



WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

State Role in Public Transportation

Task 1: Unmet Public Transportation Capital and Operations Needs

November 2010

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1.0 Purpose and Key Findings

The Washington State Legislature wishes to identify the state role in public transportation and to develop a statewide blueprint for public transportation to guide future state investments. A final report will be developed in three stages over the six-month project duration. Each stage will be documented using a white paper format that provides an opportunity for on-going feedback with the JTC and the Public Transportation Advisory Panel assembled for this effort. The three white papers envisioned for this work include:

- Unmet Public Transportation Capital and Operations Needs
- Assessing the Current State Role in Public Transportation
- Public Transportation Efficiency and Accountability Measures to Inform Future State Investment

1.1 Overview of Task

This white paper presents information on current public transportation programs, funding, and emerging issues in Washington State with the aim of assessing the extent and nature of any unmet needs. Public transportation is defined broadly including transit systems with fixed-route services, demand-response programs, and vanpool services; specialized services provided by private or non-profit organizations, many which operate in communities that are not served by transit systems; and private providers.

For the purposes of this white paper, unmet needs are defined as those services and capital facilities considered justified by individual provider policy boards or agencies which cannot be currently provided. An example would be provision of Sunday public transit service which had been operating to meet community needs. Elimination of Sunday service would mean that a public transportation need is now not being met.

Unmet needs will include those associated with the current recession which has resulted in, for some operators, elimination or reductions to existing service, deferrals of capital investments (such as bus replacements), and stagnant levels of specialized services despite growing demand. These needs can be attributable in large part to recent reductions in local revenues that support operating and capital programs of transit systems, private operators that receive public funding, and human services programs that provide public transportation.

Other unmet needs could include those that have been identified but, for various reasons, have not been addressed such as intermodal or intersystem connections. Still other unmet needs could be associated with deferrals of planned longer-range system expansions designed to meet projected future demand associated with population and employment growth.

In presenting information on unmet needs, this paper also provides a context associated with these needs, specifically how public transportation policies, programs, related market demands and funding sources are evolving. Several key themes are presented for this context including possible variations between urban and rural systems and capital versus operating needs.

1.2 Summary of Task Purpose

To provide direction for other study tasks, information in this white paper was developed to accomplish the following objectives:

- Assess adequacy of current funding levels to meet identified needs.

- Identify unmet public transportation needs and/or try to scale the magnitude of the issues. This will determine how potential funding shortfalls are affecting particular programs relating to public transportation.
- Provide a key building block to begin discussions with the Public Transportation Advisory Panel established for this study and a basis for discussing required state actions and possible future areas of state interest.
- Identify key issues affecting public transportation needs, particularly those that may involve the state (e.g. coordination, relationship between transit planning and regional planning).
- Provide commentary as appropriate on data reporting, for example:
 - What it includes and what it doesn't
 - How various reports, plans, etc. document public transportation needs, if at all
 - How plans and reports are used to make informed decisions at the local and state level, if at all
- Identify key findings that provide information for other white paper development.

1.3 Summary of Major Findings

Sections 2 through 5 of this white paper present background information on current public transportation services, programs and funding as well as direction on emerging trends and needs. Several information sources were used to help assess transit needs. Sources include state plans and reports, Transit Development Plans (TDPs) prepared by transit systems and regional transportation plans. Appendix A provides listing of the information sources. These sources provided broad perspectives on projected costs, revenues and resulting shortfalls. Other sources provided more specific information on potential unmet needs. The intent for using these sources was to gain an understanding of what major factors are contributing to funding shortfalls and/or specific unmet needs.

An important finding of this work is that there is no one source for identifying unmet needs faced by public transportation providers and users. In addition, the definition of “unmet need” is broad and left to the perspective of the entity reporting the issues. In some cases the unmet need had been an anecdotal comment and not recorded in any document. To some extent, this paper has tried to provide some framework around issues without any record. This was done through research and by information provided by WSDOT and the Washington State Transit Association (WSTA).

The information gathered and assessed indicates several key themes. These findings are presented in three major categories and summarized in Table 1-1:

- Current public transportation programs
- Major issues and needs affecting public transportation
- Emerging public transportation trends and projected needs in the future.

The following sections provide additional detail regarding some of the findings above.

Table 1-1. Washington Public Transportation Services—Overview of Major Findings

Summary of current public transportation programs	
1.	31 transit systems operate in 28 of Washington’s 39 counties. The service areas of these systems cover over 87 percent of Washington’s population.
2.	In 2008, over 200 million passenger trips were provided by public transit systems. Most service is provided on fixed routes operating on fixed schedules; however, this also includes special needs, light rail, commuter rail, and passenger-only ferry trips.
3.	Between 2003 and 2008, the number of passengers riding public transit fixed route services increased 35 percent, while the number of service miles increased 12 percent. .
4.	Numerous specialized transportation systems operate in areas without transit services.
5.	While there are numerous small private and non-profit providers serving elderly and disabled people across the state, the 31 public transit systems provide a significant level of service to these transit-dependent populations, with 19.7 million trips provided in 2007 for \$202 million in operating costs. Public transit systems also have taken on additional operational and financial responsibilities for Medicaid trips previously covered by Medicaid in 2009.
6.	In 2010, the private sector provided \$102 million worth of service through contracts with ten transit agencies or with the state government.
Major issues and needs affecting public transportation	
7.	To address a 12.7 percent reduction in sales tax revenues in 2009, agencies have implemented service cuts, fare increases, local tax increases, and deferred capital investments. Further service cuts will be necessary if new revenues are not identified for several systems.
8.	Current funding uncertainty due primarily to instability in sales tax revenue collections, which accounts for 74% of revenues used by transit providers, has hampered transit agencies’ ability to effectively plan for the future.
9.	The current recession has caused transit agencies to spend down reserves and delay capital investments, including vehicle replacement, in order to maintain service levels.
10.	Several transit systems have increased sales tax support in the last three years. Of the 0.9 percent sales tax that could be levied by transit systems, most systems are at a 0.6 percent level or more. Three systems asked voters for local tax increases in 2010, two measures passed, and at least two more will ask for increases in 2011.
11.	Over 60 percent of transit systems have increased fares since mid-2008.
12.	State funding of CTR programs such as the Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers is being replaced by other sources.
13.	Connectivity gaps between transit systems involved limited service for local connections, inter-modal connections and gaps in inter-county and interstate services.
14.	Connectivity improvements were identified as a major need in Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans.
15.	Expanded service periods and education were identified as the top needs for health and human service providers and users.
16.	Better coordination between federal, state and local programs would improve the efficiency of providing specialized services.
17.	Rural communities emphasize a need for transit options and access outside of typical core destinations and employment hours.
18.	Surveyed ferry riders say improved connections at the destination end of the trip would increase ferry use by walk-on passengers.
Emerging public transportation trends and projected needs in the future	
19.	Expected growth in Washington population and employment will place greater pressure on public transportation services. The expected growth of 65+ persons will increase pressure on service access in particular in rural communities.
20.	A key part of the state’s growth management, greenhouse gas and tolling programs is in driving a reduction in SOV vehicles miles travelled. A key strategy for meeting these goals is encouraging the use of alternative modes including public transportation options.
21.	Uncertainty in future federal funding is contributing to the ability of transit and other public transportation providers to plan for meeting current and future needs.
22.	Current transit reporting such as the TDPs and WSDOT Summary of Public Transportation do not identify needs or follow-up relating to performance measure metrics.

1.3.1 Public Transportation Services

A variety of public transportation programs are provided in Washington. While there are 31 transit systems operating in 28 counties, there are also numerous specialized transportation services many operating in locations in the state without transit services. Inter-city services involving transit systems and state-sponsored intercity bus and rail programs provide important links between several parts of the state.

The majority of transit service in the state is bus fixed route operated on fixed schedules. Demand responsive services and vanpool programs are the next two largest programs. While the amount of fixed route service in Washington grew by 12 percent between 2003 and 2008, ridership increased at a more significant rate of growth, 35 percent). Route-deviated services as well as vanpool services also increased during that period to meet increasing ridership needs.

Specialized transportation programs are designed to serve the needs of those who cannot use fixed route service (e.g., elderly, persons with disabilities) or who are located in areas that are not served by transit systems. Most human service transportation programs in Washington are provided by private or non-profit organizations and many are wholly funded through federal and state grant programs. There are variations among specialized transportation providers in terms of the types of passengers they serve. A large majority of these providers serve seniors and persons with disabilities; however, over 30 percent provide services to either the general public or low income persons.

Intercity Public Transportation

Amtrak Cascades service is provided between Eugene, Oregon and Vancouver, B.C. with stations in Seattle and several other locations, in Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Thurston, Pierce, King, Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties. The state, through biennial appropriations and grant funds, provides support for inter-county transit services that connect Island, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties. The routes include the County Connector between Whatcom, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties and Everett Connector between Island, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties. WSDOT recently initiated a unique program involving intercity bus services connecting communities in areas that were losing privately provided services. The program received federal FTA 5311(f) funds but local match is provided through private bus company commitments. The service uses private contractors to operate the bus routes.

State-Sponsored Commuter Programs

The commute trip reduction (CTR) law was enacted by the Legislature in 1991 with the intent to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and lower the consumption of petroleum fuels through employer-based programs that encourage the use of alternatives to driving alone. Recent legislative changes transformed CTR from a program with a top-down mandate to one that is locally-driven and coordinated with local and regional planning requirements.

In 2003, the Washington State Legislature created a vanpool grant program to increase vanpooling by commuters. WSDOT and transit agencies created the Vanpool Investment Program to guide vanpool program development and manage vanpool grants.

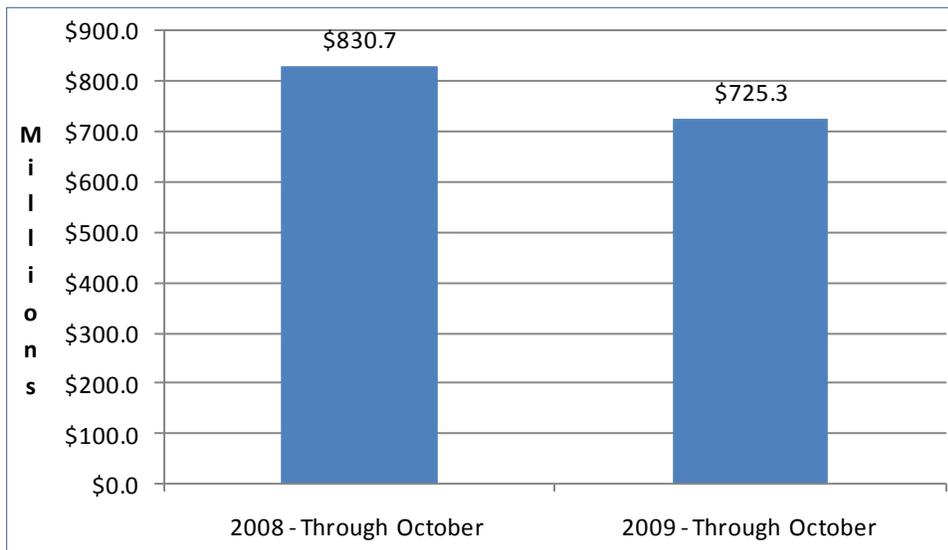
1.3.2 Current Issues and Needs Affecting Public Transportation

This section presents information on current issues and needs relating to public transportation, including current financial positions of transit systems.

Current financial conditions

The trends in public transportation funding indicate a high level of uncertainty that is affecting planning and programming of public transportation. This is particularly the case for local sales tax revenues which make up the largest share of total funding for transit systems. Between January and October of 2008, \$830.7 million in sales tax revenue was generated for transit systems (see Figure 1-1). However, for the comparable period in 2009, the total was \$725.3 million or a 12.7 percent revenue decline. Figure 1-1 below indicates a decline in sales tax receipts of over \$105 million between 2008 and 2009. Tax collections in 2009 also include the sales tax increase of 0.5 percent by Sound Transit from April through October. Transit agencies have addressed these revenue shortfalls with service cuts, fare increases, local tax increases and/or deferred capital investments.

Figure 1-1. Local Annual Sales Tax Funding for Transit—2008 and 2009



In a survey conducted by WSTA in 2009, the transit agencies indicated that shortfalls in local sales tax funding will have implications regarding service levels and capital programs. Of 25 systems responding to a WSTA survey, 9 indicated cuts in service levels are under consideration and 11 indicated that they will have to defer capital items due to decreased levels of local sales tax revenues for 2010 and 2011. Since this survey, additional public transit systems have proposed service cuts and at least two are likely to ask voters for local sales and use tax increases in 2011.

Connectivity

Connectivity improvements involve transit systems as well as specialized transportation services. Using information provided by WSTA, both current and potential future gaps were identified regarding connectivity between transit systems. Public transit systems provide coordination and connections to a) connect communities within their system boundaries; b) connect to and through

other transit systems; and c) to connect to partners such as the state ferry system, Amtrak and non-profit operators. However, there are still some gaps in the connections.

Eight regions in Washington identified gaps such as lack of connections between counties with transit service, no inter-county service to major transportation centers after certain hours, and a need for high-occupancy vehicle lanes for express bus service. Improving system connectivity also was identified as a major need in the Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans. Also, public surveys conducted for the Washington State Ferry's in 2010 indicated potential needs associated with connections to local transit services at ferry terminals.

Private sector support

Over time, the private sector has assumed some roles in the provision of publicly operated transit services. Currently 10 transit systems use private contractors to provide \$102 million in service and maintenance functions. In some cases, bus services provided directly by employers, such as Microsoft, is filling a role that was not being provided by the transit system. Private sector involvement in the current public transportation system is a direct result of filling an existing unmet need.

Specialized transportation services

Specialized transportation services are provided by public transit systems, non-profit organizations, and private operators under contract to public agencies. For public transit systems, specialized services incur a much higher cost per rider than fixed-route service. But, demand for specialized services provided by public transit systems is likely to grow.

For private, non-profit organizations, a key challenge related to supporting operations of special transportation, is the lack of ongoing and reliable funding. While the state-managed Public Transportation Grant program provides an important lifeline for these services, there is no assurance of continued state support. Given the prolonged nature of the economic recession and the uncertainty regarding the next re-authorization of federal transportation programs, there is significant uncertainty related to future availability of state and federal funding support, as well as social program funding.

In addition to these funding challenges, the Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans developed by Regional Transportation Planning Organizations and Metropolitan Planning Organizations provide further information on unmet needs. Major items identified in the Plans include the need for better public information and education regarding these services, the need for expanded service hours, and better system connectivity.

1.3.3 Emerging Trends—Key Issues and Unmet Transit Needs

Several trends have been identified that will impact providers and the overall provision of public transportation in the future. While these trends have not resulted in specific unmet needs at this point in time, they can be expected to impact the overall state transportation system of the future.

Demographic trends

Population growth and the aging population of Washington will place higher demands on public transportation. Public transportation agencies serve areas where approximately 85 percent of Washington's population lives. Keeping pace with this growth in population would require, at the minimum, a similar growth in transit operations and capital facilities.

Also of significance is that large concentrations of aging population are projected for counties that do not currently have transit systems. In 2000, no county in Washington had the ages of 65 and over as the dominant age group. However, by 2030, it is projected that 65 and over will be the dominant age group in 12 counties, all located in predominantly rural areas.

Environmental policies

A strategy in the Draft Washington Transportation Plan calls for requiring all local transportation plans to include a non-motorized element, a Green House Gas (GHG) reduction strategy component, and a reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) strategy component. Discussions thus far have placed heavy reliance on the provision of public transportation and other non-motorized forms of travel to achieve these objectives.

GHG and VMT reduction strategies will likely translate into shifts from auto to alternative mode such as transit. While transit systems could potentially accommodate these modal shifts, providing the capacity, in terms of both operations and capital, would require higher funding levels than currently offered. With current funding levels affecting the ability to provide even the maintenance of current service levels, any future expansion would be challenging.

Transportation pricing trends

Potential new tolling facilities on major Washington highway corridors are being proposed to address overall transportation funding shortfalls. This could result in higher demand for transit. However, it is unclear how tolling revenue, beyond capital construction, might be used to manage and support overall transit operations within these corridors.

1.3.4 Transit Reporting

There are a variety of plans, reports and guidelines that provide a forum for identifying and assessing public transportation needs and support local and state planning and decision-making. Large urban transit agencies currently report to the FTA through the National Transit Database (NTD) on key metrics. The state and individual transit providers also produce other plans such as the Transit Development Plans (TDP's) and individual agency Annual Reports. A Summary Report on Public Transportation produced by WSDOT presents comprehensive information on transit from the information provided. However, these reports do not currently identify unmet needs relating to public transportation.

While the state does not require performance measures for TDP preparation some agencies reference the measures they use to manage their systems. The Summary Report on Public Transportation prepared by WSDOT includes statewide as well as operator-specific information, including performance indicators. However, follow-up for this information (e.g. potential actions to address low performance areas) provided by either the transit operator or WSDOT is not currently identified. Also, reporting by transit systems could be organized in a manner that allows consolidation as much as possible versus the more separated and multiple-reporting process that is currently done.

These reports are primarily focused on the state of transit systems in Washington, including their size, numbers of passengers carried, and operating and capital costs. They focus on what the financially constrained plans are for the future. However, there is not a systematic way to identify the unmet needs of these transit systems nor, with the exception of FTA and Paratransit/Special Needs, is the information used for decision-making purposes.

2.0 Overview of Current Public Transportation Services, Programs and Unmet Needs

This section provides an overview of various public transportation services and programs in Washington State. These services include transit systems now operating in 28 counties, specialized transportation programs and inter-city services some of which are supported through state and federal funding.

Within the sections describing public transportation services, two major items are provided: a profile of the services provided and information on unmet needs. This section also includes information on the private sector's role in public transportation, emerging trends that could affect meeting future public transportation needs, and observations on current transit reporting.

2.1 Transit Systems

2.1.1 Current Transit Services

Currently 31 (effective August 2010), public transit systems provide service in 28 of the 39 counties in Washington State. Locations of the transit systems are shown in Figure 2-1. Most systems operate within a single county while three: Link Transit (Chelan and Douglas Counties) Ben Franklin Transit (Benton and Franklin Counties), and Sound Transit (King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties) each serve multiple counties. As indicated in Table 2-1, most transit systems are provided through a Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA) form of governance, of which there are 22, and city systems, which includes five operators.

While several municipal systems have been providing transit service for decades, the PTBA's in Washington State were initially authorized by state legislation in the 1975. Over time, several transit systems involving various types of governing authorities have been established. The most recent formations and voter-approved tax support involved the city of Selah (2006) and the city of Union Gap (2007). Also, as reported in the 2007 Summary of Public Transportation Report, WSDOT Public Transportation Division personnel provided technical assistance to several Eastern Washington communities regarding potential new/expanded public transportation services. These communities include Kittitas County (Ellensburg), Okanagan County, Yakima County, and Stevens County.

The state's transit systems offer a variety of services that reflect market needs within their service areas. Table 2-2 provides an overview of various transit services provided in 2008 expressed in terms of revenue vehicle miles¹. Commuter rail and light rail services are provided entirely by Sound Transit.

¹ The information for passenger-only ferry service is reported in revenue vessel miles.

Figure 2-1. Transit Agency Locations

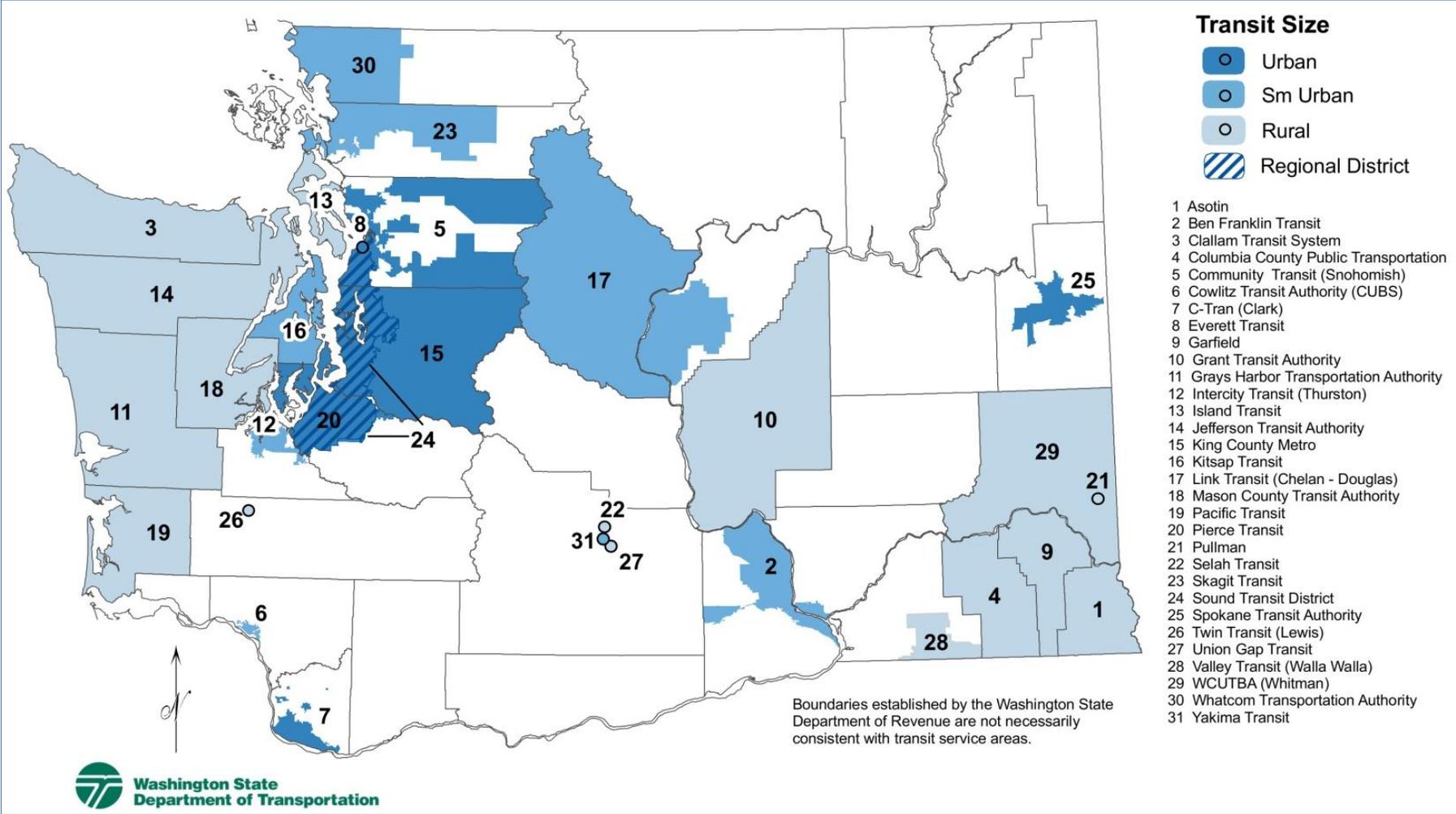


Table 2-1. Public Transportation Systems by Type of Authority

Type of Transit Authority	Transit Systems
Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA)	Asotin County
	Ben Franklin Transit
	Clallam Transit System
	C-TRAN (Clark County)
	Community Transit (Snohomish County)
	Cowlitz Transit Authority
	Grant Transit
	Intercity Transit (Thurston County)
	Island Transit
	Jefferson Transit
	Kitsap Transit
	Link Transit (Chelan and Douglas Counties)
	Mason County Transportation Authority
	Pacific Transit
	Pierce Transit
	Skagit Transit
	Spokane Transit Authority
	Twin Transit (Lewis County)
Valley Transit (Walla Walla)	
Whatcom Transportation Authority	
Unincorporated PTBA	Garfield County Public Transportation
	Whitman County Public Transportation
City	Everett Transit
	Pullman Transit
	Selah Transit
	Union Gap Transit
	Yakima Transit
County Transportation Authority	Columbia County Public Transportation
	Grays Harbor Transportation Authority
	King County Metro Transit
Regional Transit Authority	Sound Transit

Table 2-2. Types of Transit Services and Related Annual (2008) Revenue Vehicle Miles

Service Type	Annual (2008) Revenue Vehicle Miles
Fixed Route	90,657,143
Vanpool	34,623,062
Demand Response	30,042,915
Route Deviated	2,482,781
Commuter Rail	1,039,433
Light Rail	150,712
Passenger Ferry	48,998
Total	150,055,875

As indicated by the table, most public transit services involves fixed routes operated on fixed schedules followed by relatively similar levels of service for demand response and vanpool programs. Route-deviated service involves a hybrid of fixed route service with designated time points and deviations to allow access to other locations on an on-demand basis. This type of service is gaining popularity since it provides access to locations that are not efficiently served by traditional fixed route service. Mason Transit’s service is entirely route deviated. A transit system is not required to provide complementary paratransit services to the routed service if those services are deviated for individuals with disabilities. This allows a transit system to maximize their resources, particularly in rural communities.

2.1.2 Recent Trends—Transit Service Supply and Demand

Figure 2-2 and Figure 2-3 show growth trends for these types of transit service expressed in terms of service supply (as measured in annual revenue vehicle miles) and demand for service (as measured in annual passenger trips). The 2003 through 2008 period was chosen since it reflects finances for transit systems following elimination of MVET funds (effective 2000); and the subsequent local sales tax increases approved by voters for several transit systems.

Figure 2-2. Growth in Transit Service Miles—2003 to 2008

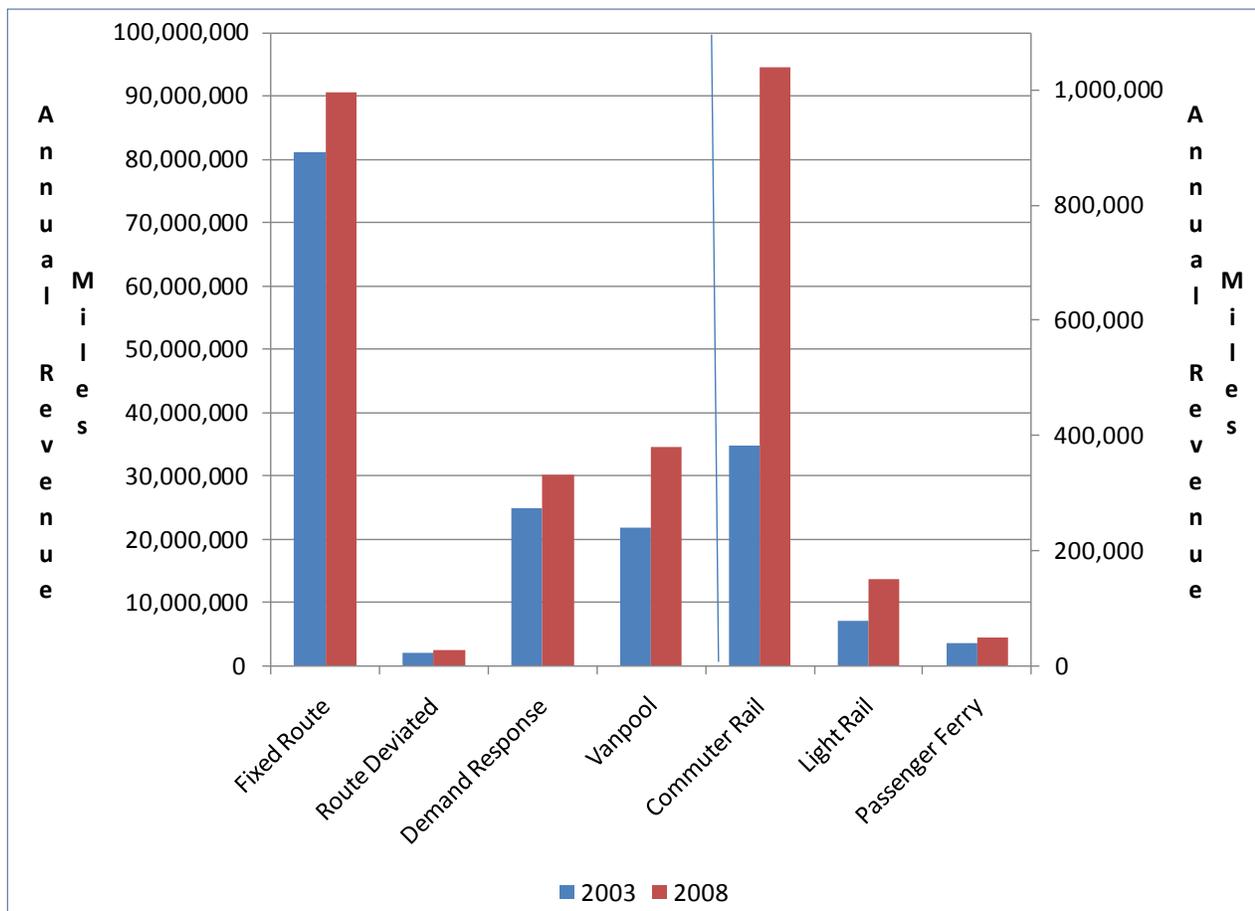
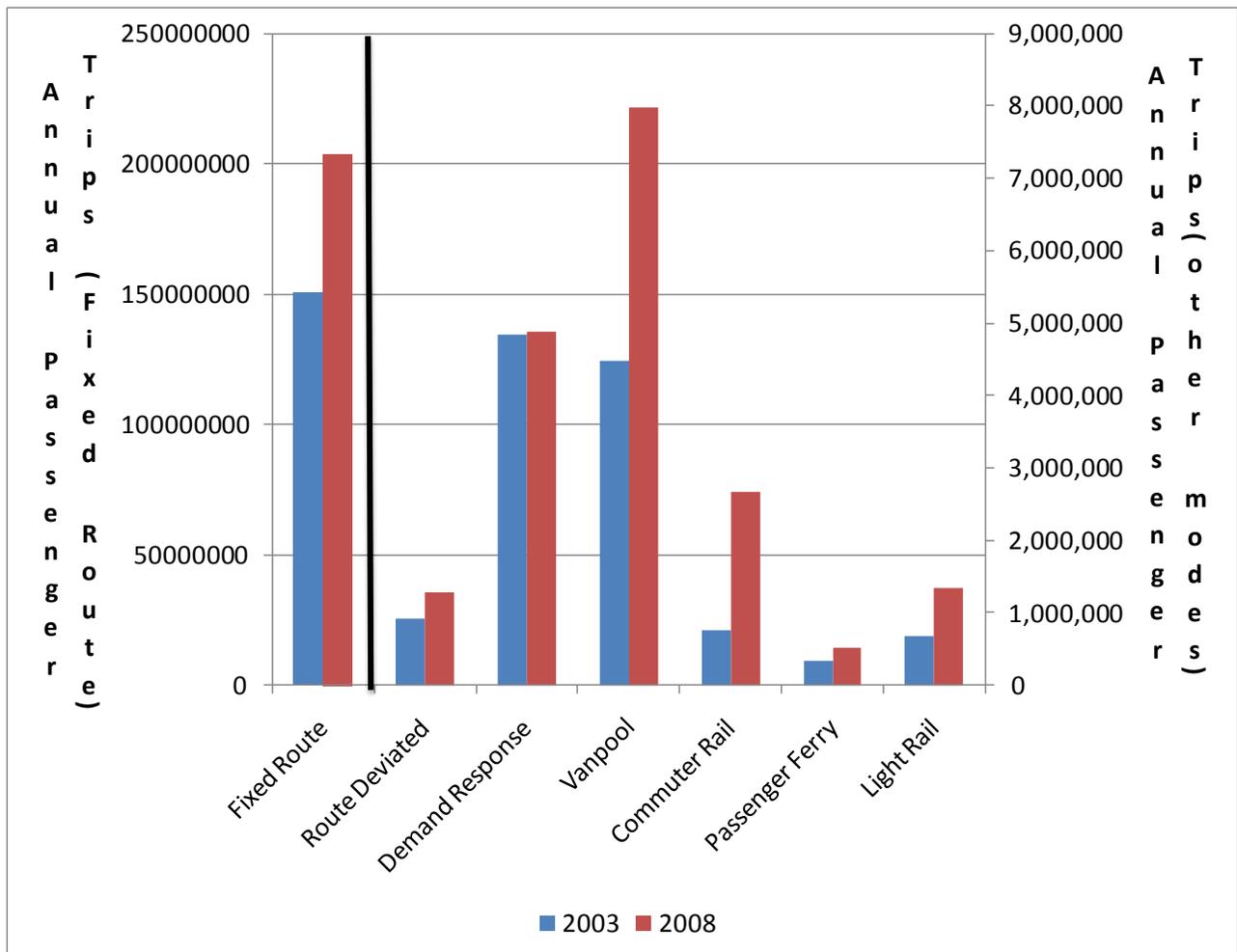


Figure 2-3. Growth in Transit Ridership (2003 to 2008)



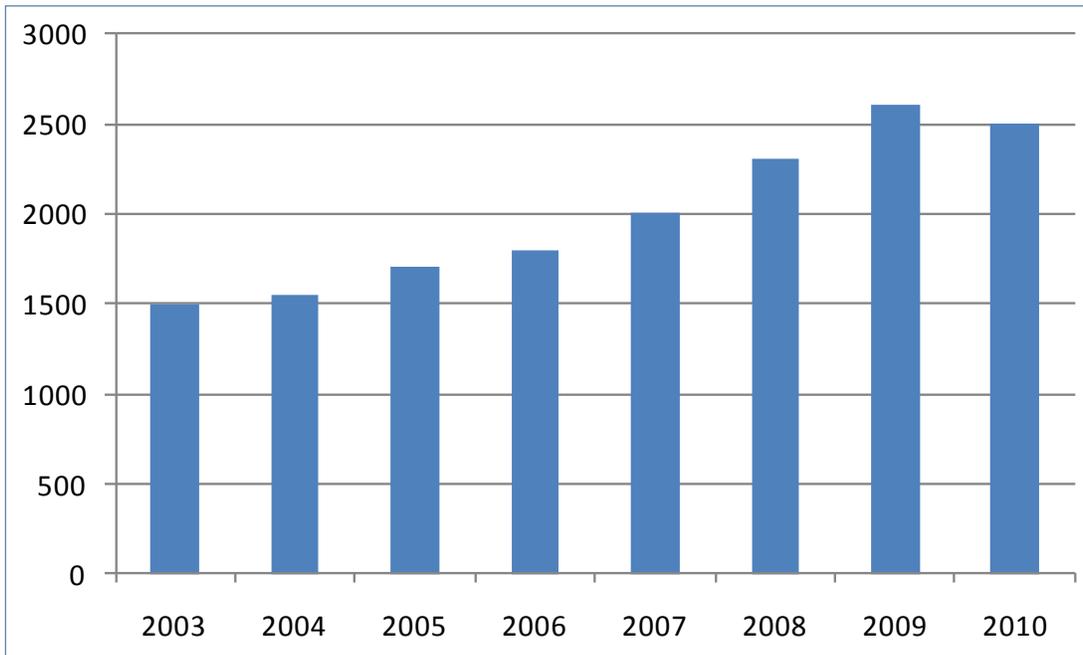
While supply for fixed route service grew by 12 percent between 2003 and 2008, demand for this service saw a more significant rate of growth (35 percent). Route-deviated demand also grew significantly as did the vanpool program. While commuter rail supply over doubled in volume between 2003 and 2008, passenger demand increased at a higher rate, from about 0.7 million trips in 2003 to over 2.7 million trips in 2008.

Growth in vanpool miles and ridership has resulted in this mode surpassing demand-responsive as the second largest transit service in terms of both revenue miles and passengers. As indicated by Figure 2-4, vanpools operating in the state increased dramatically between 2003 and 2008 to its highest levels. Gas prices in 2008 were at an all time high which attributed to a significant demand for vanpooling. Many transit agencies throughout the state at that time had to generate waiting lists for vans.

However, immediately following this robust growth period, the state experienced an economic downturn which negatively impacted the job market and vanpooling - since there is a direct correlation between the two. In 2009, unemployment across the state rose to 8 percent from 4 percent in the previous year. Fewer jobs and lay-offs mean fewer commuters and additionally,

some employers have reduced employee transportation-related benefits including vanpool fare subsidies.

Figure 2-4. Operating Vanpools in Washington State (2003 to 2010)



2.1.3 Current Transit Connectivity

The focus of service provided by transit systems is on meeting needs within their respective service areas. However, the systems also recognize the importance of connections between their service and other public transportation systems.

Connections provided by transit systems include:

- Adjacent transit systems with connections at transit centers or park-and-ride facilities to allow convenient transfers
- Regional transit systems with local bus systems providing feeder access
- Inter-County and Interstate services including Amtrak, State Ferry service, private bus routes, Travel Washington bus routes
- Services provided by non-profit organizations

As part of this study, WSTA provided information on current connections for eight regions in Washington State. The following sections provide a sampling of major inter-system transit connections in these regions.

South Puget Sound

Intercity Transit (Thurston County) operates 16 roundtrips on weekdays between Olympia and Pierce County serving Lakewood Station, the SR512 park-and-ride facility, downtown Tacoma and the Tacoma Dome Station. Pierce Transit (PT) provides 8 peak period, weekday roundtrips between Pierce County and Thurston County. Sound Transit connections to Intercity Transit service to Olympia are available from Tacoma Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail South Line and eight ST Express routes. Mason Transit connects to Intercity Transit and Grays Harbor Transit at

the Olympia Transit Center. Greyhound is co-located with Pierce Transit at the Tacoma Dome Station.

Olympic Peninsula

Clallam Transit connects with Jefferson Transit at Sequim and at Forks. The Forks connection is part of the Olympic Peninsula Connector service provided by Jefferson Transit and connects with Grays Harbor Transit at Amanda Park. The Sequim connection allows connection to the Washington State Ferry service in Port Townsend. Jefferson Transit operates service across the Hood Canal Bridge to connect with Kitsap Transit at Poulsbo. Kitsap Transit makes a direct connection with Mason Transit eight times each weekday at the multi-modal Bremerton Transportation Center.

North Puget Sound

Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) connects with Skagit Transit and Island Transit in Mt. Vernon at Skagit Station. WTA provides service to Greyhound, Amtrak and the Alaska Ferry in Bellingham and the Lummi Island ferry (operated by Whatcom County). Ten weekday roundtrips are provided by Skagit Transit to Everett Station. This service connects to Sound Transit, Everett Transit and Community Transit. Everett Transit connects with Island Transit at Everett Station and continues the trips of Island Transit customers at Mukilteo Ferry. Community Transit and Everett Transit connect at Everett Station, downtown Everett, along Swift BRT corridor, in Marysville, at Mukilteo Ferry Terminal and at Mariner park-and-ride. Connections by Sound Transit to Community Transit local services are available via Sounder commuter rail North Line and six ST Express bus routes.

Central Puget Sound

King County Metro Connections with Pierce Transit at: *Federal Way Transit Center, Auburn Station* (funded by partnership of Metro, PT, City of Auburn). King County Metro connections with State Ferries at *Colman Dock*: Routes 16, 66, 99, and multiple others in downtown Seattle—*Fauntleroy*: Routes 54, 116, 118, 119, *Vashon*: Routes 118, 119, *Tahlequah*: Route 118. Pierce Transit connections with Kitsap Transit occur at the Purdy Park and Ride in Gig Harbor. Community Transit/King County Metro connect in downtown Seattle and University District (weekdays), Shoreline, Bothell and Mountlake Terrace. Sound Transit connections to King County Metro local service are available from Central Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail North and South Lines and twenty-three (i.e. all but one) ST Express routes.

Southwest Washington

C-TRAN (Clark County) connects with rural transportation service at the Salmon Creek Park & Ride. C-TRAN provides connections to the Amtrak and Greyhound stations in downtown Portland seven days a week. C-TRAN provides connections with Skamania County Transit Service at the Fisher's Landing Transit Center with connections to Salmon Creek Park-and- Ride and CAP.

Eastern Washington

Spokane Transit Authority (STA) connects to Wheatland Express (intercity private bus service) two times a day, seven days a week at the Spokane International Airport. STA connects with the Travel Washington Gold Line's two daily round trips at the Spokane Intermodal Center and Spokane International Airport. STA connects to KALTRAN (Kalispel Tribe) four times a day.

Southeast Washington

Ben Franklin Transit provides a connection with Yakima County via the People for People's Yakima-Prosser connector in Prosser. BFT connects with the Travel Washington Grape Line at the BFT Pasco Transfer Center. Columbia County Transit provides service from Dayton, Starbuck, Prescott and Wattsburg to the Walla Walla Transit Center which is also served by Valley Transit.

North Central Washington

Link Transit (Chelan/Douglas Counties) connects to rural weekly service at the Chelan Transit terminal and Columbia Station Intermodal Center in Wenatchee. The Apple Line has daily transfer opportunities with Link Transit in Omak, Okanogan and Pateros. Grant Transit can connect to Okanogan County Transit's weekly service at the Columbia Station Intermodal Center in Wenatchee. Okanogan County Transit provides one weekly trip to the Chelan and Wenatchee areas. Grant Transit connects to the People for People service in Yakima County in Moses Lake and Warden.

2.1.4 Unmet Needs—Transit Systems

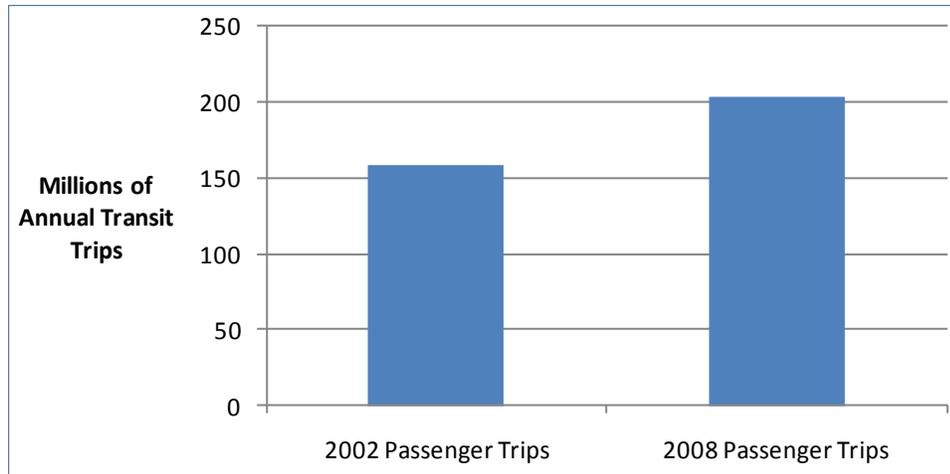
The review of Transit Development Plans submitted to WSDOT Public Transportation as well as information provided by the Washington State Transit Association (WSTA), present insights on transit system needs. A major part of these needs is associated with economic conditions since 2008 at both the state and national levels. In 2009, WSTA provided an overview of how the recent economic downturn has affected transit revenues. The following sections present highlights of this overview.

Reduced Levels of Local Sales Tax Support

Overall, after accounting for King County's increased tax rate (which was increased in 2006), sales tax revenues fell over 2.3 percent in 2008. Into 2009, this decline increased and continued with sales tax revenues decreasing another 12.7 percent as compared to 2008. With the exception of three systems (Skagit Transit, Valley Transit, and Sound Transit) that passed increased sales tax rates, every transit system in the State of Washington, saw a decline in sales tax revenue in the first 8 months of 2009. Many systems have seen double-digit decreases in 2009 with the statewide averages decrease exceeding 12.5 percent. This is discussed in greater detail in section 3.7 Recent Transit Funding History.

Transit systems across the state are, at best, maintaining existing service levels. Most are doing this by implementing cost cutting measures, drawing down reserve levels, by deferring capital projects (including bus replacements), increasing fares or cutting service. Additional actions will be necessary to address revenue shortfalls if sales tax receipts do not improve. Four systems reduced service in 2009 and eight systems plan reductions in 2010. Almost every system in the state will face reductions in the 2011 to 2014 time frame if additional revenue is not found.

The service reductions occurred even though transit systems had experienced record ridership levels and demands for expanded service through 2008. After passage of I-695 in 1999 transit ridership had declined to about 158.7 million annual trips in 2002. But by 2008, ridership grew by 19 percent since 2002 due to a combination of factors such as added service (resulting from increased sales tax support), a growing state economy, and higher gas prices. The growth is shown in Figure 2-5. Between 2007 and 2008 alone, ridership on fixed route services grew by 15 percent.

Figure 2-5. Change in Fixed Route Transit Ridership: 2002 to 2008

Over 60 percent of the transit systems in Washington have increased fares since mid-2008. Four systems are planning an increase over the next 12 months and two systems are considering a second increase. On average, fares make up a little over 10 percent of revenues for transit systems statewide although this varies among providers and types of transit services. Fares for fixed route systems covered 20 percent of operating costs, ranging from 0 percent for Selah Transit and Island Transit (since these systems are fare-free) to 61.3 percent for Pullman Transit. The relatively high level of costs that are covered by Pullman Transit's passenger fares is due in part to a major reduction in bus service levels during summers when demand from the Washington State University community decreases. For more typical fixed route systems, the highest farebox recovery is by King County Metro and Sound Transit (mix of bus and rail) at 23 percent. Fares for small urban demand-response systems covered about 3 percent of operating costs, ranging from 0 percent for Island Transit to 6.8 percent for Yakima Transit. A substantial increase in fares would not fully address the need for additional revenue and would likely have a negative impact on ridership, particularly the transit dependent.

In response to increased demand, a number of systems expanded service in 2008, some of which was associated with rapid increases in gas prices or due to planned expansion funded by earlier sales tax increases. Most systems who maintained service levels in 2009 did so by drawing down reserves while some systems have already reduced or are planning to reduce service. The only systems that have been expanding are those that recently passed sales tax measures however even these systems are being affected by the prolonged recession and are concerned about the 2010 to 2014 time period.

Most transit systems have deferred capital projects or are undertaking no new capital projects without grant funding. The most common one is deferral of replacement vehicles that are at or beyond their recommended service life. Instead transit systems have been extending the service life of vehicles which is at best a short-term answer. Delaying replacing older vehicles means higher emissions, greater energy use and higher operating costs. The deferral of transit facility projects such as park-and-ride facilities, transit centers, or operations and maintenance facility limits the ability of many systems to increase service or respond to increased demand.

Gaps in Transit Service Connections

While extensive inter-system service connections are currently provided by transit systems, there are gaps that keep these connections from being more effective. Based on information provided by WSTA, several major categories of service connection gaps are identified in Table 2-3².

Additional information on connection gaps is presented in Appendix B.

The most dominant type of service gap identified involves limited service availability by one or more of the connecting systems. An equal number of instances (10 each) were identified for local service connections as well as those involving connections to inter-county and interstate public transportation. For example, in Northwest Washington, Jefferson Transit and Kitsap provide connecting services but this is limited to four roundtrips on weekdays, two on Saturdays, and none during midday's, weekends, and holidays. Similar types of gaps were identified for local connections to inter-county and interstate public transportation services. For example, due to service cuts, the Whatcom Transportation Authority will no longer provide Sunday service to Amtrak and Greyhound.

Table 2-3. Gaps in Service Connections (WSTA, September 2010)

Agencies Affected by Gaps	Service Gaps
Limited Service Availability—Connections between Local Services (10)*	
Mason Transit / Intercity Transit	Midday service very limited; no Sunday service
Pierce Transit / Mason Transit	Connections are infrequent and only occur on weekdays
Clallam Transit / Jefferson Transit	Limited service is provided to Sequim by Jefferson Transit. Service is very limited. No Sunday service is provided.
Jefferson Transit / Kitsap Transit	Service is very limited (4 roundtrips on weekdays; 2 on Saturdays). No connections during midday, weekdays, Sundays.
Jefferson Transit / Mason Transit	Limited Saturday service; no Sunday service
Kitsap Transit / Mason Transit	Last weekday trip leaves Bremerton at 6:35 p.m. Saturday service is limited; no Sunday service
Island Transit / Skagit Transit	No Sunday service and limited Saturday service
Everett Transit / Skagit Transit	No weekend service
Community Transit / Skagit Transit	No weekend service.
Community Transit with Everett Transit, King County Metro, Sound Transit, Amtrak-Greyhound, Ferry Service	No Community Transit service on Sundays or major holidays
Limited Service Availability—Local and Inter-County / Interstate Connections (10)*	
Whatcom Transportation / Greyhound-Amtrak	Effective September 19, 2010, no Sunday service to Greyhound/Amtrak.
Skagit Transit / Ferry Service	Limited service between Skagit Station and connecting service to ferry terminal (four weekday trips, no weekend service)
Ferry Service / King County Metro	Some midday and evening connections between transit and ferries are difficult due to less frequent and irregular service
Apple Line / Okanagan County	Service is limited
Apple Line / Grant Transit	Connections infrequent; only on weekdays
Grant Transit / People for People	Limited connections in Moses Lake and Warden with People for People route serving to Yakima County.

² Provided by WSTA to PB (September 13, 2010)

Agencies Affected by Gaps	Service Gaps
CTran / Skamania County	Skamania Transit does not provide service on weekends; limited midday service.
Link Transit / Okanagan County	Rural service in Okanagan County 1 day per week; requires a request in advance
Link Transit / Grant Transit	Connections are one round trip per day and only occur on Weekdays
CTran and Intercity/Mason/Grays Harbor/Twin/Pierce Transits	Connections to Intercity Transit in Tumwater. Service does not operate on weekends and has limited weekday service
Scheduling Gaps (5)*	
Intercity Transit / Pierce Transit / KC Metro	Weekend service on Intercity Transit is too late for connections to Sea-Tac Airport service
Intercity Transit / Amtrak	Weekend service begins too late for some Amtrak connections; expansion of Amtrak service in corridor may require additional service
Spokane Transit / Amtrak-Greyhound	STA service ends too early to connect to Amtrak service which arrives and departs after 1:00 AM
Grant Transit / Amtrak-Greyhound	Timing of connections in Ephrata (Amtrak) and Moses Lake (Greyhound)
Link Transit / Amtrak-Northwest Trailways	Making timely connections in Wenatchee
Local Bus Access to Regional and Inter-City Facilities (5)*	
King County Metro / Sound Transit	Lack of ticket vending machines at Federal Way Transit Center impedes convenient regional transfers.
King County Metro / Sound Transit	Limited bus layover facilities at some LRT stations presents challenges for expanding bus service (e.g. to Tukwila Int'l Blvd Station)
King County Metro / Sound Transit	No all-day service to Tukwila Sounder Station due to limited availability of private access road to Renton
Pierce Transit / Sound Transit	Increased demand expected for transfers bus to Sounder rail system in Pierce County.
CTran/ Amtrak-Greyhound	There is no service to the Vancouver Amtrak Station.
Added Capacity Needed for Existing Inter-County/Interstate Service (3)*	
Whatcom Transportation / Skagit Transit	Demand warrants two more weekday round trips for current inter-county bus route.
Whatcom Transportation / Island Transit	Demand warrants two more weekday round trips. Service connections to Whidbey and Camano Islands funded through state grant and may not be sustainable in the future.
King County Metro / Pierce Transit	Growth in inter-county demand (e.g. Federal Way / NE Tacoma) could require higher levels of service on local bus routes.
Intercity Transit / Twin Transit	Affects I-5 corridor connecting Thurston and Lewis Counties
Spokane Transit / Citylink (Kootenai County, ID)	Transit service gap between Liberty Lake, WA and Post Falls, ID.
New Transit Connections along Regional Corridors (1)*	
Sound Transit	Potential new HCT connections to Everett, Redmond, Pierce County, and potentially Thurston County. Not funded
Gaps in HOV Lane Availability (1)*	
Sound Transit / Pierce Transit / King County Metro / Community Transit	Several sections of the regional HOV system are currently incomplete.
Contingency for Major Bridge Failure (1)*	
Kitsap Transit / Jefferson Transit	Enhance connections between Kitsap County and Jefferson County in the event of a prolonged closure of the Hood Canal Bridge.

*Type of service gap (how often identified)

The second dominant types of service gaps are scheduling coordination and local access to regional transit facilities. Most of the scheduling gaps involve local access to Amtrak or intercity bus stations. Local bus access to regional facilities were mostly identified in the central Puget Sound region but it was also noted in Southwest Washington where local bus access is not currently provided to the Amtrak station in Vancouver.

While inter-county connections are provided, several transit systems identified the need for capacity expansion. Examples include added weekday trips for Whatcom/Skagit and Whatcom/Island connections. The need for new regional connections to fill current gaps was also identified. Examples included connections between Thurston and Lewis Counties as well as between Spokane Transit (Eastern Washington) and Citylink in Kootenai County, Idaho.

Inter-system connections are complemented by high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes along major state highways. However, as identified in the WSTA information, several sections of the HOV system are incomplete, thereby compromising the effectiveness of express bus service along affected corridors.

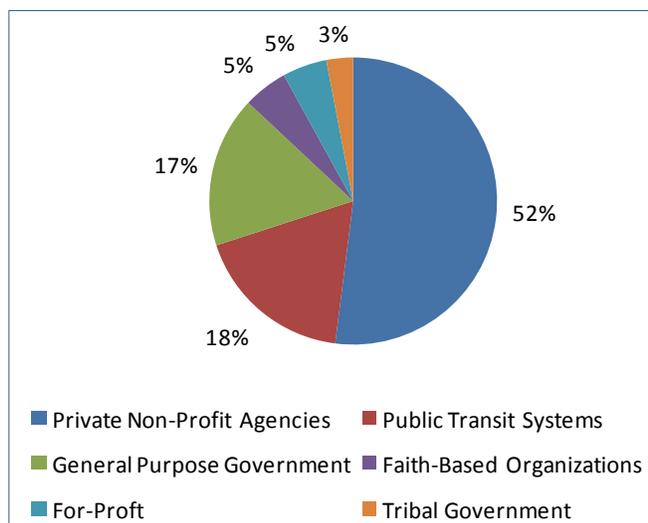
2.2 Specialized Transportation Programs

Specialized paratransit programs are designed to serve the needs of those who cannot use public fixed route service (e.g., elderly, persons with disabilities) or who are located in areas that are not served by transit systems. Transit systems provide specialized services through demand responsive programs. These programs include those required by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA requires that complementary ADA services must be provided within a one-quarter mile of fixed route service for those who cannot functionally use fixed-route service. The growing and aging population in Washington State will likely place even more pressure on paratransit services. More seniors and people with disabilities will require specialized public transportation.

As indicated on Figure 2-6, most specialized transportation programs in Washington State are provided by organizations other than transit agencies. Over 50 percent of the providers are private non-profit organizations.

Faith-based and for profit groups and tribal governments make up 5 percent or less of total providers. With the direct federal funding for tribal transit programs, Washington tribes are providing more services to their members.

Figure 2-6. Number of Specialized Transportation Providers by Organization/Agency Types



2.2.1 Transit Agency Providers

Transit agencies and general-purpose government are the next dominant type of provider at about 18 percent of total providers. Public transit systems do provide substantial special needs transportation on buses (fixed route and route deviated) and on demand response service. These trips and the demand for additional service, including trips to adult day health care centers

formerly covered by Medicaid and/or trips for those eligible under the ADA, have been increasing. However, these increases have occurred without corresponding funding to adequately compensate for added trips. This represents a significant shift from a state and federal role to public transit systems and non-profit providers.

Of the over approximately 200 million fixed-route trips in 2008, a portion of these riders qualified as special needs (elderly, disabled, children and people with low incomes). In addition, there were over 4.9 million door-to-door paratransit trips for those eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Public transit systems also have taken on additional operational and financial responsibilities for Medicaid trips including a shift of all Adult Day Health Center trips previously covered by Medicaid in 2009.

For transit agencies, these 4.9 million trips in 2008 required substantial shares of each agencies total operating budget. These shares range between 8 percent for Community Transit to 100 percent for Garfield Transit. Table 2-4 provides 2008 operating information for specialized services by transit systems³.

Specialized transportation at transit agencies consumes a disproportionately high portion of operating budgets relative to ridership and farebox recovery. Current federal regulations require a discounted fare be offered to these passengers. Disproportionate growth in paratransit demand will put pressure on resources now devoted to fixed route and other services. The high cost of service is due in part to ADA requirements.

2.2.2 Profile of Special Needs Transportation Providers

A recently completed report—the Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study⁴—provided a summary profile of special needs transportation services in Washington State. This profile was based on a review of the approximately 600 organizations and agencies that provide some level of special needs transportation in the state. The types of organization vary and can include public agencies, community-based groups, human service programs, employers, and faith-based groups.

The major observations from the Study included the following:

- While non-profit organizations are the dominant group providing special needs transportation, many transit systems also serve special needs markets and the general public, especially in rural areas.
- Most specialized public transportation is provided to seniors and persons with disabilities. The minimum age to qualify as a “senior” varies among the providers, ranging from 55 to 75 years old.

³ 2007 Summary of Public Transportation (WSDOT)

⁴ Special Needs Transportation Coordination Study - Final Report (State of Washington Joint Transportation Committee, January 2009)

Table 2-4. Demand Response Service Information

	Farebox Revenues	Passenger Trips	Operating Expenses
Systems Serving Urbanized Areas			
C-TRAN	266,498	246,684	\$8,799,279
Community Transit	274,305	214,568	\$8,401,128
Everett Transit	41,211	111,684	\$3,894,273
King County Metro Transit	831,048	1,145,480	\$52,752,281
Pierce Transit	337,001	451,646	\$17,637,236
Sound Transit	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spokane Transit Authority	211,042	516,516	\$11,961,832
Subtotal Urbanized Areas	1,961,105	2,686,578	103,446,029
Systems Serving Small Urban Areas			
Ben Franklin	391,739	668,991	\$14,946,173
Cowlitz Transit Authority	5,602	46,895	\$789,075
Intercity Transit	124,936	130,849	\$5,134,911
Kitsap Transit	323,069	428,537	\$9,548,676
Link Transit	51,079	69,549	\$2,246,707
Selah Transit	N/A	4,207	\$44,286
Skagit Transit	10,968	58,740	\$2,476,676
Whatcom Transportation Authority	144,926	184,200	\$5,851,304
Yakima Transit	172,055	96,160	\$1,487,657
Subtotal Small Urban Areas	1,224,374	1,688,128	42,525,465
Systems Serving Rural Areas			
Asotin County Transit	6,297	10,418	\$147,462
Clallam Transit System	149,361	61,634	\$1,328,155
Columbia County Public Transportation	63,131	41,630	\$654,426
Garfield County Public Transportation	4,697	12,085	\$122,600
Grant Transit Authority	36,634	30,212	\$1,207,864
Grays Harbor Transportation Authority	72,299	144,597	\$2,734,928
Island Transit	N/A	41,036	\$769,154
Jefferson Transit Authority	83,925	20,914	\$737,282
Mason County Transportation Authority	N/A	58,581	\$1,894,994
Pacific Transit	15,544	15,196	\$522,016
Pullman Transit	7,058	18,255	\$635,883
Twin Transit	4,029	12,050	\$170,116
Union Gap	N/A	2,437	\$33,032
Valley Transit	7,321	46,098	\$1,038,809
Subtotal Rural Areas	450,296	515,143	11,996,721
TOTAL ALL SYSTEMS	3,635,775	4,889,849	157,968,215

Source: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Publications/Manuals/PTSummary.htm>

- Some services for persons with disabilities are directed to specific populations such as cancer and kidney dialysis patients.
- Services are typically provided Mondays through Fridays only, with only a third of the providers offering services on weekends.
- *Types of service provided.* A variety of special needs public transportation services are provided in Washington State but the dominant type is demand response. Over 90 percent of the transportation agencies/organizations provide demand response service.

Other types of service and the percent of transportation providers that offered them were:

- ADA Paratransit 40 percent
- Fixed Route 30 percent
- Volunteer Drivers 25 percent
- Deviated Fixed Route 18 percent
- Intercity Service 15 percent
- Job Access Transportation 10 percent
- Vanpool 10 percent

There are also variations among specialized transportation providers in terms of the types of passengers they serve. While a majority serves seniors and persons with disabilities, over 30 percent provide services to either the general public or low income persons. The following identify the extent of service types provided by specialized transportation services.

- Persons with Disabilities 70 percent (of total specialized transportation providers)
- Seniors 60 percent
- General Public 40 percent
- Low Income 30 percent

About one-half of the specialized transportation providers offer service Mondays through Fridays only. However, over 40 percent provided services on weekends. The following provide the breakdowns regarding the extent of service during the week.

- Monday through Friday 50 percent (of total specialized transportation providers)
- Seven Days/Week 34 percent
- Six Days/Week 10 percent
- One-Four Days/Week 5 percent
- Once per month 1 percent

2.2.3 Unmet Needs: Specialized Public Transportation Services

The Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans prepared by Regional Transportation Planning Organizations and Metropolitan Transportation Organizations provide information on needs associated with specialized public transportation in Washington. These Transit Plans provide direction on the types of unmet needs in regions throughout the state.

Table 2-5 provides a breakdown on the type of unmet need and frequency of identification by the Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans. The expansion of service hours was mentioned as a need in all 11 of the Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans. Some Plans indicated that this need is associated with types of employment such as agriculture which have irregular destinations and hours of work. The work start times likely do not correspond with schedules currently provided by specialized services. Transit information (awareness, education, and coordination)

was the second dominant type of needs, with 8 of 11 plans identifying it. Addressing this need would not incur major costs as compared to added service hours or frequency improvements.

Better intercity service and service coordination/connectivity between systems was identified by 6 of the 11 Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans. These needs are related since improved connectivity could be enhanced through improved intercity service

Table 2-5. Major Needs as Identified in Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans

Needs	How Often Mentioned? (out of 11 total plans)	Agencies that Identified Needs	Notes
Expanded Service Periods	11	Ben Franklin COG, NE Washington RTPO, Palouse RTPO, Peninsula RTPO, Quad County RTPO, Skagit-Island RTPO, Spokane RTC, SW Washington RTC, Thurston RPC, Whatcom COG, Yakima COG	Examples include serving agricultural industry which has non-traditional work schedules.
Transit Information Awareness, Education, and Coordination	8	Palouse RTPO, Peninsula RTPO, PSRC, Skagit-Island RTPO, Thurston RPC, SW Washington RTC, Whatcom COG, Yakima COG	
Better Intercity Service	6	Ben Franklin COG, NE Washington RTPO, Palouse, Skagit-Island RTPO, Whatcom COG, Yakima COG	In some cases (Palouse RTPO) there is lack of connections to more populated areas. In other cases (Skagit-Island) the need involves improvement to existing services.
Service Coordination/ Connectivity between Systems	6	NE Washington RTPO, Palouse RTPO, Peninsula RTPO, PSRC, Skagit-Island RTPO, Whatcom COG	Includes coordination of information such as single source for schedules (Palouse RTPO). The PSRC Plan noted that there is lack of coordination between Ferry service and paratransit service.
Increased Frequency	5	Quad RTPO, Skagit-Island RTPO, Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council, Whatcom COG	
Continuous Service Funding	3	Quad County RTPO, Skagit-Island RTPO, Spokane RTC	
Better Conditions at Bus Stops	3	PSRC, Spokane RTC, SW Washington RTC	

Needs identified in the Coordinated Transit Plans also included several items specific to geographic areas within the state. Rural counties often emphasized the need for reliable transit for employment outside of typical core hours. Examples of the unmet needs identified in these plans include:

- The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments noted a need for expanded service to food processing and orchard locations.

- The Palouse RTPPO noted that uncompetitive wages and limited Department of Licensing staff to provide Commercial Drivers License (CDL) certification made it difficult to maintain qualified drivers.
- The Whatcom Council of Governments (COG) identified a need to expand beyond the current hub-and-spoke system, which is centered on Bellingham, and to provide better connections between the “spokes.”
- The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) noted that there is a need to develop consistent service standards (such as acceptable wait times, frequency of service by area, trip lengths and/or number of transfers) in order to better communicate to customers what expectations are reasonable, as well as providing a benchmark against which current service may be measured.

The Joint Transportation Committee *Special Needs Transportation Coordination: Final Report* (2009) also identified several common themes⁵. In general, the unmet needs identified in this report were similar to those noted in the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transit Plans. Key transit needs included the following:

- More mobility options, particularly in rural areas.
- Better connectivity between systems is needed, especially where boundaries are based on institutional / jurisdictional areas rather than the needs of customers.
- Lack of affordable housing in urban areas results in many people with special needs moving to rural areas for more affordable housing, but ending up farther away from needed services.

Issues influencing coordinated planning were also found in the respective transit plans:

- “Silo” funding prevents coordination including funding sources such as state/federal funding for social service programs, veterans, health, etc.
- Except for the Central Puget Sound area, there is no “one-call” center to assist customers with arranging travel and providing information.
- Lack of connectivity, duplication of service, and inconsistent coordination efforts prevail in many areas of the state, despite a desire to improve coordination.
- Coordination between public paratransit services and Medicaid services should be promoted, perhaps with pilot/demonstration programs, certifying transit operators as Medicaid service providers, and capturing the value of Medicaid trips on transit services that are not currently reimbursed.
- Site-selection efforts for many facilities should include access to transit services
- Insurance issues also serve as a barrier to greater coordination since sharing rides and equipment is perceived to increase risks and have liability implications.

2.3 State-Supported Services and Programs

In addition to public transportation services provided within defined service areas, such as a county, several inter-city services are provided that receive some level of either state support and/or federal funding that is administered by WSDOT. The intercity programs include:

⁵ Special Needs Transportation Coordination: Final Report (Nelson/Nygaard for the Washington State Joint Transportation Committee, January 2009)

2.3.1 Intercity Rail Passenger Service

Amtrak Cascades service is provided between Eugene, Oregon and Vancouver, B.C. with stations in downtown Seattle and several other locations, in Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Thurston, Pierce, King, Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties. Since inauguration in 1994, demand has continued to increase. In 2009 a second train was provided between King Street Station in downtown Seattle and Vancouver, BC.

In 2009, the federal government initiated efforts relating to planning, design, and construction of high speed intercity rail along designated corridors. One of these corridors corresponds to the current Amtrak Cascades service between Oregon and British Columbia. WSDOT recently received \$590M in stimulus funding (ARRA) to help fund development of the overall 467 mile corridor. The long-term vision is to have a dedicated track with service operating at 150 mph and 13 daily round trips between Seattle and Portland. Improvements to the corridor will be done incrementally, with a number of near term investments in track, signal and grade separations which are expected to reduce travel times by approximately 5 percent, improve service reliability and permit two additional roundtrips per day.

2.3.2 Inter-system Public Transit Services

The state, through biennial appropriations and grant funds, provides support for inter-county transit services connecting Island, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties. The routes include the County Connector between Whatcom, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties and Everett Connector between Island, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties. This service represents a partnership between the state, and four transit agencies: Island Transit, Whatcom Transportation Authority, Skagit Transit, and Community Transit. The routes serve a variety of markets, including commuters destined to major employment centers in the Everett area.

The state also provides intercity and inter-county connections through the Washington State Ferry System (WSF). At ferry terminals, there are important connections between the ferries and local transit systems for those who walk on the vessels. Coordination of services at the origin and destination end of the trip helps to provide quality connections for ferry users.

2.3.3 Travel Washington Intercity Bus Services

WSDOT recently initiated a unique program involving intercity bus services connecting communities in less developed populations areas. The program received federal FTA 5311(f) funds but local match is provided through private bus company commitments. The service uses private contractors to operate the bus routes. Previously, potential providers submitted a grant request. Now, through the contracting process, WSDOT takes into consideration the interests of the entire state network when determining which routes to fund. Each private contractor promotes the service with the *Travel Washington* brand. While the service is privately operated, the program has a common brand that is registered with WSDOT. A key feature of the state-supported program is the extent of service coordination with other inter-city services (e.g. Amtrak, Greyhound, and airports) and local transit routes. The contracts with private operators of these services require inter-line agreements with other inter-city services. In 2010, WSDOT ordered 10 new transit buses for the Travel Washington intercity program and used \$1.8 million in ARRA funding.

Four Travel Washington routes are currently operated (effective June 2010):

- The Grape Line operates between Walla Walla and Pasco. It provides connections with Greyhound, Amtrak, Ben Franklin Transit and Valley Transit. One-way fares range from \$3.00 to \$7.00 dollars. Three round trips are provided each day except on holidays.
- The Dungeness Line on the Olympic Peninsula connects Port Angeles, Edmonds, and Seattle with Sea-Tac International Airport. The route provides links to Greyhound, Amtrak, Washington State Ferries and privately operated ferry service to Victoria, British Columbia. One-way adult fares range from \$28.00 to \$39.00 dollars. Two round trips are provided each day.
- The Apple Line serves Omak, Wenatchee, and Ellensburg. The route provides connections to Greyhound, Northwest Trailways and Amtrak. This intercity bus route provides service to the rural communities along the U.S. 97 corridor. One-way fares range from \$9.00 to \$32.00 dollars. One round trip is provided each day.
- The Gold Line between Kettle Falls and Spokane was added to the network in September 2010.

2.3.4 Washington State Ferries

Washington State Ferries (WSF) provides service to 20 terminals, all located in the state except for the one in Sidney, B.C. In the central Puget Sound area, coordination between WSF and local transit service has been enhanced through the One Regional Card for All (ORCA). Bus and ferry riders need to load two separate monthly pass products onto their ORCA card: WSF monthly pass for ferry service and a PugetPass for transit travel. The price of a WSF Central Sound passenger pass is \$88.35. The ORCA PugetPass is good on Kitsap Transit, King County Metro, Sound Transit, Community Transit, Everett Transit and Pierce Transit.

2.3.5 Vanpool Programs

Transit systems in Washington, including large urban, small urban and rural services, operate vanpool programs. Public transit systems operate the individual vanpool programs, with over 2,700 vans in service providing almost eight million revenue vehicle miles in 2008.

In 2003, the Washington State Legislature created a vanpool grant program to increase vanpooling by commuters. WSDOT and transit agencies created the Vanpool Investment Program to guide vanpool program development and manage vanpool grants. Since 2003, the state has provided funds for vanpool vehicle purchases. The initial funding level for the 2003-2005 Biennium was \$4 million. In the 2009-2011 WSDOT budget, the Vanpool Investment (VIP) will provide \$7 million in funding for vehicle replacement or expansion. Most of the funds are available to transit systems but there is also availability for employer incentives.

The capital grants to transit systems are based on the following conditions:

- Funds can be available for both expansion and replacement vans
- The grants cannot supplant transit funds currently supporting vanpools
- The grants will require a local cash match of 20 percent

2.3.6 Commute Trip Reduction Program (CTR)

The commute trip reduction program was enacted by the Legislature in 1991 with the intent to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and reduce the consumption of petroleum fuels through employer-based programs that encourage the use of alternatives to driving alone. Several

changes have been made to the program in the 18 years since its inception. The most significant revisions occurred in 2006 with the passage of the CTR Efficiency Act, which made the program more focused, streamlined, flexible and coordinated with other local and regional planning requirements. The Act transformed CTR from a program with a top-down mandate to one that is locally-driven and coordinated with local and regional planning requirements. This change builds on existing CTR infrastructure so that resources can achieve the greatest impact.

Local governments within urban growth areas may voluntarily establish Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers (GTECs). Per the Planning Guide developed by WSDOT, the goal of the GTEC program is to provide greater access to employment and residential centers while increasing the proportion of people not driving alone during peak periods on the state highway system. Counties, cities and towns may designate existing or new activity centers as GTECs in order to establish a TDM program in the designated area. The GTEC's goal is to expand the CTR program's focus to smaller employers, students, and residents. About 235,000 commuters have access to services and programs offered through seven designated GTECs.

2.3.7 Support for Managing Demand on Inter-City Corridors

Public transportation systems help manage travel demand on state highways connecting Washington cities. For example, express bus operations supported by HOV lanes enable the facilities to add person-carrying capacity to corridors without the need for adding lanes. For construction projects, public transit systems will play a role in helping manage demand. Examples include the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project and the SR 520 Bridge Replacement Project HOV Lane Project.

2.3.8 Unmet Needs: State-Supported Public Transportation Services

Intercity Bus Service

Unmet needs associated with inter-city bus services involve transit-dependent growth in Washington and future availability of funding support. Intercity connections in urban areas are affected by funding availability. Recently public transit systems in these areas reduced service along major corridors in response to decreased revenues. The Travel Washington routes operate largely in rural areas of the state as do many public transportation systems and some non-profit operators. All of these groups are striving to connect cities and the service is critical; even in cases where miles per trip are high and the service can be perceived as more costly than intra-city urban transit.

Population projections indicate that rural counties will see emergence of seniors as being the most dominant age group within that county. Growth of the senior population is likely to place even greater demand on public transportation according to a state study of intercity services, the lack of available local match from WSDOT, combined with limited availability of federal funding would mean that the program will be limited in terms of number of routes and services that could be addressed and projects that could be included⁶. Annual federal funding of \$2.1 million, increasing slightly each year (assuming continued authorization by Congress), will mean that the 5311 (f) program is unlikely to afford capital projects such as intermodal terminals or even the purchase of coaches (which can cost up to \$400,000 or more each).

⁶ Washington State Intercity Bus Service Study (WSDOT Public Transportation Division, 20__)

Washington State Ferries

As noted above connections between WSF service and local transit systems is an important element of the state transportation network. In April 2010 the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) conducted surveys of WSF passengers. The main objective of this research was to understand, from ferry riders' prospective, their travel behavior, opinions, and attitudes on important issues currently facing the WSTC and WSF. The survey results included information on connections between WSF and local public transportation service. Key findings relating to inter-system connections are as follows⁷:

- On average, ferry riders would increase their peak walk-on trips by 37 percent if “better transit services and more reliable connections” were available. Of these trips, 47 percent would be for commuting purposes.
- It appears that more improvements are needed on destination side than the “home” side. While 35 percent of those surveyed indicated the need for improvements involving the home end of the trip, 57 percent indicated that the need at the destination end.
- Riders on the Point Defiance/Tahlequah, Fauntleroy/Vashon and Mukilteo/Clinton are most likely to change their walk-on behavior if better transit services and more reliable connections were available.
- Better home to terminal connections is more strongly connected to “better transit services and more reliable connections” for riders of the Seattle/Bainbridge (41 percent indicating the connection) and Seattle/Bremerton routes (45 percent indicating the connection).

2.3.9 Vanpool Investment Program

With the economic slowdown and resulting job losses, vanpool formations in Washington have declined. However, this decline occurred after a major growth period in vanpool formations. The recovery of the economy and/or increases in gasoline prices would likely result in increases and correspondingly higher demands on the state vanpool investment program.

2.3.10 CTR Program

In 2007-2009, the state provided \$2.0 million to seven cities for development and implementation of GTEC programs. Despite the state's elimination of funding in the 2009-2011 budget, most programs have continued some elements⁸. They are relying primarily on local funds and federal funding provided by the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) as well as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality and Energy block grants. Although WSDOT should be credited with forethought, leadership and innovation for the GTEC program, the future role of the state with GTECs is currently undefined.

2.4 Private Sector Involvement in Public Transportation

In addition to bus company operator involvement in inter-city service described in the previous sections, the private companies have several other avenues for participation in public transportation services in Washington. The following summarize major private sector efforts in public transportation programs.

⁷ Winter Wave Survey Summary—April/May 2010 (Washington State Transportation Commission)

⁸ CTR Report to the Washington State Legislature (Washington State Commute Trip Reduction Board, January 2010) and e-mail of August 11, 2010 from WSDOT Public Transportation Division

2.4.1 Private Sector Operations for Travel Washington Bus Service

Private transportation operators provide public transportation bus service in Washington State. As discussed above, more recently, private contractors began serving as contractors for the state-supported Travel Washington bus services. This program includes use of private sector commitments involving existing services (non-subsidized) as a local match for federal funds to operate the services.

2.4.2 Private Public Transportation Bus Services

The organization of private operators, the Northwest Motorcoach Association, covers operators serving Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Members (19 in total) include major operators such as Grey Line and smaller regional services like Starline and Wheatland Express based in Pullman.

2.4.3 Privately Contracted Services by Transit Systems

Several Washington transit systems use private or private non-profit contractors for some or all of their services. Table 2-6 identifies the type and associated value (annual operating costs for 2010) for private services used by transit systems. In total, about \$102 million dollars were expended for private contracting services by transit systems. As the share of total annual costs, private contracting ranges from 1 percent for Ben Franklin Transit (subsidized taxis and service to Finley) to 100 percent by Grant County. Privately contracted services made up more than 10 percent of total operating costs for 5 of the 10 operators using contracted services.

The Grant Transit Authority and WSDOT Travel Washington intercity bus service are two examples of public transportation services being provided by private operators under contract to public agencies.

While most of the privately contracted services involve rural and small urban transit systems, there is substantial use by Community Transit for commuter routes. First Transit, a for-profit private company operating service between Snohomish County and downtown Seattle, is funded by Community Transit and Sound Transit. Since the 1980's, this service has been contracted out to private companies that provide bus operators and maintenance support.

2.4.4 Transit Service directly Provided By Private Employers

Although not "public", some Washington employers provide transportation directly to their employees. The type and magnitude of service that employers offer varies significantly -- from a single van that shuttles their employees between King Street Station and their worksite, to Microsoft's extensive network of employee transportation services.

Microsoft's "Connector" commuter routes and the "Shuttle" that connects their numerous worksites are by far the largest employer transportation services in the state. Microsoft began its connector service in September 2007 as an employee benefit with a goal of retaining employees, improving employee productivity, reducing parking requirements at their facilities and reducing the environmental impact of employee commuting. In order to increase the number of employees that use an alternative mode to driving to get to work and not just shift current bus riders from one bus to another, Microsoft worked with Metro and Sound Transit when designing these services. Microsoft's Connector service has grown from five to 19 routes that provide about 3,000 person trips daily. Microsoft contracts with MV Transportation, California, to provide the service.

Table 2-6. Private Contracting by Transit Systems⁹

Operator	Type of Contracting	Annual Amount (2010)	Contracting Costs as Percent of Total Operating Costs
Asotin Transit	Maintenance of Vehicles	Not identified in TDP	
Ben Franklin Transit	Subsidized Taxis and Service to Finley	\$306,000	1 percent
Community Transit	Commuter Routes to Seattle and Paratransit	\$28,500,000	25 percent
CUBS	Paratransit	\$957,000	35 percent
Grant Transit Authority	All Services	\$4,452,000	100 percent
Link Transit	Subsidized Taxi	Not identified in TDP	
Mason Transit	Some fixed-route service	\$158,780	3 percent
Spokane Transit	Part of Paratransit (early AM, evening, supplement to STA-operated paratransit)	\$6,750,000	11 percent
Yakima Transit	Paratransit	\$1,494,161	18 percent
Metro	Paratransit	\$59,600,000	9.4 percent
Total		\$102,221,794	

Other public or private entities provide bus service to address specific travel needs. The University of Washington’s (UW) established the Health Sciences Express (HSE) bus service in 1973 to connect the University and selected affiliated medical centers. The service provides transportation for faculty, staff, students and medical center patients and their families conducting University, Health Sciences and University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) business. The service was implemented to provide a competitive option to driving between facilities, reducing vehicle congestion on city streets, and reducing the requirement for parking at the University and affiliated destinations. The UW, the UWMC and Harborview Medical Center fund the Health Sciences Express bus service.

Through a program know as Custom Bus, Metro provides service for major employers (e.g. Boeing), educational institutions such as private high schools, and medical centers. Although these services are open to the public, they are designed to serve a particular trip or travel need. The operating cost of the service is funded by the entity for which the service was designed, but Metro public transportation facilities such as park-and-rides and bus stops facilitate delivery of the service.

Private companies can actively participate in helping to promote vanpool programs through their own transportation management efforts. Also, unlike transit systems, drivers are volunteers and are part of the “pool.”

Through the Victoria Clipper service, passenger only ferry service public transportation is provided between downtown Seattle and Friday Harbor in the San Juan Islands. This seasonal service (May through September) serves a market need that is not met by the State’s Ferry System.

⁹ As identified in Transit Development Plans submitted to WSDOT

2.4.5 Unmet Needs Private Providers

Private provider services are being implemented to meet unmet needs not being addressed by current transit agencies and other providers. These services have been established to transport employees from transit centers to employment sites or in the case of Microsoft's Connector service provides specific employer service between residential areas and the Microsoft's main campus. In some cases employer's contract directly with transit agencies, such as the Boeing Custom Bus service provided through King County Metro.

3.0 Funding of Current Public Transportation Programs

This section presents information on major sources of funds for public transit services operating in Washington State. A variety of sources are available involving local option taxes, primarily the sales tax, fare revenues, state funds, and federal funds.

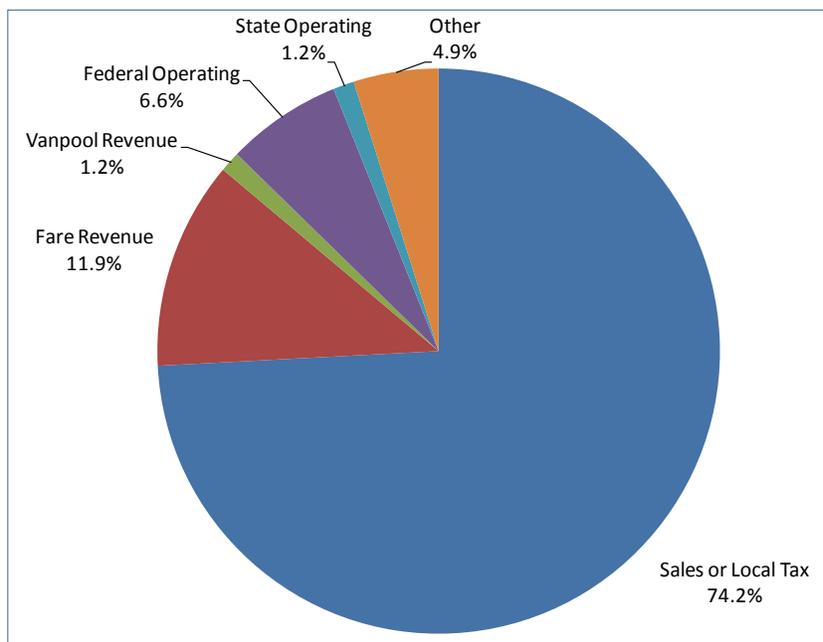
3.1 Operating and Capital Funds for Public Transit Systems

The combined revenues to support operations and capital costs approached \$1.9 billion in 2008. Of this amount:

- Approximately \$1.6 billion in operating revenues were available for public transit systems in 2008.
- Approximately \$374 million of total revenues involved capital obligations. This amount includes approximately \$150 million for Sound Transit, most of which involved Link LRT development in Central Puget Sound.
- For operating expenses, fixed-route service was the most significant expenditure at 77 percent followed by demand response at 16 percent. Other service such as LRT, commuter rail, passenger ferry service, route deviation service, and vanpool service made up the rest of operating costs

Figure 3-1 provides a breakdown of the operating revenues available to public transportation systems in 2008¹⁰. It shows that about 87 percent of the operating funds are generated locally through local sales or other local option taxes and fare revenue. As Figure 3-1 indicates, the state’s contribution to transit operations in 2007 was approximately 1 percent of the total, or \$19 million.

Figure 3-1. Operating Revenues in 2008 for Public Transit Systems¹¹



¹⁰ Data provided by WSDOT and WSTA in September 2010; to be included in the Summary of Public Transportation (WSDOT Public Transportation Division)

¹¹ Data provided by WSTA and WSDOT in September 2010; to be included in the Public Transportation Summary (WSDOT Public Transportation Division)

Figure 3-2. Capital Revenues in 2008 for Public Transit Systems¹²

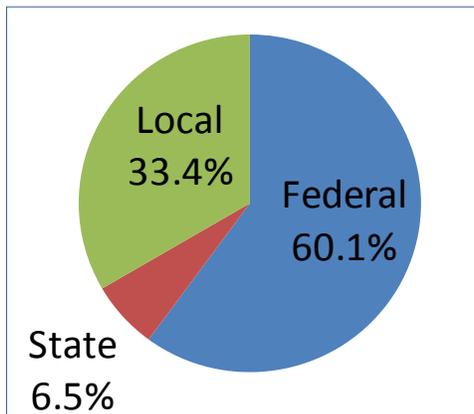


Figure 3-2 provides a breakdown of capital revenues available to public transportation systems in 2008 for capital projects¹³. Federal sources made up 60 percent or approximately \$225 million of total revenues for capital. The major item within federal grants is FTA Section 5309 grants, which made up approximately two-thirds of total federal capital funding in the state for public transit systems. Most of the Section 5309 funds involved LRT construction in central Puget Sound. At 33 percent of the total or approximately \$125 million, local sources provided by the public transit systems made up the second highest source of capital funds. Within the local capital source, drawdown on capital reserves made up almost two-thirds of the total. At approximately \$24

million in funds, state sources made up approximately 6 percent of total capital revenues in 2008.

3.2 State Regional Mobility and Public Transportation Grants

For the 2009-2011 biennium, a total of approximately \$32 million in Regional Mobility grants was approved for 13 capital projects and operating programs in the state¹⁴. This funding represented 12 percent of the total funding necessary to support the projects and programs. Of the Regional Mobility grant funds allocated for operations, the state support comprised approximately 29 percent of the programs' total costs. For the grant funds allocated for capital programs, the state support comprised approximately 11 percent of total projects' costs. These dollars represent only a part of any project or programs total funding needs. Often it takes multiple years to develop the full funding necessary to complete a project. In addition, larger projects and programs often involve multi-year implementation and construction.

The Public Transportation Grants program also includes a mix of capital and operating elements that are supported by the state, federal FTA funds or, in some cases, both. For the 2009-2011 biennium, a total of about \$36.7 million in grants was awarded. Of this, \$13.7 million in state funds was awarded and \$23 million in FTA funds was awarded. Of the state funds, a substantial majority, \$13.2 million or 96 percent, was directed to providing operating assistance for 54 public transportation systems (primarily smaller and more rural public transit agencies) and non-profit organizations.

3.3 Local Option Sales and Use Tax

As noted above, the local option sales and other taxes provide the dominant source of funds for transit operations. Currently, each transit system is authorized to seek up to 0.9 percent in sales tax support. For each transit system, actual sales tax support ranges from 0.2 percent of one cent to 0.9 of one cent. Table 3-1 identifies the current breakdown of sales tax support for each transit system.

¹² Data provided by WSTA and WSDOT in September 2010; to be included in the Public Transportation Summary (WSDOT Public Transportation Division)

¹³ Ibid, September 2010

¹⁴ Regional Mobility Grant Program—2nd Quarter 2009 Report, WSDOT (October 2009)

Of the 28 systems with sales tax support, 16 are at 0.6 percent or more. Four systems, Island Transit, Sound Transit, King County Metro, and Community Transit are at the maximum level of 0.9 percent and Kitsap Transit and Intercity Transit are at 0.8 percent. The approved sales tax increases since 2008 involved the following transit systems:

- Skagit Transit (increasing from 0.2 percent to 0.4 percent)
- Island Transit (from 0.6 percent to 0.9 percent)
- Community Urban Bus System (from 0.1 percent to 0.3 percent)
- Valley Transit (from 0.3 percent to 0.6 percent)
- Intercity Transit (from 0.6 percent to 0.8 percent)
- Sound Transit (from 0.4 percent to 0.9 percent)

In November 2010 voters approved a ballot measure authorizing increased funding from the local sales and use tax for the Bellingham Transportation Benefit District. The increased funding, 0.2 percent, will be available for street paving, non-motorized transportation projects and transit service. At least two public transit systems, Pierce Transit and C-TRAN, intend to seek voter approval in 2011 of sales tax increases¹⁵.

For the 16 transit systems that are at a sales tax rate of 0.6 percent or more, several such as Island Transit, Clallam Transit, and Ben Franklin Transit are located in areas without a major sales tax base. A number of agencies faced with declining revenues and the need to scale back service are struggling with the challenge of requesting added sales tax support from their voters during a time of high unemployment and uncertainty related to the extent and severity of the recession.

3.4 Federal Funding Sources

A variety of revenue sources are available from the USDOT, including the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA¹⁶). Table 2-6 provides information on various formula and competitive grants provided to Washington State transit

Table 3-1. Authorized Sales Tax Rates for Washington State Transit Systems (effective August 16, 2010)

0.2 Percent	Asotin County Transit
	Grant Transit
	Twin Transit
	Union Gap Transit
0.3 Percent	Pacific Transit
	Cowlitz Transit Authority
	Yakima Transit
	City of Selah
0.4 Percent	Columbia County Public Transportation
	Link Transit
	Skagit Transit
0.5 Percent	C-TRAN
0.6 Percent	Ben Franklin Transit
	Clallam Transit System
	Everett Transit
	Grays Harbor Transit Authority
	Jefferson Transit Authority
	Mason County Transportation Authority
	Pierce Transit
	Spokane Transit Authority
	Valley Transit
	Whatcom Transportation Authority
0.7 Percent	None
0.8 Percent	Kitsap Transit
	Intercity Transit
0.9 Percent	Community Transit
	Island Transit
	King County Metro Transit
	Sound Transit

¹⁵ Per WSTA staff comment on draft Task 1 Working Paper

¹⁶ Further information on the state funding is provided in the White Paper for Task 2 of the Identifying the State Role in Public Transportation Study.

systems¹⁷. Several of the formula grants are administered by the State and are directed to transit service in rural areas.

Federal funds are typically authorized over a six-year period and the current authorization bill SAFETEA-LU has expired. Temporary extensions have been enacted, including the most recent extension through December 2010.

As indicated by Table 2-6, which shows federal funding at 2007 levels, transit operators in Washington State received \$273 million in federal funds. Over one-half of that (\$157.7 million) involved FTA Section 5309 "New Starts" and "Bus and Bus Facilities" funds which is discretionary funding appropriated directly through the annual congressional appropriations process. Setting those sources of funding aside, Section 5307 Formula funds are the most dominant source. Since they are formula driven, Section 5307 funding can be considered as a more reliable source of support than competitive grants or discretionary funds. However, the funds are only available to designated recipients in urbanized and small urbanized areas.

WSDOT receives an annual allocation of FTA 5310 funds for elderly and persons with disabilities. These funds are primarily used for capital grants to nonprofit agencies, for the purchase of lift-equipped vehicles. On the occasion that the award of capital grants may be satisfied and there remain some additional federal funds, WSDOT has used FTA 5310 funds for purchase of service contracts with nonprofit agencies. Annual allocations under 5310 have gradually increased from \$1.5 million in 2001 to \$2.5 million in 2010.

The publication date for information in Figure 3-2 precedes the availability of federal funds though the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Some of these funds were provided to transit systems in Washington State. FTA funds from American ARRA must be used for capital projects only. These funds can be used for "the acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance of facilities, and equipment for use in transit."

A large majority of transit systems in Washington received ARRA funding for a variety of projects. ARRA-funded projects in urbanized area, including the Section 5307 and Fixed Guideway, were selected locally. The projects for the rural areas were selected by the state using a competitive process. In addition, the state received almost \$590 million in ARRA funds to support the development of a high speed rail corridor. In December 2008 and January 2009, WSDOT developed a capital project list in anticipation of the Recovery Act. This list consisted of a variety of project types including:

- Purchasing replacement and expansion vehicles
- Purchasing new communication equipment
- Constructing facilities and transit centers
- Repairing buildings
- Installing bus shelters

¹⁷ Summary of Public Transportation - 2007: Statewide Operations Overview (WSDOT Public Transportation Division)

Table 3-2. 2007 Federal Transit Funding by Major Fund Categories

Source	Purpose	Affected Area	Funding
Section 5307	Formula	Seattle	\$81,229,871
		Spokane	\$6,434,323
		Kennewick-Richland	\$2,459,462
		Yakima	\$1,646,047
		Bremerton	\$2,349,035
		Olympia-Lacey	\$2,246,977
		Bellingham	\$1,564,038
		Longview	\$737,928
		Marysville	\$1,208,535
		Mount Vernon	\$790,127
		Wenatchee	\$1,148,346
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>\$101,814,689</i>
Section 5309	Bus and Facilities	North Bend, Park and Ride	\$160,512
		Mukilteo, Multimodal Terminal	\$1,163,712
		Seattle, Multimodal Terminal Redevelopment and Expansion	\$900,000
		Snohomish County, Community transit Bus Purchase and Facility Enhancement	\$601,920
		Thurston County, Replace Thurston County Buses	\$180,576
		Southworth Terminal Redevelopment	\$1,150,000
		Seattle, Urban Partnership Agreement	\$41,000,000
		Oak Harbor	\$200,640
		Pacific Transit/Ilwaco, Shuttle Procurement	\$20,064
		Pacific Transit/Ilwaco, Park and Ride Construction	\$20,064
			Island Transit
	Fixed Guideway	Seattle	\$31,857,041
	New Start	Central Link (Sound Transit)	\$80,000,000
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>\$157,736,065</i>
Section 5311	Formula	Statewide Rural	\$8,392,208
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>\$8,392,208</i>
Section 5316	Job Access Reverse Commute	Seattle	\$1,013,784
		Spokane	\$188,373
		State Apportioned Job Access	\$1,285,935
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>\$2,488,092</i>
Section 5317	New Freedom	Seattle	\$719,018
		Spokane	\$102,142
		State Apportioned New Freedom	\$786,371
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>\$1,607,531</i>
Section 5339	Alternative Analysis	Sound Transit I-90 Long-Range Plan Corridor Studies	\$750,000
		Kitsap Count-Kitsap Transit	\$326,560
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>\$1,076,560</i>
Grand Total			\$273,115,145

3.5 WSDOT Directly Funded Programs

A variety of funding programs are provided directly by WSDOT or through a grants process administered by the state. Also, WSDOT staff support the CTR Board that was established to oversee and report on commute trip reduction efforts in the state. The Multimodal Transportation Fund was established during the 1990 legislative session to be used for general transportation purposes. More specifically, the grant accounts in this Fund are not subject to the 18th Amendment requirements restricting gas tax revenues to "highway purposes." As a result, money from this Fund can be used for programs such as transit, high capacity transit, aviation, passenger and freight rail, and new transportation technologies, as well as for highway purposes.

Using this Multimodal Transportation Fund as a source, WSDOT supports a variety of operating and capital items throughout the state. State grant programs include the following:

3.5.1 Regional Mobility Grants

The Regional Mobility Grant (RMG) program provides money to local governments to deliver transit mobility projects that are cost-effective, reduce travel delay for people and goods, improve connectivity between counties and regional population centers, and are consistent with local and regional transportation and land use plans.¹⁸ Capital construction, equipment acquisition and operating projects are eligible. Projects are competitively evaluated and a ranked list is submitted to the Legislature for appropriation.

For the 2009-2011 Biennium, a total of \$43.0 million in grants was awarded in the RMG program. A total of 16 grants were awarded and they included both capital and operations items.

Implementation for six projects will extend beyond the biennium, i.e., beyond June 2011. Additional funding for these projects, totaling approximately \$15 million, will be included in the 2011-2013 biennium recommended project list.

3.5.2 Public Transportation Grants

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) distributes a variety of state and federal grants to support public transportation programs. The programs covered by the 2009-2011 consolidated application process include:

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Sections 5310, 5311, 5316, and 5317
- State Rural Mobility Competitive
- State Paratransit/Special Needs Competitive for non-profit agencies

WSDOT uses a consolidated application process for those organizations applying for both state and federal public transportation grants. Applicants describe their projects and provide pertinent information. Based on this information, the appropriate type of funding when awarding projects is determined. Timelines for all state and federal funding awards are in line with the state biennium, so applicants need to submit their grant proposals once every two years. While capital projects can be funded, applicants can also apply for funds to support the following types of operating items including:

- Operating assistance for paratransit/special needs transportation services
- Feeder bus service for the intercity network

¹⁸ Transit Mobility Programs—2009 Annual Report to the Washington State Legislature (WSDOT Public Transportation Division, January 2009)

- Mobility management
- Travel trainer

Operating assistance funding has been a key revenue source for specialized transportation services. However, the funding can only be committed for up to two years. Continued funding would have to rely on follow-up grant approvals. However, since the grants are competitive, there is no guarantee that future funding can be provided by the state.

For the 2009-2011 Biennium WSDOT received 143 applications that involved a total of \$57.2 million in requested funds. After review by an independent review panel (Individuals representing organizations applying for funds do not serve on the review panel), 100 applicants were awarded funding for transit systems and as well as for human services transportation services. These totaled \$36.6 million in Public Transportation Grants involving state multimodal funds and FTA funds. Of the \$36.6 million in awarded grants, \$22.9 million came from FTA funds and \$13.7 million was provided through state Multimodal Transportation Funds.

In most cases, the project was funded through either state or federal funds; but in some cases, projects were supported by both programs. While some capital projects are funded through Public Transportation grants, a large portion of the funds provide operating assistance to transit systems as well as to private non-profit organizations that provide public transportation services. Since operating assistance involves grants support, there is no guarantee that funding will continue when the grant expires. While overall Public Transportation Grants represent a relatively small portion of total transit funding in Washington State, they represent critical support for programs operated by a variety of public and private service providers.

Capital grants were also provided to transit systems through ARRA funding that was available in the FTA 5311 program for 2009-2010. This provided \$13.2 million for capital projects. WSDOT also played a role in assisting rural public transportation providers in securing discretionary funding from FTA 5309 for capital grants.

3.6 Support by Local Jurisdictions

Several transit systems operate as part of local governments, for example Everett Transit and Yakima Transit which preceded establishment of PTBA's. In some cases, the city and county transit systems are competing with other local priorities for funding. However, commitment to public transportation has also been provided by several local jurisdictions in the form of funding support. Although not a major element of transit funding, this support has included direct subsidy of service in order to determine potential feasibility of continuing the service. Examples have included commuter-focused service in Eastside of King County. Also, local jurisdictions have undertaken traffic improvements that have improved the speed and reliability of transit service along busy arterials.

County Ferry Districts may impose a property tax of up to 75 cents per \$1,000 in assessed value (except in King County where the maximum rate is 7.5 cents per \$1,000 in assessed value) to fund capital and operating costs. Voter approval is not required. In King County, property tax revenues are used to support passenger-only ferry service to downtown Seattle from West Seattle and Vashon Island.

3.7 Recent Transit Funding History and Effects on Meeting Transit Needs

To assess potential unmet transit needs in terms of potential funding support, trends that have occurred in the last 10 years should be taken into account, particularly the decrease in sales tax revenues that has affected most transit systems. The following summarizes major events and implications for transit

3.7.1 Initiative 695

This measure, which passed in 1999, and subsequent legislation in year 2000, eliminated motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) support for transportation including a major share of funding for public transportation. In 1997, \$219 million in MVET was directly distributed to 24 transit agencies, and \$7.6 million in grants funded by MVET to 7 transit agencies¹⁹. During the 1990s, the MVET was a stable and growing source of revenue available to transit systems.

The effect of MVET elimination was substantial since the MVET amounted to approximately one-half of the local tax revenues supporting some public transit systems, including the Washington State Ferries. In addition, unlike sales taxes, MVET also provided a relatively stable revenue source that was not as affected by economic trends as is the sales tax.

Initially, transit systems and the state (e.g. ferry services) reacted to the revenue loss by either reducing service or identifying potential major cuts in service unless added revenues were provided. In response to the MVET loss, the State Legislature approved increasing the local authorization ceiling for transit sales tax for transit systems from 0.6 percent to 0.9 percent. Shortly after that approval, 14 transit systems replaced the loss in MVET revenues through voter-approved increases in sales taxes.

3.7.2 Declining Local Sales Tax Revenues

Figure 3-2 identifies how local funding for public transit has changed over time, including sales and use taxes, MVET and fares. In 1999, prior to I-695 going in effect, about 60 percent of these revenues (\$561.5 million out of \$990.6 million) involved sales tax²⁰. By 2008, and after increases in sales tax levels for several transit systems to replace the loss of MVET revenues, the sales tax share of total revenues grew to approximately 75 percent (\$1.1 billion out of \$1.4 billion). While the growth in the sales tax share can be in part attributable to economic expansion in Washington, the majority of increase are due to increased local sales tax rates.

When the state economy was expanding and retail sales growing, the added sales tax support replaced the lost MVET revenue and even allowed some systems to expand. As indicated by Figure 3-2, transit ridership has also grown. Particularly major increases occurred in 2008 as a result of high gas prices and a more robust state economy when compared to the early 2000's. However, with the recent downturn in the economy that has been began in 2008 – and the resulting significant decrease in sales tax revenues—another major revenue reduction has impacted transit programs. As noted earlier, total sales tax revenue for all public transportation systems declined an average of 12.7 percent from 2008 to 2009.

¹⁹ Transit Systems: Revenues and Expenditures—1997 to 2007 (WSDOT Public Transportation Division website)

²⁰ Ibid

Figure 3-3. . Local Funding Support for Public Transit Systems (1999, 2003, 2008)

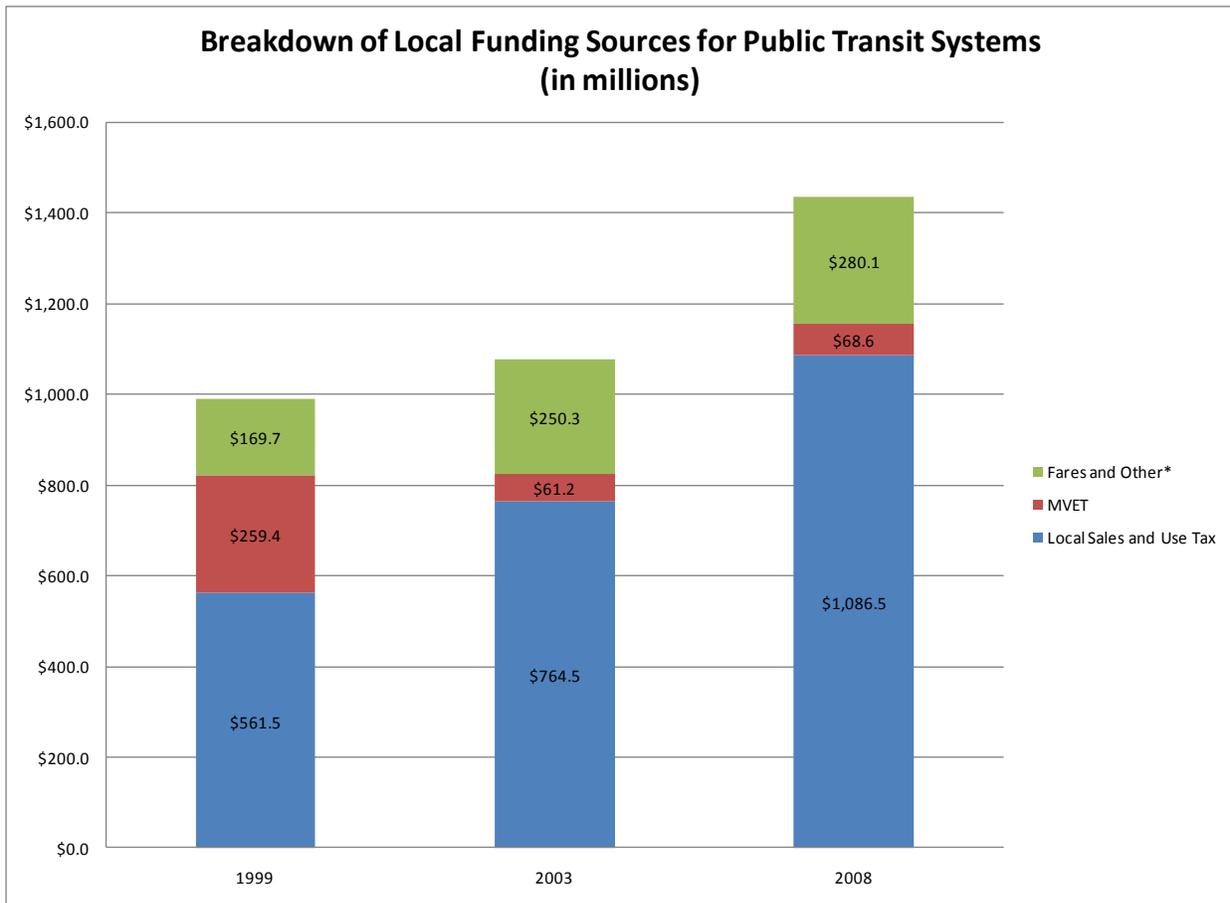
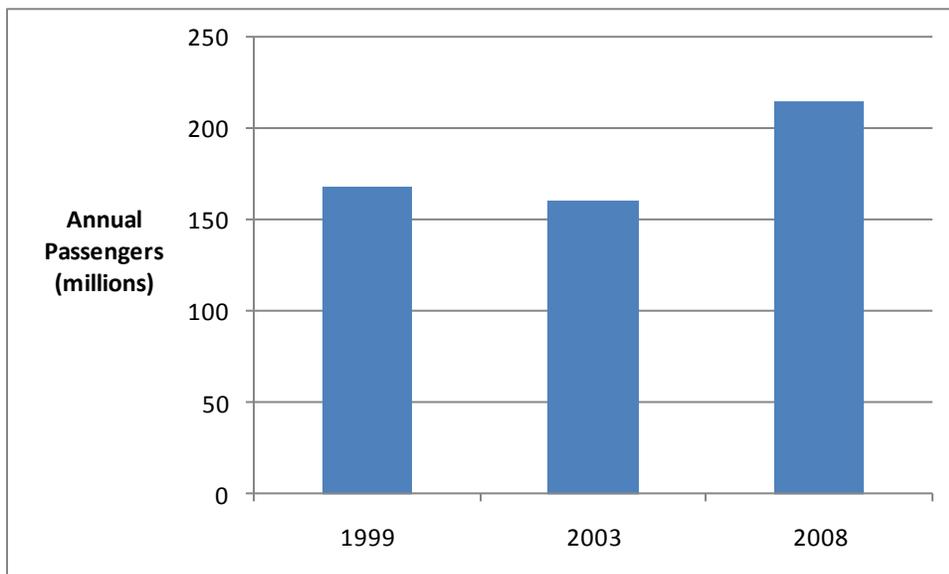


Figure 3-4. Changes in Annual Ridership for Public Transit Systems – 1999, 2003, and 2008



3.7.3 Recent Sales Tax Measures

More recent sales tax initiatives have for the most part shown support for transit but several of these occurred prior to the recent downturn in the economy. In 2006 the City of Selah passed a public transportation tax and that was followed in 2007 by a passage of a transit tax in the City of Union Gap. In 2008 three additional measures were approved by voters: and an increase of 0.2 percent to support expanded service by Skagit Transit, a 0.3 percent increase by Valley Transit, and a 0.5 percent increase in central Puget Sound to support the ST2 Plan by Sound Transit. In 2010, Island Transit and Intercity Transit received voter approval to increase sales tax support from 0.6 percent to 0.9 percent and 0.6 percent to 0.8 percent, respectively.

Also, in 2010, a measure to increase local sales tax for Whatcom Transportation Authority failed. However, a subsequent measure on the November 3, 2010 ballot approved funding for the City of Bellingham's Transportation Benefit District. The added funds involving a 0.2 percent increase in sales taxes will include support street paving, non-motorized transportation projects and public transit services operating in the City of Bellingham.

At least two more public transit systems will be requested added sales tax support in 2011. These systems are Pierce Transit and C-TRAN.

3.7.4 Current Recession and Lost State Revenue for Public Transportation

State revenue for the Multimodal Transportation Fund has been reduced due to current fiscal constraints. As noted above, the multimodal programs have provided support for a variety of public transportation programs, involving transit systems, private/non-profit organizations, and private employer initiatives to reduce peak period auto trips.

3.7.5 Future Funding Uncertainty

As has been discussed throughout this white paper, the trends in public transportation funding indicate a high level of uncertainty that affects public transportation agencies' ability to plan for future services and facilities. Sales taxes, as the dominant source for both operating and capital costs, are declining for most transit systems with long term impacts. A major source for Public Transportation Grants, Multimodal Transportation funds, was reduced to as a result of declining state transportation revenues. Finally, federal funding for transit and specialized transportation programs is awaiting re-authorization by Congress.

4.0 Emerging Factors Affecting Transit Programs

The future for public transportation will be affected by population growth and demographic changes. Major policy initiatives such as greenhouse gas reduction and recent changes in CTR legislation in congested areas are focusing on the reduction of SOV travel. These changes are leading to increasing demands for alternative modes of transportation. In addition, public transportation providers at least in the short term will be asked to do more with less. They will continue to need to look at cost efficiency measures, reduced service levels and reduce or postpone capital investments in order maintain core services. These emerging factors will place greater pressure on public transportation providers, both public and private.

The following sections summarize major trends highlighted in TDP's, regional transportation plans developed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, and state population and employment forecasts.

4.1 Population Growth and Demographics

The overall trend in Washington population and employment projections indicates that there will be an increase in demand for public transportation. Population is projected to grow by 26 percent, from about 6.6 million in 2010 to 8.3 million in 2030 while employment is projected to grow by 25 percent, from about 3.2 million in 2010 to 4.0 million in 2030. Public transportation agencies serve areas where approximately 85 percent of Washington's population lives. Keeping pace with this growth in population would require, at the minimum, a similar growth in transit operations and capital facilities.

However, beyond this general projection, more focused identification of needs also has been identified by both transit systems and regional planning agencies. The growing and aging population will likely place even more pressure on expensive paratransit services, and more seniors will need public transportation with discounted fares. Specialized transportation at transit agencies consumes a disproportionately high portion of operating budgets relative to ridership and farebox recovery. In 2008, the cost per passenger of fixed-route service was \$4.23 while the cost per passenger for demand-responsive service was much higher at \$32.31²¹. In the same year, the combined farebox recovery for fixed-route bus systems was 20.0 percent as compared to 2.3 percent farebox recovery for demand-responsive services. Disproportionate growth in paratransit demand will pressure public transit resources now devoted to fixed route and other services. The high cost of service is due in part to ADA requirements.

As with the rest of the county, Washington State's demographic makeup will continue to see a shift toward an older population. While those over 65 years made up about 11 percent of the population in 2000, it is projected to be 18 percent in 2030. Interestingly, there are variations in the projected representation of age groups depending on the county. A review of demographic forecasts prepared by the Office of Financial Management indicates that rural counties will experience higher rates of elderly as compared to more urbanized counties. In 2000, for example, "age 65 or older" was not included among the dominant age group in any county²². But, for Year 2030, 65 or over will be the dominant age group for the following 12 counties - Clallam, San Juan, Jefferson, Island, Mason, Pacific, Wahkiakum, Columbia, Garfield, Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille.

²¹ As reported to WSDOT, Public Transportation Division (September 2010)

²² Washington State Office of Financial Management/Year 2000 US Census Data

Of note, these counties are all in rural areas; and five of them, San Juan, Wahkiakum, Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille, do not have transit systems.

4.2 Continued Implementation of the Growth Management Act (GMA)

The Growth Management Act and related comprehensive plans can have potential implications on transit development. A major overriding implication is accommodating future growth in travel demand through less reliance on single-occupant vehicles. This can be achieved in a variety of ways (e.g., regional transportation plans that emphasize greater reliance on public transportation to meet projected growth in transportation demand. With projected constraints in the amount of state and local funds available for additional general-purpose road capacity expansion, added pressure for public transportation to assume higher shares of travel could emerge.

4.3 Reduction in Greenhouse Gases

As a result of an Executive Order 09-05 and subsequent legislation²³, efforts are underway to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG). A key part of these efforts is a reduction in per capita vehicle miles travelled (VMT). Under the Environmental and Health Quality goal of the Draft Washington State Transportation Plan, System Improvement Strategies include the reductions in per capital VMTs travelled as a strategy. A strategy in the Draft Washington Transportation Plan calls for requiring all local transportation plans to include a non-motorized element, GHG reduction strategy component, and a VMT strategy component.

4.4 Tolling of Highways

Tolling is already in place on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge connecting Kitsap and Pierce Counties and it will be implemented in spring of 2011 for SR 520 in the Central Puget Sound area. With the added costs for driving there is some shift from the automobile to public transit operating in the affected corridor. How transit systems are able to respond to this shift will be affected by funding availability. Consideration of funding of these increases from toll revenues has been suggested. However, given that tolls are not projected to even cover the unfunded portions of major projects such as the SR 520 bridge replacement, Columbia River Crossing, and other projects, it is unclear whether toll revenues will be available to fund transit programs.

4.5 Increased Demand for Greater Connectivity between Modes and Systems

Demand for public transportation services do not stop at county lines. Several initiatives in Washington such as the inter-city bus routes serving Island, Snohomish, Whatcom, and Skagit Counties could serve as examples of further inter-county programs in the future. Public transportation systems and their partners already provide many of the connections listed below, but funding limitations and other factors hamper efforts. Potential new examples of these connections include:

- Improved ferry/transit coordination, including better connections during non-peak periods.
- Inter-system connectivity, particularly those involving quick and direct services along major corridors (e.g. BRT along SR 99 between Seattle and Snohomish County).

²³ Chapter 70.235 RCW

- Connections between fixed route and specialized service that could help improve mobility while at the same time encouraging more use of less expensive fixed route service by those with mobility needs.
- Timed (coordinated) transfers between systems in locations where routes serving different markets (e.g., express versus local) overlap.
- Expanded integration of regional fare systems (e.g. in the Puget Sound area people can use a single fare card—“ORCA” to ride on and transfer between six transit systems plus Washington State Ferries and ferries operated by Kitsap Transit and King County Metro).

As previously noted in Table 2-2, service connectivity was identified as an unmet need by a majority of Coordinated Human Services Transit Plans. As rural counties grow, particularly by the elderly population, the need for improved connectivity will also likely grow. This need would be particularly significant in those rural counties without transit services including lack of connections to counties with transit systems.

4.6 Uncertainty Related to Future Federal Transportation Policies, Programs and Funding Levels

Reauthorization by Congress of the federal multi-year surface transportation authorization bill (SAFETEA-LU) has been delayed. Congress has temporarily extended SAFETEA-LU pending action on new legislation keeping federal funding programs available to Washington State public transportation systems generally intact. There is uncertainty, however, related to the timing and nature of future legislation including the types of policies, programs and associated funding levels that will be authorized by Congress. This uncertainty is further heightened with the extent of the currently federal deficit and its likely continuation in the near term future. Given this uncertainty, it is somewhat challenging to make long-term plans or assumptions regarding the availability of federal funds and what federal priorities and/or criteria will be associated with federal funding.

5.0 Transit Reporting and Unmet Needs

Unmet needs related to public transportation have been identified in many different ways. For this analysis this information is contained in many different documents. There is no one place where all unmet needs are captured and discussed in a consolidated fashion. In addition, there is no common definition on what constitutes an unmet need.

In this section, unmet public transportation needs are identified using two major sources. One source is the Washington State Transportation Plan (draft) which identified potential unmet public transportation needs for a variety of operating and capital elements. The second source is a collection of findings resulting from review of TDPs, Regional Transportation Plans, funding information, emerging trends, and other sources.

The review of these documents resulted in identification of major themes related to unmet needs.

5.1 Relationship between Transit Development Plans and State Policy Goals

The Washington Transportation Plan identifies the following policy goals:

- **Preservation**—To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services
- **Safety**—To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system
- **Mobility**—To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington state
- **Environment**—To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment
- **Stewardship**—To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system
- **Economic vitality**—To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy²⁴

Several TDP's were very specific on how these state programs/goals are being addressed both with current services/programs and/or through future developments. These include state funding programs such as the Vanpool Investment Program and Public Transportation Grants administered by WSDOT:

- Pierce Transit's TDP focuses extensively and specifically on how its Plan elements address state objectives. For example, the plan noted that Pierce Transit and Intercity Transit jointly operate *Olympia Express* bus service connecting Pierce and Thurston counties thereby achieving inter-county Mobility.
- Several systems, such as Intercity Transit, identified efforts at obtaining hybrid and bio-diesel powered buses that help achieve the Environmental goal.
- The Skagit TDP includes continued support for inter-county service (connecting Skagit, Whatcom, and Island Counties and regional transit service at Everett Station in Snohomish County) even though its service area is within Skagit County. This helped achieve the

²⁴ This goal was adopted by the Legislature during the 2010 Legislative Session

Mobility goal but it also supports Stewardship since it made use of existing investments such as transit centers in affected counties. These inter-county services are both supported by state grants. The Tri-County Connector has been funded in the Transportation budget, while the Everett Connector has been funded by Regional Mobility Grants.

- Park-and-ride development along state highways such as those identified in the TDP for Island Transit. This supported the Stewardship goal by making use of existing state transportation facilities.
- Coordinated road/transit development (Kitsap Transit and SR 305 alternative analysis), and the Chelan/Douglas sidewalk prioritization program. These joint transit/roads programs help achieve Safety, Stewardship, and Preservation objectives.
- The C-TRAN TDP identified high capacity transit developments but also noted constraints relating to funding; the Plan did include scenarios relating to potential added sales tax support for transit. With potential transit enhancements along major state facilities this program would support Mobility and Stewardship objectives.
- Even with expected funding shortfalls for the vanpool program, several systems such as Asotin and Grays Harbor identify vanpool acquisitions as an element of the TDP. With expected reductions in commute vehicle trips, these programs would support the Mobility and Environmental objectives.

5.2 Unmet Public Transportation Needs—Washington State Transportation Plan (2007-2026)

The adopted Washington State Transportation Plan for 2007-2026 (WTP) identified several public transportation needs under several categories²⁵. The basis for the needs determination included outreach efforts as well as conversations with transportation professionals, stakeholders, and the general public. An update to the WTP (Washington Transportation Plan 2010) is currently underway with a targeted completion date of December 2010. It will cover the 2011 to 2030 plan period.

The current WTP describes significant levels of unfunded priorities involving several categories relating to public transportation or support for public transportation such as HOV lane development. Most public transportation-related needs are addressed under two major categories—Preservation and Mobility. The following further identifies the unmet needs under the major categories:

5.2.1 Transit System Improvement

- Replace transit system bus fleets (\$2B)
- Provide transit funding for new vehicles and facilities (\$550M)
- Provide \$860M to transit agencies in operating funds for special needs transportation (in order to allow current revenues to be used to maintain fixed-route bus service)
- Assist transit agencies to provide additional and new on-demand (Dial-a-Ride) service (\$1B)

5.2.2 Specialized Transportation Services

- Increase funding to the Agency Council for Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) to support performance measurement and community coalitions of providers (\$30M)

²⁵ Washington Transportation Plan (prepared by WSDOT for the Washington State Transportation Commission, November 2007)

- Improve services for special needs populations in both rural and urban areas through demonstration projects (\$20M)
- Fund remaining needs for rural mobility grants to assist non-profit providers in areas of the state with limited transit service (\$364M)
- Connect communities and rural areas to urban centers with bus service (\$32M)

5.2.3 Major Facilities Development

- Complete the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) system in the Puget Sound region) to reduce travel delay and increase travel time reliability for transit and carpools (\$550M)
- Implement a park-and-ride program in coordination with transit systems, including alleviating overcrowding at existing lots, providing safety and security, and accommodating growing demand (\$200M)

5.2.4 Intercity Connections

- Expand the existing web-based public transportation information system to enable people to plan detailed itineraries between communities throughout Washington and other states (\$8M)
- Expand Amtrak *Cascades* intercity passenger rail service (\$470M)

5.2.5 Commute Trip Reduction

- Expand the commute trip reduction tax credit program, increasing the number of small employers in the program (\$20M)
- Expand the trip reduction performance program (part of Commute Trip Reduction) to fund cost-effective projects, implement recommendations to improve the program, and provide technical support to grant recipients (\$20M)
- Provide incentives and support for local jurisdictions to develop Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers, as employers located in these areas tend to have higher levels of trip reduction (\$32M)
- Provide additional funds for Commute Trip Reduction County Support to help counties experiencing highway congestion integrate regional and local plans to reduce solo-driving commute trips (\$25M)
- Educate the public and use marketing to increase travelers' use of commute options for Commute Trip Reduction (\$10M)

5.2.6 Vanpool Program

- Purchase more vans for the vanpool enhancement program (\$45M)
- Develop and sustain a vanpool rideshare incentive program, using vanpool financial incentives and technical assistance (\$12M)

5.3 Transit Development Plans

Several plans such as the Transit Development Plans (TDP's)/ Annual Reports and the related Summary Report on Public Transportation present comprehensive information on transit. However, since the Plans are supposed to be financially constrained, identifying unmet needs may not clearly be stated. Some transit systems make reference to their performance measures to help identify approaches to meeting future demand with constrained financial resources. However, performance measures are not called out in state guidance for the TDP's. Based on information

provided transit operators in their TDP's, the state Public Transportation Summary does identify performance measures to evaluate and compare systems as required by state law.

The following are observations on TDP's and other reports that could be used to identify unmet transit needs:

- There are a variety of plans, reports, guidelines that could provide a forum for identifying and assessing public transportation needs. Several plans such as the Transit Development Plans (TDP's) and Annual Reports as well as the related Summary Report on Public Transportation present comprehensive information on transit. However, since the Plans are required to be financially constrained, identifying unmet needs may not clearly be addressed.
- Performance measures are not called out in state guidance for TDP's. However, the TDP's of some transit systems make reference to the performance measures they use to manage their systems.
- There is not a consistent methodology for developing the financially-constrained Transit Development Plans in Washington State. Therefore, it is difficult to roll-up the information from all the plans to develop a comprehensive statewide picture. Each transit agency may be using their own set of assumptions to forecast their revenues in the future.

6.0 Information Sources

The following are major information items used to assess potential unmet needs:

- *Washington State Transportation Plan (2007-2026 and Draft of 2011-2030 Update)*: The Plan provides information on both facilities the state owns and state policies and identifies the unmet needs during the Plan period.
- *JTC Transportation Resource Manual*: Several sections of this manual provided information on major plans that affect public transportation planning and development.
- *Special Needs Transportation Coordination (Final Report, January 2009)*: This study examined special needs transportation in Washington, including methods to improve those services and the effectiveness of the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation.
- *Transit Development Plans (TDP's) and longer-range transit plans where available (submitted in 2010 and 2009)*: The TDP's, submitted annually to WSDOT, provide comprehensive information on projected programs and funding levels. While the plans are financially constrained, they do provide indicators of potential program shortfalls and funding estimates.
- *Summary of Public Transportation Report (WSDOT, 2007)*: A summary report providing key information collected through transit agency TDP's. (2008 transit information was provided by WSDOT and WSTA in September 2010)
- *Transit Mobility Program—2008 Annual Report (WSDOT)*: An annual summary report provided to the Legislature on Transit Mobility programs managed by WSDOT's Public Transportation Division.
- *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plans (2006 and 2009 submittals)*: Required by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU); reports are for 2007-2010, except the 2010-2014 plan recently published by the Puget Sound Regional Council.
- *Regional Transportation Plans (MPO's and RTPO's)*: Financially constrained plans that cover public transportation related needs under current estimated funding levels.
- *Washington State Public Transportation Grants (2009-2011 Biennium)*: The submitted grant applications were compared to those that were awarded funding. This provided an indication of unmet needs as reflected by those projects that were not selected.
- *Washington State Transportation Budget (2009-2011 Biennium)*.
- *Summary Information prepared by WSTA in October 2009*: This information focuses on impacts of recession on transit system revenues and consequences related to service levels, capital programming, and other impacts. (Further information is forthcoming from WSTA and will be incorporated in the Final Report for the study.)
- *Survey of Washington State Ferry Riders—April/May 2010*

7.0 Gaps in Public Transit Service Connections by Region

Region	Affected Transit Systems	Gaps - Current Connections	Gaps - Future Connections
South Puget Sound	Intercity Transit / Twin Transit	No connections between Intercity Transit and Twin Transit in Lewis County	Express service demand will grow and is needed
	Intercity Transit / Pierce Transit	Service begins too late and ends too early for connections to SeaTac-bound service and for many trips destined for the central Puget Sound area	Demand in the corridor is expected to grow. I-5 along this corridor already congested
	Intercity Transit / Amtrak-Greyhound	Weekend service on Intercity Transit begins too late for some connections to Amtrak	Weekend service begins too late for some connections to Amtrak
	Mason Transit / Intercity Transit	Midday service is very limited and there is no Sunday service.	Additional growth will create demand for service
	Pierce Transit / Mason Transit	Connections are infrequent and only occur on weekdays	
Sound Transit and South Sound	Sound Transit / Intercity Transit	Sound Transit's Long Range Plan envisions a rail extension past Lakewood to DuPont and Thurston County (not currently funded)	
	Sound Transit / Pierce Transit	Several sections of the regional HOV system used by ST Express service (I-5 south of SR-16, SR-167 south of King County line) are currently incomplete.	
Olympic Peninsula	Clallam Transit / Jefferson Transit	Limited service is provided to Sequim by Jefferson Transit. Service is very limited. No Sunday service is provided.	Future funding for this service is uncertain.
	Jefferson Transit / Kitsap Transit	Service is very limited (4 roundtrips on weekdays), particularly on Saturdays (2 roundtrips). No connections between Kitsap Transit and Jefferson Transit during mid mornings and mid afternoon's weekdays. No Sunday service is provided.	Future funding for this service is uncertain.
	Jefferson Transit / Mason Transit	Service is very limited, particularly on Saturday. No Sunday service is provided	
	Kitsap Transit / Mason Transit	Last weekday trip leaves Bremerton at 6:35 p.m. Saturday service is limited and there is no Sunday service	Future funding to increase service is uncertain
	Kitsap Transit / Jefferson Transit	Alternate transportation modes should be planned for connections between Kitsap County and Jefferson County in the event of a prolonged closure of the Hood Canal Bridge (HCB).	

Region	Affected Transit Systems	Gaps - Current Connections	Gaps - Future Connections
North Puget Sound	Whatcom Transportation / Skagit Transit	Demand warrants two more weekday round trips for current inter-county bus route.	Seamless connections to points south, particularly Everett, throughout the day.
	Whatcom Transportation / Island Transit	Demand warrants two more weekday round trips.	Service connections to Whidbey Island and Camano Island is funded through State of Washington grant and may not be sustainable
	Whatcom Transportation / Greyhound-Amtrak	Effective September 19, 2010 there will be no Sunday service to Greyhound/Amtrak.	
	Island Transit / Skagit Transit	No Sunday service and limited Saturday service	Future of State of Washington funding for this service is uncertain.
	Everett Transit / Skagit Transit	No weekend service connections	Future funding to maintain or increase service is uncertain.
	Community Transit / Skagit Transit	No weekend service.	Future funding to maintain or increase service is uncertain.
	Skagit Transit / Ferry Service	Limited service between Skagit Station and connecting service to ferry terminal (four weekday trips, no weekend service.)	
	Community Transit / Everett Transit	No Community Transit service on Sundays or major holidays due to funding shortfall.	
	Community Transit / Amtrak-Greyhound	No Community Transit service on Sundays or major holidays due to funding shortfall	

Region	Affected Transit Systems	Gaps - Current Connections	Gaps - Future Connections
Sound Transit and North Puget Sound	Sound Transit / Skagit Transit	None identified	Extension of Link light rail or Bus Rapid Transit service on I-5 from Ash Way north to Everett (not funded)
	Sound Transit / Everett Transit	None identified	Extension of Link light rail or Bus Rapid Transit service on I-5 from Ash Way north to Everett and ST Express service to the Boeing Everett industrial center (not funded)
	Sound Transit / Island Transit	None identified	Extension of Link light rail or Bus Rapid Transit service on I-5 from Ash Way north to Everett (not funded)
	Sound Transit / Community Transit	None identified	Extension of Link light rail or Bus Rapid Transit service on I-5 from Ash Way north to Everett and on I-405 from the King County line to I-5. ST Express service to the Boeing Everett industrial center (not funded)

Region	Affected Transit Systems	Gaps - Current Connections	Gaps - Future Connections
Central Puget Sound	King County Metro / Pierce Transit	Lack of ticket vending machines at Federal Way Transit Center impedes convenient regional transfers. Limited frequency (30-60 min) on many connecting routes serving many connection points. No service between Enumclaw & Buckley	Future growth in cross county communities such as Federal Way - Northeast Tacoma and Auburn - Lakeland Hills could require higher levels of service on local routes. Without new revenue it is likely Pierce Transit County and King County will be reduced in order to provide service within Pierce County
	King County Metro / Community Transit	No CT service in Snohomish County on Sundays/holidays	Future funding shortfalls could lead to service reductions.
	King County Metro / Sound Transit	Lack of ticket vending machines at transit centers and major transfer points impedes easy regional transfers. No all-day service to Tukwila Sounder Station due to limited availability of private access road to Renton	Limited bus layover facilities at some ST light rail stations presents challenges for expanding bus service (e.g. to Tukwila Int'l Blvd Station) Future funding shortfalls could lead to service reductions
	King County Metro / Ferry Service	Some midday and evening connections between transit and ferries are difficult due to less frequent and irregular service	Waterfront/Alaskan Way Viaduct construction may prevent all bus access to Colman Dock for several years
	Pierce Transit / Sound Transit	None identified	Additional funding to support increase demand for transfer to Sounder rail system when it operates to S. Tacoma and Lakewood Stations. It will also support additional Sound Transit feeder service in Sumner and Bonney Lake.
	Community Transit / Sound Transit	No Community Transit service on Sundays or major holidays due to funding shortfall.	Until sales tax revenues increase, or new funding is provided, service on Sundays and Holidays will not be possible.
	Community Transit / Ferry Service	No Community Transit service on Sundays or major holidays due to funding shortfall.	Until sales tax revenues increase, or new funding is provided, service on Sundays and Holidays will not be possible.

Region	Affected Transit Systems	Gaps - Current Connections	Gaps - Future Connections
Sound Transit / Central Puget Sound	Sound Transit / Pierce Transit	HOV-2 operation of HOV lanes in this area causes delays to ST Express routes that operate on them. ST2 includes several new connections such as extended commuter rail to Lakewood	Several sections of the regional HOV system used by ST Express service (I-5 south of SR-16, SR-167 south of King County line) are currently incomplete.
	Sound Transit / King County Metro	Current gaps in regional connections being met with planned LRT connections.	Further HCT extensions in King County not funded
	Sound Transit / Community Transit	Link light rail is programmed to be extended from Northgate and the Snohomish County line to Ash Way.	Further extensions in Snohomish County not funded
Southwest Washington	CTRAN and Intercity/Mason/Grays Harbor/Twin/Pierce Transits	CAP provides service to Longview, Woodland, Kalama, Castle Rock, Toledo, Centralia and Tumwater with connections to Intercity Transit in Tumwater BUT does not operate on weekends and has limited weekday service	
	CTRAN/ Amtrak-Greyhound	There is no service to the Vancouver Amtrak Station.	
	CTRAN / Skamania County	Skamania Transit does not provide service on weekends and has limited midday service.	
Eastern Washington	Spokane Transit / Citylink (Kootenai County, ID)	Service gap of about five miles between Liberty Lake, WA and Post Falls, ID. No connection provided between the two services.	
	Spokane Transit / Amtrak-Greyhound	STA service ends too early to connect to Amtrak service which arrives and departs after 1:00 AM	
Southeast Washington	Ben Franklin Transit, Pullman Transit, Valley Transit, Columbia County Public Transportation	Lack of connection between Pullman and South Central areas of state. Lack of expanded services to orchards and fruit processing locations (from this report) No express routes No bus routes to the major employer, the Hanford site No Sunday services	

Region	Affected Transit Systems	Gaps - Current Connections	Gaps - Future Connections
North Central Washington	Link Transit / Okanagan County Transit	Service by Okanagan County Transit is one day per week and requires a request in advance	Chelan and Wenatchee have the only medical facilities accepting Medicaid for critical care or prescriptions. No future funding for the service is available.
	Link Transit / Grant Transit	Connections are one round trip per day and only occur on Weekdays	Demand exists for more frequent service and service on Saturdays. Medical access and employment transportation are key demands.
	Link Transit / Amtrak-Northwest Trailways	None identified	Link Transit serving the Leavenworth Amtrak Station and making timely connections in Wenatchee
	Apple Line (Travel Washington bus route) / Okanagan County Transit	Service is limited	
	Apple Line / Grant Transit	Connections are infrequent and only occur on Weekdays	Continuation of current gap
	Grant Transit / Amtrak-Greyhound	Timing of connections in Ephrata (Amtrak) and Moses Lake (Greyhound)	
	Grant Transit / People for People	Very limited connections in Moses Lake and Warden with People for People route serving to Yakima County.	