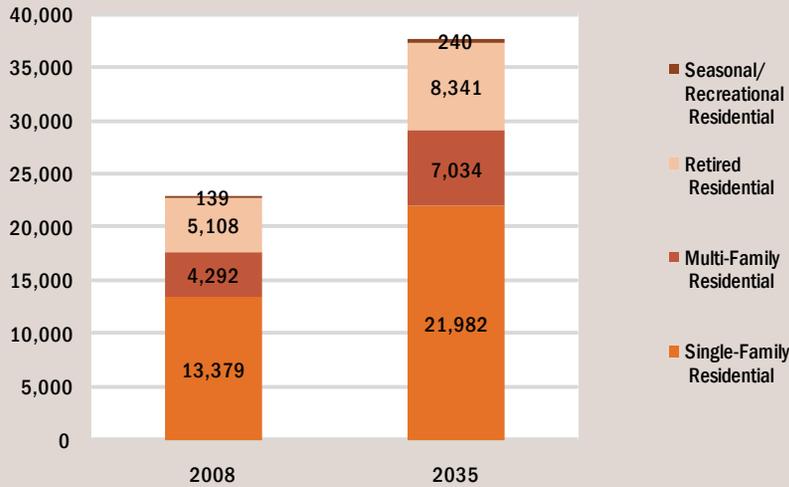
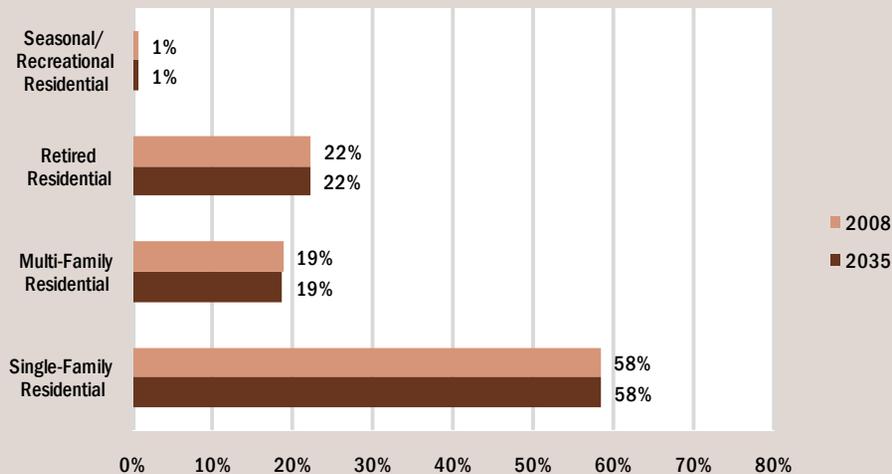


Exhibit 5-7  
MPO Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



## Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Subregion

The MPO subregion is located along both I-5 and SR 20, where the two connect. It extends along SR 20 to the east to the city of Sedro-Woolley, with the northern limit along I-5 being the city of Burlington and the southern limit being the city of Mount Vernon. These three cities comprise the majority of the subregion. Regional roadways in this subregion include the state routes (I-5, SR 20, SR 536, SR 538, and SR 9), as well as Burlington Blvd which provides a connection between Burlington and Mount Vernon; Laventure Road, which connects parts of north and south Mount Vernon and leads to a connection to SR 9; and Cook Road and F&S Grade Road which connect Sedro-Woolley to I-5.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, more than 14,500 new residential units are expected to be added to the MPO subregion.

This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.8 percent. Most of the growth is expected to occur in both Mount Vernon, at more than 65 percent of the total growth for the subregion, and in Sedro-Woolley, with roughly 15 percent of the total growth for the subregion. The rest of the growth is expected to be in pockets near Burlington as well as near Cook Road. Nearly 60 percent of this growth is expected to be single-family residences, with both multi-family and retired residential development expected at about 20 percent each. Of all the subregions, the MPO subregion is expected to have the highest percentage of multi-family residential growth.



**Employment Growth.** More than 8,000 new employees are expected to be added within the MPO subregion over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.8 percent. Over half of the employment growth is expected to occur in or near Mount Vernon, with pockets of growth in Burlington and Sedro-Woolley. The government and services sectors are expected to increase the most, both at or greater than 30 percent of the total employment growth, with retail not far behind at less than 20 percent of the total employment growth. The other sectors are each expected to represent roughly 5 percent of the total employment growth.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Improvements and Strategies

The Skagit metropolitan area experiences a wide range of traffic operations, safety, and preservation issues. These issues are a result of significant levels of commuter traffic, access to/from regional highways, freight movement, access to regional shopping areas, and travel to and from essential public facilities such as schools, hospitals, airports and marine terminals.



**Roadways.** Several high priority improvements have been identified in the I-5 corridor. These include maintenance, safety improvements, interchange improvements, and strategic widening. Improvements to SR 20 focus on preservation, safety, and operational needs.

Other high priority improvements in the MPO subregion include new connections, such as the Anderson/Laventure extension (project MP31). Improvements to key intersections and corridors are identified to resolve existing and forecast safety, capacity, and operational issues.

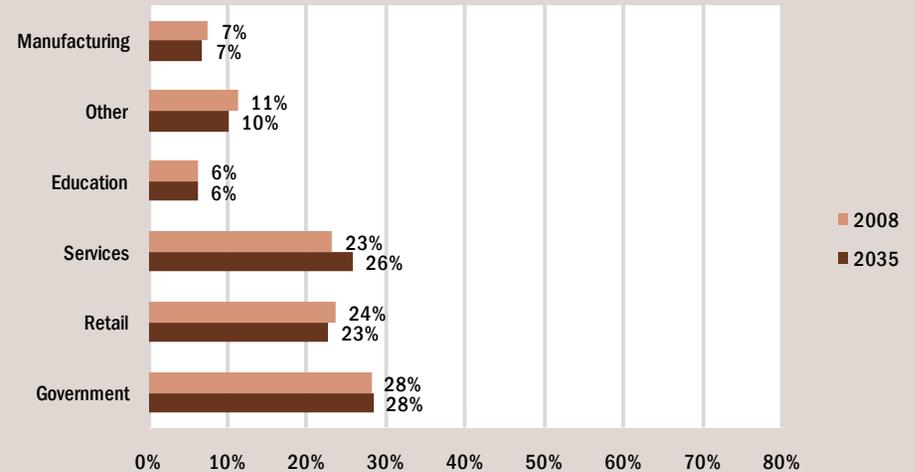


**Non-Motorized.** Arterial and intersection projects will include improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb ramps to enhance non-motorized travel along major corridors. Completion of missing links in the arterial system also will improve the connectivity of the non-motorized system. Improvements to SR 9 (project MP27) include construction of pedestrian and bicycle improvements to facilitate non-motorized travel on SR 9 north of SR 20.



**Transit.** Skagit Transit has 13 fixed routes serving the Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley area and also provides specialized paratransit services for persons with special transportation needs. Several transit improvements are identified in the M/RTP. Additional regional connector services (project RW3) are identified to relieve congestion and improve mobility by providing commuter-based transit service.

**Exhibit 5-8 MPO**  
Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors



**Exhibit 5-9 MPO**  
Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



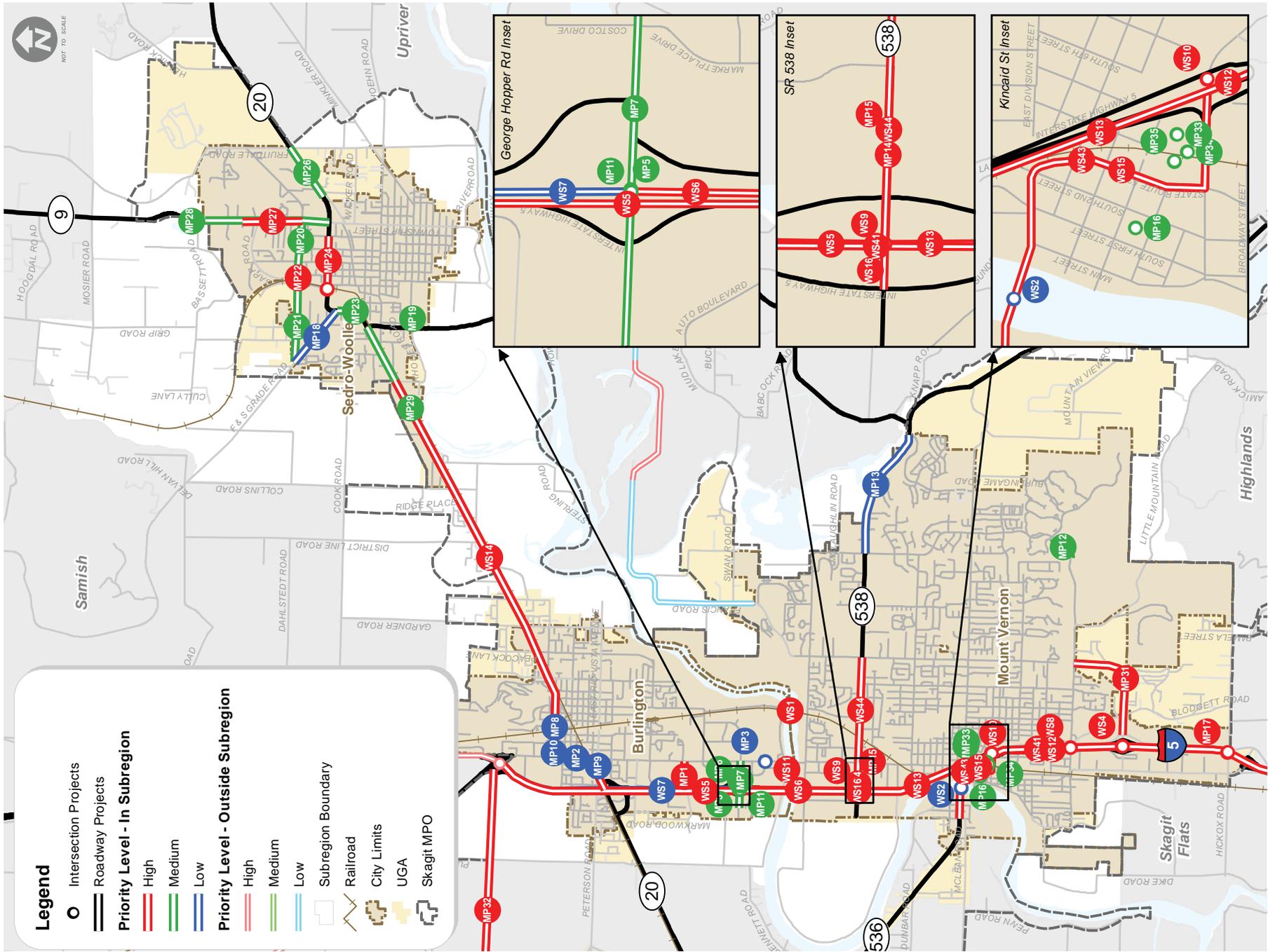


Exhibit 5-10 Improvement Project Map - MPO Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-11 MPO Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million  
 ● = Full                 \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 Long Range = 2026 - 2035

Regional Priorities

| Map Key | Project Location  | Description               | Agency                | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |   |                           |                       |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| MP2     | Burlington Blvd / SR-20 Improvements (SR-20 to Avon) (15%)  | Intersection/ Operations  | City of Burlington    | \$\$     | Long       | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP3     | Burlington Blvd @ Marketplace Capacity Improvements   | Intersection/ Operations  | City of Burlington    | \$\$     | Mid        | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| MP4     | Burlington Boulevard Grind Down/Overlay   | Maintenance/ Preservation | City of Burlington    | \$\$     | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP5     | George Hopper Interchange Improvements  | Interchange               | City of Burlington    | \$\$\$   | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP6     | George Hopper Interchange, Phase III (NB off ramp/roundabout)   | Interchange               | City of Burlington    | \$\$\$   | Mid        | Medium            | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| MP7     | Hopper Road Grind/Overlay   | Maintenance/ Preservation | City of Burlington    | \$       | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP8     | SR 20 Widening between Alder and Cascade Hwy (15%)  | Widening                  | City of Burlington    | \$\$     | Long       | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP9     | SR 20 Widening between Haggens Drive and Burlington Blvd (15%)  | Widening                  | City of Burlington    | \$       | Long       | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP10    | Widen SR 20 westbound approach to Burlington Blvd (15%)   | Widening                  | City of Burlington    | \$       | Long       | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP11    | I-5/George Hopper Rd -Widen bridge to 5 lanes   | Widening                  | City of Burlington    | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP12    | Blackburn Road (Little Mountain Rd to Waugh Rd)   | New Construction          | City of Mt. Vernon    | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| MP13    | College Way Widening  | Widening                  | City of Mt. Vernon    | \$\$     | Mid        | Low               | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| MP14    | College Way Widening  | Widening                  | City of Mt. Vernon    | \$\$     | Long       | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP15    | College Way/SR 538 Signal Upgrades  | Intersection/ Operations  | City of Mt. Vernon    | \$       | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP16    | Downtown Multilevel Parking   | Parking                   | City of Mt. Vernon    | \$\$\$   | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP17    | Hickox Rd/I-5 Interchange Pre-design  | Interchange               | City of Mt. Vernon    | \$       | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ●           |
| MP18    | F&S Grade Rd Improvements   | Widening                  | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Mid        | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP19    | Jameson Arterial Extension to SR 9  | New Construction          | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| MP20    | John Liner Road Arterial Improvements   | Widening                  | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP21    | Jones Rd Arterial Improvements  | Reconstruction            | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP22    | Jones/John Liner Railroad Undercrossing - SR 20 Corridor Freight Mobility & Revitalization Project Phase 2B | New Construction          | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| MP23    | SR 20 Corridor Freight Mobility & Revitalization Project Phase 1A, 1B, 1C                                   | New Construction          | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ●                   | ○            | ●      | ●        | ○           | ●           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-11 MPO Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ● = Partial             \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million    Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Full                 \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035

Regional Priorities

| Map Key | Project Location   | Description                   | Agency                | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |  |                               |                       |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| MP24    | SR 20 Corridor Freight Mobility & Revitalization Project Phase 3   | Widening                      | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ●      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| MP25    | SR 20 BNSF Railroad Undercrossing Bridge - SR 20 Corridor Freight Mobility & Revitalization Project Phase 2A | Reconstruction                | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| MP26    | SR 20 Other Improvements (east of east City Limits)  | Widening                      | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ●      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP27    | SR 9 Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Improvements  | Non Motorized                 | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$       | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ●      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP28    | SR 9/North Township Street Arterial Improvements   | Widening                      | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Long       | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP29    | West SR 20 Widen to 3 Lanes  | Widening                      | City of Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP31    | Anderson/Laventure Rd Ext 2 & 3  | New Construction              | Skagit County         | \$\$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP32    | Josh Wilson Rd   | Reconstruction/ Non Motorized | Skagit County         | \$\$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP33    | Remodel of Skagit Station  | Transit                       | Skagit Transit        | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP34    | Repair to train platform   | Transit                       | Skagit Transit        | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| MP35    | Walkway to Parking Garage  | Transit                       | Skagit Transit        | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS1     | BNSF Skagit River Bridge Replacement for Flood Risk Reductions   | Reconstruction                | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS2     | Division Street - SR 536 Skagit River Bridge Replacement   | Reconstruction                | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ●           |
| WS3     | Division Street - SR536 Skagit River Bridge Replacement, Planning Study                                      | Planning Study                | WSDOT                 | \$       | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ●           |
| WS4     | I-5 Anderson Interchange   | Safety/Mobility               | WSDOT                 | \$\$     | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS5     | I-5 Overlay - I-5 SB/NB RR Bridge to Joe Leary Slough  | Maintenance/ Preservation     | WSDOT                 | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS6     | I-5 Weave Lanes - College to George Hopper   | Widening                      | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Long       | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS7     | I-5 Weave Lanes - George Hopper to Chuckanut   | Widening                      | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Long       | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS8     | I-5/Blackburn Rd   | Reconstruction                | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Long       | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS9     | I-5/College Way  | Interchange                   | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | High              | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| WS10    | I-5/Kincaid Street   | Interchange                   | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | High              | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| WS11    | I-5/Skagit River Bridge  | Widening                      | WSDOT                 | \$\$\$\$ | Long       | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-11 MPO Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

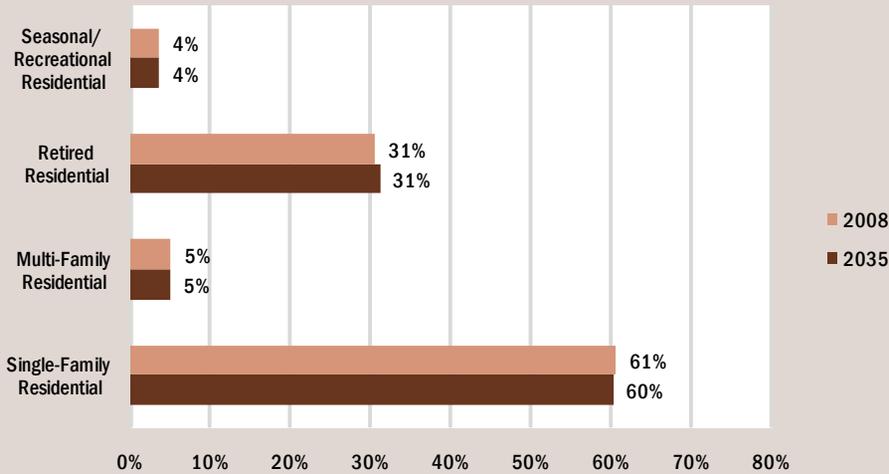
Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Partial             \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035  
 ● = Full                 \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

Regional Priorities

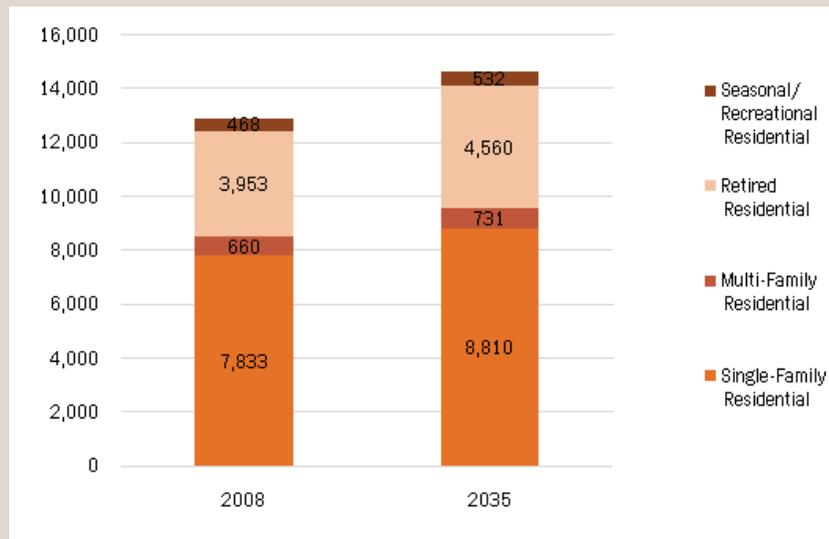
| Map Key | Project Location  | Description               | Agency                                 | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|---|---------------------------|--|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |   |                           |  |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| WS12    | I-5/Weave Lanes - Anderson to Kincaid   | Widening                  | WSDOT                                  | \$\$\$\$ | Long       | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS13    | I-5/Weave Lanes - Kincaid to College  | Widening                  | WSDOT                                  | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS14    | SR 20 Overlay - Avon Ave to Rhoades Rd  | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT                                  | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS15    | SR 536 Mill and Fill - Skagit River Bridge to I-5   | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT                                  | \$       | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS16    | SR 538/I-5 Interchange - Additional Lanes   | Interchange               | WSDOT                                  | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS41    | I-5 - Burlington and Mount Vernon, Samish River Vic to Stackpole Rd - ITS                         | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT                                  | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| WS42    | SR 20 I-5 to Sedro-Woolley - ITS  | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT                                  | \$\$     | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| WS43    | SR 536- Wall Street to I-5 - ITS  | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT                                  | \$       | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| WS44    | SR 538- I-5 to La Venture - ITS   | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT                                  | \$       | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| RW1     | GAP Project - Cascade Trail E: Burlington to Sedro-Woolley (Not Mapped)                           | Non Motorized             | Cities of Burlington/<br>Sedro-Woolley | \$\$     | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ●           | ○           |
| RW3     | Regional Connector Services (Not Mapped)  | Transit                   | Skagit Transit                         | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW4     | Skagit Transit Maintenance, Operations and Administration Building Feasibility Study (Not Mapped) | Transit                   | Skagit Transit                         | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS50    | Remote Weather Information Sites (Not Mapped) - ITS   | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT                                  | \$       | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-12**  
Fidalgo Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-13**  
Fidalgo Subregion: Residential Growth



## Fidalgo Subregion

The Fidalgo subregion covers the City of Anacortes and the Swinomish Indian Reservation, as well as part of Deception Pass State Park. Large portions of the geographic area are undeveloped land, with portions of development located mostly along State Route 20. Regional roadways in this subregion include R Avenue in Anacortes, which provides a north-south bypass along the State Route, and Reservation Road which connects the Reservation to SR 20 to the north and the Town of La Conner to the south.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, over 1,500 new residences are expected to be added to the Fidalgo subregion. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.5 percent. More than 60 percent of these new units are expected to be in Anacortes. The rest are expected to be spread out on the Swinomish Indian Reservation and in the UGA area north of SR 20. Of the growth in the subregion, approximately 60 percent is expected to be single-family residences. Retired residential development is expected to make up more than 35 percent of the growth, which is the highest percentage of growth for that type of residential development within any subregion.



**Employment Growth.** More than 2,000 new employees are expected to be added to the Fidalgo subregion over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent. Nearly 80 percent of this employment growth is expected to be in Anacortes. Other areas experiencing growth include the Swinomish Indian Reservation, the Anacortes UGA, and along southern parts of Fidalgo Island. The services and government sectors are expected to experience the most growth, both at about 30 percent of the total growth. The retail sector is just a bit less at about 20 percent of the total growth, while manufacturing, education, and other sectors make up the remaining 20 percent of total employment growth.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

High priority improvements in the Fidalgo subregion focus on preservation and safety issues. Improvements to ferry terminals are also identified. Exhibits 5-16 and 5-17 summarize regional transportation improvements for the Fidalgo subregion.



**Roadways.** SR 20 Spur provides access to Anacortes from I-5. It also serves as the city's main downtown street. SR 20 Spur is also an important freight route, connecting all points east to the marine highway. WSDOT has identified several preservation and safety projects along the SR 20/SR 20 Spur.



**Non-Motorized.** The new construction, widening, and reconstruction roadway projects, discussed above, also will consider improvement to non-motorized travel in the Fidalgo subregion. The Guemes Channel Trail (RW2) will provide an alternate route to keep pedestrians and bicycles off the state highway, and provides access to the shoreline.



**Transit.** Alternative modes of transportation such as transit, car pooling and vanpooling, walking and biking also should be promoted in this subregion. The improved non-motorized facilities encourage more bicycle and pedestrian use within the Fidalgo subregion.



**Ferry.** The Anacortes - San Juans ferry route is part of SR 20, a major transportation corridor. Total ridership on this route is expected to grow 42 percent from approximately 1.64 million to 2.34 million riders, between 2006 and 2030. This growth assumes the route is operating three new 144-car vessels by 2030. Total ridership on the Anacortes - Sidney, B.C. ferry route is expected to grow 78 percent, from 110,000 to roughly 196,000 riders between 2006 and 2030. This growth assumes one 124-car vessel is operating on this route by 2030.

Exhibit 5-14  
Fidalgo Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors

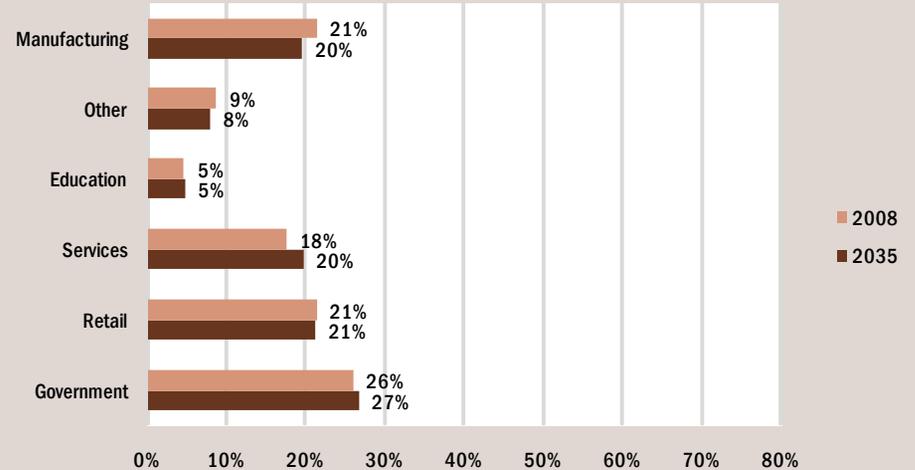


Exhibit 5-15  
Fidalgo Subregion: Employment Sector Growth





Exhibit 5-16 Improvement Project Map - Fidalgo Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-17 Fidalgo Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

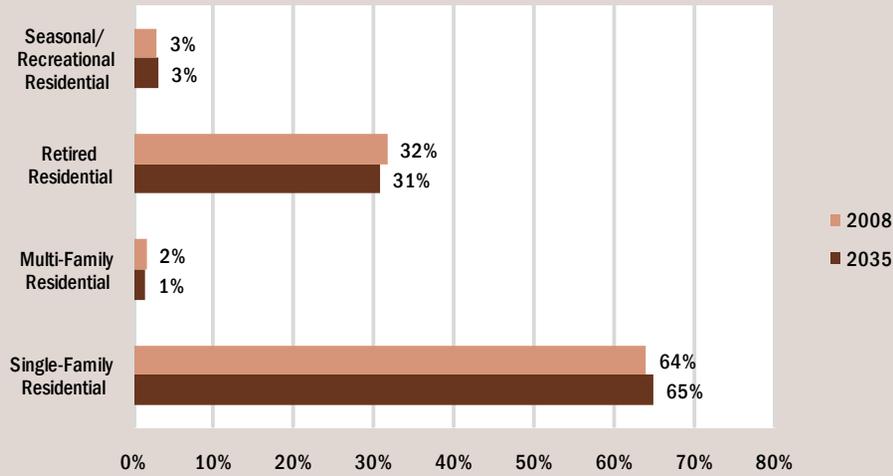
Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035  
 ● = Full                 \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

Regional Priorities

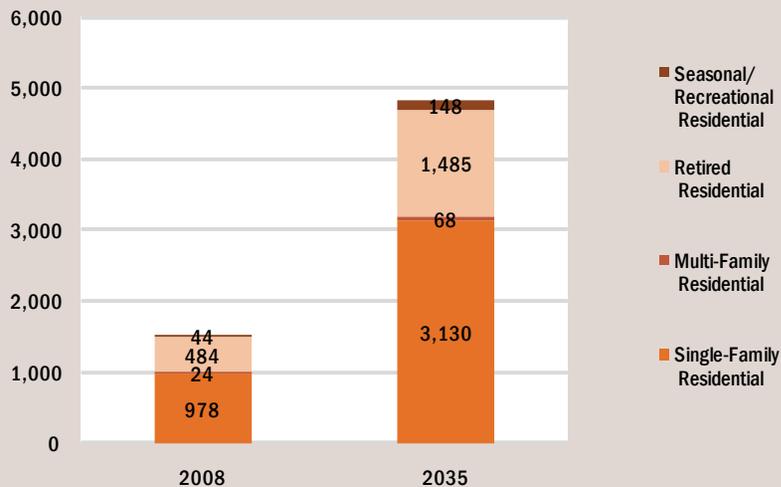
| Map Key | Project Location  | Description               | Agency            | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|---|---------------------------|-------------------|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |   |                           |                   |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| FD1     | D Avenue & 32nd Street  | Intersection/ Operations  | City of Anacortes | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| FD2     | D Avenue Overlay  | Maintenance/ Preservation | City of Anacortes | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| FD3     | R Avenue & 22nd Street  | Intersection/ Operations  | City of Anacortes | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| FD4     | South Fidalgo Bay Road (Old Brook Lane)                       | Reconstruction            | City of Anacortes | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| FD5     | Anacortes Ferry Dock & Guemes Ferry Dock Replacements         | Ferry                     | Skagit County     | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| FD6     | Ferry Terminal Projects                                       | Ferry                     | Skagit County     | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| FD7     | North Reservation Road Extension (Swinomish Flats Rd)         | New Construction          | Swinomish Tribe   | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| FD8     | Pioneer Parkway Intersection/Traffic Calming Improvements     | Intersection/ Operations  | Swinomish Tribe   | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| FD9     | Reservation Road Widening                                     | Widening                  | Swinomish Tribe   | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS24    | SR 20 Overlay - Deception Pass to Sharpes Corner              | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT             | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS26    | SR 20 Overlay - Sharpes Corder to Swinomish Slough            | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT             | \$\$     | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS28    | SR 20 Spur Paving - Commercial Ave to Higgens Slough          | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT             | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS29    | SR 20 Spur Paving - Sharpes Corner to 12th Ave                | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT             | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS30    | SR 20/ Sharpes Corner to Miller-Gibraltar Access improvements | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT             | \$\$\$\$ | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS47    | SR 20 Spur - ITS  | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT             | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| WS48    | SR 20 Spur to Fredonia - ITS                                  | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT             | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| RW2     | Guemes Channel Trail (Not Mapped)                             | Non Motorized             | City of Anacortes | \$\$     | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-18**  
**Bayview Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix**



**Exhibit 5-19**  
**Bayview Subregion: Residential Growth**



## Bayview Subregion

The Bayview subregion is bordered by SR 20 to the south, I-5 and SR 11 to the east, and Padilla Bay to the west. It is adjacent to the MPO subregion and includes both rural and agricultural areas as well as the Skagit Regional Airport. Roads of regional value in the area include Josh Wilson Road and Peterson Road, running east to west, and Farm-To-Market Road and Higgins Airport Way, which run north to south. These roads provide access to the area and serve as secondary routes to SR 20.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, the Bayview subregion is expected to experience quite a bit of residential growth, with more than 3,000 additional residential units expected, representing an average annual growth rate of over 4 percent -- the highest average annual growth rate in any of the subregions. Of this growth, more than 30 percent is expected in retired residential development, which is the second highest percentage of any subregion. 67 percent of the residential development is expected to be single-family. More than 95 percent of this growth is anticipated in the Bayview UGA area, located between Farm To Market Road, Josh Wilson Road, and SR 20.



**Employment Growth.** The total growth in employment is expected to be relatively low compared to the expected residential growth in the Bayview subregion. More than 500 employees are expected to be added, representing an annual average growth rate of 0.7 percent. The highest concentration of growth is located near the community of Bayview on the shoreline, at almost 30 percent of the total growth for the subregion. Most of the growth will be in the manufacturing sector, with the government, retail, and services sectors representing roughly 20 percent of the growth in the subregion each.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

Currently, the low land use densities in this subregion do not result in any existing capacity or major operational deficiencies. The forecast residential growth will significantly increase commute trips and demand for travel to I-5 and beyond. East-west connections to/from the east are provided primarily by Josh Wilson Road, Peterson Road, and SR 20, while north-south travel is served by Farm to Market Road and Bayview-Edison Road.



**Roadways.** Improvements identified for the Bayview subregion include ITS improvements (WS46) along SR 20. An improvement at the intersection of Josh Wilson Road/Farm to Market Road (BV1) will improve future safety and operations related to the new growth. Reconstructing Josh Wilson Road (MP32) to urban standards is also identified as a high priority project.

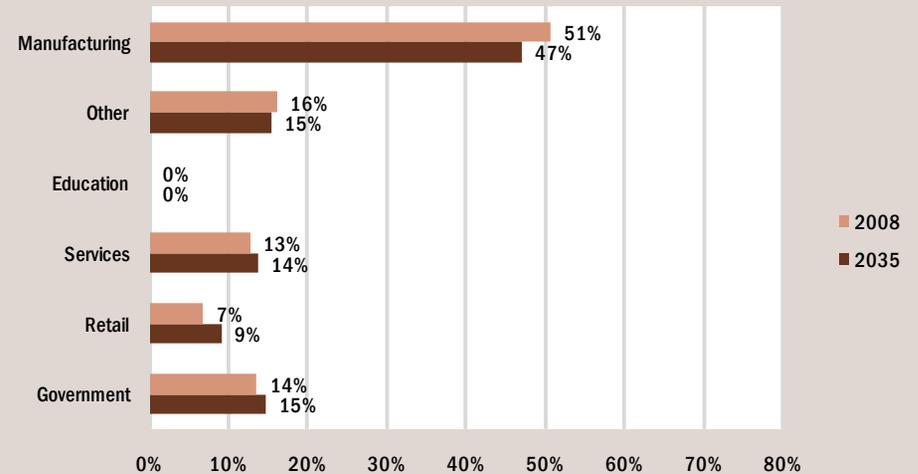


**Non-Motorized.** The future development of north-south and east-west corridors will create a framework for the long-range non-motorized facilities in the Bayview subregion. These will primarily consist of roadway shoulders for pedestrian and bicycle travel.



**Transit.** Skagit Transit operates route 513, providing service from Skagit Station to March's Point, via the Skagit Regional Airport. Future commuter service may be needed to serve the new residential growth.

**Exhibit 5-20**  
Bayview Subregion 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors



**Exhibit 5-21**  
Bayview Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



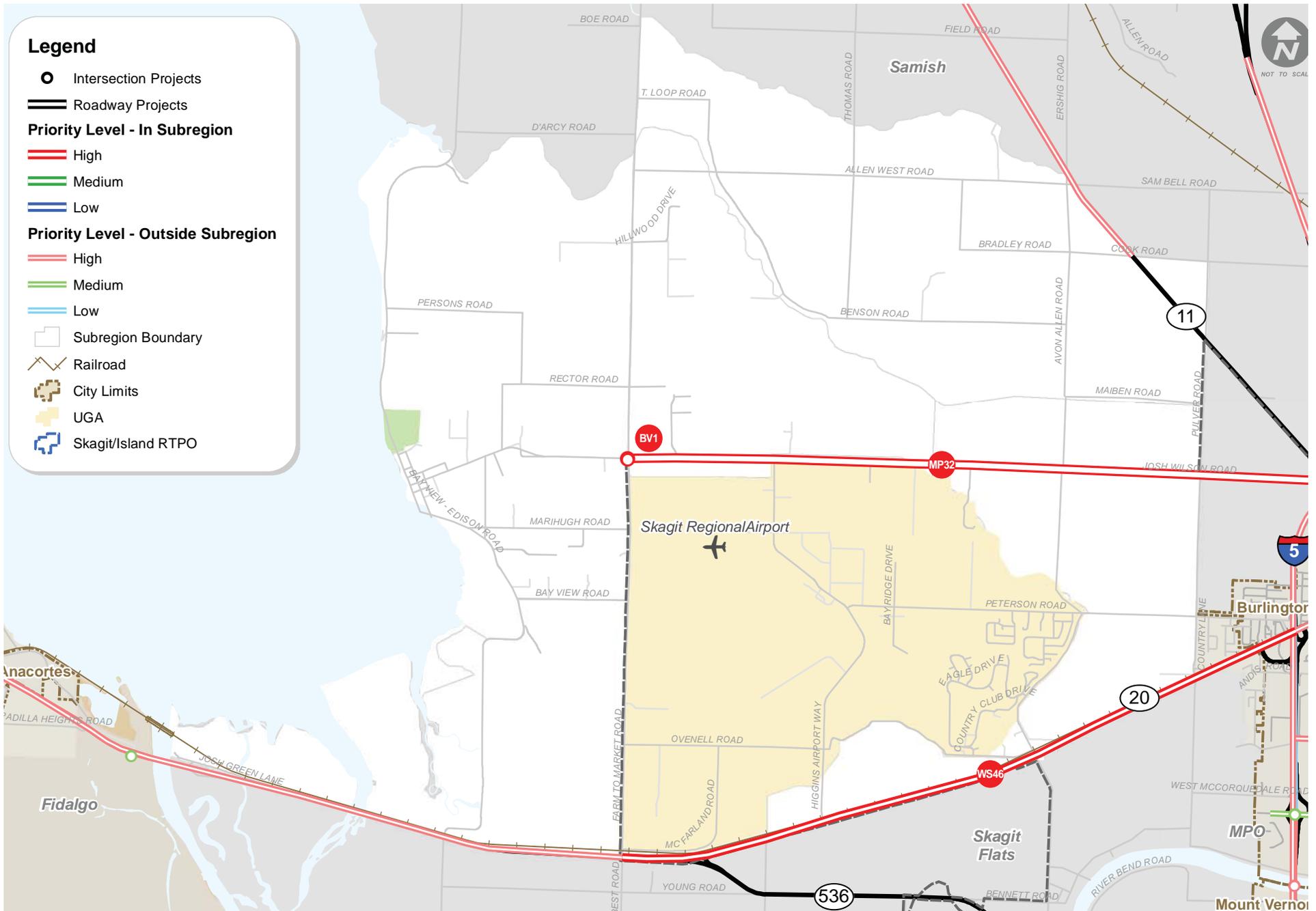


Exhibit 5-22 Improvement Project Map - Bayview Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-23 Bayview Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

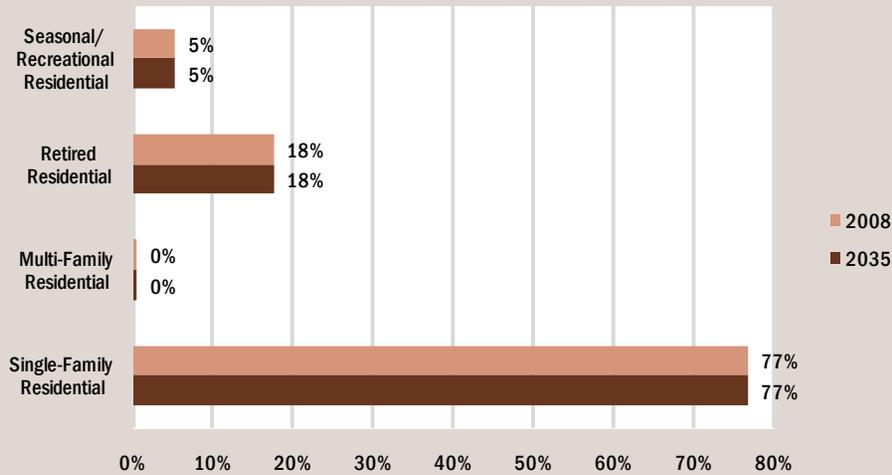
Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035  
 ● = Full                 \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

Regional Priorities

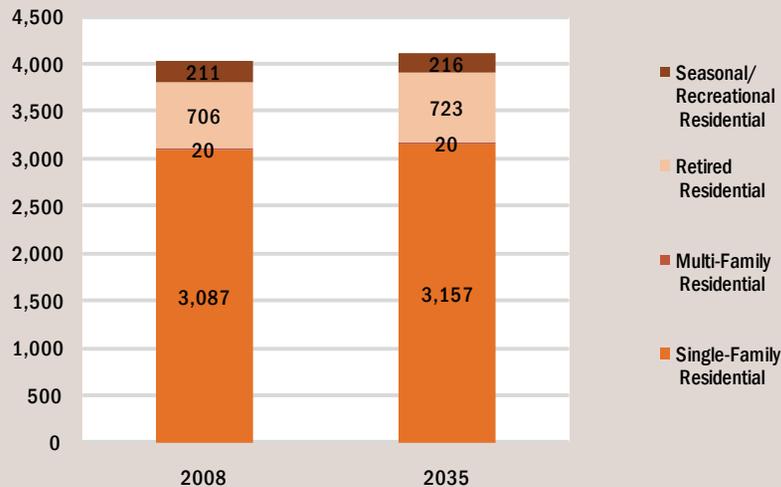
| Map Key | Project Location                                | Description                   | Agency        | Cost   | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|---|-------------------------------|---------------|--------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |   |                               |               |        |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| BV1     | Josh Wilson Rd/Farm to Market Rd                | Reconstruction                | Skagit County | \$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ●      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| WS46    | SR 20 Fredonia to I-5 remaining equipment - ITS | Safety/Mobility               | WSDOT         | \$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| MP32    | Josh Wilson Rd                                  | Reconstruction/ Non Motorized | Skagit County | \$\$\$ | Short      | High              | ●                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-24**  
Samish Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-25**  
Samish Subregion: Residential Growth



## Samish Subregion

The Samish subregion covers the northern part of Skagit county located along I-5 and continuing out just east of SR 9. It includes mainly rural and agricultural areas. Three state routes serve north-south travel in the subregion: I-5, SR 11 and SR 9. Primary east-west routes include Cook Road, F&S Grade Road, and Bow Hill Road.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, the Samish subregion is not anticipated to experience much residential growth. The subregion is projected to have less than 100 new residential units, representing an average annual growth rate of less than one-tenth of a percent. The growth is forecasted to be distributed evenly throughout the subregion. Of the new growth, over 80 percent is expected to be single-family residential.



**Employment Growth.** Similar to the residential growth, the employment growth for this subregion is low compared to other subregions. Fewer than 350 new employees are expected to be added to the Samish subregion over the next 25 years, which represents an average annual growth rate of less than one-half a percent. Roughly 20 percent of this growth is anticipated to occur just east of I-5 and north of Bow Hill Road. Roughly 40 percent of the growth is expected in the retail sector, with other sectors experiencing growth between 5 percent and 20 percent.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

Improvements in the Samish subregion focus on preservation, traffic operations, and safety. The limited growth forecasted for this subregion reduces the need for general widening and capacity improvements. Exhibits 5-28 and 5-29 summarize regional transportation improvements for the Samish subregion.



**Roadways.** WSDOT and the local agencies have identified several improvements related to roadway reconstruction and preservation. A bridge replacement project (SA3) is identified on Old Highway 99. Old Highway 99, north of Cook Road, is a major route that serves trucks from concrete and gravel material companies to the north. The road also serves as a north/south detour route for I-5 when the road is blocked or undergoing construction. A freight mobility improvement to Cook Road is also identified.



**Non-motorized.** The roadway reconstruction and widening projects will include sidewalks or improved shoulders which will support non-motorized travel in the Samish subregion.



**Transit.** Skagit Transit has identified improvements to the Alger Park and Ride. The Alger Park and Ride is a commuter stop on a regional connector service route. The current Park and Ride is privately owned and the owner charges a daily parking fee for use of the dirt lot. Skagit Transit owns an adjacent piece of property that we would like to develop as a 45 stall Park and Ride facility. A feasibility study has been completed for the Park and Ride Lot.

Exhibit 5-26  
Samish Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors

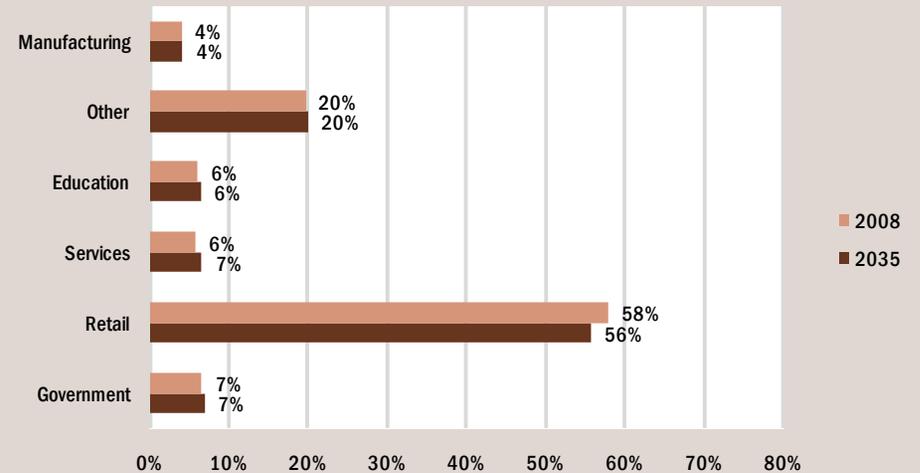
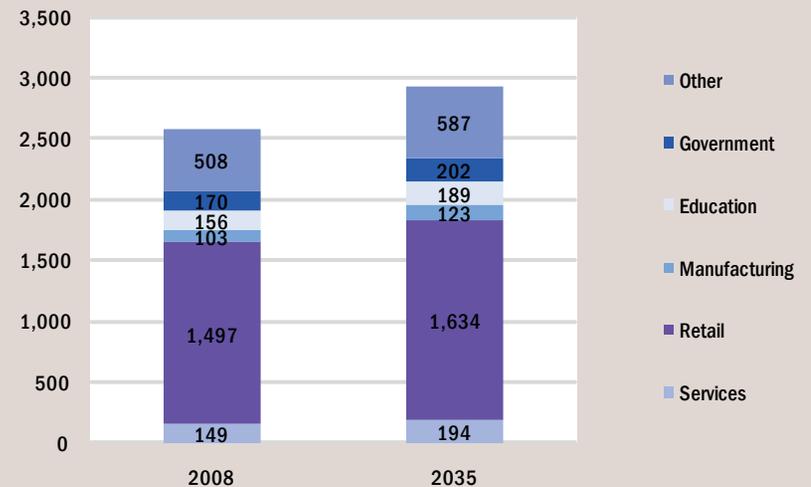


Exhibit 5-27  
Samish Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



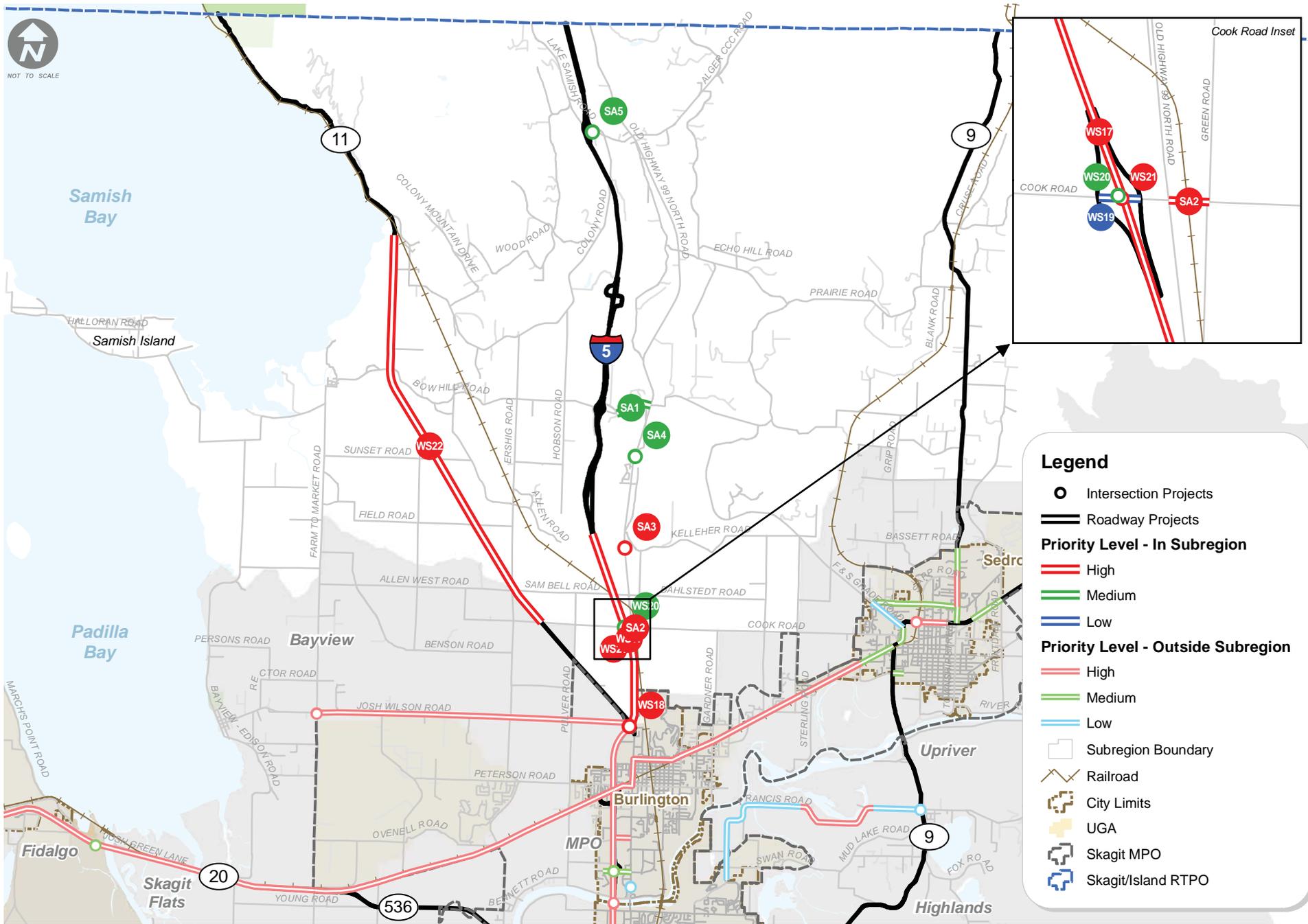


Exhibit 5-28 Improvement Project Map - Samish Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-29 Samish Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million  
 ● = Partial             \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million  
 ● = Full                \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

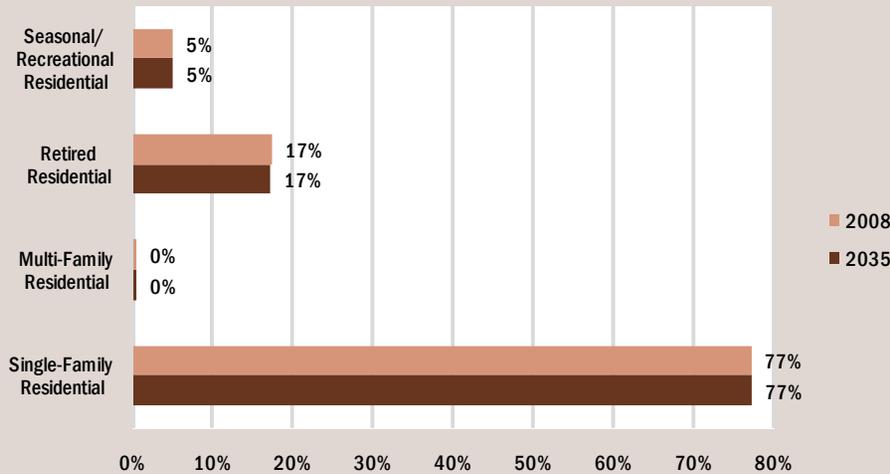
Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 Long Range = 2026 - 2035

Regional Priorities

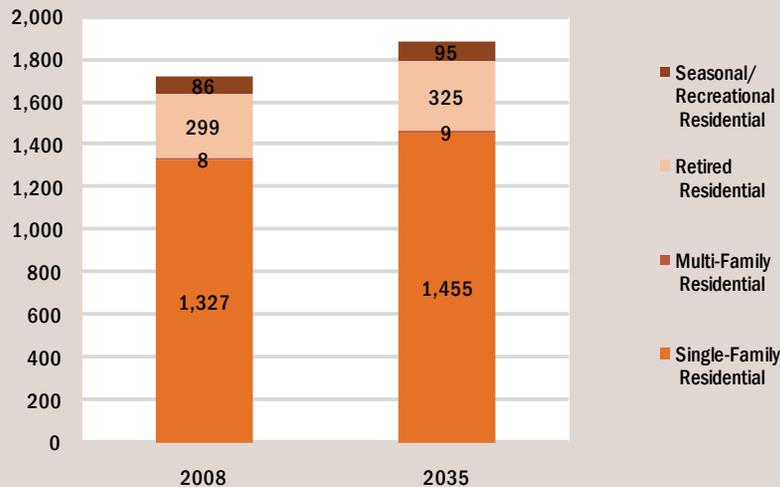
| Map Key | Project Location  | Description               | Agency         | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|---|---------------------------|----------------|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |   |                           |                |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| SA1     | Bow Hill Rd   | Reconstruction            | Skagit County  | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SA2     | Cook Rd Freight Mobility Improvement Project                            | Reconstruction            | Skagit County  | \$\$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SA3     | Old 99N Bridge Replacement Corridor (BNSF Trestle, Thomas Creek Bridge) | Reconstruction            | Skagit County  | \$       | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SA4     | Old Hwy 99N Samish River Bridge Repair and Deck Overlay                 | Reconstruction            | Skagit County  | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SA5     | Alger P&R   | Transit                   | Skagit Transit | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS17    | I-5 SB Resurfacing - Joe Leary Slough to Nulle Rd Vicinity              | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT          | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS18    | I-5 Chuckanut SB on and off ramps                                       | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT          | \$\$\$   | Long       | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS19    | I-5 Cook Road Bridge Widening to 4 lanes Exit 232                       | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT          | \$\$\$\$ | Long       | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS20    | I-5/Cook Rd Interchange - SB ramp & Intersection Improvements           | Intersection/ Operations  | WSDOT          | \$\$     | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS21    | I-5/Cook Rd Interchange NB ramp/Old Hwy 99 Intersection Improvements    | Intersection/ Operations  | WSDOT          | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS22    | SR 11 Paving - Cook Rd to Colony Creek                                  | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT          | \$\$     | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-30**  
Upriver Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-31**  
Upriver Subregion: Residential Growth



## Upriver Subregion

The Upriver subregion is focused along the eastern portion of the Skagit River, from the eastern city limits of Burlington and Mount Vernon, following SR 20 east toward the towns of Lyman and Hamilton. Similar to the Samish subregion, this subregion is mostly made up of rural residential and agricultural land. The primary road servicing this subregion is SR 20, with SR 9 and Francis Road connecting the western side of the subregion. The Skagit Highway serves as an alternate route to SR 20, running parallel to the state route on the south side of the Skagit River.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, roughly 150 new residences are expected to be added to the Upriver subregion. This represents an average annual growth rate of less than one-half a percent. More than 40 percent of these new units are expected to be in and around the Town of Hamilton, and slightly less than 40 percent is expected in and around the Town of Lyman. The rest of the growth is expected to be spread out throughout the subregion. Single-family development is expected to comprise more than 82 percent of new residential growth, while retired residences are expected to comprise roughly 17 percent. Of all the subregions, the Upriver subregion is expected to have the highest percentage of single-family residential growth.



**Employment Growth.** Slightly more than 100 new employees are expected to be added to the Upriver subregion over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of less than one-half a percent. The growth is anticipated to be somewhat spread throughout the subregion, with areas just east of Sedro-Woolley, in and around Lyman, and east of SR 9 south of the Skagit River to experience slightly more growth. The government sector is anticipated to experience the most growth, at just more than 40 percent, with the services sector at slightly less than 20 percent.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

The focus of improvement strategies for the Upriver subregion is on roadway reconstruction and preservation. The limited growth forecasted for this subregion reduces the need for general widening and capacity improvements. Exhibits 5-34 and 5-35 summarize regional transportation improvements for the Upriver subregion.



**Roadways.** Pavement overlay projects on SR 20 are identified as high priorities in the Upriver subregion. Widening and resurfacing Francis Road is also identified as a high priority.



**Non-motorized.** The roadway reconstruction and widening projects will include improved shoulders which will support non-motorized travel in the Upriver subregion.



**Transit.** Improvements to SR 20 will support transit service in this corridor. Skagit Transit currently operates route 717 (Burlington to Concrete) within this subregion.

Exhibit 5-32  
Upriver Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors

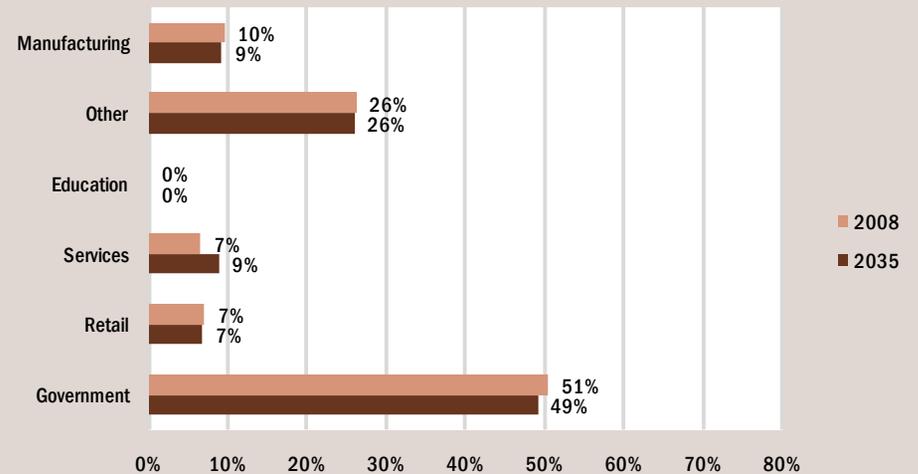


Exhibit 5-33  
Upriver Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



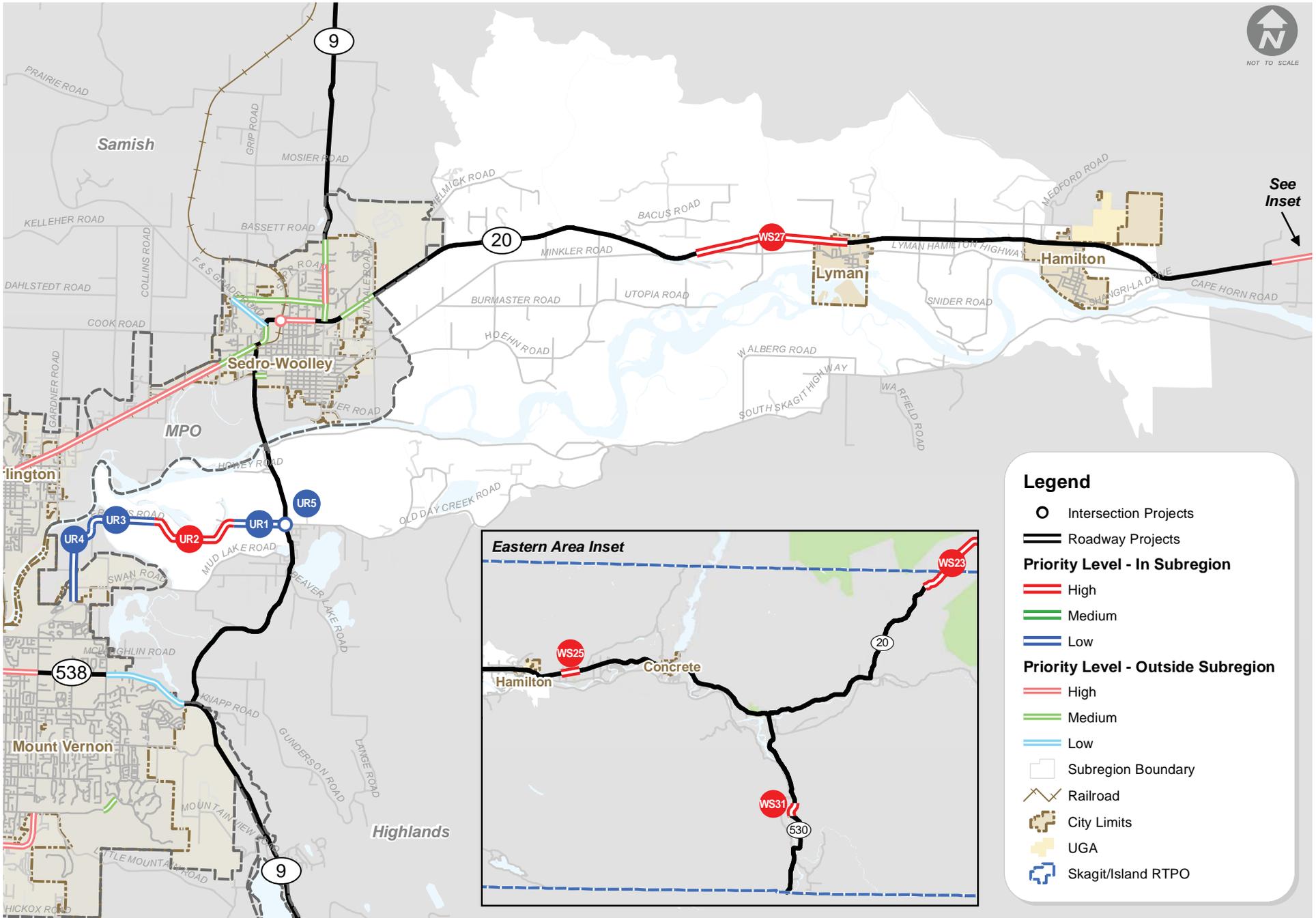


Exhibit 5-34 Improvement Project Map - Upriver Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-35 Upriver Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

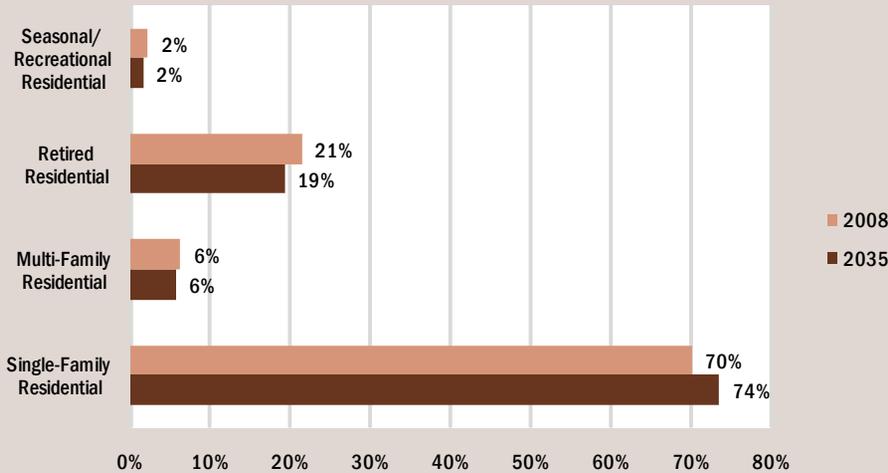
Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million    Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Full                  \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035

Regional Priorities

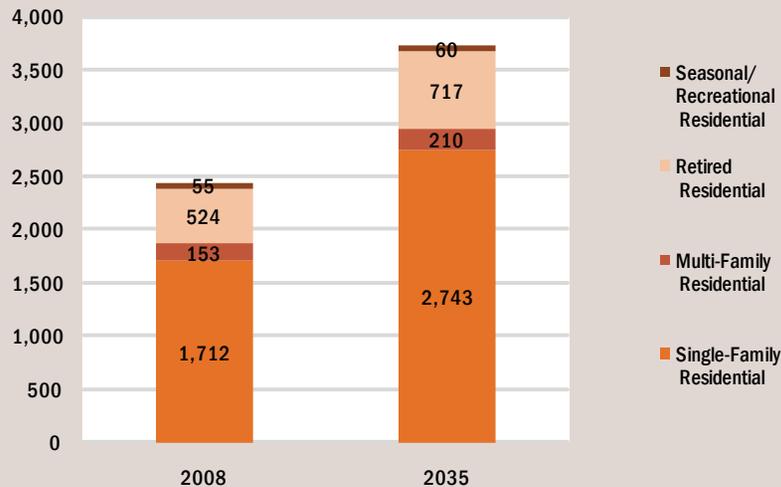
| Map Key | Project Location  | Description               | Agency              | Cost | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|---|---------------------------|---------------------|------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |   |                           |                     |      |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| UR1     | Francis Rd Section 1  | Reconstruction            | Skagit County       | \$\$ | Short      | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| UR2     | Francis Rd Section 2  | Reconstruction            | Skagit County       | \$\$ | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| UR3     | Francis Rd Section 3  | Reconstruction            | Skagit County       | \$\$ | Short      | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| UR4     | Francis Rd Section 4  | Reconstruction            | Skagit County       | \$\$ | Mid        | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| UR5     | Francis Rd/State Route 9  | Reconstruction            | Skagit County/WSDOT | \$\$ | Mid        | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS27    | SR 20 Paving - Lyman Hamilton Road Vicinity to Baker River                          | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT               | \$\$ | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS23    | SR 20 BST - Damnation Creek to George Powerhouse Vicinity (Not Mapped)              | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT               | \$\$ | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS25    | SR 20 Overlay - Pinelli Road Vicinity to 1 mile east of Lusk Road (Not Mapped)      | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT               | \$\$ | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS31    | SR 530 Overlay - 2.6 miles north of Suiattle River Road to White Creek (Not Mapped) | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT               | \$\$ | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-36**  
Skagit Flats Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-37**  
Skagit Flats Subregion: Residential Growth



## Skagit Flats Subregion

The Skagit Flats subregion is composed primarily of agricultural land, with the Skagit River running through it and forking out to Skagit Bay to the west. The subregion is bounded by SR 20 to the north, I-5 to the east, the County Line to the south, and the shoreline and Swinomish Indian Reservation to the west. The Town of La Conner is included in this subregion. At its periphery the subregion is served by state routes: SR 20, SR 536, and I-5. Within the subregion, Fir Island Road, Best Road, La Conner-Whitney Road, and McLean Road provide circulation.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, more than 1,200 new residences are expected to be added to the Skagit Flats subregion.

This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.6 percent. Areas where growth is expected to occur are mostly near Mount Vernon, representing more than 90 percent of the residential growth for the subregion, as well as some growth in the Town of La Conner. Growth in the agricultural areas is expected to be minimal. Of the anticipated growth, more than 80 percent is expected to be single-family residential, with retired residential estimated at around 15 percent.



**Employment Growth.** More than 800 new employees are expected to be added to the Skagit Flats subregion over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent. The highest rates of growth are expected in the agricultural and services sectors, each representing approximately one quarter of the anticipated growth in employment for the subregion. This growth is anticipated to occur near the City of Mount Vernon and in and around the Town of La Conner, representing approximately 50 percent and 20 percent of the anticipated growth, respectively.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

The primary focus of the M/RTP improvements in the Skagit Flats subregion are reconstructing and upgrading roadways. Exhibit 5-40 and 5-41 summarize the priority improvements.



**Roadways.** A bridge replacement project on Best Road at the North Fork Skagit River is identified as high priority. A project at the intersection of Pioneer Highway/Fir Island Road is identified as a high priority to improve safety and traffic operations. In addition WSDOT has identified an ITS project along I-5.



**Non motorized.** The roadway and intersection improvements will also support non-motorized travel.



**Transit.** Skagit Transit operates route 615, from Skagit Station to March's Point, via the Swinomish Nation.

Exhibit 5-38  
Skagit Flats Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors

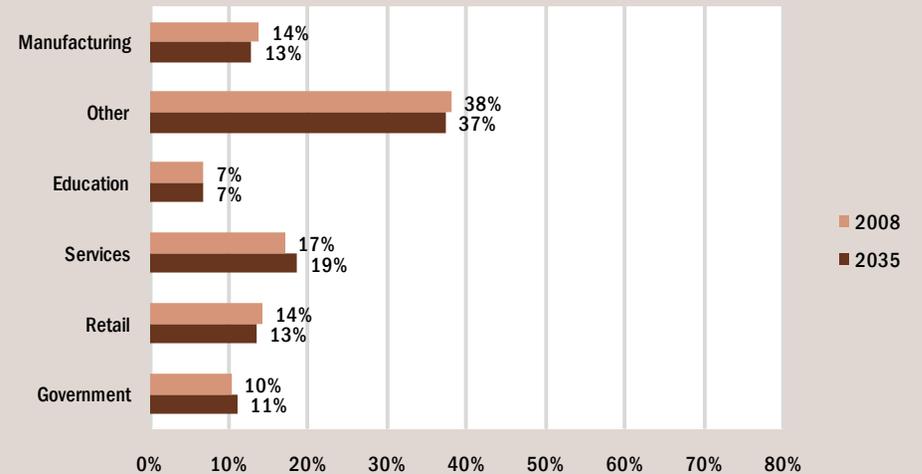


Exhibit 5-39  
Skagit Flats Subregion: Employment Sector Growth

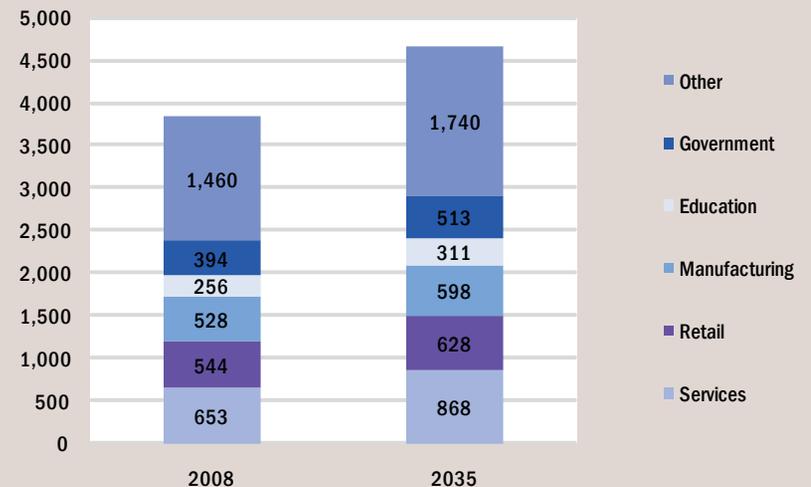




Exhibit 5-40 Improvement Project Map - Skagit Flats Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-41 Skagit Flats Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

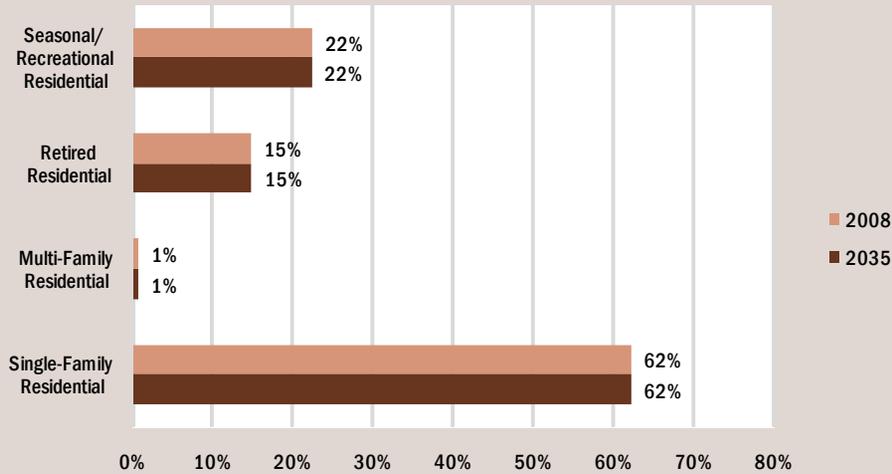
Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million    Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Full                  \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035

Regional Priorities

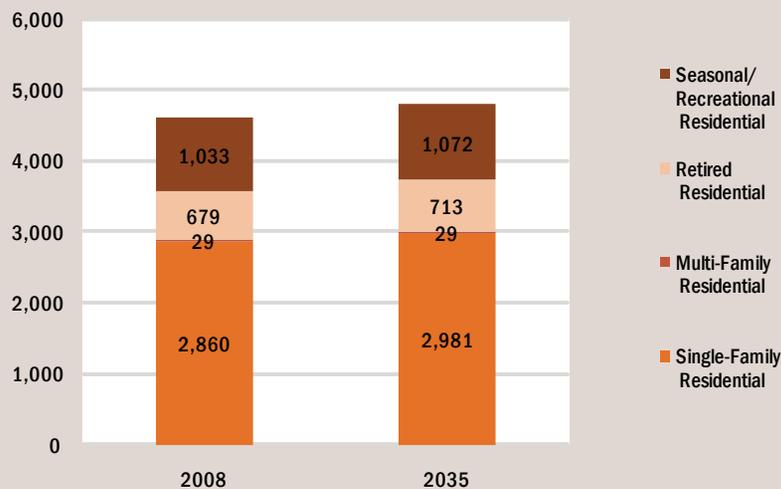
| Map Key | Project Location                                 | Description     | Agency        | Cost   | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|--|-----------------|---------------|--------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |  |                 |               |        |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| SF1     | Pioneer Hwy/Fir Island Intersection              | Reconstruction  | Skagit County | \$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SF2     | Skagit River North Fork Bridge Replacement       | Reconstruction  | Skagit County | \$\$\$ | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS45    | I-5 -Old Hwy 99 Vic to Stillaguamish River - ITS | Safety/Mobility | WSDOT         | \$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-42**  
Highlands Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-43**  
Highlands Subregion: Residential Growth



## Highlands Subregion

The Highlands subregion is located just south of Mount Vernon, starting at I-5 and extending east past SR 9. It is a mostly rural and agricultural area and includes the communities of Big Lake and Lake McMurray. Regional roadways serving the area are mostly state highways: I-5 to the west, SR 9 in the east, and SR 534 in the south. County collector roads connect the communities to the state highways and serve local travel patterns.



**Residential Growth.** Approximately 150 new residences are expected to be added to the Highlands subregion over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.2 percent. More than 70 percent of these new units are expected to be in the part of the subregion near Mount Vernon. The remaining 20 percent are anticipated to be spread out throughout the subregion. Single-family development represents slightly less than 80 percent of the expected growth, with retired residential development representing the remaining 20 percent.



**Employment Growth.** Less than 90 new employees are expected to be added to the Highlands subregion over the next 27 years, representing an average annual growth rate of 0.5 percent. The majority of this new growth, around 45 percent, is expected to occur near the I-5 corridor. The rest will be dispersed throughout the subregion. Of this new growth, the sector expected to experience the highest rate of growth is the services sector, representing more than 20 percent of the anticipated growth, followed closely by the retail, education, and agricultural sectors, at slightly less than 20 percent each.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

No regional priority projects were identified for the Highlands subregion.

Exhibit 5-44  
Highlands Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors

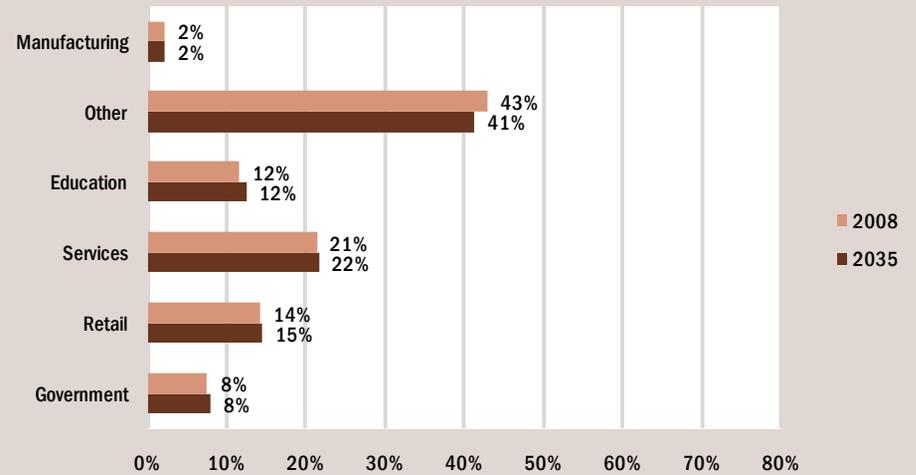
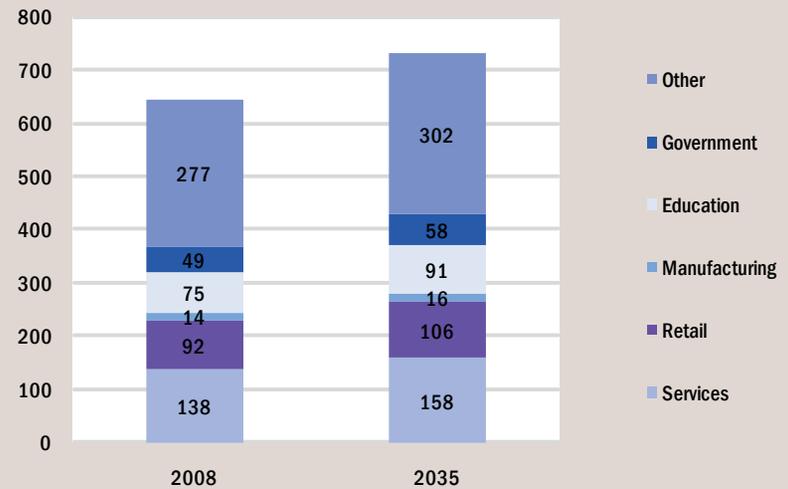
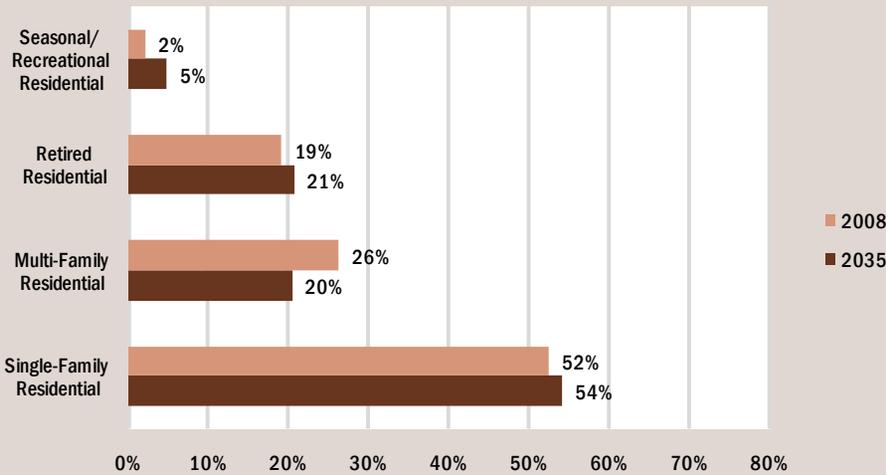


Exhibit 5-45  
Highlands Subregion: Employment Sector Growth

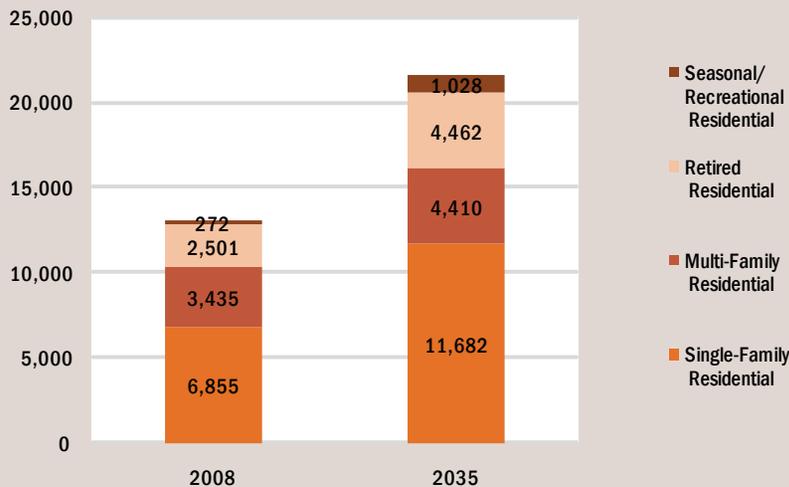


# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-46**  
North Whidbey Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-47**  
North Whidbey Subregion: Residential Growth



## North Whidbey Subregion

The North Whidbey subregion is located on the northern portion of Whidbey Island and includes the City of Oak Harbor, as well as the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station and several State Parks. SR 20 is the main route serving the subregion, with other roadways providing alternate circulation access to the state route, including Ault Field Road, Heller Road, Whidbey Avenue, and Regatta Drive. The subregion is connected to Skagit County and other northern areas via the SR 20 Deception Pass Bridge to the north.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, more than 7,700 new residences are expected to be added to the North Whidbey subregion. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.8 percent. Over 75 percent of these new residences are expected to be developed in the City of Oak Harbor, with another 20 percent expected just east of the city. More than 60 percent of these new residences are anticipated to be single-family, with 25 percent being retired residential and the remainder of the new residences are expected to be multi-family.



**Employment Growth.** Roughly 3,700 new employees are expected to be added to the North Whidbey subregion over the next 25 years, representing an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent. More than 25 percent of the growth is expected to occur on the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station, with another 45 percent anticipated in the City of Oak Harbor. The highest rates of growth are expected to be in the government and services sectors, each representing more than 30 percent of the new employment growth.

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

Exhibits 5-50 and 5-51 summarize the regional improvements for the North Whidbey subregion. The improvements focus on maintenance, preservation and improving efficiencies of the existing system. They also address existing or forecast safety and operations needs along regional corridors.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs



**Roadways.** Regional improvements in the North Whidbey subregion will address safety and operational needs on highway, arterial, and collector road corridors. In Oak Harbor, the M/RTP includes a project to upgrade Whidbey Avenue between SR 20 and Heller Road. The project will upgrade the existing roadway to improve safety and operations. An improvement to the intersection at Pioneer Way/Beeksma Drive is identified as a high priority to improve traffic operations.



**Non-motorized.** The roadway reconstruction and widening projects will include sidewalks or improved shoulders which will support non-motorized travel in the subregion. These should be designed and constructed to comply with the ADA requirements.

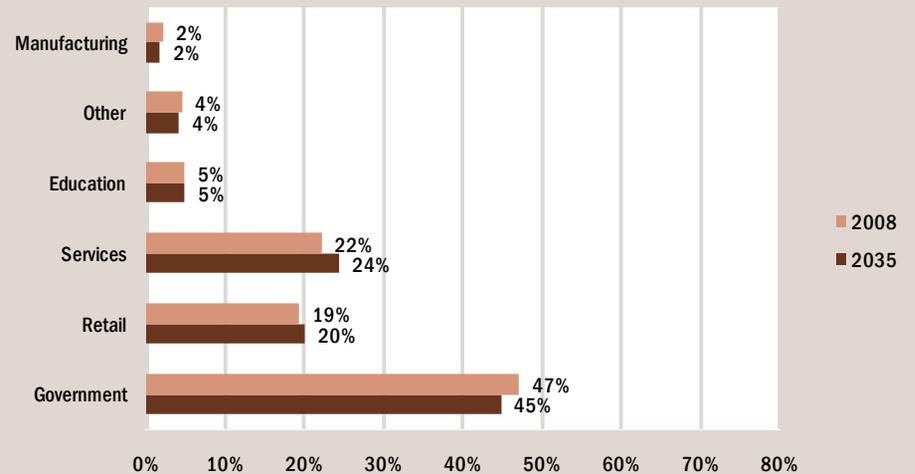
New and improved regional non-motorized links should be constructed to encourage more non-motorized transportation, including making connections between existing pedestrian and bicycle routes and adding bicycle and pedestrian routes to major employer worksites. These new bicycle and pedestrian routes should be ADA compatible.



**Transit.** The North Whidbey subregion is served by Island Transit, which connects Island County to Skagit County, and the Clinton ferry terminal. Island Transit also provides specialized paratransit services for Island County. There is a need to expand specialized paratransit services in the future.

The subregion should promote alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking, carpooling, and vanpooling. These Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies should be effectively promoted in order to be successful. Information about commute alternatives should be distributed regularly to employees. Examples of information to be distributed include non-motorized transportation maps, vanpool rider signup information, and promotional materials informing people of their transportation choices.

**Exhibit 5-48**  
North Whidbey Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors



**Exhibit 5-49**  
North Whidbey Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



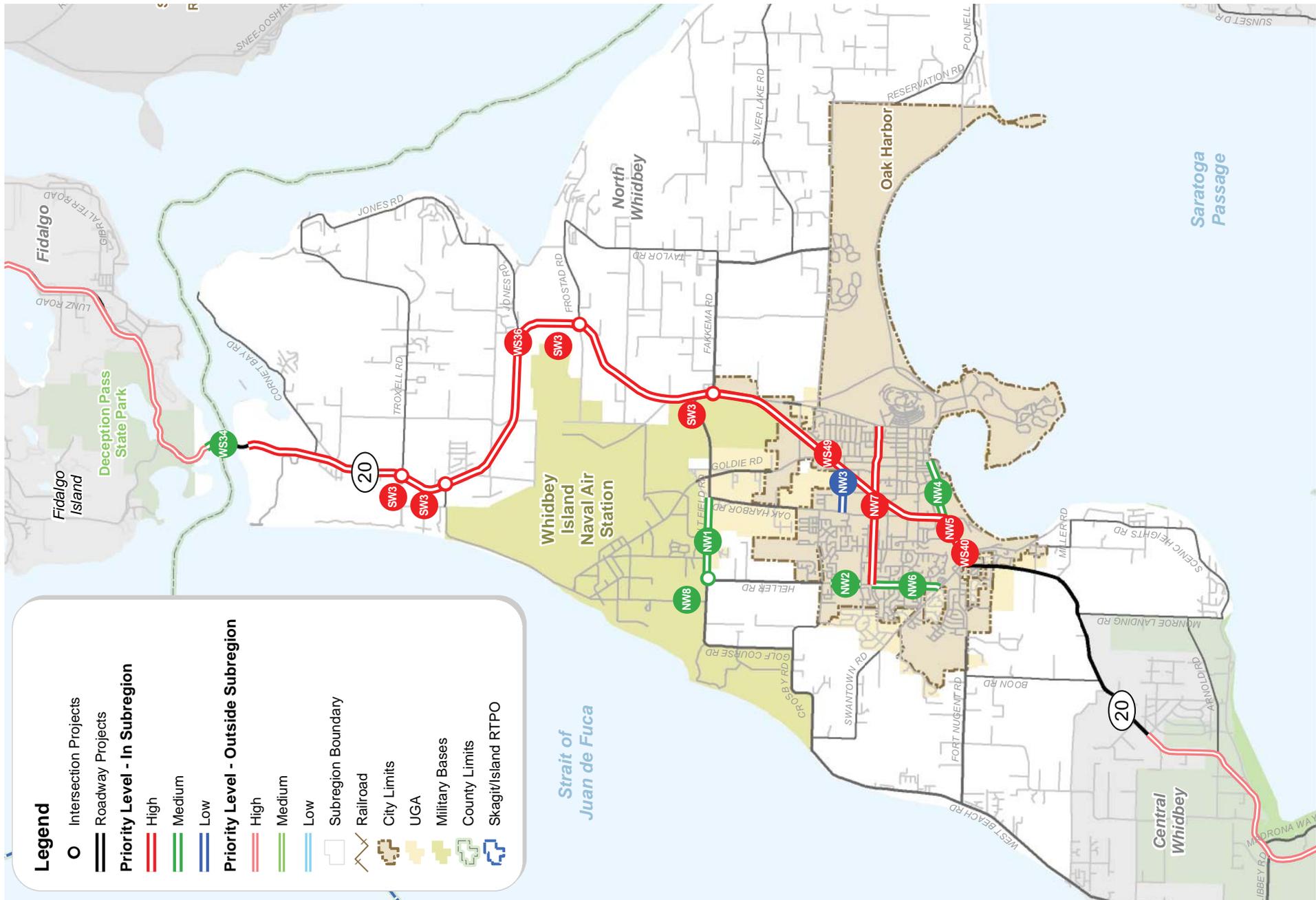


Exhibit 5-50 Improvement Project Map - North Whidbey Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-51 North Whidbey Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

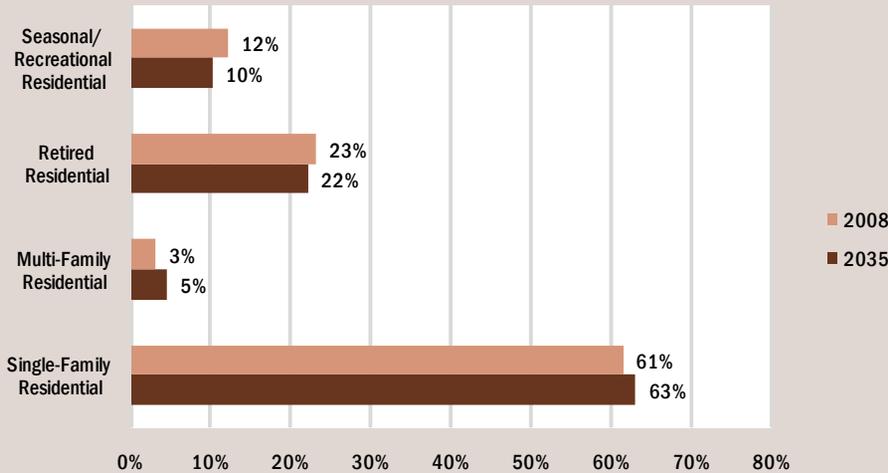
Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035  
 ● = Full                 \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

Regional Priorities

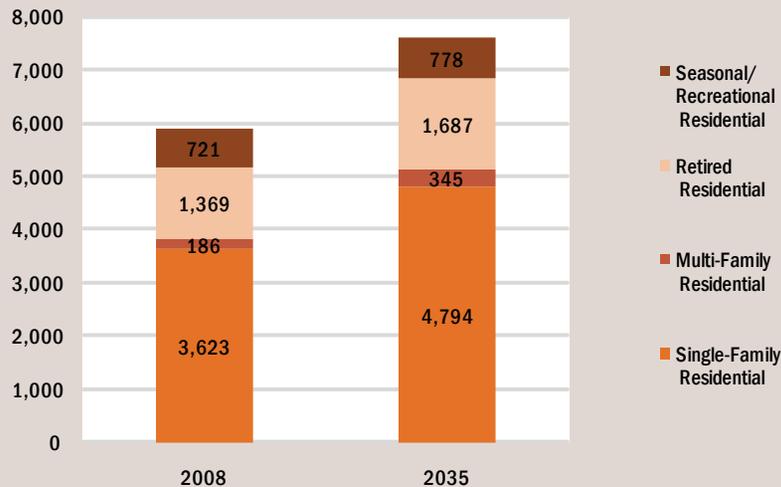
| Map Key | Project Location   | Description               | Agency             | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|--|---------------------------|--------------------|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |  |                           |                    |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| NW1     | Ault Field Road Connector  | Reconstruction            | City of Oak Harbor | \$\$\$   | Long       | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ●      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| NW2     | Heller Rd Motorized and Pedestrian Improvements                                  | Reconstruction            | City of Oak Harbor | \$\$\$   | Long       | Medium            | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| NW3     | NE 7th Ave Reconstruction, Pedestrian Improvements                               | Non Motorized             | City of Oak Harbor | \$\$     | Short      | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| NW4     | Pioneer Way Improvements   | Widening, Non Motorized   | City of Oak Harbor | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| NW5     | SR 20/Pioneer Wy/S Beeksma Dr Intersection Improvement                           | Widening                  | City of Oak Harbor | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| NW6     | SW Heller St Improvements  | Widening                  | City of Oak Harbor | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| NW7     | Whidbey Ave Reconstruction   | Widening, Non Motorized   | City of Oak Harbor | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| NW8     | Clover Valley Rd/ Heller Rd  | Intersection/ Operations  | Island County      | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| WS33    | Periodic review and update of 2001 North Whidbey Island Access Feasibility Study | Planning Study            | WSDOT              | \$       | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS34    | SR 20 Guardrail, Deception Pass replacement of rock log frame guardrail.         | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT              | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS36    | SR 20 Overlay - Narrows Ave to Deception Pass                                    | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT              | \$\$     | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS40    | SR 20/Oak Harbor - Swantown to Barrington Phase 1                                | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT              | \$\$\$\$ | Short      | High              | ●                   | ○            | ●      | ●        | ○           | ●           |
| WS49    | SR 20 Oak Harbor - Swantown Rd to Ault Field Rd - ITS                            | Safety/Mobility           | WSDOT              | \$\$     | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-52**  
Central Whidbey Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-53**  
Central Whidbey Subregion: Residential Growth



## Central Whidbey Subregion

The Central Whidbey subregion includes the Town of Coupeville and several State Parks. SR 20 runs through the subregion, turning into SR 525 toward the southern portion of the subregion. A ferry running from Central Whidbey Island to Port Townsend serves regional traffic, while local traffic is served by Parker Road, Engle Road, and Wanamaker Road and other roadways.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, more than 1,600 new residences are expected to be added to the Central Whidbey subregion. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.0 percent. More than 25 percent of these new units are expected to be in and around Coupeville. Another approximately 15 percent are expected to be in the southern portion of the subregion, west of SR 525. The remaining units are expected to be spread throughout the subregion. More than 70 percent of the development is expected to be single-family residential, with nearly 20 percent comprised of retired residential and the remaining 10 percent of development being multi-family residential.



**Employment Growth.** Just over 540 new employees are expected to be added to the Central Whidbey subregion over the next 25 years, representing an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent. Nearly 75 percent of this growth is anticipated to occur in and around the Town of Coupeville, with another 10 percent expected in the southern portion of the subregion to the west of SR 525. The highest rate of growth is expected to be in the services sector, representing more than 80 percent of the new employment growth.

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

Exhibits 5-56 and 5-57 summarize the regional improvements for the Central Whidbey subregion. The improvements focus on regional access and connectivity. They also address existing or forecast safety and operations needs along SR 20.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs



**Roadways.** Regional improvements in the subregion will address safety and operational needs on SR 20/SR 525. The M/RTP includes a project to provide a new connection parallel to SR 525 (Race Road to Houston Road). The project will support future growth and improve regional accessibility, safety, and operations along the corridor. WSDOT has plans to overlay sections SR 20/SR 525 from Sidney Street to Harbor Avenue. This will help preserve prior investments and improve safety.



**Non-motorized.** WSDOT has identified a high priority project to improve SR 20 from Race Road to Jacobs Road that would widen lanes and shoulders and address roadside safety. The project would be consistent with the rest of SR 20 on Whidbey Island and provide adequate shoulder for bicycles and pedestrians.

New and improved regional non-motorized links should be constructed to encourage more non-motorized transportation, including making connections between existing pedestrian and bicycle routes and adding bicycle and pedestrian routes. This is consistent with Island County's Trail Plan goal of developing a non-motorized trail system along the length of Whidbey Island connecting Deception Pass Park to the Clinton community.

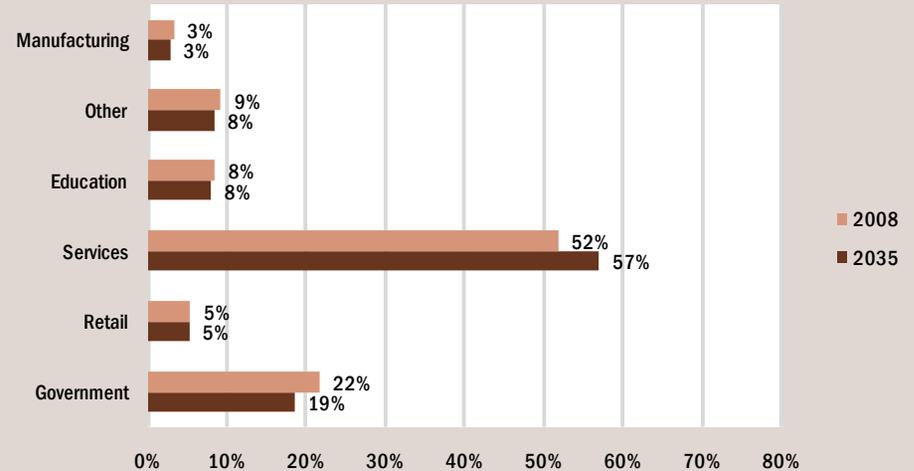


**Transit.** Island Transit has identified several regional transit improvements. Regional connector service is identified as a high priority to relieve congestion and improve mobility by providing commuter-based transit service. Improved regional transit will be needed in the future to meet increasing demand for public transportation options between Island, Skagit, Whatcom, and Snohomish Counties. In addition, identification and development of transit facilities on Whidbey and Camano Islands will improve connectivity and mobility of future transit service.

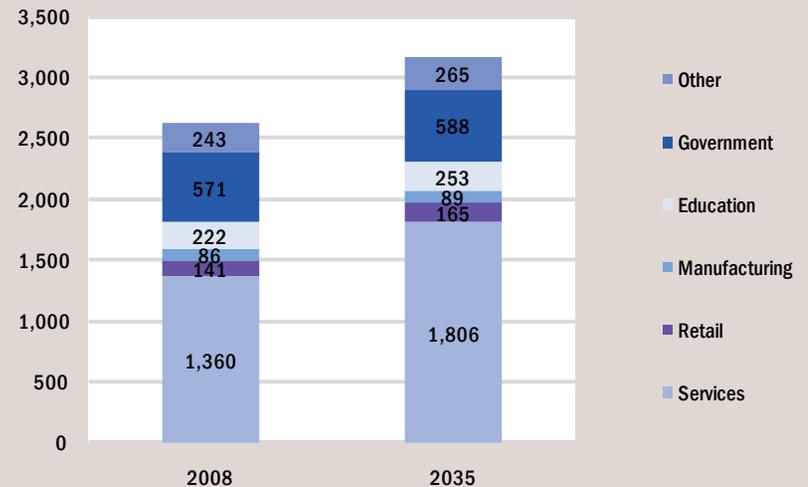


**Ferry.** The Port Townsend - Coupeville ferry will continue to serve as a major transportation corridor for the subregion. Total ridership on the route is expected to grow 96 percent between 2006 and 2030, from

**Exhibit 5-54**  
Central Whidbey Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors



**Exhibit 5-55**  
Central Whidbey Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



## *Section 5:* **Transportation Improvements & Programs**

roughly 773,000 to 1.5 million. This growth assumes the route is operating two new 64-car vessels by 2030.

In November of 2007 the two antiquated steel electric ferry vessels serving the Coupeville-Port Townsend ferry route were removed from service due to safety concerns surrounding the ferries' hulls. The State Legislature responded by commissioning the construction of two, 64-car ferries similar in size to the old Steel Electrics. To keep the route going a 50-car vessel was leased until the new ferries were brought on-line.

Three years after the steel electric vessels were retired the inaugural sailing of the newly built Chetzemoka (the first of the two new boats) took place in November of 2010. With the added capacity of 14 vehicles, the level of service has improved yet it still falls from 2007 levels. The second commissioned ferry boat is scheduled to be in service by June of 2011; in time for the summer tourist season. The replacement of the second boat is critical for meeting state concurrency requirements and level of service standards.

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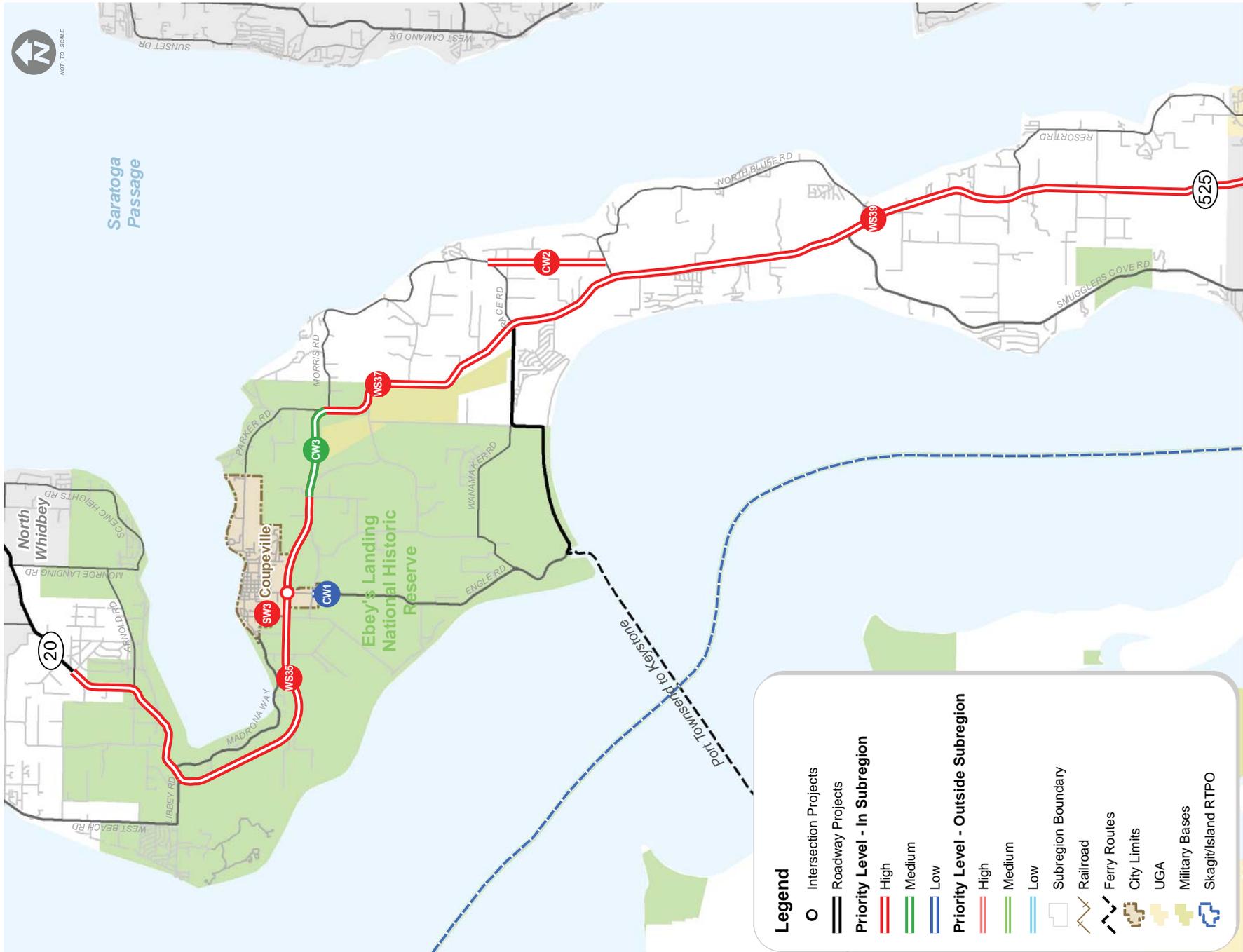


Exhibit 5-56 Improvement Project Map - Central Whidbey Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-57 Central Whidbey Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035  
 ● = Full                  \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

Regional Priorities

| Map Key | Project Location  | Description               | Agency             | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|---|---------------------------|--------------------|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |   |                           |                    |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| CW1     | South Main St   | Widening, Non Motorized   | City of Coupeville | \$\$     | Short      | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| CW2     | Race to Houston Rd Connector  | New Construction          | Island County      | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ●                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| CW3     | SR 20 Turn Lane south of Jacobs Road to Parker Road intersection                                | Safety                    | Island County      | \$\$     | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SW3     | SR 20/ SR 525 Intersection Improvements   | Intersection/ Operations  | Island County      | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| WS35    | SR 20 Overlay - Jacobs Rd Vicinity to Sidney St   | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT              | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS37    | SR 20/Race Road to Jacobs Road Widening   | Non Motorized             | WSDOT              | \$\$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ●      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS39    | SR 525 Overlay - Harbor Ave to SR 20  | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT              | \$\$\$   | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW5     | RTPO Unified Planning Work Program (Not Mapped)   | Planning Study            | Island County      | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ●           |
| RW6     | SR 20 and SR 525 Multiuse Trail, 44 miles (Not Mapped)  | Non Motorized             | Island County      | \$\$\$\$ | Long       | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW7     | Integrated Security and Communications Systems in Partnership with law enforcement (Not Mapped) | Transit                   | Island Transit     | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW8     | Island Transit Operations Base Facilities (Not Mapped)  | Transit                   | Island Transit     | \$\$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW9     | MDL-AVL / Dispatch Communications / Enhancements (Not Mapped)                                   | Transit                   | Island Transit     | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW10    | Regional Connector Services (Not Mapped)  | Transit                   | Island Transit     | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW11    | Transit Park Improvements - Multiple Locations (Not Mapped)                                     | Transit                   | Island Transit     | \$\$\$   | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ●           | ●           |
| RW12    | Tri-County Enhancement: Everett Connector (Not Mapped)  | Transit                   | Island Transit     | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| RW13    | Vehicle Replacement / Expansion (Not Mapped)  | Transit                   | Island Transit     | \$       | Mid        | Medium            | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ●           | ○           |
| RW14    | Whidbey Solar Skyway Demonstration Project (Not Mapped)   | Planning Study            | Island Transit     | \$\$     | Mid        | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |

\*Note: Rhododendron Trail Phase II to be included.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

Exhibit 5-58  
South Whidbey Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix

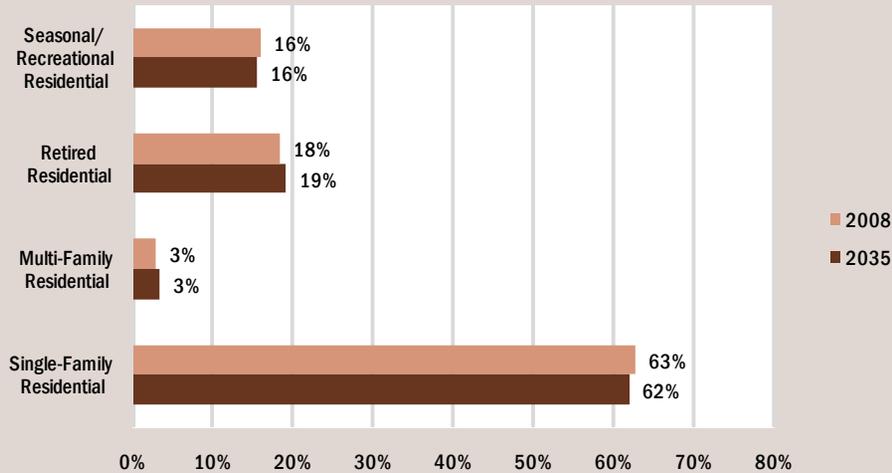
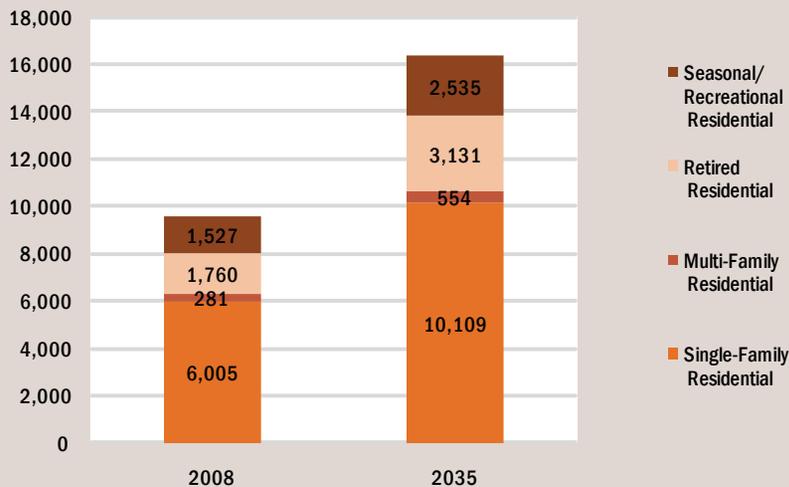


Exhibit 5-59  
South Whidbey Subregion: Residential Growth



## South Whidbey Subregion

The South Whidbey subregion is located along the southern portion of Whidbey Island and includes the City of Langley, along the northern shore of the subregion, and the communities of Freeland and Clinton, located along SR 525. Similar to the other subregions on Whidbey Island, state highways are used for much of the travel in this subregion. A ferry route exists between Clinton and Mukilteo in Snohomish County, supplying access from the subregion to the main land. Bayview Road and Langley Road provide a regional connection to Langley off SR 525, while other arterials and county collector roads connect the communities to the state highways and serve local travel patterns.



**Residential Growth.** More than 5,700 new residences are expected to be added to the South Whidbey subregion over the next 25 years.

This represents an average annual growth rate of 2.0 percent, which is the highest residential average annual growth rate of the subregions on Whidbey Island. Roughly 30 percent of these new units are expected to be between Freeland and Langley, on the north side of SR 525. Approximately 15 percent of the growth is expected to happen near Freeland, with another 15 percent expected on the very southernmost portion of the island, south of SR 525. The remaining units are expected to be spread throughout the subregion on lands currently being used for low-density residential uses. Similar to the split of residential use on the rest of the island, single-family is expected to comprise the majority of the growth, at slightly more than 70 percent, with multi-family representing less than 25 percent and retired residential making up the remaining 5 percent.



**Employment Growth.** Over the next 25 years, more than 760 new employees are expected to be added to the South Whidbey subregion.

This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent, which is consistent with the other subregions on Whidbey Island. The highest rate of growth is expected to be in the services sector, at less than 50 percent. The

## Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

retail and education sectors are not far behind, at roughly 20 percent and 17 percent, respectively. This growth in employment is anticipated to be fairly spread out through the subregion, with somewhat more concentrated pockets of employment growth expected to occur in and around Freeland, at about 30 percent, and in Langley and between the two urban areas north of SR 525, both representing roughly 15 percent of the anticipated growth.

### Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

Exhibits 5-62 and 5-63 summarize the regional improvements for the South Whidbey subregion. The improvements focus on regional access and connectivity. They also address existing or forecast safety and operations needs along regional corridors.



**Roadways.** Regional improvements in the South Whidbey subregion will address safety and operational needs on SR 525. Intersection improvements are identified at nine intersections along SR 20/SR 525 to address safety and operations needs. These improvements will help serve future growth along the corridor. WSDOT has plans to overlay SR 525 from Bob Galbreath Road to Honeymoon Bay Road. This will help preserve prior investments and improve safety.



**Non-motorized.** The roadway reconstruction and widening projects will include sidewalks or improved shoulders which will support non-motorized travel along the corridor. In addition, funding has been obtained to construct a new non-motorized trail in Freeland from Bush Point Road to Fish Road, starting in the Spring of 2012.

New and improved regional non-motorized links should be constructed to encourage more non-motorized transportation, including making connections between existing pedestrian and bicycle routes and adding bicycle and pedestrian routes. These new bicycle and pedestrian routes should be ADA compatible.

Exhibit 5-60  
South Whidbey Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors

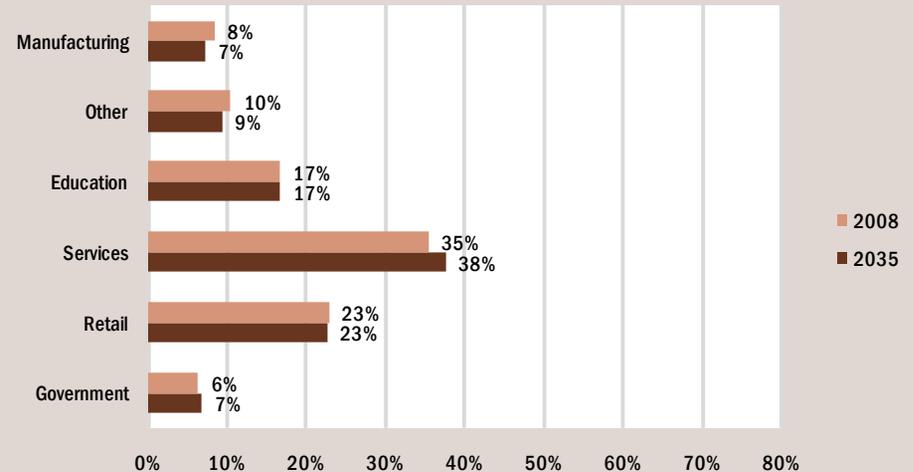
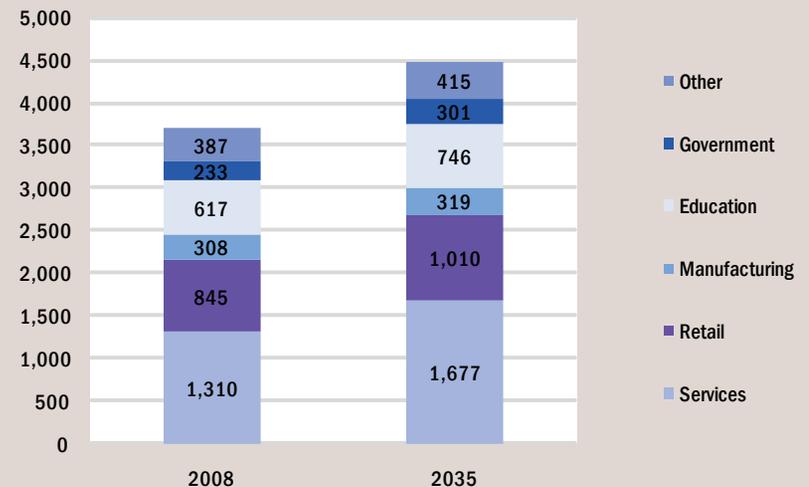


Exhibit 5-61  
South Whidbey Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



## *Section 5:* **Transportation Improvements & Programs**



**Ferry.** The Mukilteo-Clinton ferry route is part of the SR 525 route, a major transportation corridor and critical link for residents and commuters. Total ridership on the Mukilteo - Clinton ferry route is expected to grow 46 percent, from roughly 4.07 million to 5.94 million riders, between 2006 and 2030. This growth assumes two new 144-car vessels are operating on this route by 2030. WSDOT is reviewing various alternatives to improve ferry operations, safety, transit connections and access.

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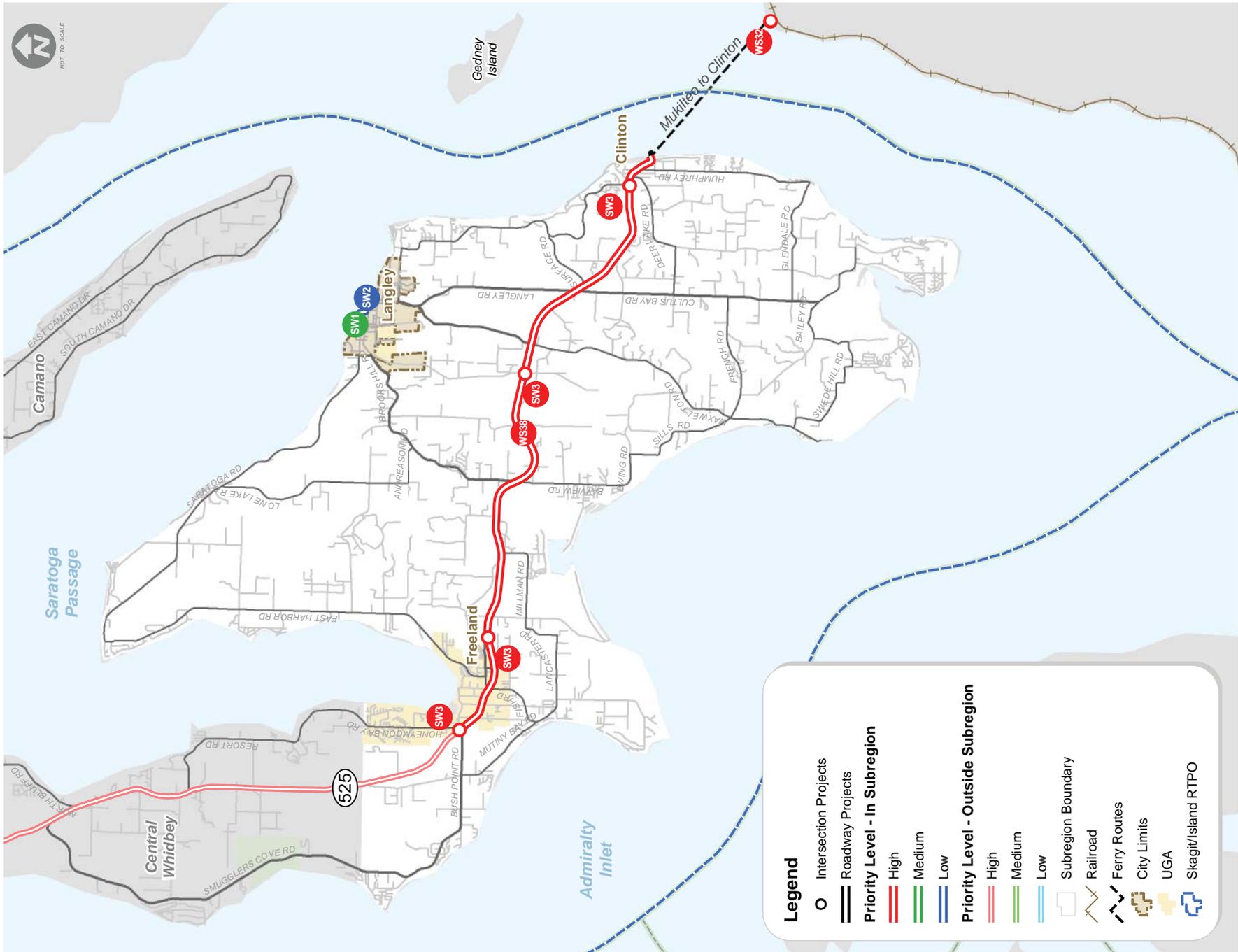


Exhibit 5-62 Improvement Project Map - South Whidbey Subregion

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-63 South Whidbey Subregion Improvement Project Summary**

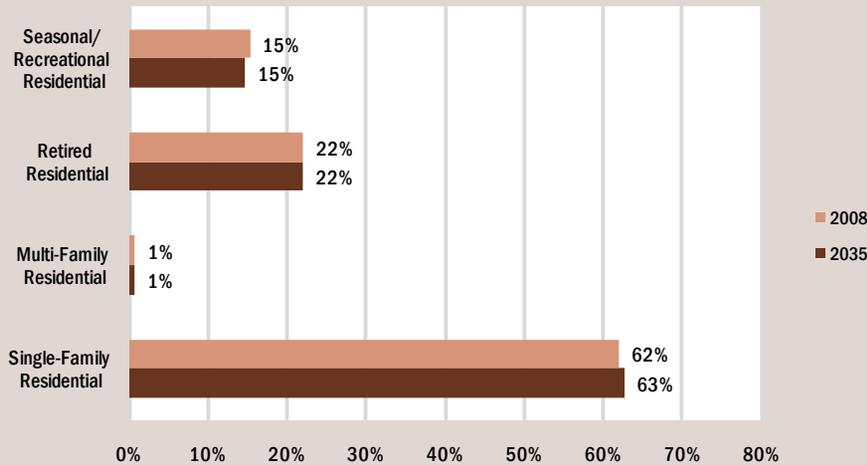
Addresses Priority      \$ = up to \$1 million      Short Range = 2008 - 2015  
 ○ = None                \$\$ = \$1 - \$10 million      Mid Range = 2016 - 2025  
 ● = Partial              \$\$\$ = \$10 - \$30 million      Long Range = 2026 - 2035  
 ● = Full                  \$\$\$\$ = > \$30 million

Regional Priorities

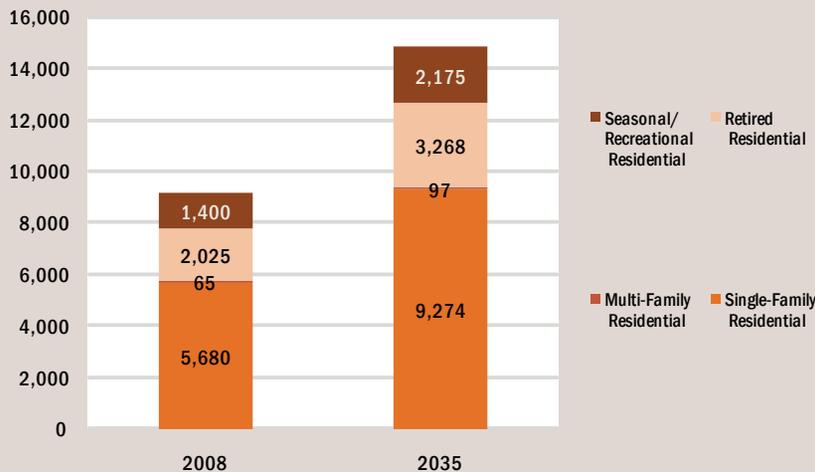
| Map Key | Project Location   | Description               | Agency          | Cost     | Time Frame | Relative Priority | Regional Priorities |              |        |          |             |             |
|---------|--|---------------------------|-----------------|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|         |  |                           |                 |          |            |                   | Economic Vitality   | Preservation | Safety | Mobility | Environment | Stewardship |
| SW1     | 2nd Street Reconstruction Phase 1, Pedestrian Improvements     | Reconstruction            | City of Langley | \$       | Short      | Medium            | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SW2     | Wharf St Widening  | Widening                  | City of Langley | \$       | Short      | Low               | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| SW3     | SR 20/ SR 525 Intersection Improvements                        | Intersection/ Operations  | Island County   | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ●        | ○           | ○           |
| WS32    | Mukilteo Multimodal Projects                                   | Ferry                     | WSDOT           | \$\$\$\$ | Mid        | High              | ○                   | ○            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |
| WS38    | SR 525 Overlay - Bob Galbreath Rd to Honeymoon Bay Rd Vicinity | Maintenance/ Preservation | WSDOT           | \$\$     | Short      | High              | ○                   | ●            | ○      | ○        | ○           | ○           |

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

**Exhibit 5-64**  
Camano Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Housing Mix



**Exhibit 5-65**  
Camano Subregion: Residential Growth



## Camano Subregion

Camano Island makes up the Camano subregion. The island is located just east of Whidbey Island and is connected to the City of Stanwood, I-5, and the rest of Snohomish County to the east via SR 532. State Route 532 is the only way on or off the island by land, and connects to Camano Drive and Marine Drive at Terry's Corner on the northern part of the island. Those roadways and several other circulatory roads provide access to all areas of the island. The island is mostly made up of rural residential uses, with supporting retail services.



**Residential Growth.** Over the next 25 years, more than 4,800 new residences are expected to be added to the Camano subregion. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.8 percent. The anticipated growth is expected to be spread out throughout the island, with only certain shoreline areas expected to experience less growth than other areas of the subregion. The growth is expected to be about 75 percent single-family residential, with retired residential at about 25 percent. Of total expected growth, this subregion has the highest percentage of retired residential growth within Island County.



**Employment Growth.** Just over 207 new employees are expected to be added to the Camano subregion over the next 25 years. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent, which is consistent with the other subregions in Island County. More than 40 percent of the growth is expected to occur north of SR 532, east of Marine Drive. The rest of the anticipated employment growth is spread throughout the subregion, with slightly higher concentrations around areas of Camano Drive. Most of the expected growth is in the services sector (35 percent) and retail sector (just under 30 percent). Other sectors expecting some growth are the education and construction sectors, both expecting 12 percent of the projected growth.

# Section 5: Transportation Improvements & Programs

## Transportation Needs and Improvement Strategies

Though no regional improvements have been identified for the Camano subregion, SR 532 has one of the highest volume-to-capacity ratios of any highway segment in Island County during the PM peak hour. This coupled with the forecast population growth in the future, makes it clear that there will be transportation needs by 2035. As there has not been a comprehensive evaluation of SR 532 in Island County since a 2001 Route Development Plan was completed, it is recommended that the Sub-Region RTPPO members conduct a separate analysis in order to identify needed mobility and safety improvements to address corridor needs out to 2035.

Exhibit 5-66  
Camano Subregion: 2008 and 2035 Employment Sectors

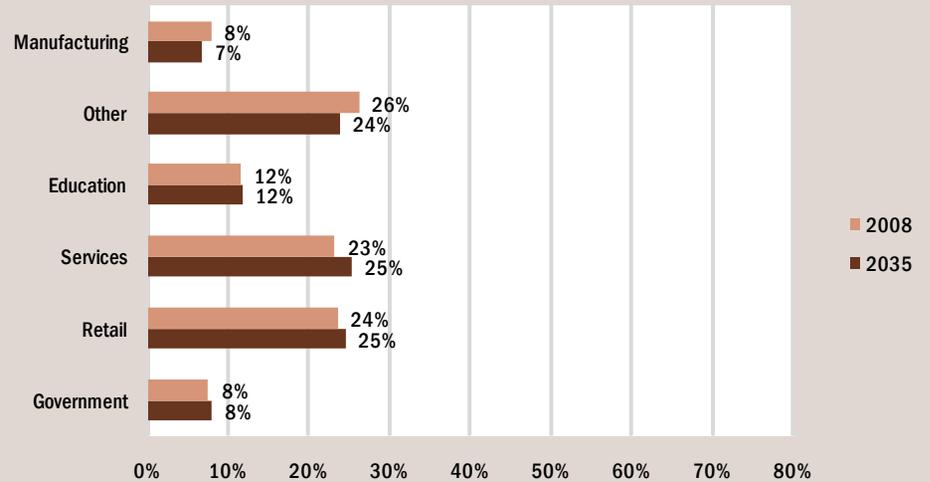


Exhibit 5-67  
Camano Subregion: Employment Sector Growth



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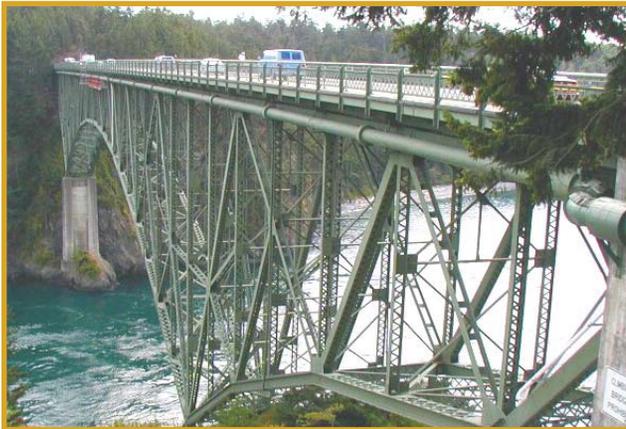


*Section 6*  
**Environmental Constraints**

## Section 6: Environmental Constraints

A programmatic-level review of potential environmental constraints was conducted as part of the M/RTP update. SAFETEA-LU requires such planning efforts protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and locally planned growth and economic development patterns. A scan of potential environmental constraints is a key component of this and can help inform the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards, their stakeholders, WSDOT and others as to the potential limitations that may present themselves as projects move through the development process.

Further, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) provides the context for environmental constraints analysis along with the applicable federal and local regulations. Generally, the environmental analysis for the M/RTP looked at the potential for impacts from transportation construction projects, although a cursory review of non-construction projects was conducted (i.e. transit vehicle purchases).



Deception Pass Bridge

This environmental constraints assessment can also help the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards and their members agencies identify the types of pitfalls that may be encountered through the project development process. Through early screening and identification, it is possible that planning and financially-based decisions could be made to better align the

programming or prioritization of projects. For example, if a bridge replacement and widening project has several constraints identified, it may be advisable for the Skagit & Island Sub-Regional RTPO Boards to work with local jurisdictions or WSDOT to identify other projects to potentially fill the gap if the bridge project experiences considerable delays.

Environmental constraints may be encountered during the planning, design, permitting and construction phases of future transportation improvement projects identified in the M/RTP.

Through the priority identification process for the M/RTP, which included input from a variety of stakeholders within the region as well as the public, the environmental priority was identified as:

- To enhance regional quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.

It was determined this would be accomplished by improving the environmental quality of our neighborhoods and communities to create a sustainable transportation system and economic vitality. This includes finding ways to reduce environmental impacts that could potentially result from the expansion or creation of a project, as well as promoting environmentally efficient modes of transportation such as transit, vanpooling, car-sharing, bicycling, and walking.

While the project list generated for the M/RTP reflects these principals, a more discrete analysis of the actual environmental impacts of these projects will be conducted as projects come online. The environmental constraints assessment for the M/RTP is not intended to identify specific environmental impacts of road projects included in the M/RTP, or to be used in determining environmental mitigation. Analysis of specific direct and indirect impacts and potential mitigations will occur

as individual transportation projects and programs are further defined and permitted.

As noted, the analysis for the M/RTP identified potential impacts through a GIS-based evaluation of several aspects of the area's environmental features. Where available, GIS files were compiled to measure potential impacts to:

- Geologic hazard areas;
- Air quality;
- Water resources and wetlands;
- Floodplains;
- Plant and animal habitat areas;
- Land use and housing;
- Noise;
- Aesthetics/light and glare;
- Environmental justice;
- Recreation; and
- Historic and cultural resources.

The environmental constraints analysis focused on projects that will significantly add to the footprint of roadways, including projects identified for the state highways, as well as regional transportation projects as summarized under the responsibility of the associated city, county, and transit agency or WSDOT. Several major widening projects are identified in the M/RTP for state highways. In addition, several projects will add to the roadway surface area at intersections. These projects were analyzed

individually at a programmatic level.

Within the agency-delineated projects, the M/RTP identifies several major corridors for road widening and/or extensions. These projects were also analyzed individually at a programmatic level. Other projects

in the M/RTP that could significantly add to the footprint of roadways were summarized by responsible agency.

Projects such as ITS improvements, preventive maintenance, operational improvements and projects that do not involve significant increases in roadway surface may not have environmental constraints that will create notable environmental constraints, or significant impacts that could lengthen the project approval process or increase the cost of project design and approval. Even though there may be less impacts in terms of roadway surface area, there may be some potential for temporary construction impacts such as noise and air quality associated with these projects. It is also possible that projects could have a positive impact on the environment.

Projects that will not add roadway surface are discussed under the heading "Maintenance, Upgrades, and Reconstruction Projects." The M/RTP also includes improvements to transit and trails, which are discussed under "Projects for Improving Alternative Transportation Modes."

### The agencies identified with responsibilities for the projects are:

#### Skagit County

- City of Anacortes;
- City of Burlington;
- City of Mt. Vernon;
- City of Sedro-Woolley;
- Skagit County;
- Skagit Transit;
- Swinomish Tribe; and
- WSDOT.

#### Island County

- Town of Coupeville;
- City of Langley;
- City of Oak Harbor;
- Island County;
- Island Transit; and
- WSDOT.

# Section 6: Environmental Constraints

## Exhibit 6-1 Overview of Environmental Elements

| Environmental Element Type      | Overview of Environmental Elements   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Geological Hazard Areas         | Projects will cross or be adjacent to mapped steep slopes, landslide and avalanche risk areas, stream undercutting, and earthquake activity areas. (Suitability of soils to be assessed with project level environmental review and permitting.)   |
| Air Quality                     | Conformity standards established through National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and analyzed on an area-wide basis.  |
| Water Resources and Wetlands    | Projects will cross or be in the immediate vicinity of rivers, streams or lakes, or in the immediate vicinity of identified wetlands, however the actual presence and location of wetlands must be field verified. (Groundwater issues, stormwater management, and any necessary mitigation for protection of aquifers will be evaluated and determined at the project level.) |
| Floodplains                     | Projects are located within mapped floodplains.  |
| Plant and Animal Habitat Areas  | Projects are adjacent to terrestrial (land) or aquatic (water) habitat areas for state- or federally-listed endangered, threatened, or candidate, sensitive, or other vulnerable or important species. (Where a project may affect an identified habitat area, more investigation is required to confirm the actual, current use of the identified area as habitat.)           |
| Land Use and Housing            | Projects that may have potential for direct disturbance of an existing land use, land use incompatibilities, or the need to relocate housing units. (Actual impacts will likely be fewer where there is existing right-of-way to accommodate road expansion, or where there are intervening topography, buildings or vegetation.)  |
| Shoreline Use                   | Projects that may be located within a shoreline jurisdiction area (i.e. within 200 feet of shorelines of the state) and therefore subject to the Washington State Shoreline Management Act (SMA). The SMA is implemented by the shoreline master program in effect in the local jurisdiction.  |
| Noise                           | Projects are located in proximity to residences, habitat areas, parks, schools, and hospitals, which are considered sensitive to noise. All widening and extension projects, and some other improvement or upgrade projects, will result in increased noise during construction.   |
| Aesthetics/Light and Glare      | Changing visual conditions, or added light or glare due to road extension or increased capacity may affect sensitive land uses and/or priority habitat areas.  |
| Environmental Justice           | Projects in immediate proximity of concentrations of poor and/or minority populations, particularly in the vicinity of projects that may generate substantial noise, land use/housing disturbance, land use incompatibility, aesthetic impacts, light and glare, or impacts to recreational resources.   |
| Recreation                      | Projects in the immediate vicinity of parks or recreational resources.   |
| Historic and Cultural Resources | Projects in the immediate vicinity of state- or federally-designated historic properties (Washington Heritage Register or National Register of Historic Places). The potential for impacts to archaeological resources will be evaluated at the project level due to sensitive nature of the locations of archaeological resources.  |

## Environmental Elements

A brief summary of each element of the environment for which constraints may exist is presented in Exhibit 6-1. The discussion of environmental elements is followed by a summary of the potential for environmental impacts that could occur with implementation of projects included in the M/RTP. Not all of these elements were evaluated due to limited data sets but are presented to provide an idea of the types of environmental constraints that may impact a project.



Coastline After Snowfall

## Potential for Environmental Impacts of Major Improvement Projects

The exhibits and text below summarize the potential for environmental impacts of the transportation improvement projects identified in the M/RTP that will have the greatest potential for significant environmental impacts. Two categories were used to identify the potential for environmental constraints, possible constraint and probable constraint.

The project assessment is summarized for each of the 11 subregions, consistent with the M/RTP. Exhibit 6-3 shows the location of transportation projects in relationship to possible environmental constraints. This exhibit summarizes potential constraints and impacts related to major improvements such as road widening and new construction.

The project assessment was limited to the GIS environmental constraints data available at the time of the Plan update. These data sets were primarily limited to steep slopes, wetlands, and other water bodies. As discussed earlier, the environmental constraints assessment for the M/RTP is not intended to identify specific environmental impacts of road projects included in the M/RTP, or to be used in determining environmental mitigation. Analysis of specific direct and indirect impacts and potential mitigations will occur as individual transportation projects and programs are further defined and permitted.

Exhibit 6-2  
Level of Constraint or Impact

| Level               | Definition   |
|---------------------|--|
| Possible Constraint | Constrained areas or resources were identified in the vicinity of the project(s) and could potentially be affected based on the actual alignment and design of the project(s) (this category indicates any potential ranging from limited to great, but not certain).  |
| Probable Constraint | A resource or constrained area is definitely located in the project(s) area or immediate vicinity and will likely require further review. Identification of a constraint does not mean that the project(s) will definitely result in impacts or that impacts will be of a significant degree; instead, it indicates that the potential for impacts will need to be evaluated further at the project level. |

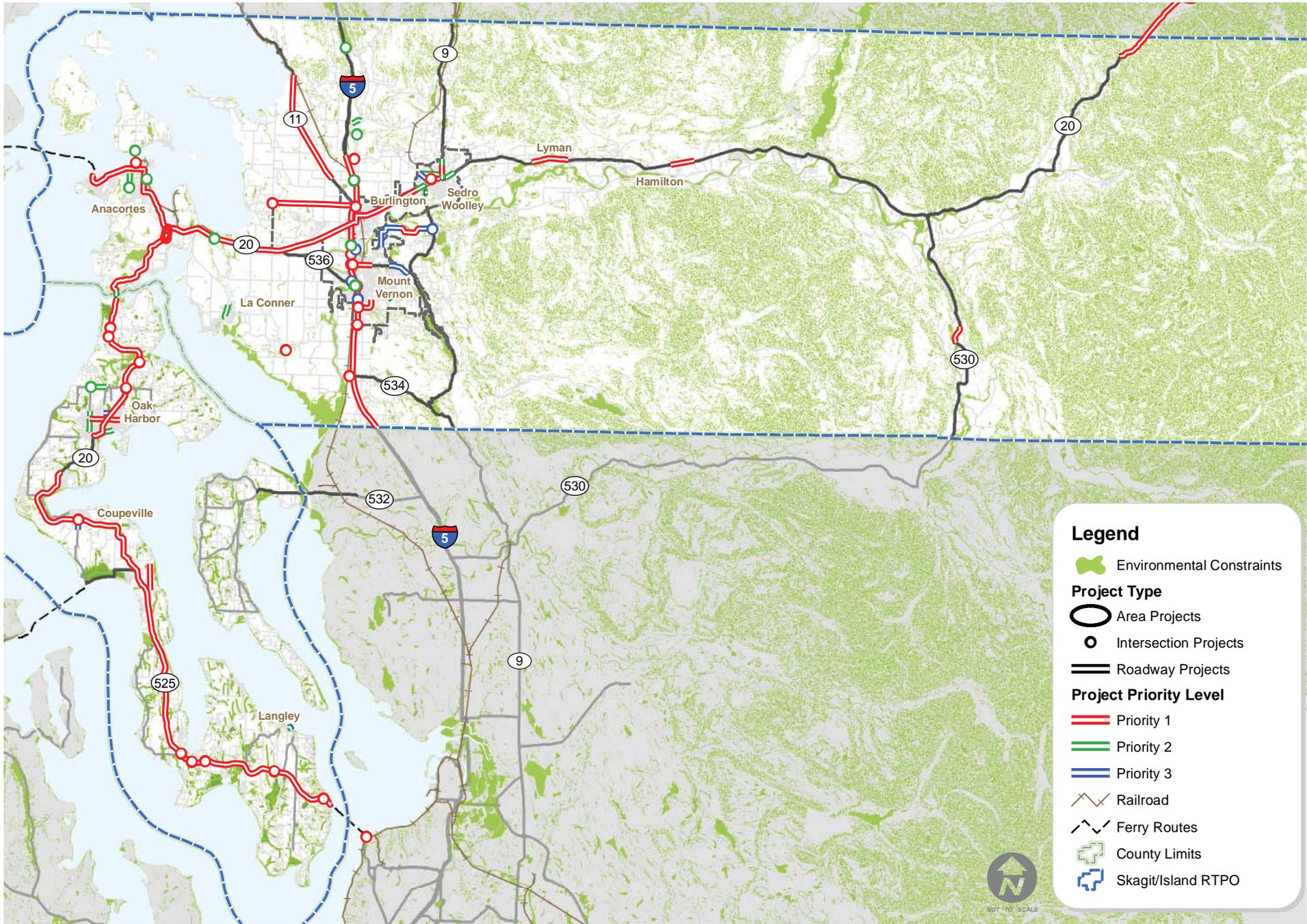


Exhibit 6-3  
 Potential Environmental Constraints for Regional Transportation Projects

### WSDOT Projects

In general, widening projects located near rivers, the Sound or bays and inlets may affect shoreline jurisdiction area, floodplains, habitat area, aesthetic conditions, wetlands (where they may exist adjacent to rivers), and to some extent water quality. Some geologic hazard areas may also be affected. There is also potential to affect park and recreation sites where they are located adjacent to these rivers. Increased noise associated with these projects also has the potential to affect both habitat areas and parks where they are located in the immediate vicinity.

Some other generalizations are derived from past project experience:

- Projects that will increase capacity through widening or extension of roads will have the greatest effects as they generally involve the most land disturbance, require additional impervious areas and can impact land use over a wider area;
- Projects that will add impervious surface area without increasing capacity are less likely to affect land use or housing; and
- Projects located in urban areas are expected to have lower impacts than projects in rural areas, due to existing levels of urbanization and impervious surface area, and existing disturbance of habitat.

### Regional Transportation Projects by Subregion

The potential impacts and constraints of regional transportation projects identified in this plan are summarized below by County subregion. The locations of these projects in relationship to possible environmental constraints are shown in Exhibit 6-3. Environmental constraints associated with transit agency projects are summarized with the subregions under each county.

### Skagit County

#### Bayview (BV)

All three Bayview projects, most notably those along Josh Wilson Road, have the potential for environmental constraints.

#### Fidalgo (FD)

The Fidalgo subregion contains Anacortes, the Swinomish Indian Reservation and unincorporated areas of western Skagit County. Projects identified for Anacortes include operations, maintenance and reconstruction projects identified to have only low or moderate relevance in terms of environmental constraints. The only project identified to have potentially moderate environmental constraints is the Guemes Channel Trail, which is adjacent to the city's shoreline and could have some impacts in that area, although much of it is already developed or disturbed. Two of the three projects identified for the Swinomish Tribe, the project to construct intersection and traffic calming improvements to Pioneer Parkway near Swinomish Village and the widening of Reservation Road, indicated potential environmental constraints. The ferry dock projects, on both the Anacortes and Guemes sides, are located in unincorporated Skagit County and have potential environmental constraints due to their shoreline locations.

#### Highlands(HI)

No projects are identified in the Highland subregion.

#### MPO (MP)

The majority of projects identified in the M/RTP are located within the MPO



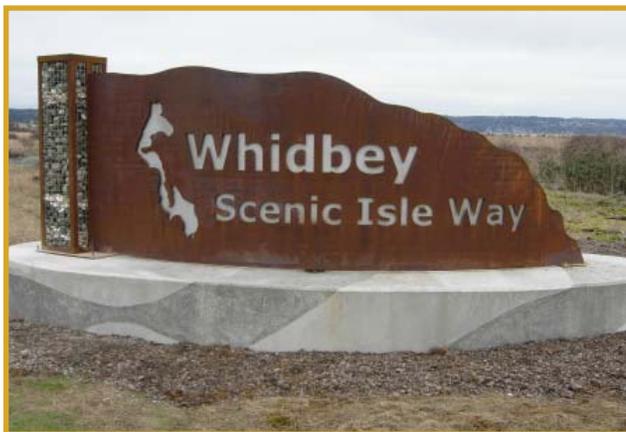
BNSF Skagit River Bridge after flooding

## Section 6: Environmental Constraints

boundaries and include projects in Burlington, Mt. Vernon, Sedro-Woolley and unincorporated areas of Skagit County surrounding these communities. Twelve of the 34 projects that are planned for implementation by the municipalities or the county (not WSDOT) within the MPO boundaries indicate the potential for environmental constraints. The projects consist of widening, new construction, parking and trail projects that have a high likelihood of disturbing adjacent lands or wetlands and creating more impervious structures. Most notably, these projects include improvements to SR 9 in Sedro-Woolley, the downtown parking garage and College Way widening in Mt. Vernon, the Burlington Boulevard overlay project in Burlington, and the Anderson/Laventure Road and Josh Wilson Road improvements in Skagit County.

### Samish (SA)

The Samish subregion contains five projects not under the purview of WSDOT. The Old Highway reconstruction projects have the possibility of constraints based on the magnitude of the projects while the Bow Hill Road reconstruction project in the vicinity of Old 99N was identified as having potential environmental constraints.



Scenic Isle Way Sign

### Skagit Flats (SF)

Two projects are identified in the M/RTP for the Skagit Flats subregion. The only project with identified environmental constraints is the Skagit River North Fork Bridge Replacement.

### Upriver (UR)

The Upriver subregion is located east of Sedro-Woolley and includes five projects listed in the Plan. Four sections of Francis

Road have identified environmental constraints due to its proximity to the Skagit River.

### Skagit Transit

The nature of transit improvements generally means less physical construction in undeveloped areas and generally has less potential for adverse impact than road widening or extension projects. Additionally, the alignments for new bus routes are not identified in the M/RTP.

Projects identified under the purview of Skagit Transit include enhancements or upgrades to existing transit facilities at Skagit Station in Mt. Vernon, including the remodel of the station, repairs to the train platform, and a walkway to the parking garage. There are no environmental constraints identified for these projects as they are all located within or adjacent to the existing station in the downtown area.

### Island County

#### Camano (CA)

No projects are identified in the Camano subregion.

#### Central Whidbey (CW)

The Race to Houston Road project in unincorporated Island County is the most notable one out of the three projects identified for the Central Whidbey subregion to have potential environmental constraints, primarily due to construction of a new corridor.

#### North Whidbey (NW)

Three projects in the City of Oak Harbor have been identified for potential or possible environmental constraints. The NE 7th Avenue reconstruction project is noted for potential constraints while the SR 20/Pioneer Way/South Beeksma Drive intersection and SW Heller Street improvements have possible constraints based on the ultimate scope of the projects.

## Section 6: Environmental Constraints

### South Whidbey (SW)

The Wharf Street widening project in Langley, which includes improving the street to include 12-foot travel lanes which will result in storm drainage improvements, retaining walls and slope stabilization, poses some environmental constraints due to the scope of these improvements.

### Island Transit

As noted under the Skagit Transit projects, environmental constraints identified in the M/RTP for Island Transit are difficult to identify for site-specific impacts. The major capital project identified for Island Transit is the identification and development of transit parks and facilities on Whidbey and Camano Islands to improve connectivity and mobility of transit services in the area. A separate planning effort will likely identify specific locations and environmental constraints. Other projects identified for Island Transit include new or enhanced connector services, fleet upgrades and vehicle replacements, technology upgrades and a planning study for a Whidbey Solar Skyway demonstration project, none of which will likely result in notable negative environmental impacts.

### Potential for Environmental Impacts of Other Transportation Programs

The M/RTP includes a number of projects that, based on the project type, are not discussed individually in this summary or Appendix G. These include general maintenance and roadway overlay projects, signage modifications, sidewalk completion, lighting improvements, rail crossing improvements, safety improvements such as installation of guardrails, and installation of curbs and gutters, for example. Several projects are also listed for only non-motorized transportation improvements.

Many of these projects are categorically exempt from environmental review while others are limited in terms of what can be specifically

identified at this level of planning. Others, such as intersection and operational improvements, may result in improved environmental conditions.

Some of these projects apply to specific road segments or local areas, while others will be area-wide improvements. Area-wide projects included in the M/RTP are not analyzed individually because specific locations are not identified. These include roadway overlays, sidewalk improvements, signal timing enhancements, intelligent transportation system, and other area-wide improvement strategies. Such projects will not likely result in increased impervious surface area; this includes rail improvements that are considered upgrades.

### Climate Change

In Washington State, transportation accounts for nearly half of the total greenhouse gas emissions, including emissions from cars, trucks, planes, and ships. Emission reduction strategies can help create more efficient driving conditions, reduce the amount of driving, and introduce more fuel-efficient vehicles.

The State set the following VMT reduction goals:

- 18% reduction by 2020;
- 30% reduction by 2035; and
- 50% reduction by 2050.

The Skagit/Island region recognizes that reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation sources is a necessity. The goal of the regional/ metropolitan transportation



Harbor Station

## *Section 6:* Environmental Constraints

plan is to make recommendations to achieve significant reductions in transportation-related GHG emissions, and to recommend tools and best practices to achieve the VMT reduction goals enacted in Washington State House Bill 2815 (greenhouse gas emissions and green collar jobs).

### **Action Strategies**

- Align investment strategies with achievement of VMT and GHG reduction provisions;
- Use GHG/VMT as criteria for funding and pursue new revenue sources to support transportation choices;
- Pursue new revenue sources to support transportation choices, particularly transit operations;
- Expand and enhance transit, rideshare, and commuter choice;
- Provide incentives for vanpool and carpool programs;
- Develop more park-and-ride and park-and-pool lots;
- Develop actions to address congestion issues on the transit network (e.g. vehicle capacity, bus lanes, signal priority);
- Address ineffective intermodal connections; and
- Pursue additional non-VMT actions to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector, including increasing the use of rail for both the movement of passengers and freight.
- Pursue opportunities for reduction in GHG emissions through improvements in traffic operations and roadway design that reduce vehicle delay, idling, and starting and stopping at intersections.



*Section 7*  
**Financial Constraints**

## Section 7: Financial Constraints

Federal and state regulations for Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plans (M/RTP) require a financial analysis to show how the transportation improvements and programs can be implemented with reasonably expected funds through the horizon year of the plan. In addition, the regulations allow the Plan to identify how additional potential revenues could be generated to fund more projects or programs.

This financial analysis is based on historical trends for revenues and expenditures, and current rules and regulations controlling transportation funding. The estimates are used to establish a likely range of revenues for regional transportation improvements and programs. The estimated revenues are only intended for planning purposes and are not intended to be precise forecasts, which is consistent with the objectives of the M/RTP. Actual revenues will be sensitive to local, state, and federal policy decisions; economic and market forces; and individual choices. Further, estimated costs for project are subject to the same influences. Additional detail for each revenue source is included in Appendix H.



Swinomish Roundabout

To develop the “fiscally-constrained” M/RTP, estimated costs of regional transportation improvement projects and programs are compared to available revenues. Because total improvement project costs exceed the estimated revenues, only 20 percent of the projects identified as high priority can be funded with the projected revenues are the region’s highest priorities.

They are presented as the fiscally-constrained projects in the M/RTP.

The projects and programs are further divided into two groups:

1. Projects identified as the medium priorities of the region, which will be considered for funding if revenues increase or total costs decrease. Although the costs of these second priority projects are not covered in the fiscally-constrained plan, the projects are included in the M/RTP in the event that changes in revenues or expected costs change to the degree that the project could be progress before the horizon year of the plan.

2. Improvements identified as supporting the region’s transportation needs, but are of a lower priority. These low priority projects are not likely to be funded during the 20-year horizon without dramatic changes in the financing programs.

Because this is a regional transportation plan, the revenues projected are for the member jurisdictions of the Skagit-Island RTPO, including Skagit and Island Counties, and the incorporated cities therein, organized into the following groups:

### **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

- City of Burlington
- City of Mount Vernon
- City of Sedro-Woolley

### **Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO)**

- City of Anacortes
- City of Langley
- City of Oak Harbor
- Town of Concrete
- Town of Coupeville
- Town of Hamilton
- Town of La Conner
- Town of Lyman
- Skagit County (unincorporated area)
- Island County (unincorporated area)

Consistent with SAFETEA-LU requirements, revenues and project costs have been projected for 2010-2035 in terms of “year of expenditure dollars.” This provides an apples-to-apples comparison of revenues versus costs. Revenues are projected to grow at a slower relative rate than improvement costs providing for fewer dollars to cover future costs.

Although total projected revenues for each group of cities may be sufficient to cover desired project costs as a whole, the location of the funding may not necessarily match the location of the project. Cities may have a disparity of funding availability and funding need (i.e., one city may have excess funds while another city may be short on funds to complete their project list). A regional discussion covering project partnerships may be necessary to address these disparities.

The fiscal analysis is organized into five sections. The first section covers historical and future estimated funding from The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for the RTPO area. The second section provides an analysis of transportation revenues and costs for the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization, which consists of Skagit and Island Counties and member cities and towns within each county not included those within the Skagit MPO boundaries.

The financial analysis is summarized into three time periods to illustrate the likely funding program based on current assumptions.

- 2010 – 2015: Covers the base year of the M/RTP and the time periods covered by agency Six-Year Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP). Both funding levels and projects lists are considered to be more committed during this time period due to project development timeliness.
- 2016 – 2025: This ten-year period provides a mid-range outlook for the financial program.
- 2026 – 2035: This period covers the final 10 years of the M/RTP. Projecting revenues and costs more than 10 years is less reliable because rules, regulations, economic conditions, and local priorities change. As the M/RTP is updated in the future, the data for these years will be refined.

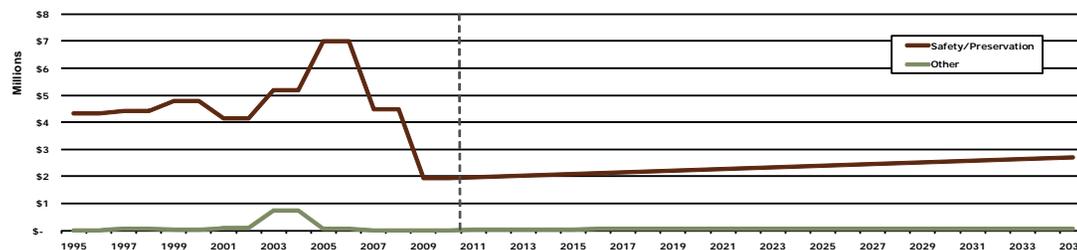
The third element provides an analysis of transportation revenues and costs for the Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which consists of the Cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley. The fourth section covers revenues and costs for other transportation services in the region. The analysis includes Skagit Transit and Island Transit. The fifth and final section discusses potential funding options.

## Section 7: Financial Constraints

### Washington State Department of Transportation Funding

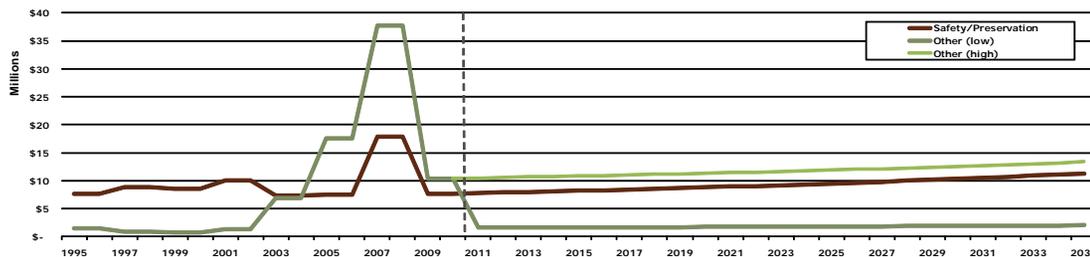
Spending for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is appropriated biennially by the State Legislature. Future projects eligible for funding consideration are listed in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), however no funding is guaranteed until projects are directly appropriated in the State budget. Historical spending data and spending projections from WSDOT were

**Exhibit 7-1**  
WSDOT Historical and Projected Expenditures in Island County 1995-2035, Year of Expenditure Dollars



Source: Washington State Department of Transportation, Berk & Associates, 2010

**Exhibit 7-2**  
WSDOT Historical and Projected Expenditures in Skagit County 1995-2035, Year of Expenditure Dollars



Source: Washington State Department of Transportation, Berk & Associates, 2010

analyzed to estimate future WSDOT spending in Skagit and Island Counties.

WSDOT also prepares the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) and the associated Highway System Plan (HSP). The WTP and HSP evaluate needs, priorities, and funding for the state highway system for a 20-year horizon. The HSP is updated every two years. The biennial updates build on prior appropriations and committed funding programs such as 2003 “Nickel” Gas Tax and Transportation Partnership Act (TPA) approved in 2005.

Currently, the State’s transportation funding sources are not keeping pace with basic transportation needs. WSDOT estimates that basic maintenance, preservation, and operations at the state, county, and city levels are underfunded over the next 10 years, including more than \$1 billion in needs for cities and counties. Washington’s primary transportation revenue source, the Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax, funds 76% of all state transportation investments and is set at a constant cents-per-gallon rate; it therefore does not keep pace with inflation or the state’s growing demand for transportation infrastructure. Additionally, the 16-year forecast for fuel tax revenue has been adjusted downward as vehicles become more fuel-efficient and are powered by alternative fuels.

As local jurisdictions and transit organizations struggle with the effects of the economic recession on their own revenue streams, such as sales tax and property tax, WSDOT is being asked to stretch fewer dollars over more areas of need. WSDOT expects that the state will continue to experience the effects of the recession for years to come, and that economic recovery will be a slow process.

WSDOT historical and projected spending in Skagit and Island Counties is shown in Exhibits 7-1 and 7-2. The data is also summarized by

## Section 7: Financial Constraints

Exhibit 7-3  
Summary Estimates of Possible WSDOT Spending in Island County

|   | 2010-2015       | 2016 - 2025     | 2026 - 2035     | Total           |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Estimated Future Revenues                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Safety/Preservation                       | \$12,000        | \$22,556        | \$25,667        | \$60,287        |
| Other                                     | \$239           | \$556           | \$668           | \$1,463         |
| <b>Total Estimated Available Revenues</b> | <b>\$12,304</b> | <b>\$23,112</b> | <b>\$26,335</b> | <b>\$61,751</b> |

Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

Source: Berk & Associates, 2010

time period in Exhibits 7-3 and 7-4. Safety and Preservation project spending is displayed in brown; Other project spending is shown in green.

The Skagit-Island M/RTP incorporates and builds on the WTP and HSP. The project priorities and funding program were closely coordinated with WSDOT staff. This section reviews WSDOT's historical expenditures in Skagit and Island Counties and estimates future revenues based on historical trends. Estimated costs of WSDOT projects in the M/RTP are summarized following the discussion of revenues .

Exhibit 7-4  
Summary Estimates of Possible WSDOT Spending in Skagit County

|  | 2010-2015        | 2016 - 2025      | 2026 - 2035      | Total            |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Estimated Future Revenues                        |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Safety/Preservation                              | \$47,709         | \$89,074         | \$104,635        | \$241,417        |
| Other (low)                                      | \$18,599         | \$17,463         | \$19,433         | \$55,495         |
| Other (high)                                     | \$63,830         | \$114,091        | \$126,958        | \$304,878        |
| <b>Total Estimated Available Revenues (low)</b>  | <b>\$66,307</b>  | <b>\$106,538</b> | <b>\$124,068</b> | <b>\$296,913</b> |
| <b>Total Estimated Available Revenues (high)</b> | <b>\$111,538</b> | <b>\$203,165</b> | <b>\$231,592</b> | <b>\$546,296</b> |

Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

Source: Berk & Associates, 2010

## Section 7: Financial Constraints

Since the MPO geographical area of Skagit County is statutorily required to have a constrained budget, the Plan includes estimates for possible WSDOT spending in the urban regions of the county. These estimates are limited to projects that have been designated as “Urban” in WSDOT’s Urban/Rural designation category. These designations may not directly align with the MPO boundaries, but they provide the best estimates based on the information available.

These projections are based on an average historical spending, excluding recent years in which expenditures have been higher than seen previously. Future rates of increase match those projected for WSDOT spending in the entire county.

Exhibit 7-5 shows the total estimated WSDOT spending in Urban Skagit County for the summary time periods.

**Exhibit 7-5**  
Summary Estimates of Possible WSDOT Spending in Urban Skagit County

|   | 2010-2015       | 2016 – 2025     | 2026 – 2035     | Total           |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Safety/Preservation                       | \$13,337        | \$22,457        | \$26,197        | \$61,991        |
| Other                                     | \$2,146         | \$3,869         | \$4,276         | \$10,290        |
| <b>Total Estimated Available Revenues</b> | <b>\$15,482</b> | <b>\$26,326</b> | <b>\$30,472</b> | <b>\$72,281</b> |

Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

Source: Berk & Associates, 2010

**Exhibit 7-6**  
WSDOT Project Cost Summary

|                             | 2010-2015        | 2016 – 2025        | 2026 – 2035        | Total              |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| High Priority               | \$315,093        | \$932,489          | \$875,234          | \$2,122,816        |
| Medium Priority             | \$7,604          | \$3,148            | -                  | \$10,752           |
| Low Priority                | -                | \$112,338          | \$322,773          | \$435,111          |
| <b>Total State Projects</b> | <b>\$322,697</b> | <b>\$1,047,975</b> | <b>\$1,198,007</b> | <b>\$2,568,679</b> |

Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

1. Included in fiscally-constrained M/RTP.

## Local Agency Funding

### Total Skagit County Revenues

The total revenue estimates for Skagit County (unincorporated area) are shown in Exhibit 7-7 for the three summary time periods, in year of expenditure dollars. Exhibit 7-8 shows the breakdown of total estimated revenues for Skagit County.

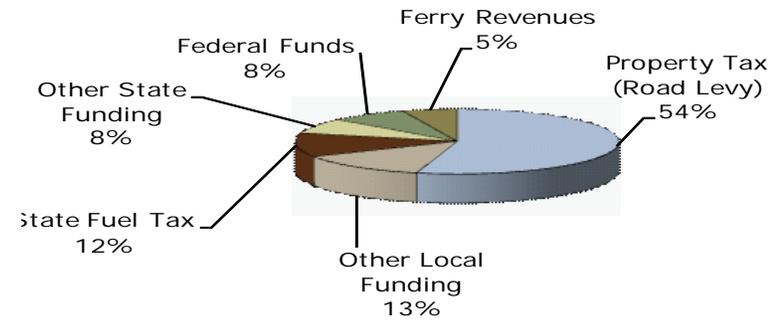
Exhibit 7-7  
Local Agency – Skagit County Revenue Estimates

|   | 2010-2015        | 2016 – 2025      | 2026 – 2035      | Total            |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Property Tax (Road Levy)*                 | \$73,635         | \$138,330        | \$160,538        | \$372,503        |
| Special Assessments                       | -                | -                | -                | -                |
| General Fund Contributions                | -                | -                | -                | -                |
| Other Local Funding                       | \$14,410         | \$30,880         | \$45,303         | \$90,593         |
| State Fuel Tax                            | \$19,113         | \$31,311         | \$32,294         | \$82,718         |
| Other State Funding                       | \$11,339         | \$19,811         | \$21,010         | \$52,160         |
| Federal Funds                             | \$11,764         | \$20,124         | \$21,917         | \$53,804         |
| Ferry Revenue                             | \$6,151          | \$13,018         | \$17,495         | \$36,664         |
| <b>Total Estimated Available Revenues</b> | <b>\$136,412</b> | <b>\$253,474</b> | <b>\$298,556</b> | <b>\$688,443</b> |

Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

\* Road Levy funds may only be spent on projects located in unincorporated Skagit County.

Exhibit 7-8  
Breakdown of Total Estimated Revenues – Skagit County



## Section 7: Financial Constraints

### Total Island County Revenues

The total revenue estimates for Island County (unincorporated area) are shown in Exhibit 7-9 for the three summary time periods, in year of expenditure dollars. Exhibit 7-10 shows the breakdown of total estimated revenues for Island County.

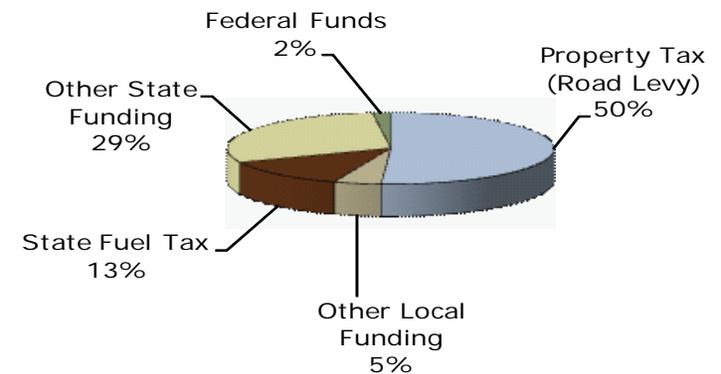
Exhibit 7-9  
Local Agency – Island County Revenue Estimates

|   | 2010-2015        | 2016 - 2025      | 2026 - 2035      | Total            |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Property Tax (Road Levy)*                 | \$50,119         | \$101,940        | \$130,492        | \$282,552        |
| Special Assessments                       | -                | -                | -                | -                |
| General Fund Contributions                | -                | -                | -                | -                |
| Other Local Funding                       | \$3,435          | \$8,566          | \$13,906         | \$25,907         |
| State Fuel Tax                            | \$14,203         | \$26,965         | \$30,900         | \$72,068         |
| Other State Funding                       | \$30,536         | \$60,569         | \$73,246         | \$164,351        |
| Federal Funds                             | \$1,846          | \$3,663          | \$4,429          | \$9,938          |
| <b>Total Estimated Available Revenues</b> | <b>\$100,139</b> | <b>\$201,703</b> | <b>\$252,973</b> | <b>\$554,815</b> |

Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

\* Road Levy funds may only be spent on projects located in unincorporated Island County.

Exhibit 7-10  
Breakdown of Total Estimated Revenues – Island County



## Total MTP Revenues

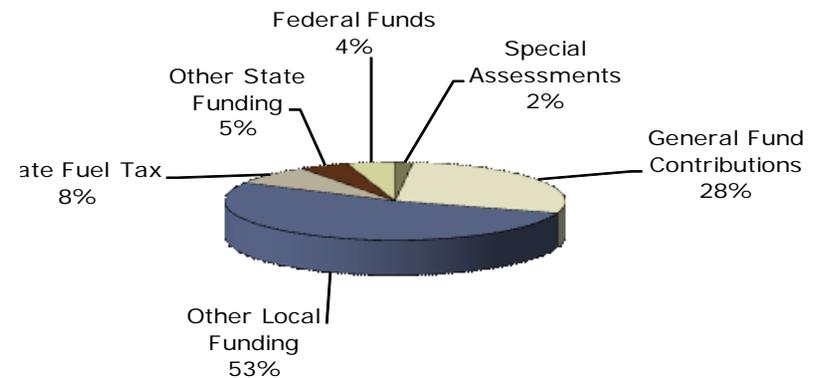
The total revenue estimates for the MPO area are shown Exhibit 7-11 for the three summary time periods, in year of expenditure dollars. Exhibit 7-12 shows the breakdown of total estimated revenues for the MTP area.

**Exhibit 7-11**  
Summary Transportation Revenue Estimates, 2010-2035 – MTP Area

|   | 2010-2015       | 2016 – 2025      | 2026 – 2035      | Total            |
|---|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Special Assessments                       | \$1,321         | \$2,707          | \$3,429          | \$7,458          |
| General Fund Contributions                | \$20,926        | \$44,283         | \$59,513         | \$124,722        |
| Other Local Funding                       | \$29,175        | \$75,195         | \$127,866        | \$232,236        |
| State Fuel Tax                            | \$6,609         | \$12,960         | \$15,551         | \$35,120         |
| Other State Funding                       | \$4,960         | \$7,938          | \$7,938          | \$20,837         |
| Federal Funds                             | \$3,587         | \$7,278          | \$9,217          | \$20,082         |
| <b>Total Estimated Available Revenues</b> | <b>\$66,579</b> | <b>\$150,361</b> | <b>\$223,513</b> | <b>\$440,453</b> |

Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

**Exhibit 7-12**  
Breakdown of Total Estimated Revenues – MTP Area



## Section 7: Financial Constraints

### Project and Program Costs

The local agencies that are within the Skagit-Island RTPO use their transportation revenues to fund maintenance and operations activities, as well as capital improvements. The M/RTP identifies preservation and safety as key priorities, so the M/RTP accounts for these annual costs as the first priority for funding.

The revenue projections that were previously discussed must accommodate maintenance, operations, and administration and necessary local transportation projects not covered by the M/RTP. After these costs are accounted for, the remaining revenues are available for regional capital projects. These regional transportation improvement projects for the local agencies were identified as high, medium, and low priorities.

### Maintenance, Operations, and Administration Costs.

Transportation system maintenance, operations, and administration spending is directly related to the size of the system and the service expectations established for each community. Therefore, jurisdictions must continually make decisions regarding available funds, desired level of service, and other financial priorities.

Future transportation system Maintenance, Operations and Administration (MO&A) costs were estimated based on historical spending trends. These historical expenditures include maintenance for roadways, storm drainage, structures, traffic and pedestrian services, sidewalks, street lighting, traffic control devices, parking facilities, snow and ice control, street cleaning, and others, as well as general administration and overhead.

Maintenance, Operations, and Administration costs naturally increase over time as the transportation system expands and ages along with

increases in population. The historical per capita MO&A spending trend was analyzed and the same trend was forecast to continue into the future. This assumes that the increase in transportation capital attributable to this plan is in line with the historical annual increases on a per capita basis. It also assumes that maintenance, operations, and administration costs will continue to rise at a per capita rate similar to recent history.

Exhibit 7-13 summarizes the estimated spending and costs for the RTPO area to maintain the same level of maintenance, operations, and administration in year of expenditure dollars. Local jurisdictions will spend nearly \$1.8 billion to cover Maintenance, Operations, and Administration between 2010 and 2035.

Exhibit 7-14 shows the estimated transportation revenues and maintenance and operations expenditures by time period. The \$1.8 billion in Maintenance, Operations, and Administration represents over 90 percent of the local agency revenue. The M/RTP assumes that Maintenance, Operations, and Administration funding at this level will be a priority, leaving approximately \$133 million for capital transportation improvements, including regional M/RTP projects and non-regional projects.

#### Exhibit 7-13

#### RTPO area - Maintenance, Operations and Administration Funding - Trend Estimates

|  | 2010-2015        | 2016 - 2025      | 2026 - 2035      | Total              |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Maintenance and Operations                                       | \$226,717        | \$518,715        | \$779,122        | \$1,524,554        |
| Administration   | \$43,437         | \$99,287         | \$146,835        | \$289,559          |
| <b>Total Maintenance, Operations, and Administration Funding</b> | <b>\$270,154</b> | <b>\$618,002</b> | <b>\$925,957</b> | <b>\$1,814,113</b> |

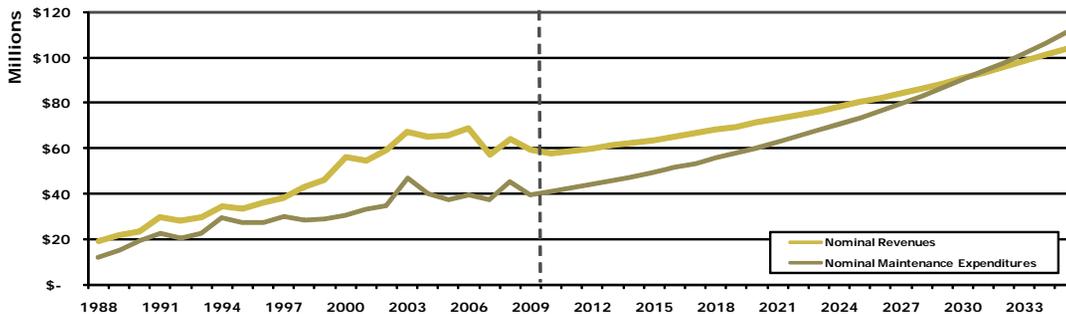
Note: Spending in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

Maintenance expenditures begin to become more than total revenues in the outer years, evidenced in the negative remaining dollar figure. This is a result of differing rates of increase between costs and revenues. In aggregate, costs are estimated to increase at an average annual rate of 4.1% over the study period. Revenues are estimated to increase, in aggregate, at an average annual rate of 2.4%. This difference is clearly illustrated in Exhibit 7-15, where the yellow line representing nominal revenues is eventually surpassed by the steeper-sloped brown line representing nominal M&O expenditures.

**Exhibit 7-14**  
Comparison of Summary Transportation Revenues and M&O Expenditures, 2010-2035, Total Study Area

|  | 2010-2015       | 2016 - 2025     | 2026 - 2035      | Total            |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Estimated Available Revenues       | \$333,728       | \$689,018       | \$924,279        | \$1,947,025      |
| Total Estimated M & O Expenditures       | \$270,154       | \$618,002       | \$925,957        | \$1,814,113      |
| <b>Total Estimated Funds for Capital</b> | <b>\$63,574</b> | <b>\$71,016</b> | <b>(\$1,678)</b> | <b>\$132,912</b> |

**Exhibit 7-15**  
Comparison of Nominal Revenues and M&O Expenditures, 1988-2035, Total Study Area



## Section 7: Financial Constraints

Exhibit 7-16

### Local Agency MTP Capital Project Funding

|   | 2010-2015 | 2016 - 2025 | 2026 - 2035 | Total     |
|---|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Total Revenues                                      | \$66,579  | \$150,361   | \$223,513   | \$440,453 |
| Maintenance, Operations, and Administration Funding | \$52,887  | \$136,724   | \$238,893   | \$428,504 |
| Estimated Funds for MTP Capital Projects            | \$13,692  | \$13,637    | \$(15,380)  | \$11,949  |

Note: Revenue in \$1,000s of dollars

Exhibit 7-17

### Local Agency MTP Capital Project Costs

|                       | 2010-2015       | 2016 - 2025     | 2026 - 2035     | Total            |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| High Priority         | \$43,253        | \$5,720         | \$4,990         | \$53,964         |
| Medium Priority       | \$37,156        | \$74,661        | \$7,332         | \$119,148        |
| Low Priority          | -               | \$11,981        | \$4,164         | \$16,146         |
| <b>Total Projects</b> | <b>\$80,408</b> | <b>\$92,362</b> | <b>\$16,487</b> | <b>\$189,257</b> |

Note: Costs in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

### Skagit MTP Projects

Exhibits 7-16 and 7-17 show local agency transportation revenues and costs by time period. As Exhibit 7-17 shows, almost \$190 million is needed to fully fund all the regionally significant capital projects within the MPO area. Approximately 30 percent of the project costs are identified as high priority projects. This represents over \$54 million during the 25-year planning period. The total available capital revenues for the MPO area are approximately \$12 million, as shown in Exhibit 7-16.

A funding gap of approximately \$42 million is estimated for funding the MTP high priority improvements over the life of the plan. To address this difference, some of the high priority improvements may need to be deferred to later years beyond the 2035 planning horizon, unless grants or other revenues can be accelerated.

Approximately \$86 million is needed to fully fund the MTP short range projects under the jurisdiction of local agencies. Approximately 54 percent of these projects are identified as high priority projects. The medium and low priority projects, total approximately \$136 million. Over 64 percent of these total project costs are mid range time frame (2016 - 2025).

**Skagit and Island RTP Projects**

Exhibits 7-18 and 7-19 show the local agency RTP transportation revenues and costs by time period. As shown in Exhibit 7-19, approximately \$430 million is needed to fully fund RTP capital projects by the local agencies during the life of the plan. Almost 80 percent of these costs are identified as high priorities. This represents almost \$345 million during the life of the plan. A funding of gap of almost \$160 million is estimated for funding the RTP high priority projects. Similar to the MPO area, improvements may need to be deferred to later years beyond the 2035 planning horizon, unless grants or other revenues can be accelerated.

**Exhibit 7-18**  
Local Agency RTP Capital Project Funding

|   | 2010-2015 | 2016 - 2025 | 2026 - 2035 | Total       |
|---|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total Revenues                                      | \$296,428 | \$572,674   | \$700,765   | \$1,569,867 |
| Maintenance, Operations, and Administration Funding | \$217,266 | \$481,278   | \$687,064   | \$1,385,608 |
| Estimated Funds for RTP Capital Projects            | \$79,162  | \$91,396    | \$13,701    | \$184,259   |

**Note: Revenues in \$1,000s of dollars**

**Exhibit 7-19**  
Local Agency RTP Capital Project Costs

|                 | 2010-2015 | 2016 - 2025 | 2026 - 2035 | Total     |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| High Priority   | \$141,185 | \$75,035    | \$126,868   | \$343,089 |
| Medium Priority | \$34,446  | \$63        | \$27,447    | \$61,957  |
| Low Priority    | \$8,971   | \$16,633    | \$0         | \$25,604  |
| Total Projects  | \$184,603 | \$91,732    | \$154,316   | \$430,650 |

**Note: Costs in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars**

## Section 7: Financial Constraints

### Local Agency Funding

The local agencies, including Skagit and Island Counties and its cities and towns, use a range of revenue sources to fund transportation systems within their jurisdictions. These revenues need to pay for annual maintenance, operations, and administration as well as capital improvements for both the regional corridors and for streets that primarily serve local community needs. The agency revenues may fully fund these transportation projects and programs or be the “local match” for a federal or state grant.

For purposes of the M/RTP, all revenues and expenditures for the local jurisdictions are combined. This approach builds on the goal to develop the region’s transportation system based on the highest priority needs. This approach will require member agencies to work together to secure grants and/or otherwise jointly fund some of the major regional improvements. Exhibit 7-20 shows transportation revenues and costs for the entire RTPO region, including the Skagit metropolitan area and including WSDOT projects.

### Revenue Projections

It is worth repeating that these estimates are intended to assist in project prioritization and planning, but are not considered “forecasts” as they do not reflect a detailed analysis of future revenues. The figures presented in the M/RTP are estimates to be used for planning purposes; actual revenues are highly sensitive to local, state, and federal policy decisions; personal choices of residents; and market forces. These estimates are expressed in year of expenditure dollars.

Exhibit 7-20  
Total RTPO Capital Project Costs

|                       | 2010-2015        | 2016 – 2025        | 2026 – 2035        | Total              |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| High Priority         | \$499,531        | \$1,013,245        | \$1,007,093        | \$2,519,868        |
| Medium Priority       | \$79,206         | \$77,871           | \$34,779           | \$191,856          |
| Low Priority          | \$8,971          | \$140,953          | \$326,937          | \$476,861          |
| <b>Total Projects</b> | <b>\$587,708</b> | <b>\$1,232,069</b> | <b>\$1,368,810</b> | <b>\$3,188,586</b> |

Note: Costs in \$1,000s in year of expenditure dollars

### Other Regional Transportation Entities

The above analyses of state and local agency funding programs focus on highways and roadways. They also cover non-motorized transportation improvements. To meet the overall transportation needs of the region, the M/RTP supports expansion of fixed-route bus service, demand-responsive transit service, and special-needs transportation programs within the Skagit-Island region. Funding programs for and are summarized in this section. Funding for these programs is assumed to be independent of the roadway funding programs.

Air and rail transportation systems are generally funded separately from the state and local roadway projects or transit. An overview of current and known funding for these transportation systems is provided.

#### Port of Coupeville

The Port of Coupeville released its most recent comprehensive plan in 2007, which identified a list of projects the Port would like to complete over the next 20 years. The list included the following potential capital projects:

**Wharf and Moorage Recreational Boating Improvements.** The Port would like to increase the appeal and usability of the Port's marine facilities by making strategic, environmentally sensitive facility upgrades to the wharf and moorage that will attract recreational boaters, kayakers, rowers, and small boat sailors. Enhancements may include small boat mooring/launching float and storage racks for hand-carried boats. Additionally, the Port plans to restore outlying mooring buoys that were damaged or destroyed in the 2004 winter storms.

**Front Street Entrance Improvements.** The Port plans to actively participate in the Front Street revitalization planning efforts led by the

Town of Coupeville and the Central Whidbey Chamber of Commerce. The Port may consider funding a portion of the planned improvements via a contribution to Front Street projects or the Town's efforts to improve parking in the area.

**Greenbank Farm Master Site Plan.** The Greenbank farm is owned by the Port, and is operated through a public-private partnership. The Port released the Greenbank Farm Master Site Plan in 2009, which proposed a list of possible future capital projects at the site. Potential projects include a greenhouse, a multi-use building, and a Discovery Center.

None of the projects identified in the Comprehensive Plan or the Greenbank Farm Master Site Plan have detailed cost or funding estimates. Most are still in the initial visioning or planning stages.

#### Port District of South Whidbey Island

The Port District of South Whidbey Island released its most recent comprehensive plan in 2007 and included two separate capital investment scenarios:

**Current Funding Scenario.**

Under this scenario, the Port identified projects and costs it can pay for using its existing property tax revenue stream and some marina revenue. Total project spending over the 2008-2013 capital improvement plan period would be approximately \$1.3 million, and would be fully funded by existing revenue streams.



Transit Bus & Ferry

## Section 7: Financial Constraints

**Additional Funding Scenario.** Under this scenario, the Port assumed it could get voter approval for a \$5 million bond in 2009 and a levy that would generate approximately \$300,000 annually starting in 2010. Total project spending over the period would total approximately \$8.8 million. The additional spending, compared to the current funding scenario, goes toward projects at Mutiny Bay, Langley Marina, and Crawford Road. Additionally, the bond would have ongoing debt service of approximately \$400,000 annually.

Neither the voter-approved bond nor the additional levy passed according to the timeline laid out in the 2007 plan. The Port is currently waiting to hear if they will receive grants from the Department of Homeland Security and the US Department of Fish and Wildlife, which, along with their reserve funds, would be adequate to complete the desired projects. If these grants are not awarded, the Port will look to selling some bonds in 2011.

### Skagit Transit

Skagit Transit provides local fixed route bus service, Dial-a-ride (ADA) service for community members unable to use fixed route service due to disability or physical condition, a vanpool program, demand response service for areas not served by fixed routes, and connector service to Bellingham and Everett through joint operating partnerships with Whatcom Transit and Island Transit.

Skagit Transit was established in 1993 and operates in a Public Transit Benefit Area (PTBA) whose geographic boundaries have expanded over time through public vote. The PTBA currently includes approximately 750 square miles of Skagit County, including the cities of Anacortes, La Conner, Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, Hamilton, and Concrete, and unincorporated South Fidalgo Island, Burlington Country Club, and North and Northwest Skagit County.

In addition to providing transportation services, Skagit Transit owns and operates a Maintenance, Operations, and Administration Office, and a customer service/multimodal transportation center known as Skagit Station. Skagit Transit leases space at Skagit Station to Amtrak, Greyhound, and the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce.

Skagit Transit's most current six-year Transit Development Plan covers 2010 – 2015. This Plan establishes the agency's direction and provides a framework to guide service delivery over the next six years, within achievable funding levels. The Plan is reviewed annually, and may be adjusted to reflect changes in future years.

The six-year plan includes proposed action strategies to meet the State's public transportation policy objectives; a maintenance, preservation, and improvement plan; a capital plan; and a financial forecast of the revenues available to cover each of the planned items. The plan estimates that Skagit Transit's current revenue sources will be adequate to fund at the 2009 budget level through 2011. Beyond that time, new funding will be necessary to continue current service levels; the Plan includes putting a ballot measure before voters in November 2012 to levy an additional 4/10 of 1% sales and use tax. The financial forecast in the plan assumes that revenues will increase between 2% and 5% annually, and that expenditures will increase at a rate of 3% annually.

### Island Transit

Island Transit provides fixed route and deviated route bus service, curb-to-curb paratransit service for disabled community members, a vanpool program, and connector service to Bellingham, Everett, and other communities through joint operating partnerships with Whatcom Transit and Skagit Transit. These services provide important connections for community members to the Island County school

system and to Washington State Ferries terminals.

Island Transit is a Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA) and a public municipal corporation. It provides pre-paid, fare free transit services, and serves Whidbey and Camano Islands. Island Transit operates primarily from its Administrative, Operations, and Maintenance Office in Coupeville, Whidbey Island, and from a smaller satellite Operations Office on Camano Island. Island Transit also operates nine park and ride lots.

Island Transit is unique among most transit operators, in that it provides fare free service for fixed and deviated route bus service and paratransit service. The Board of Directors feels that charging a fare is contrary to Island Transit's mission, and believes that smaller transit systems generate little or no net revenue from fare collection because of costs associated with the collection. Island Transit's 2010-2015 Six-Year Transit Development Plan includes a long-range strategic plan, investment guidelines for meeting the State's Washington Transportation Plan objectives, a capital improvement program, and estimates of annual operating revenues and expenditures.

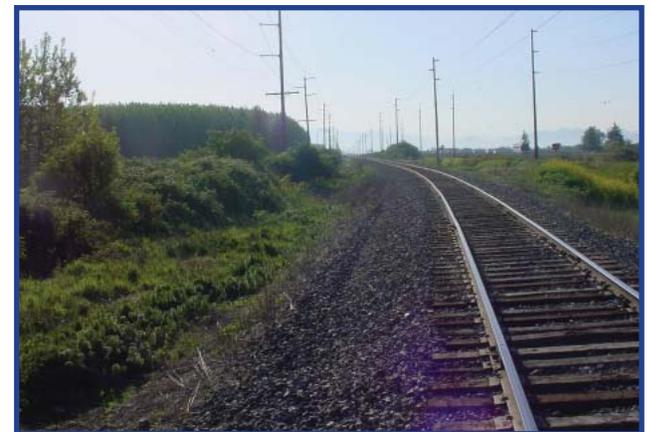
### Airports

In 2005, the WSDOT Aviation Division analyzed whether each airport in the state has enough capacity to meet its demand now and in the year 2030, based on activity forecasts. In 2010, the Division completed a detailed analysis of how each airport in the region was meeting its performance objectives. The region's airports were adequate in most categories, although there were some deficiencies. The Anacortes airport is projected to have inadequate capacity to handle 2030 projected demand for its passenger terminal, and the Camano Island Airfield is projected to have inadequate aircraft storage capacity by 2030.

Though potential deficiencies were identified, there is not currently a list of planned projects and funding programs. The Skagit Regional Airport provided further detail about its capital facilities situation by providing its most recent capital improvement plan, described below.

**Skagit Regional Airport.** The Skagit Regional Airport finalized its 2011-2015 Capital Improvement Plan in 2010, which includes 15 capital improvement projects totaling approximately \$25 million over the period. Among the planned capital projects are runway and taxiway rehabilitation, and runway extension and safety improvements, some of which help bring the Airport into compliance with FAA standards. All of the planned projects are 100% funded through airport funds, and State and sponsor matches.

**Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF).** BNSF owns most of the tracks in the Skagit and Island Counties region.



North of BNSF

### Potential Funds

Potential funds include additional revenues that may be available to the local jurisdictions in the context of their current set of policies, but will depend on market forces and the decisions made by the local agencies.

Here are a few key points to consider:

- 1. Jurisdiction Matters** – Each entity (county, city, port, transit) has its own funding tools available to it which are restricted by law and established policy. What mechanisms can be used to generate revenues for desired projects depends on the restrictions placed on the different categories of jurisdictions involved.
- 2. Current Funding Tools and Levels** – Each jurisdiction will need to examine the current revenue mechanisms that are used and determine if there are adjustments that can be made to these tools to support transportation needs. These might include levy lid lifts (requiring voter approval), utility tax rate increases (some need voter approval, some do not), or a policy change in the prioritization of how general capital funds are used.
- 3. New Funding Tools** – It is certain that no SCOG member is currently using all funding mechanisms available to it. It will be important to examine these other potential funding options and consider:
  - a. Revenue Generation
    - i. How much revenue can be generated?
    - ii. How sustainable is the revenue source?
  - b. Implementation Feasibility
    - i. What is required to put a new funding tool in place?
      1. Can it be passed by Council action?
      2. Does it require a voter approval?

- ii. What is required on an ongoing basis to conform to law and/or policy?

**4. Matching Funding Mechanism to Project Needs** – Funding sources may have statutory restrictions. General Fund revenues may be used for multiple purposes including capital, some revenues may only be used for capital projects; some revenues may only be used for transportation spending but may be used for maintenance or capital, and others must be used only for transportation capital projects. Narrower still, some grants and loans may only be used on certain types of transportation projects that achieve specific goals. It is important when considering the larger picture of transportation capital funding to match each potential project with the funding source that best fits its overall goals.

The following revenue sources may be new funding options that members of the RTPO could consider. In some cases the policy changes must be implemented by the individual jurisdictional members, and some require voter approval.

**Local Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax** (Counties) – Established in 1998, the Local Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax allows Washington State counties to levy a local Fuel Tax, in addition to the State tax, upon approval from the county’s legislative body and a majority of voters. This tax may be levied up to a rate equal to 10.0% of the State Fuel Tax rate and may be used for transportation purposes including maintenance, preservation, and expansion of existing roads and streets, new transportation construction and reconstruction, other transportation improvements, implementation and improvement of public transportation and high-capacity transit programs, and planning, design, and acquisition of right of way for the aforementioned purposes.

**Real Estate Excise Tax (REET)** (Counties and Cities) – Cities and counties are allowed to levy two portions of REET each at 0.25% of the full sale price of real estate. For those jurisdictions only levying the first 0.25% the option remains for them to begin to levy the second 0.25%. Because this funding may be used for different types of capital and is not restricted to transportation capital only, it is up to the discretion of each jurisdiction as to how they chose to spend these funds. These funds may be used for capital expenditures only and may not be used for maintenance and operations costs.

**Transportation Benefit Districts** (Counties and Cities) – A county or city may establish by legislative action a TBD to fund transportation improvements within the district. TBDs have two revenue options not subject to voter approval, but subject to other conditions:

1. Annual vehicle fee up to \$20. This fee is at the time of vehicle renewal.
2. Transportation impact fees on commercial and industrial buildings. Residential buildings are excluded. In addition, a county or city must provide a credit for a commercial or industrial transportation impact if the respective county or city has already imposed a transportation impact fee.

*Note: No voter approval is an option only . A county or city still has the option of placing either the annual fee of up to \$20 or the impact fees to the vote of the people as an advisory vote or an actual requirement of imposition.*

**Transportation Impact Fees** (Counties and Cities that plan under GMA) – Transportation Impact fees are charges assessed by local governments against new development projects that attempt to recover the cost incurred by government in providing the transportation

infrastructure required to serve the new development. Impact fees are only used to fund facilities, such as roads, that are directly associated with the new development. They may be used to pay the proportionate share of the cost of public facilities that benefit the new development; however, impact fees cannot be used to correct existing deficiencies in public facilities.

**Tax Increment Financing** (Counties, Cities, and Ports) – Tax Increment Financing (TIF) allows cities, counties and port districts to create special districts (tax increment areas) and to make public improvements within those districts that will generate private-sector development. During the development period, the tax base is frozen at the predevelopment level. Property taxes continue to be paid, but taxes derived from increases in assessed values (the tax increment) resulting from new development either go into a special fund created to retire bonds issued to originate the development or leverage future growth in the district. The current legislative TIF tool is the Local Revitalization Financing Program established in 2009.

**Business and Occupation (B&O) Tax** (Cities) – Business and Occupation tax is a locally-levied tax applied to the gross receipts of business activity within a jurisdiction. These taxes may be levied by cities and towns only, except in the case of financing a municipal transportation system, in which case the levying entities may include counties, a county transportation authority, or public transportation benefit area. Revenues from a B&O tax contribute to the General Fund, and may be used for multiple purposes, including transportation spending.

**Utility Taxes** (Cities) – Utility Taxes are a form of Business and Occupation tax levied on utilities, and a revenue source that is currently used to some degree by each city within the study area. These

## Section 7: Financial Constraints

revenues, like general B&O tax revenues, contribute to a municipality's General Fund. Washington State sets the maximum rate of tax on electrical, natural gas, steam energy, and telephone businesses at 6.0%, unless a higher rate is approved by voters. There is no tax rate limit on other utilities such as water, sewer, and garbage services.

**Sidewalk Statutes** (Cities) – Cities and towns have the authority to require property owners abutting a public street to construct sidewalk improvements or, if the property owners refuse to do so, to construct the improvements themselves and assess the costs to them.

**Parking and Business Improvement Areas** (Local Business & Property Owners) – A PBIA is a local self-help funding mechanism that allows businesses and property owners within a defined area to establish a special assessment district. Funds raised can be used to provide management, services, facilities, and programs to the district.

The activities in a parking and business improvement area are financed through a special assessment that is imposed on businesses, multifamily residential developments, and mixed-use developments

located within the geographic boundaries of the area. The assessments can be used to finance: construction, acquisition, or maintenance of parking facilities in the area; decoration of public areas; promotion of public events in public places in the area; furnishing of music in any public place in the area; provision of maintenance and security of common public areas;



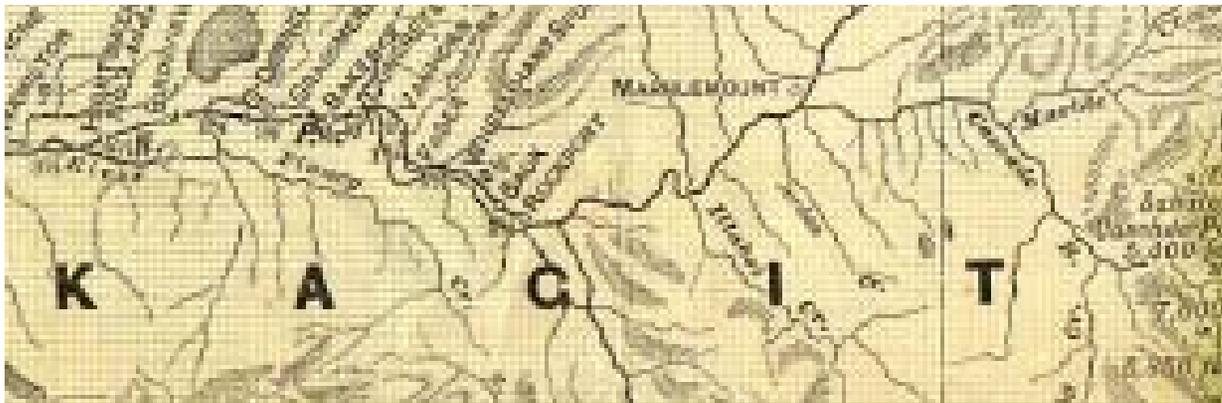
Park and Ride

or management, planning, and promotion of the area, including the promotion of retail trade activities in the area. Parking and business improvement areas are not explicitly authorized to promote tourism.

**Bonds** – Bonds may be used for capital funding in different ways. They may be used strictly as a financing function, allowing jurisdictions to move the same funding to an earlier construction period by borrowing money against future revenues. In this way an entity is able to pay for a project or set of projects at an earlier point in time and pay it off with future dollars. The interest paid on a bond increases the price of the project; however, the cost of that interest is likely off-set by completing the project in an earlier time period and avoiding increased construction prices in the future.

Rather than being strictly a financing option, a bond such as a voted General Obligation (G.O.) Bond may be used by cities or counties as additional funding for specific projects, since it actually increases revenues to the jurisdiction. If approved by voters, a G.O. Bond is used to finance a specific project and property taxes are increased for a set period of time to pay the debt service.

A unique aspect of a bond as opposed to a general increase in taxes, is that bond payments remain constant throughout the life of the repayment, causing the necessary tax rate to meet that payment to decrease each year, assuming property values are increasing annually. If an increase of \$0.10 per \$1,000 of assessed value is needed in the first year of a bond to make a \$1 million debt service payment, the following year, as assessed value has increased, it may only be \$0.09, and so on for each year of the life of the bond.



## Skagit-Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan

**Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG)**

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Mount Vernon, WA 98273

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