

SNOTRAC
STRATEGIC PLAN
2009-2014

Snohomish County Transportation Coalition



SNOTRAC.org

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Snohomish County Transportation Coalition (SNOTRAC) continues to work to develop a coordinated transportation system in Snohomish County for persons with special transportation needs – people who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation.

Many transportation resources exist in the county, including public transit, major businesses, non-profit providers, social service transportation programs, or volunteer transportation services. Coordinating and partnering between these public and private entities can make the difference between people being isolated or having access to needed services. A coordinated transportation system uses existing resources effectively and efficiently, minimizes duplication of services, and provides adequate mobility to populations and individuals currently underserved. By coordinating and streamlining administrative and operational transportation components, more people will have transportation services provided, and taxpayers can be confident that their tax dollars expended on special needs transportation are being maximized.

As an update to the 2003-2008 Strategic Plan, this 2009-2014 Plan outlines the direction and strategies for coordinated transportation in Snohomish County over the next five years. This is a living document, which will be the foundation for the implementation of a coordinated transportation system in Snohomish County.

The 2009-2014 Strategic Plan not only forms the basis for a coordinated transportation system in Snohomish County but also connects with the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. It supports and strengthens regional goals and objectives as well as alerts the region to the special needs and goals in Snohomish County.

Included in this Plan are appendices that summarize recent needs assessments in Snohomish County, the PSRC Plan, and projects that support SNOTRAC's goals and strategies.

More information about SNOTRAC's goals and accomplishments can be found online at SNOTRAC.org.

BACKGROUND

SNOTRAC was formed in 1999 to address the transportation needs of people unable to transport themselves due to disability, age, or income. SNOTRAC gained executive support in 2002 and has continued to receive funding and deliver its strategic goals.



PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Numerous public, private, and community organizations have partnered toward maximizing limited transportation resources, ensuring job access for all individuals and maintaining meaningful dialogue between transportation providers and consumers with special transportation needs. SNOTRAC's scope has broadened since the adoption of the first 5-Strategic Plan in 2003, with a corresponding growth in stakeholders committed to the successful implementation of a coordinated transportation system in Snohomish County. As part of this expanded vision, the Executive Team has restructured itself to effectively meet the challenges and goals of SNOTRAC. It is currently made up of policy makers from the County Executive office, County Council, Community Transit, Everett Transit, a City Council, Tribal Government, Work Force Development Council, Senior Services of Snohomish County and a School District.

ACHIEVEMENTS

2003-2008

The SNOTRAC Inventory, 2003-2008 Strategic Plan, and an Implementation/Evaluation Plan were adopted by the Executive Committee and put into effect July 01, 2003. With the Stillaguamish Tribe as fiscal agent, SNOTRAC was awarded two ACCT/WSDOT grants to create a Special Needs Transportation Hotline at Volunteers of America Western Washington (VOAWW) and explore the feasibility of a common intake form for use by multiple transportation providers. Since then, SNOTRAC member agencies have received WSDOT and PSRC grants to:

- Continue TAP operations at SSSC
- Hire a SNOTRAC Mobility Coordination Manager housed at VOAWW
- Start a dial-a-ride transportation program for the Stillaguamish Tribe
- Expand the VOAWW Special Needs Transportation Hotline into the 2-1-1 line
- Launch the Travel Ambassador Program
- Conduct research
- Launch the Ride Around the Sound and Pay Your Pal programs
- Expand Community Transit's Transit Instruction Program to reach low-income job seekers
- Hire a SNOTRAC Program Coordinator housed at VOAWW

1997-2002

Snohomish County Human Services (SCHS) and Senior Services of Snohomish County (SSSC) partnered to receive the first planning grant from ACCT, leading to the formation of SNOTRAC. In 2002, SCHS was awarded ACCT/WSDOT funding to contract with a consultant to help develop a Special Needs Transportation Inventory which contained a summary of:

- The federal, state, and local plans that address transportation
- Transportation resources available in the Snohomish County region
- Gaps between consumer demand and transportation service availability
- Challenges and opportunities for coordinated transportation in Snohomish County



This inventory was used by SNOTRAC and the consultant to develop the 2003-2008 Strategic Plan and an Implementation/Evaluation Plan. The Executive Committee of SNOTRAC was formed with executives around the county signing an Executive Statement of Sponsorship of its goals and mission.

VISION OF SUCCESS

On December 17, 2002, eighteen Snohomish County leaders signed a Statement of Executive Sponsorship endorsing the vision, mission, and values of the Snohomish County Special Needs Transportation Coalition, now referred to as the Snohomish County Transportation Coalition. The signing parties agreed to collectively oversee and provide guidance in the development and implementation of a coordinated transportation system for persons with special transportation needs in Snohomish County.

The mission of the Snohomish County Transportation Coalition is to work together to develop a coordinated transportation system that serves all people, with a focus on those who are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation because of a physical or mental disability, income status, or age.

Through better coordination of available transportation resources, transportation providers will realize greater efficiencies and more rides will be available to people with special transportation needs. SNOTRAC will strive to create and implement a coordinated, county wide, transportation system that will:

- Maintain existing services and resources
- Reduce unmet needs of all residents
- Explore the efficient uses of all local transportation resources, including non-traditional ones
- Foster partnerships between transportation and social service providers through ongoing communication and forums for problem solving
- Be user-friendly, safe, and easy to access
- Support “green” travel where possible
- Support and enhance regional and local goals

STRATEGIC NEEDS

To develop meaningful goals and strategies toward an effective coordinated transportation system, it is necessary to have current data on gaps, unmet needs and resources. For the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan, SNOTRAC drew from four county-wide needs assessments that identified issues and concerns of both providers and consumers in Snohomish County. These four studies were:

- Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study
- Snohomish County Transportation Needs Survey funded by Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)
- Safety Concerns on Public Transportation
- Senior Services of Snohomish County Operations Expansion study



The Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) of the Washington State Legislature conducted a 2008 Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study and selected Snohomish County as one of four case studies. The following needs were identified in Snohomish County:

- Identify funding sources or efficiencies that will help providers maintain existing services
- Need for more service and more resources to provide those services
- Need for greater understanding of transportation systems by riders, the public, and agencies – options, eligibility rules, routes
- An increased role for human services agencies in connecting transportation systems to special needs riders
- Need for increased coordination of systems. The idea of consolidating multiple transportation systems into a single agency came up frequently as an idea to address coordination
- Challenges related to the siting of affordable and special needs housing and needed services away from fixed-route transit access
- Challenges of getting transportation information to clients of human services agencies

(See Appendix A for more information about the JTC Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study.)

The Snohomish County Transportation Needs Survey in 2007 found that, in spite of a high level of transit/paratransit service in urban areas, there are significant rural areas surrounding outlying cities that are not served by public transit. There are only a few specialized programs that provide limited rural transportation but people with low incomes do not meet the eligibility criteria for most of them nor do they have the means to connect with the public transit system. A significant percentage of Snohomish County residents have limited access to fixed- route and demand-response public transportation. The majority of the people who have limited access are those living in Northern and rural areas of Snohomish County. A large number of individuals and families living in North Snohomish County and other rural areas find it difficult to get from their homes to employment.

Additionally, it was found that people would be more likely to ride the bus if they “felt safe and secure.” This was more important than having more bus stops available, being taught how to use the bus, knowing what is available, ease of making multiple stops, and disability friendliness. (See Appendix B for more information about the Snohomish County Transportation Needs Survey.)

The study of Safety Concerns on Public Transportation in 2008 explored further the safety concerns of people with special transportation needs. Overriding concerns included hygiene of buses and passengers, being stranded or alone at bus stops especially at night, insensitive drivers, unruly passengers and unfamiliarity with bus schedules and procedures. (See Appendix C for more information about the study of Safety Concerns on Public Transportation.)

The Senior Services of Snohomish County Operations Expansion study in 2008, conducted by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc., provided an assessment of the Transportation Assistance Program (TAP), which operates primarily in rural areas outside of public transit service areas. The emphasis of the study was to determine the transportation needs in the rural community and explore TAP expansion potential. SNOTRAC members, Catholic Community Services and Stilliguamish Tribe and Tulalip Tribe were contacted as major stakeholders for their input. Some of the issues and concerns expressed by stakeholders were:



- Need for scheduling/dispatching software for TAP
- Need to reach a zero denial rate
- Lack of transportation in rural areas, especially around Darrington and the eastside;
- Need to reduce 10-day advance reservation to a 5-day advance reservation;
- Need for public education and outreach in use of TAP;
- Need for coordination of transportation services and prioritizing transportation needs
- Large distances and limited resources

(Please go to <http://lscs.com/projects/snohomish> for more information about the Senior Services of Snohomish County Operations Expansion study.)

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

SNOTRAC envisions a coordinated special needs transportation system that is simple to use and addresses the special transportation needs in Snohomish County. In this chapter, the goals and strategies are identified that will lead to a coordinated special needs transportation system.

As indicated in the prior chapter, SNOTRAC used the results of four county-wide studies toward developing the goals and strategies for the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. Additionally, SNOTRAC evaluated the progress and continuing objectives of the 2003-2008 Plan and sought input from community partners and consumers with special transportation needs through monthly meetings and numerous outreach efforts. As an active partner with regional coordinated transportation efforts, SNOTRAC also incorporated the three over-reaching goals of the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. The regional goals are to Put People First, Move People Efficiently and Move More People. (See Appendix D for more information about the PSRC Plan.)

As a result of the studies, regional transportation goals and ongoing input from the community, SNOTRAC identified the following five goals and strategies for the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan:

Goal #1: Maintain Existing Services and Resources

- Maintain existing services at risk of reduction or discontinuation
- Maintain or replace vehicles, equipment and other resources needed to provide existing services
- Increase use of (ridership) existing services
- Enhance coordination among existing programs
- Improve efficiency of existing programs
- Improve awareness of existing services

Goal #2: Coordinate a Seamless Transportation Service

- Coordinate call intake and trip arrangements
- Increase regional and cross jurisdictional transportation options
- Simplify the eligibility process
- Build transportation capacity within existing community resources



- Identify opportunities and incentives for individuals and communities to help each other provide special needs trips, including accessible transportation
- Perform outreach to providers in the region to explore, coordinate, and integrate resources
- Promote “green” travel by supporting existing resources and environmentally friendly vehicles
- Research strategies to reduce duplication through sharing of resources and passengers

Goal #3: *Promote and Increase Awareness of Transportation Options*

- Provide transportation curriculum and training to professionals, individuals, and groups
- Promote awareness of eligibility requirements and service areas
- Increase marketing and outreach to special needs populations and the community through numerous media sources
- Facilitate interagency agreements and coordination between providers
- Reach out to bridge communication between transportation providers and diverse and underserved communities
- Promote “green” travel through resources and education that promote environmentally friendly methods of travel

Goal #4: *Identify and Reduce Unmet Needs*

- Increase transportation options in underserved geographic areas
- Identify and research populations with unmet needs
- Develop projects to meet unmet needs
- Emergency special needs transportation (spacing)
- Promote “green” travel
- Develop projects to increase transportation opportunities for low income populations

Goal #5: *SNOTRAC Leads Coordination Efforts in Snohomish County*

- Track and advocate for legislation that supports coordinated special needs transportation
- Clearly demonstrate the advantages of cost effective transportation and illustrate the consequences of a lack of coordination
- Seek public input and guidance on goals and strategies
- Communication and Marketing of SNOTRAC
- Develop and maintain active executive committee and bylaws
- Recruit active participation of people with special transportation needs in coordination efforts
- Maintain an effective website
- Promote “green” travel
- Support and enhance regional and local goals (i.e. PSRC Destination 2040)

Appendix E contains a list of projects identified by SNOTRAC to help meet these goals and strategies.

Appendix A

From JTC Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study-Appendix B Results of Focus Groups Conducted by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Consultants for State of Washington Joint Transportation Committee

Regional Forums

A key part of the input to the JTC Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study was received through feedback from stakeholders at four half-day forums held in four different counties around the state, including Snohomish County. All four forums were designed to address the following two questions:

- How well is the special needs transportation system working in the area
- What are the *greatest barriers*, or most important things to address, in order to improve the special needs transportation system?

Invitees to each forum were identified with the assistance of local special needs transportation agencies. Invitees included riders of the system; representatives from agencies operating transit services; human services agencies that interface with transit service operations; and interested local government representatives. ACCT members were also invited to all forums. The Snohomish County (Everett) forum took place May 7, 2008 with approximately 60 attendees, including 8 “riders” and several agency reps from Island and King Counties. (160 people were invited.) SNOTRAC was the local agency assisting this forum.

Assessing How Well the Special Needs Transportation System Works – For Riders and as a System

At all four regional forums, attendees were asked to rate the current special needs transportation system in their area. Attendees rated the system on six characteristics relevant to how the system is *working for riders*, and four characteristics relevant to *how the system works as a system*. In general, attendees rated the system *as it works for riders* as ***below average to average***. Ratings for the system *as a system* were somewhat higher, ranging from ***below average to above average***.

- Lowest ratings for the system *as it works for riders* were in the areas of ***availability of rides (when and where needed)***, and ***riders understanding of rules necessary to access rides***. In all forums, very few votes were cast rating the system as above average or excellent in any regard.
- Lowest ratings for the system *as a system* were for the ***flexibility of federal and state funding***.

Identifying Critical Barriers to Improving the System

- **Barriers for Riders.** All four forums identified the ***lack of service when needed*** as one of the most critical barriers for riders.
- **Barriers for the System.** Results across the four forums on this issue (system barriers) were less cohesive than as regards barriers for riders.

Overall Themes

At the highest level, the forums provided common feedback on several issues, listed here in no particular priority order.

- Stakeholders are not satisfied with the level of service available to meet the need of persons with special needs.
- Stakeholders generally feel that lack of flexibility in the use of available state and federal funding is a key barrier in the ability to provide needed service.
- There is a significant lack of understanding by many stakeholders as to regional priorities and plans for improving the special needs transportation system.
- There is a common desire for additional resources to meet the service needs identified.
- There is an understanding that urban and rural rider needs are quite different, and a feeling that generally rural riders are underserved in comparison with their urban counterparts.
- There is a desire for better coordination, and for coordination policies to be adopted and enforced—but at the same time there is considerable caution about centralizing broker services.
- There was broad agreement that a 1-call shop for helping customers schedule riders and understand eligibility rules would be an important and helpful step.

Themes from Everett/Snohomish County Forum

- Need **more service and more resources** to provide those services.
- Need **greater understanding of transportation systems by riders, the public, and agencies** – options, eligibility rules, routes.
- **Human services agencies** have important role to play in connecting transportation systems to special needs riders.
- Need to **increase coordination** of systems. The idea of **consolidating multiple transportation systems** into a single agency came up frequently as an idea to address coordination.
- Challenges related to the **siting of affordable and special needs housing** and needed services away from fixed-route transit access.
- Challenges of getting transportation information to clients of human services agencies.

How well does the system work for Snohomish County Riders?

Everett attendees were asked to rate each item from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest rating.

RATING:	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know
Rides available <i>when</i> needed	0	14	18	4	1	8
Rides available <i>where</i> needed	3	20	15	1	1	7
Riders know how to get information needed to travel	2	19	15	2	2	8
System is responsive to rider input	1	15	15	6	0	13
Eligibility well understood	9	21	9	0	2	8
Connections between systems are efficient	9	17	11	7	0	5

How well does the system work as a system? (for Snohomish County Riders)

RATING:	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know
Service agencies work well with transportation agencies	1	4	21	7	0	13
Providers share assets and information to maximize services and minimize duplication	1	13	15	3	1	16
Federal and state funding can be flexibly applied as needed	6	20	2	1	1	16
Agreement on biggest challenges and how to address them	3	13	12	5	0	16

Other Snohomish County Transportation Needs Addressed in JTC Study:

- Connectivity: Transfers are often required and can inhibit their travel. Nearly 40% of people living in Snohomish County work in another county and need corridor-based service.
- Lack of affordable housing: Some people, especially those on limited incomes, cannot afford housing costs in the more urban parts of the county; therefore, they are re-locating in more remote areas where transportation services are limited.
- Lack of services for veterans: This is an emerging issue that has been raised in several counties. With more and more veterans returning from active service, additional programs and resources are needed to treat or care for veterans.

Please go to <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/JTC/ACCTMeetings> for Special Needs Transportation Coordination Draft Final Report, Appendices, Study Recommendations and Next Steps.

Additional details from Snohomish County Forum

Of the eight stakeholder tables, five were assigned to Question 1; three were assigned to Question 2. Results as reported out by the table captains are described below.

Question 1: Most Significant Barriers to Riders (5 Tables Reporting)

# of Tables	Barriers
5	Availability of service when and where needed. Specific concerns included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADA eligibility geographic gaps • inter-county connections are cumbersome • trips take too long to complete, in part because multiple systems are involved, or because of the need to schedule multiple para-transit riders on a single trip • lack of funding for routes • lack of drivers • needs of shiftworkers • needs of rural residents
3	Some human services agencies resist offers of help with transportation training for clients.
1	System eligibility. The complexity of the system is overwhelming to riders; there are eligibility gaps, and the rules are confusing.
1	Fares are too expensive.
1	Housing and services are not located close to transit routes.

# of Tables	Barriers
1	Homelessness impacts on transit agencies - challenges of serving homeless families and children, esp. under McKinney Vento Act requirements.
1	Information exchange between stakeholders is hindered by the lack of a global view about the needs of riders (of both the public and agencies).
1	Some human services agencies resist offers of help with transportation training for clients.

Question 2: Most Significant Barriers to System Coordination (3 Tables Reporting)

# of Tables	Priority Barriers
3	Existence of multiple competing and overlapping transportation systems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases overhead costs at the expense of dollars available for services Geographic boundaries between systems create both gaps and overlaps, resulting in public and private sector “turf issues”, making it harder to coordinate services. System has too many rules and guidelines are too complicated for users.
3	Scarce resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “We need ‘more of everything’”—buses, routes, drivers, etc. Lack of funding makes it difficult for agencies to reduce fares. Lack of funds makes it difficult to direct resources to underserved areas.
1	Siting decisions for education and health facilities do not adequately account for transit needs of the clients of those facilities.

Ideas to address barriers to system effectiveness from the perspective of riders	
Table 1	Barrier addressed: Eligibility and System Not Well Understood by Riders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use caseworkers to assist with information exchange. Train the trainers and caseworkers to better understand transportation options and eligibility. Develop public awareness of options—place information on buses, vans; secure state funding for outreach; use billboards.
Table 2	Barrier addressed: Eligibility and System Not Well Understood by Riders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase flexibility of federal dollars by securing waivers of federal rules. Create a central information point for riders and agencies—a regional “mobility manager”. Use coalitions such as SNOTRAC as a clearinghouse for data.
Table 3	Barrier addressed: Increase System Capacity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more flexible funding to address multiple needs, support additional routes and additional drivers. Work to understand customer needs and how they differ in each county. Hold public forums to learn about public needs and then respond to what is learned.
Table 4	Barrier addressed: Multiple Systems Required to Complete Trips
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation training should be included in AARP defensive driving classes. Caseworkers should be trained in transportation issues—make it easy for them as they have little time; a challenge here is the caseworkers are funded through human services budgets, not transportation budgets. Mimic Portland’s “umbrella system” with multiple transportation entities under a single umbrella coordinator agency.
Table 5	Barrier addressed: Trips Take Too Long
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge transportation systems. Make systems seamless—borders shouldn’t be barriers. Create a regional bus system should be so operators aren’t overly focused on one jurisdiction or another. Improve siting decisions to ensure affordable housing and needed services have good transit access.

Ideas to address barriers to coordination <u>within</u> the transportation system	
Table 6	<i>Barrier addressed: Need for better Geographic Coordination between System Operators</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate the community generally, as well as agencies and riders, as to who can assist in coordinating between areas and who can help plan inter-county trips. • Manage expectations of riders, especially as to Medicaid eligible riders and the paratransit system. • Convene small meetings with groups of special needs riders with similar needs for focused outreach and training. This would be a more productive and beneficial use of rider time. The coordinating agency (SNOTRAC) should host these meetings. • Provide travel ambassadors with instruction on the fixed route system • Fund special mobility caseworkers.
Table 7	<i>Barrier addressed: Eligibility and System Not Well Understood by Riders</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and federal government must fund mandates associated with transportation. • Provide agencies with incentives to coordinate. • Provide riders with incentives to use transit –this will increase system sustainability.
Table 8	<i>Barrier addressed: Increase System Capacity</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the capacity of the 211 system to provide transportation information. • Create venues for transportation agencies and human service providers to meet together to solve problems. • Make it easier to agencies to share riders –both public and private agencies and public and private dollars: cooperative payment agreements are needed. • Expand the SNOTRAC website to facilitate interagency communication and ideas, and serve as a clearinghouse for information. • Educate the public and clients through multiple formats. • Fund a “transportation ombudsman”.

During the reporting out for this agenda item, there were two extended discussions by the group. The first related to **challenges related to the siting of affordable and special needs housing and needed services away from fixed-route transit access**. It was noted that there are many situations where affordable housing, special needs housing, employment, medical services, shopping services or educational facilities are sited in places not close to transit routes. Among the ideas identified were:

- Requiring major developers to meet with transit planners in advance of permitting;
- Taking steps to increase the linkage between facility planning and transit route planning;
- Having local government complete (in advance of development) studies on transportation needs associated with various geographies and special needs populations in order to expedite permitting.

There was also an extended discussion about the **challenges of getting transportation information to clients of human services agencies**. It was noted that this was often seen as a “non-core” task for human services agencies that simply added to caseworker workloads without resources to accomplish the task. The question was generally posed: **how can we engage human services agencies better?** Suggestions included:

- Require transportation agencies to include human services agencies in their budget planning
- Create opportunities for cross-discipline discussions between transit and human services agencies
- Train special “transportation case-workers” to be available to individual clients
 - In response to this idea, one attendee, an individual with special transportation needs, noted that this idea would put a greater burden on the client who would then have to deal with multiple case workers.
- Make transportation information more easily available to caseworkers and clients alike through the 211 system or other means
- Improve the SNOTRAC website to create a “moving blog” to identify and track issues and solutions



- Educate legislators about the need to consider transportation when thinking about human services
- Use the Community Transit CD/video on “how to ride the bus”
- Explain “what’s in it for them” (the caseworker) to learn about the transportation options.

Closing Discussion: *Open Forum*

The final 30 minutes of the meeting were dedicated to an “open forum.” Attendees were asked to focus their responses on two questions:

- **Because it is often helpful to improve a system by building on its strengths: what is one thing which works well now in Snohomish County’s special needs transportation system?**
- **What is one change you think could make a substantial improvement in the way transportation for people with special needs is provided in Snohomish County?**

Ideas about ACCT:

1. How can ACCT be more relevant? It would be helpful to do more forums around the state like this, not just meet in Olympia.
2. ACCT has done a very good job, given limited resources and the continual expansion of their role by the legislature. They should be given additional funding.
3. ACCT isn’t effective because it is not locally connected to issues. The state should put authority and money back in local hands to increase the speed and effectiveness to which the money can be applied.

Things that are working particularly well in Snohomish County and neighboring counties:

4. The current coordinating council—SNOTRAC, is well funded and a committed group. This is a positive for the County.
5. Volunteer transportation programs are working well, filling important gaps in service. They could be further supported with additional money for driver retention.
6. The Island County transit “Fare Free” program eliminates barriers between systems and is a model that other counties may want to look at.
7. The Medicaid Broker in Snohomish County is working well; we could expand their services to cover other areas such as information technology or monitoring activity.
8. Community Transit’s bus rider training is a good tool that we can use in Snohomish County.
9. SNOTRAC is a success: we should keep funding it.

Ideas that could significantly improve transportation in Snohomish County:

10. Restore demonstration project funding.
11. Increasing demand for McKinney-Vento services: we need additional funding for homeless student transit.
12. We should strive to share trips where appropriate, but be sensitive to the needs and issues of individual riders.
13. SNOTRAC ambassadors could be transportation caseworkers.
14. Para-transit riders and veterans should be able to ride fixed route services for free.
15. Develop a shared trip cost model to enhance hared ride use.
16. Increase integration of program rules—CTR, employers, van pools—how can we use these programs and assets for persons with special needs?
17. DART should use card cash meters.
18. The Enhanced Washington ID card should be augmented to indicate ride program eligibility.

Other:

19. Forty percent of Snohomish County's population fits the definition of persons with special needs.
20. Funding for transportation should be proportionate to the populations served.
21. Consider mental health issues and how these clients need transportation services (Mental Health trips are the largest user of the Medicaid System –21% of 3.2 million trips).
22. Recruitment and retention of drivers is a common issue here.
23. Para-transit services have helped me live independently and stay employed in this County.

Appendix B

From Snohomish County Transportation Needs Survey

Study conducted by Volunteers of America Western Washington for SNOTRAC with help from the disAbility Resource Connection and many other community partners. Funding provided by the Community Transportation Association of America.

Summary of Research

SNOTRAC conducted a 44-item questionnaire to investigate employment-related transportation issues for residents of rural Snohomish County. Surveys were available online and were distributed throughout the community. SNOTRAC collected 698 responses over a 7-month period from April to November of 2006.

A small portion of the surveys were filled out by caseworkers on behalf of an individual, but the majority of the surveys were completed by the individuals themselves (619). The sample consisted of a good representation of special needs populations. Fifty-four percent of participants used a personal vehicle and the rest used methods such as fixed route buses, DART and Everett Paratransit, family and friends, walking/bicycling, and vanpools. Fifty-five percent of the respondents lived in an urban city and 40 percent lived in a rural city. Fifty-two percent of people who lived in rural areas felt that transportation to work was limited because of where they lived, compared to only 35% who lived in urban areas. People were willing to use the bus for their main method of transportation for the following reasons in order of importance: shorter trips, safety and security, more bus routes, ability to make multiple stops, knowledge of what is available, disability friendliness, and taught how to use the bus. Participants with disabilities, low incomes, and those who were unemployed were less satisfied with their primary method of transportation.

Percent of Population with Special Needs			
2000 US Census Data	Northern/Rural Snohomish County	Snohomish County	Washington
Total Population	129,196	606,024	5,894,121
Unemployment Rate	5.5%	5.0%	6.2%
Individuals Below Poverty	7.4%	6.9%	10.6%
Families Below Poverty	5.2%	4.9%	7.3%
Seniors Age 65+	9.1%	9.1%	11.2%
Age 5+ with Disability	18.6%	16.8%	18.2%

NOTE: Percentages for North Snohomish were calculated by taking the mean percentage of Arlington, Darrington, Granite Falls, Lake Stevens, Stanwood, Monroe, Skykomish, and Tulalip US census Geographic county subdivisions.

In 2000, 7% of residents for whom income was listed, had incomes below the poverty level, and for those that were 65 years old or more, 8% were below poverty. Of children under the age of 5, almost 9% were listed as below poverty. In Snohomish County, 92,909 residents over the age of five were listed as having a disability. Of those, 11,044 (12%) had incomes below the poverty level in 1999, as compared to 5% of the population without disabilities. In addition, only 63% of the population between the ages of 21 and 64 with a disability were employed, as compared to 80% of those employed without a disability. For people with disabilities, the unemployment rate was 14.6% (US Census).

Everett Transit estimated that approximately two thirds of its ridership has household incomes of less than \$20,000 per year. This may mean that people with low incomes ride the bus out of necessity.

A national survey conducted by the Center for Housing Policy (2006) found low to moderate income working families are finding that as they move further from work to find afford housing they end up spending as much, or more, on transportation costs than they are saving on housing.

Community Transit and its paratransit service Dial-A-Ride-Transportation (DART) provides a significant amount of service to all the cities in the rural areas of Snohomish County. In 2005 they provided:

- Approximately 160,014 boardings on local fixed routes serving these areas
- Approximately 25,238 boardings on commuter fixed routes providing transportation from these areas to and from Seattle, the King County Eastside and University District
- 30,938 boardings on DART in these areas

However, in spite of this level of service, there are significant rural areas surrounding these cities that are not served by public transit. There are only a few specialized programs that provide limited rural transportation but people with low incomes do not meet the eligibility criteria for most of them. Nor do they have the means to connect with the public transit system.

A significant percentage of Snohomish county residents have limited access to fixed route and demand response public transportation (see table below). The majority of the people who have limited access are those living in Northern and rural areas of Snohomish County. A large number of individuals and families living in North Snohomish County and other rural areas find it difficult to get from their homes to employment. Some people are unable to access transportation and others find it extremely time consuming to plan, schedule and get to needed destinations. These burdens may result in people choosing not to work or being repeatedly late for work, not receiving necessary medical treatment, and suffering general isolation from community services and events.

Percent of Special Needs Populations with limited Access to Public Transit		
	Limited access to fixed route	Limited access to demand-response
Seniors 65+	18%	4-17%
Disabled	20%	4-18%
Low Incomes	19%	4-15%

Information obtained from the Puget Sound Regional Council

The rural areas of Snohomish County have higher concentrations of people with, low incomes, disabilities, and seniors. People with low incomes tend to move to rural areas because of the low cost of housing. National reports indicate that older adults in rural areas live in single-family homes which they own. They feel a strong attachment to their homes and communities, and prefer to “age in place” even when health and physical limitations make it difficult for them to remain in their own homes. These individuals often experience higher rates of poverty, substandard housing, and a lack of employment opportunities. The percentage of disabled individuals appears to have an inverse relationship with the urban areas having lower concentrations of disabled residents and rural areas having a higher concentration.

The availability of public transportation is grossly limited in the very rural areas of Snohomish County, thus, making this group of individuals struggle more to access transportation. In these rural areas, suffering from high unemployment, vulnerable populations have a particular need for public transportation because their options for personal mobility may be severely limited.

The result of the project highlighted the need for people with disabilities to be educated about public transportation, as many of the participants did not have a full understanding of their options and had misconceptions about the services. The study did not have high participation from rural areas and further research is needed to obtain data from this population. In addition, information from this study did not capture the interaction of employment and transportation clearly. Future investigation is needed to understand how transportation can better meet the needs of people with low incomes and disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment.

The Puget Sound Regional Council identified the following gaps in transportation throughout the Puget Sound area based on reports from transit, human service providers, and the special needs population: *Unserved or Underserved Areas*. People often live in the more rural areas or the edges of cities due to lower cost housing options. However, to provide cost efficient service, transit agencies typically provide more frequent service in areas with more people, such as in urban areas. Consequently, many people are without transit service. Even within transit service areas, the service levels in some areas may not meet the travel needs of people. Human service agencies typically provide services, but are often designated for a specific target population (e.g. Veterans) or specific destination type (medical trips). Specialized transportation services are also limited on weekends and for social activities, such as going to a place of worship.

Ease of Use. Once a person figures out how to use “the system,” whichever transportation system works for them, transportation becomes less challenging. However, learning how to use the system can be difficult for several reasons.

- Different transit systems have different fare schedules, which is confusing and difficult for riders.
- Riders eligible for multiple transportation programs must make multiple trip arrangements depending on their transportation need, not with a single provider.
- Riders may need help getting on and off the vehicle, but there is often nobody available to help people at transfer points.
- Paratransit systems generally do not provide same day service, which means riders must always plan trips in advance and cannot be spontaneous about travel.

Access. There are not enough affordable accessible or lift-equipped vehicles for people who are disabled, but not eligible for Medicaid or ADA paratransit services. Some of these people could ride the fixed route

bus, but are unable to access it for a variety of reasons. The Center for People with Disabilities conducted a 2005 Bus Stop Survey which found that problems at bus stops made it difficult for people with disabilities to ride the bus. Problems included:

- Blocked access to the stop by such things as tree limbs, landscaping rocks, and retaining walls
- Ramps that are too steep
- Some drivers don't provide boarding help at stops where boarding is difficult and may even refuse to stop
- Bus stops that are too far from the accessible path of travel
- Residue on the boarding surface, cracked pavement, uneven joints, pebbles or other rough surfaces that make boarding difficult

Transit/ Paratransit Trip Length and Transfers. Transfers among the different transit systems add a great deal of time, inconvenience, confusion and frustration to regional travel. Fortunately, transits operate several regional express services to reduce ride times for many of the longer trips. This is very beneficial for people with special needs, the majority of whom use fixed route. However, regional ADA paratransit services for transit agencies do not mirror the regional express services. Consequently, transfers are necessary among paratransit systems and tend to be more lengthy and difficult for people who by definition have the more severe disabilities. Transfers can be physically painful for some individuals.

Connections with Ferries. Paratransit trips – funded by transit, Medicaid, and other human services - that involve ferries present a series of difficulties. The ferry system does not give priority to paratransit vehicles, so paratransit vehicles may have to wait for subsequent ferries if they can't board the intended sailing. This happens frequently on holidays and weekends. Riders can miss appointments, and if they are frail, the trip may be painful when extended. It is difficult to coordinate docking time with a pick up at the other end due to lack of communication between providers and the ferries.

Regional Transfer Site Amenities. Riders whose trips involve a transfer are more likely to want amenities, access to information, or other features to help make their trip more seamless. An analysis of the amenities at the 21 regional transfer sites shows:

- 18 do not have restrooms
- 17 do not have pay phones
- 15 do not have customer service/information

Safety and Supervision. The fear of crime and difficulty boarding are two significant reasons people are reluctant to use public transportation. Busy cross streets, lack of amenities, and lack of assistance or enforcement are all safety hazards that are barriers for potential riders. In addition, transportation of children requires additional supervision beyond what is available on fixed route transit, due to age, behavior issues, or disabilities that require assistance to travel. In addition, people with special transportation needs have not been an integral part of emergency planning, which leaves a significant gap in how people unable to drive will be able to respond during natural disasters or other emergencies.

Information Partners. "Gatekeepers", the people who work with seniors, youth, people with disabilities, and low-income populations - are often the first point of contact for people with special transportation needs. Gatekeepers often don't have adequate information about the appropriate transportation choices and referrals for clients; or don't have the time to learn about the appropriate choices or referrals. Some

social service agencies and other support services may not agree that a fixed-route bus is appropriate for their client. For these and other reasons, case managers and customer service representatives from social and health service agencies may advocate for modes of transportation that are more expensive because they fear the client will not get to the service if there is any inconvenience in using other transportation modes.

Awareness of Available Services. Marketing of less expensive modes, such as fixed route transit, rideshare, and vanpools, is mostly targeted to commuters and not people with special transportation needs. Furthermore, funding is not available to meet the demand for specialized paratransit, volunteer and other community transportation, and hence marketing is not encouraged. Rural communities in particular are not aware of the options available to them due to the limited funding available for marketing and planning coordination.

Service Levels and Expectations. There are no clear public transportation service level criteria in Puget Sound - such as defining adequate wait times, appropriate service frequency by area, or reasonable trip lengths. Without service levels clarified and broadly publicized, people develop expectations of the public transportation system that it is not designed to meet. This results in frustration for both the rider and the public transportation system.

Results of Survey

Participants who lived in rural areas felt that transportation was lacking more so than those living in the urban areas at a statistically significant level.

Chart: Availability of transportation in rural versus urban areas



Further analysis indicates that 83% participants strongly or somewhat agreed their own car does a good job of getting them to work, although, roughly 50% of them wish that there was something better.

How well does the transportation they use work for them						
The Transportation they use:	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Missing
Does a good job of getting me to work	303	161	47	23	80	99
Makes me wish there was a better service	204	159	63	92	96	99
Limits where work is available.	135	116	74	148	128	112
Is difficult to pay for	139	164	92	139	69	110
Makes it easy to do other tasks in addition to work	271	109	81	95	54	103

Participants were asked to indicate what criteria would entice them to use the bus regularly for work. Participants using a personal car were evenly divided that knowing what was available it would help. Fifty-Eight percent of participants responded “strongly or somewhat agreed” that they would be more likely to ride the bus if they “felt safe and secure.” This was more important than more bus stops available, being taught how to use the bus, knowing what is available, ease of making multiple stops, and disability friendliness. It ranked as the second after shorter trips as reasons participants were likely to ride the bus. Survey participants who were disabled and/or were women “strongly agreed” that safety and security was an important factor at a statistically significant level compared to those that were not.

Incentive to riding public buses						
They would use public transportation if:	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Missing
Know what is available	137	127	91	86	155	117
More bus routes	217	133	72	64	129	98
Easy to make stops	174	136	73	75	148	107
Shorter trips	244	123	53	59	127	107
Safety and security	231	125	49	63	139	106
Taught how to use the bus	104	86	93	122	202	106
Disability friendly	124	70	61	82	263	113

Interestingly, the participants didn’t feel that being taught how to ride the bus would be helpful, except for those that relied on family and friends and some bus users (see chart 2). DART and Paratransit users (92.8%) and those who relied on family and friends (80.7%) felt that buses that are more disability friendly would entice them to ride the bus.

The biggest enticement for sharing a ride is a faster commute and costing less money was close behind. The most important part of having a personal vehicle to the participants was that it is easy to use and does not require scheduling.

Incentives to sharing a ride

<i>Why would the participants share a ride?</i>	Frequency	Percent
Sharing a ride will cost me/my client less money than riding alone.	188	26.4
I/my client knows the person sharing the ride or it is someone referred to me/my client.	86	12.1
Faster commute, goes directly where I/my client need to go, better parking, etc.	216	30.3
I/my client can make more than one stop to do other tasks not related to work	38	5.3
Missing	185	25.9

Motivators for using a personal vehicle		
<i>Why do the participants enjoy their vehicle?</i>	Frequency	Percent
Fast, I/my client get to desired location right away	130	18.2
I/my client feel safe in my own car	34	4.8
Easy to use, no scheduling is needed	226	31.7
I/my client can stop to take care of other tasks (day care, etc.)	121	17.0
Satisfaction from owning a car	26	3.6
Missing	127	24.7

Purpose of travel		
<i>Getting to work between 8am and 5pm</i>	Frequency	Percent
Night work shifts or early morning work shifts	361	50.6
Weekend and holiday travel	163	22.9
Recreational Activities & Events	369	51.8
Visit family and friends	370	51.9
Getting kids to day care or school	150	21.0
Going to the doctor's	367	51.5
Grocery Shopping and running errands	395	55.4
Attending training or education classes	264	37.0
Long distant trips outside of Snohomish County	266	37.3

Appendix C

Study of Safety Concerns on Public Transportation

Results of Focus Groups Conducted by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates,

Focus Groups

Three focus groups were convened in November 2007 and February 2008 to help determine what safety concerns people with special transportation needs have regarding the use of public transportation. The purposes of the study were to identify what safety issues or perceptions exist and explore what steps might be taken to feel more secure, including public awareness and education. Three populations were targeted for this study: People with disabilities, Mothers with low income and Seniors.

In all focus groups, the meeting began with introductions and an explanation for the purpose of the focus group. Next, participants were asked to respond to two questions of concern for the meeting:

- Do you ever feel unsafe or insecure riding the bus? If so, please describe why you do not feel safe or secure. Describe any experiences or knowledge you have that contribute to your perception of security on the bus.
- Please describe what steps could be taken, by you or the transit agency, that would help you feel more secure.

Focus Group 1- People with Disabilities

This focus group took place on November 7, 2007 at the disAbility Resource Connection (dRC), located in Everett, WA. dRC provided a meeting room, and also recruited the seven participants. dRC Provides Four Core Services: 1) Advocacy: 2) Peer Counseling Support: 3) Information and Referral: 4) Independent Living Skills Training. Each of the participants in the focus group was associated with dRC in some capacity, either as a recipient of services or as staff.

Each participant shared his or her experiences using fixed route transit or other transportation services available in Snohomish County. Of the seven participants, four indicated they were frequent users of public transit, two considered themselves infrequent users, and one person relied exclusively on paratransit services. Those who used public transit were primarily customers of Everett Transit.

When asked whether they feel unsafe or insecure riding the bus, participants offered the following responses:

- Persons with disabilities are not always provided seats in the designated area of the bus (in front, near the driver) intended for seniors and persons with disabilities. Sometimes youth take these places, which makes it difficult for persons with disabilities to use the bus.
- The attitude of drivers makes using public transit difficult sometimes. They may be rude to passengers, or insensitive to persons with disabilities. Or, they may not allow enough time for passengers to get to their seats.
- Not all drivers are knowledgeable of how to use special equipment on the buses, such as wheelchair lifts.
- Some people expressed fear of being stranded, of getting lost or having their equipment (i.e. power wheelchair) break down.

- Some people expressed concerns about health issues: the air quality on the bus is not good, or there may be people with contagious diseases or illnesses on the bus.
- Others expressed apprehension about other passengers, especially groups of teenagers, which make them uncomfortable. Some bus passengers have been observed to be rude to other passengers or to the driver.

When asked what steps they, as individuals, or transit agencies could take to help alleviate these fears and concerns, focus group members offered the following suggestions:

- Driver training—teach drivers how to effectively work with people with disabilities, and how to handle emergency situations. Focus group members expressed some sympathy for drivers who are asked to consider timeliness and a rigid schedule, sometimes at the expense of delivering good customer service.
- Transit agencies should re-evaluate their scheduling policies in order to allow for better customer service, take traffic conditions under consideration, etc.
- Transit agencies should offer regular training on use of special equipment.
- Transit agencies should institute a “cleanliness audit” to ensure the vehicles are sanitary and clean.
- Transit agencies should institute a “mystery rider” program, where customers are asked to evaluate the behavior and performance of drivers.
- One step that customers can do, if fearful of riding the bus, is to take a companion with them, especially if they are not sure where they are going.
- Customers can also advocate for themselves, and seek to become a part of a larger “voice” to work towards better public transit.

Focus Group 2- Mothers with Low Income

The second focus group took place on February 21, 2008 in the Everett Station. Everett Station serves as a transportation hub as well as a higher education and career development center. Everett Station houses the Everett Transit Customer Service Center as well as WorkSource, WorkForce, The University Center and Espresso Americano. Amtrak, Greyhound, Northwest Trailways, Skagit Transit, Island Transit, Sound Transit and Community Transit also provide service from Everett Station. Participants for the focus group were women participating in the WorkSource Program. By definition, they were low-income and a parent of at least one child (or expecting a child). All the women were under age 30.

Among the eleven focus group members, only two were regular transit users. The others either walked or had access to an automobile. In general, participants reported that they do not feel unsafe using the bus. However, many reported that they feel uncomfortable or insecure primarily for the following reasons:

- Not familiar with the bus system, especially if routes have changed.
- Concerns were also expressed because of the distance between bus stops, and their fear of being mugged while traveling from the bus stop to their home or other destination.
- Inability to control who gets on the bus—a number of participants expressed their opinion that other riders may be mentally unstable, may have been drinking, or may exhibit aggressive or otherwise undesirable behavior.
- There was consensus among the women that they fear for their children’s safety on the bus or at bus stops rather than their own safety. Many are reluctant to have their children use the bus.
- There was consensus among the women that they are more uncomfortable at or near bus stops or centers (such as Everett Station) rather than on the bus itself. Several reported incidents of panhandling or sexual overtures from people loitering at bus stops or in transit centers.
- While some women had read about or heard about threats to women’s safety (in Seattle), none had experienced any person threats to their safety while using transit.

When asked what steps could be taken to improve their perception of safety, the women offered the following suggestions:

- Provide more security on the bus, especially cameras. There is the perception that, even if there are cameras, they aren't working or nobody monitors the activity on the buses.
- Have drivers enforce the rules—some behavior warrants being kicked off the bus, such as spitting, sexual harassment, or interfering with another passenger's ride. Many reported that, while drivers are helpful and do a good job, they are not always able to control the behavior of the passengers or don't do enough to protect the safety and well-being of other passengers.
- The opinion was expressed that if, in fact, some people are removed from the bus, this information should be publicized to instill confidence that the rules are being enforced. As it is, people are not ever sure whether this is the case.
- The focus group participants also suggested that efforts to enhance safety and security be focused on key facilities, such as transit centers or park and ride lots.

The focus group members had the following suggestions as to what they, as individuals, could do to increase their sense of safety and security when riding the bus:

- Stay alert
- Sit near the driver
- Be careful; don't take risks
- Travel in groups

Focus Group 3- Seniors

This focus group took place with the assistance of Snohomish County Senior Services. Twelve residents of a senior housing facility attended the focus group, which was held on February 21, 2008. In order to be eligible to live in the facility, residents must be at least 55 years of age and meet an income threshold. One member regularly used public transit (two routes directly serve the housing complex) and the others rarely if ever used public transit. One person used paratransit on occasion to get to and from medical appointments.

In general, participants indicated they do not fear for their personal safety and security when making their travel decisions.

- No one had directly experienced threats to their safety or security while using transit.
- No one expressed fear about getting hurt or falling while riding the bus.
- The impression was expressed by some that some transfer centers or bus stops may be "undesirable" places to wait because of rowdy kids, a lot of smoking, etc.
- Some expressed apprehension about knowing how to use the service, understanding the schedules, knowing where to get off, etc.
- One person expressed reluctance to use public transit with her walker, because she is concerned it may get in the way of other passengers.

When asked what steps could be taken to make them feel more safe and secure, most comments related to learning more about the bus system in order to feel more confident using it.

- About 50% of the participants are internet users, and are comfortable seeking information they need on-line.
- For others, informal networking such as flyers or a group meeting is more effective.

- Some indicated an interest in a travel buddy program and agreed that traveling with a companion would help enhance their confidence, especially when using transit for the first time.
- Some felt that more information should be available at various destinations—sometimes people know how to get to a certain place, but don't know how to get back.
- Additional amenities such as shelters and benches would help.

Appendix D

From Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Federal Fiscal years 2006-2009

Regional Strategy for Coordinating Special Needs Transportation

Given the growing demand for transportation over the next 10 years, the opportunities to better coordinate services, and the gaps in transportation services, the Special Needs Subcommittee decided to frame a blueprint for how to collectively move from mobility today to the desired mobility of the future. The first step was to identify the regional vision, mission, and principles by which to guide our decisions.

THE VISION....

Mobility, Quality and Efficiency through Coordination

THE MISSION....

We are multiple organizations working together for mutual benefit to gain economies of scale, eliminate duplication, expand service, and or improve the quality of service in order to better address the regional transportation needs of transportation disadvantaged people in the Greater Puget Sound.

THE STAKEHOLDERS....

Riders

People that need transportation, including those with physical and mental disabilities, youth, older adults, and people that simply can't afford to own or maintain a car, or are unable to operate a vehicle.

Transportation Purchasers

Agencies and people that pay for transportation, including taxpayers, social service agencies, transit agencies, school districts, service providers, nursing homes and hospitals.

Transportation Providers

Agencies that arrange and provide the trips, including transit agencies, school districts, transportation brokers, non-profits, private transportation companies, volunteer driver programs, community shuttles, and social service agencies.

Community At-Large

Those who serve people with special transportation needs including hospitals, nursing homes, colleges and universities, pharmacies and medical facilities, retail and grocery stores, community programs, family and friends, government agencies, and employers.

Guiding Principles & Values....

Transportation stakeholders have different principles and values, depending on their viewpoint. The values from each stakeholder perspective are listed below and stated as "forward-looking" statements – the ideal environment for coordinated special needs transportation to thrive. These four viewpoints have been balanced throughout this planning effort and the building of a coordinated special needs transportation system in the region.

RIDER VALUES

- A range of mobility and cost options gives riders a variety of usable and effective choices to meet the need.
- Riders can easily plan, arrange, and/or pay for trips, regardless of mode.
- Transportation services can be depended upon to arrive and depart within agreed upon timeframes. Drivers are consistently respectful and helpful.
- Services are safe and secure.
- Gaps in service areas are filled, and services are sufficient to meet the need.

- Passenger information is kept confidential and is treated respectfully.
- Coordination takes place “behind the scenes”- it is handled to the greatest degree possible by the agencies- not the riders.

PROVIDER VALUES

- Competition for providing publicly funded rides remains fair – everyone has an equal chance to compete for a share of the market.
- The administrative burden of collecting fares, reporting data, and complying with regulations are simplified and streamlined.
- Publicly-funded rides will continue to be provided by both public and private providers.
- It’s easy to help people access different transportation programs without having to know the details about each program.
- Opportunities to share resources among providers are leveraged, such as vehicles, training, maintenance, and drivers.

COMMUNITY VALUES

- Everyone benefits from pedestrian-friendly accessible communities with a full range of mobility options.
- Responsibility of transportation is shared among the community.
- All federal, state, and local planning processes recognize that mobility is integral to achieving healthy communities.
- The community is held accountable for working together to meet mobility needs.
- Mobility choices are usable and presented in effective ways. Coordination of choices is efficient and requires the least amount of work by riders.

PURCHASER VALUES

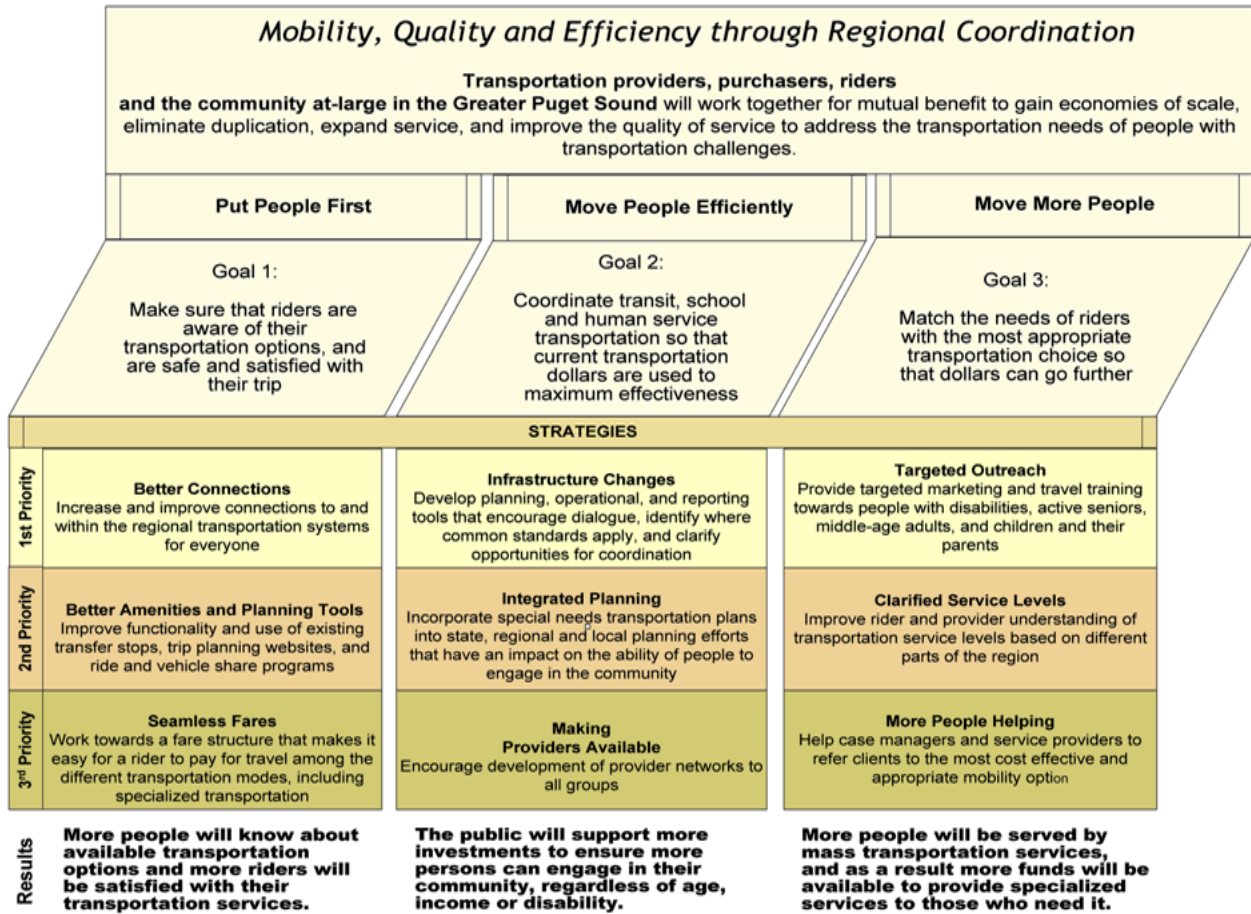
- Agencies continue to represent client interests and get them the most appropriate transportation that meets their specific needs.
- Coordination will be cost neutral or result in cost savings for all participating agencies. Where possible, cost savings realized by the plan will be reinvested into more mobility.
- Driver and vehicle level of standards are agreed upon and enforced. The service quality of publicly funded special needs transportation services should be at least equal to fixed-route services.
- Competition is a good thing.
- Costs and responsibilities are not shifted to other purchasers without adequate compensation. (“budgets are not balanced on the backs of others”)
- No one entity is solely responsible for special needs transportation. Costs of providing grouped trips are shared equitably
- Publicly funded rides are provided by the lowest cost, most appropriate service for the passenger.
- Transportation coalitions have the responsibility to seek additional funding to supplement federal, state, and local funds.
- Federal, state, and local regulations are consistent and support the coordination of transportation services.
- A range of transportation options are available, including but not limited to, carpools, transit, taxi cabs, community businesses, non-profits, cabulances, school buses, volunteer drivers, gas vouchers, and non-motorized alternatives.

To move the region closer to the identified vision of mobility, quality and efficiency through coordination, this plan supports the three goals and nine strategies as illustrated in Figure 20.

The strategies were identified as key ways to act on the goals and objectives over the next four years.

With public input, the strategies were ranked into first, second and third priority levels for each goal area.

Figure 20: Strategic Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives



Please go to <http://psrc.org/boards/advisory/specialneeds/3.07Coord%20Plan.pdf> to view entire PSRC plan.