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# Local/Regional Jurisdictions

## Overview and Table of Contents

This section summarizes the responsibilities of local jurisdictions and regional organizations in planning, constructing, operating, and managing transportation systems within the state.

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**JURISDICTION: Cities**

**RCW:** 35.72–35.79

**BACKGROUND**

- Cities and towns are responsible for 16,421 miles of streets and approximately 676 bridges in the 281 incorporated municipalities of the state.
- Currently about 70% of cities' transportation funding is generated from local revenue sources, 19% from state revenues, and 11% from federal sources.

**PROGRAM**

- Maintenance, construction, and management of city streets and bridges.
- Cities also have maintenance, construction, and management responsibility for City Streets as Part of State Highways (RCW 47.24). Cities under 25,000 in population have street illumination, street cleaning, catch basins, storm water facilities, and traffic and parking enforcement responsibilities on Limited Access state highways. Cities over 25,000 have the additional responsibilities of slope stability and traffic control signals on Limited Access state highways.
- Six-year plans for city street construction programs must be adopted before July 1 of each year and submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation within 30 days of adoption (per RCW 36.81.121).

**FUNDING**

- 2.96 cents per gallon of the state motor fuel tax
  - Referred to as the statutory or normal distribution to cities
  - Distributed to cities on a per capita basis
- Grants from the Urban Arterial Trust Account, the Transportation Improvement Account, the Small Cities Account programs of the Transportation Improvement Board, and the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Program of the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB).
- Federal-aid programs
  - National Highway System
  - Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement
  - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
  - Surface Transportation Program
    - Distribution by Population
  - Transportation Enhancements
  - Highway Safety Improvement Program
  - High Risk Rural Roads
  - Safe Routes to Schools
  - Surface Transportation Program–Flexible
    - Distribution by Population
    - Freight Projects
    - Legislative Projects
- General-purpose local revenue sources, including local retail sales and use taxes, real and personal property taxes, local real estate excise taxes, other licenses, impact fees, and other fees and taxes.

- Transportation local option taxes
  - Commercial parking tax
  - Border area motor fuel tax (for cities along the Canadian border)
  - Portion of countywide local option motor fuel tax

(See the *Local Tax* section, page 107 of this manual for information on *Local Option Taxes*.)

**JURISDICTION: Counties**

**RCW** 36.73, 36.79, 46.68.090, 84.52.043

**BACKGROUND**

- County Road Administration Board (CRAB) sets administrative standards and provides oversight for the county road departments of each of the 39 counties.
- Counties are responsible for managing 39,828 miles of roads and approximately 3,264 bridges in the unincorporated areas across the state.
- Currently, about 62% of counties' transportation funding is generated from local revenue sources, 27% from state revenues, and 11% from federal sources.

**PROGRAM**

- Maintenance, construction, management, and operation of county roads and bridges.
- Six-Year plans for county road, trail, and ferry construction programs must be adopted by each county prior to adoption of its annual budget and be submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation and CRAB within 30 days of adoption (per RCW 36.81.121). Annual programs must be adopted prior to adoption of annual road budget.
- Projects submitted as a part of County Roads Administration Board, Transportation Improvement Board, or federal grant applications must be included in the Six-Year plans.

**FUNDING**

- 4.92 cents per gallon of state motor fuel tax
  - Referred to as statutory or normal county distribution
  - Distributed to counties using formula based upon mileage, needs, resources, and population
- Grants and distributions from County Road Administration Board (CRAB)
  - County Arterial Preservation Program
    - 0.45 cents per gallon of state motor vehicle fuel tax
    - Distributed to counties according to percentage of arterial lane miles
  - Rural Arterial Program
    - 0.58 cents per gallon of state motor vehicle fuel tax
    - Regional distribution based on rural land area and mileage of paved county rural arterials and collectors. Within each region, distribution is competitive based on statutory criteria.
- Grants from the Urban Arterial Trust Account, and the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Program of the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board.
- Federal-aid programs
  - National Highway System
  - Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement
  - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
  - Surface Transportation Program
    - Distribution by Population
  - Transportation Enhancements
  - Highway Safety Improvement Program
    - High Risk Rural Roads
  - Safe Routes to Schools
  - Surface Transportation Program – Flexible

- Distribution by Population
- Freight Projects
- Legislative Projects
- County road levy (property tax) in the unincorporated areas of a county (maximum \$2.25/\$1,000).
- Transportation local option taxes
  - Countywide motor vehicle fuel tax (10% of state fuel tax)
  - Commercial parking tax
  - Local option taxes for high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes
    - MVET or employer tax
    - Eligible counties are King, Pierce, and Snohomish

(See the *Local Tax* section, page 107 of this manual for information on *Local Option Taxes*.)

**JURISDICTION: County Ferry District**

**RCW:** 36.54.110

**BACKGROUND**

- Established by county legislative authority
- County legislative authority, acting independently, is ex-officio governing body
- District can be county-wide or a portion of a county
- Authority to operate passenger-only ferry service

**FUNDING**

- Annual ad valorem property tax levies of up to 75 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation (councilmatic) (36.54.130). The levy limit in King County is 7.5 cents per thousand.
- Voter approved annual excess property tax levies (36.54.140)

Using the authority outlined here, in May of 2008, King County established a County Ferry District for controlling and operating the Southworth to Vashon passenger-only ferry run. They assumed authority for this run as of July 1, 2008.

**JURISDICTION:**

**Local Improvement Districts/Road Improvement Districts**

**RCW:**

36.94.220 - 36.94.300; 35.43 – 35.56 (LID), 36.88 (RID)

**BACKGROUND**

**LIDs:**

- LID - a special purpose financing mechanism that may be created by local governments to fund improvements in specific areas which are smaller than the unit of government.
- Local improvements must directly benefit nearby property owners (e.g., water main, sewers, or streets).
- Local governments that can create LIDs include cities, counties, port districts, water districts, transportation benefit district, and others.
- LIDs can be initiated by petition of property owners in an area or by resolution of local governments.
- Voter approval is not required for LID formation, but may be challenged by property owners.

**RIDs:**

- Road Improvement District (RID) similar to LID, except that it funds road improvements in unincorporated areas.
- RIDs can be initiated by county resolution or by petition of affected property owners.

**FUNDING**

- Property owners who benefit from improvements are assessed at proportionate levels to pay for the improvements.

(See the *Local Tax* section, page 107 of this manual for information on *Local Option Taxes*.)

**JURISDICTION: Metropolitan Planning Organizations**

**RCW:** Authorized under federal law 23 U.S.C. 134, and PL 109-59 Sections 1107, 3005, and 6001

**BACKGROUND**

- Federal law requires that there be designated transportation planning organizations in areas with urban population of 50,000 or greater.
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are designated by local officials and the Governor.
- In urbanized areas, the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) is managed by the MPO (RCW 47.80.020).(see next section)
- There are eleven MPOs in Washington, including: Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (SWRTC), Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC), Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCG), Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG), Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG), Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG), Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council (WVTC), Skagit Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO), and Lewis-Clark Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (LCVMPO).
- MPOs with urban populations greater than 200,000 (PSRC, SRTC, and SWRTC) are federally designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) and have expanded responsibilities under federal transportation legislation--Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), now expired but extended through 12-31-10.
- Each MPO has an executive or policy board consisting primarily of local elected officials and may include representatives of major employers, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), transit agencies, and port districts. Some MPOs (such as PSRC) also include legislators as voting or *ex-officio* board members.

**PROGRAM**

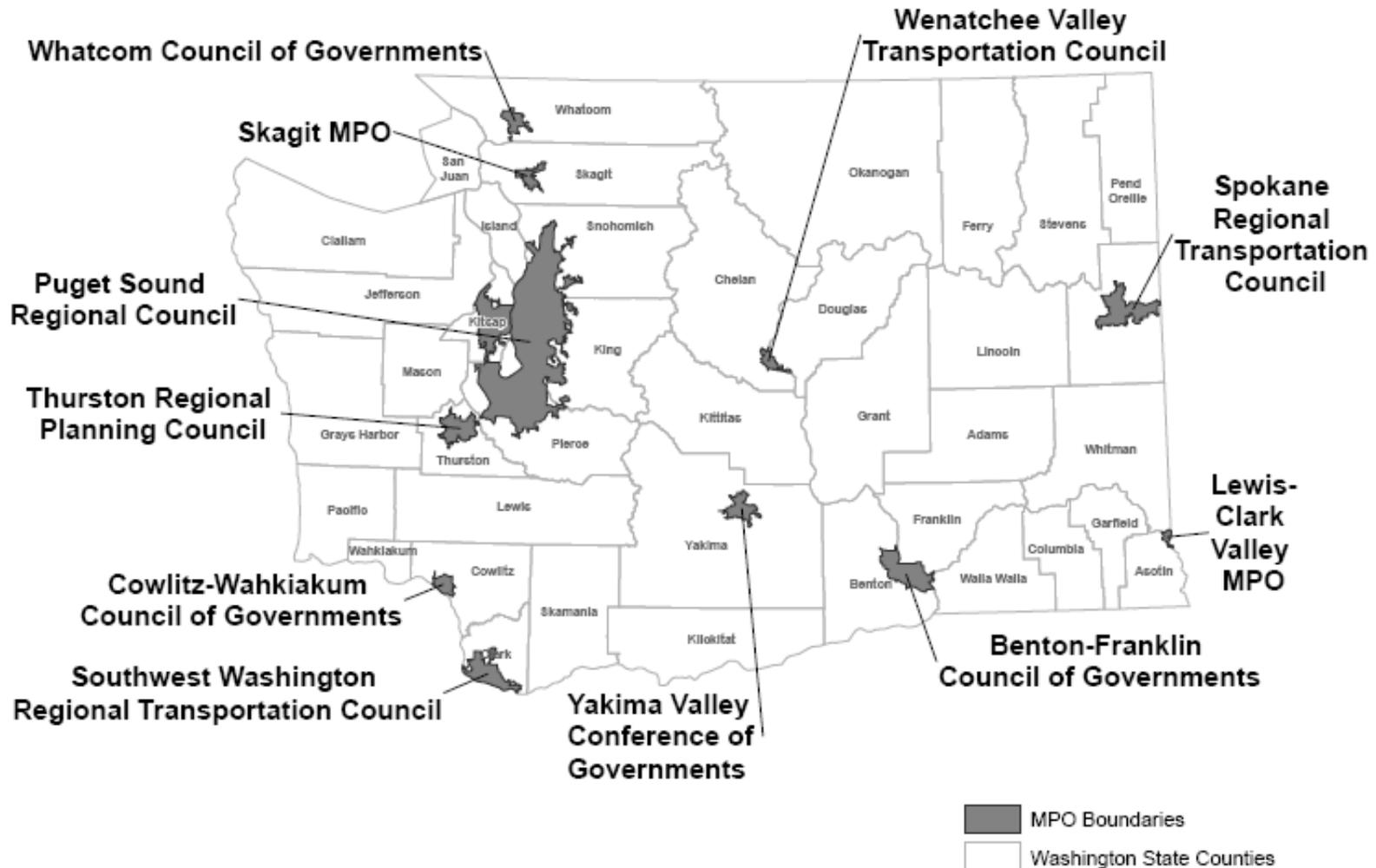
- MPO requirements are part of the federal planning and programming statute, currently SAFETEA-LU, which was signed into law on August 10, 2005.
- MPOs are required to:
  - Carry out a continuing, coordinated, and comprehensive (“3C”) transportation planning process.
  - Prepare a financially constrained 20-year metropolitan transportation plan that serves as the basis for the selection of projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
  - Develop a four-year TIP that includes a prioritized list of projects and a financial plan demonstrating how the program will be financed; it must be updated at least every four years.
  - Work with regional clean air authorities to develop transportation control measures for the air quality State Implementation Plan (SIP) in areas where national air quality standards have not been met.
- Additionally TMAs are required to:
  - Develop a system for monitoring and managing congestion in their metropolitan area.
  - Select projects for federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) program funding.

In Washington, although not required by federal rules, MPOs for areas that do not qualify as TMAs can allocate federal CMAQ and STP funds for regional projects. In order to perform this selection, each MPO must establish a process for project selection. The project selection process must involve local jurisdictions, and include port authorities, transit agencies, and other transportation providers and users.

## FUNDING

- In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2010, Washington State received \$6.5 million from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and \$2.0 from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to support MPO planning activities.
- WSDOT distributes federal funding through formulas developed cooperatively with the state's eleven MPOs and agreed to by FHWA or FTA for their respective agency's funds.

# Metropolitan Planning Organizations



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**JURISDICTION:**

**Ports**

**RCW:**

Title 53

**BACKGROUND**

- Ports are municipal corporations of the state and are classified as "special purpose districts" (organized to provide one or a small number of specific services)
- Can be smaller than a city or town, or as large as an entire county
- 75 public port districts in 33 of 39 counties
- 22 of the 75 districts located in two counties (12 - Kitsap County and 10 - Grant County)
- Formed with simple majority approval of voters residing within the proposed district's boundaries
- Proposition to form a port district may be placed on the ballot by either board of county commissioners or county voters' petition
- Policies set by each elected board of port commissioners

**PROGRAM**

- Economic Development:
  - Buy and develop land for industrial purposes
  - Provide basic infrastructure to industrial sites
  - Construct buildings
  - Manage long-term leases with port tenants
- Transportation:
  - Marine shipping
  - Fishing terminal development
  - Commercial and recreational marinas
  - Air transport

**FUNDING**

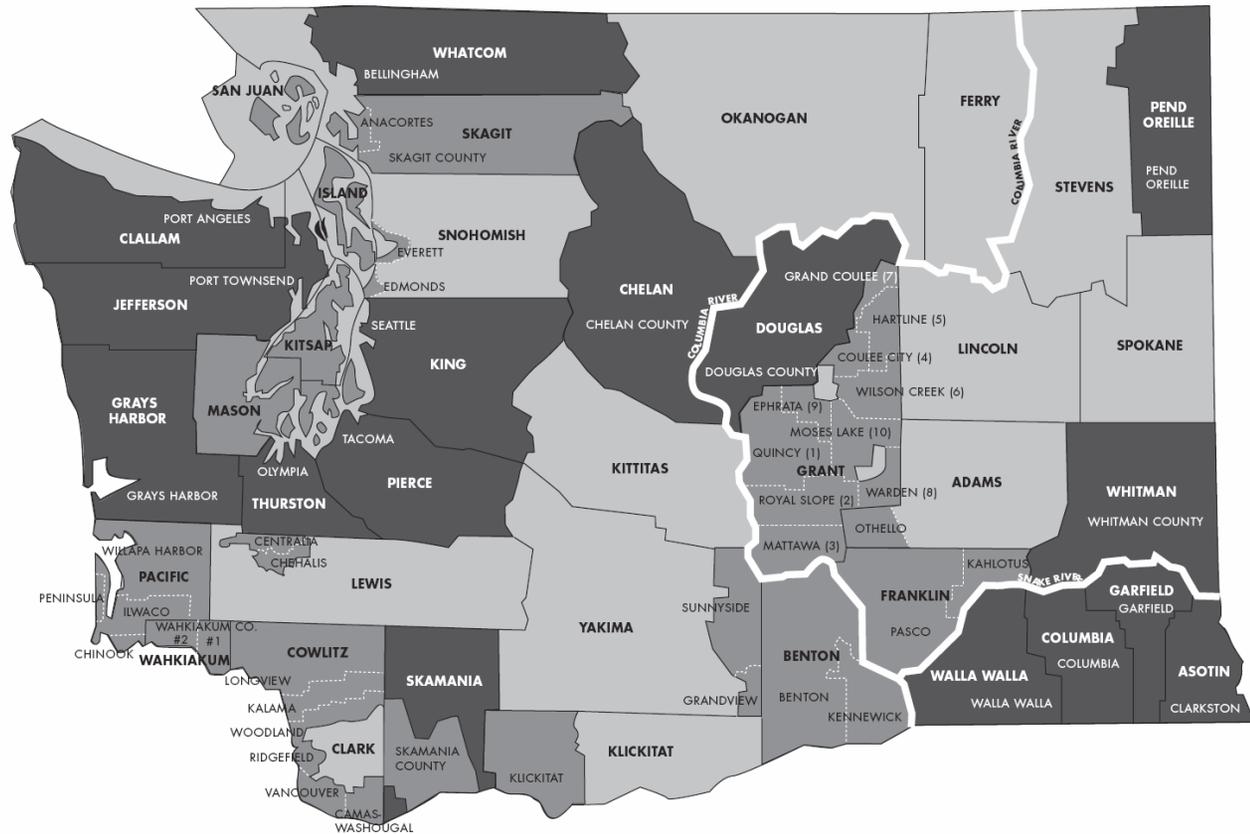
- User fees, property lease and rental fees, property tax levies, interest income, federal grants and bond proceeds

DETAIL OF SAN JUAN, ISLAND, KITSAP AND MASON COUNTIES



# WASHINGTON PUBLIC PORT DISTRICTS

- COUNTY-WIDE PORT DISTRICT
- LESS THAN COUNTY-WIDE PORT DISTRICT
- NO PORT DISTRICT AREA



**NOTE: The Port of Tahuya in Mason County was dissolved in 2006.**

**JURISDICTION: Public Transit Systems**

**RCW:** See below

**BACKGROUND**

- Organized as locally controlled, special-purpose municipal governments to provide public transit services.
- 31 operating transit systems, each using one of seven different governance structures.
- Public Transportation Benefit Areas (PTBA) (RCW 36.57A)
  - 20 systems
  - Established by public transportation improvement conference convened by the county legislative authority.
  - Governed by up to nine elected officials selected by the legislative bodies of the county and the component cities (multicounty, up to 15). Citizen members permitted in Thurston County. In Mason County, the elected officials include school board members, fire district members, and public hospital district members.
  - Additional authority for PTBA bordering Puget Sound to operate passenger-only ferry service, including additional tax sources. (*See Local Taxes section, page 107*).
- County (RCW 36.56)
  - One system: King County Metro
  - Assumed the responsibilities of a metropolitan municipal corporation (RCW 35.58)
  - County must have population of at least 210,000
- Cities (RCW 35.58.2721 and Chapter 35.95A RCW for city transportation authorities--monorail)
  - Five systems
  - Established by elected city officials
  - Operate public transit systems within corporate limits and to 15 miles beyond
  - Cities: Yakima, Everett, Pullman, Selah and Union Gap
  - City Transportation Authority (monorail), cities with population over 300,000.
  - See Seattle Popular Monorail authority (*under Modes section*).
- County Transportation Authority (CTA) (RCW 36.57)
  - Two systems: Grays Harbor and Columbia County
  - Separate legal entities
  - Established by resolution of the county legislative body
  - Governing body is statutorily comprised of three county legislative members and three mayors.
  - Permits transportation of persons with special needs if public transit and ambulance service functions are not authorized first.
- Unincorporated Transportation Benefit Areas (UTBA) (RCW 36.57.100)
  - Garfield and Whitman counties
  - Formed by county commission
  - Unincorporated areas only
- Regional Transportation Authority (RCW 81.112.030)
  - One created in Central Puget Sound in 1992, Sound Transit
  - Board consists of 18 members: 17 members are local elected officials and the 18<sup>th</sup> member is the State Secretary of Transportation; local elected officials include mayors, city council members, and county executives and council members from within the Sound Transit District.
  - Operate or contract for commuter/express bus, commuter rail, and light rail.
  - Special Needs Public Transportation Benefit Authority (RCW 36.57.130)
  - None have been established

## PROGRAM

- Primarily fixed route services in a specified geographic area (i.e., area of governance). In rural areas, transit agencies often provide deviated fixed route services to meet the needs of individuals unable to get to a routed service.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires public transportation agencies to provide accessible demand response transportation services complementary to the fixed route service for persons with functional disabilities.
- Sometimes provide transportation services or funding for the following:
  - Transportation demand management strategies in urban areas
  - Job access transportation for persons with disabilities or low incomes
  - Commute Trip Reduction activities in urban areas
  - Vanpool/carpool coordination
  - Vehicles for commuter and community vanpools
  - Ambulance service (CTA only)

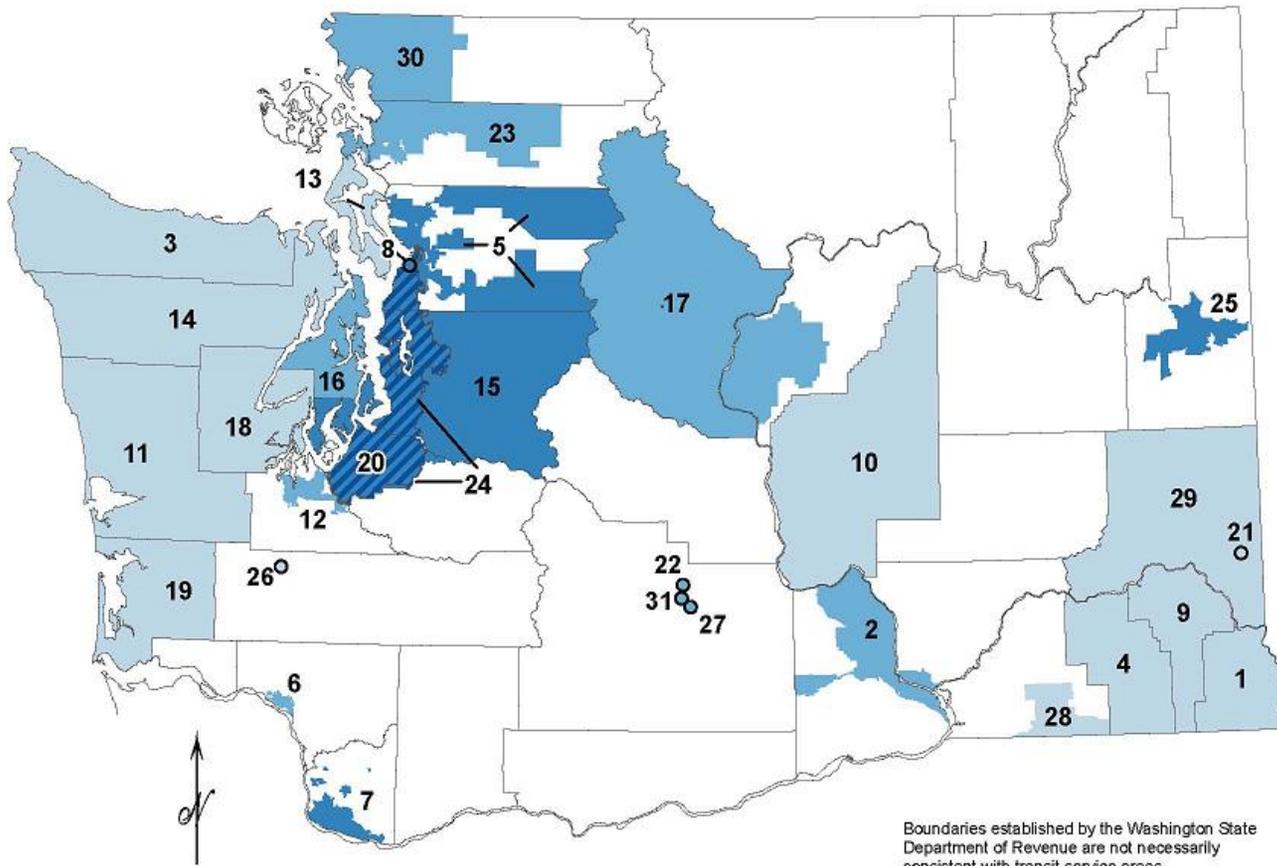
## FUNDING

- Local tax options (require voters' approval)
  - Sales and use tax – can levy up to 0.9%
  - Household – cannot exceed \$1 per month for each housing unit; no transit agency is currently using this tax option.
  - Business and Occupation (B&O) – no limit on the amount of tax; only the City of Pullman has levied a utility tax (equivalent to .314% sales tax).
  - Additional tax authority for PTBAs for passenger-only ferry service. (*See Local Taxes section, page 107*)
- Federal and state grant funds
- Farebox and pass revenues
- Contracts for service to community colleges, and/or universities; pass programs for schools.
- Advertising revenues
- High capacity transit taxes (require voters' approval)
  - Sales and use tax – up to 0.9%
  - Motor vehicle excise tax – up to 0.8% (Repealed by I-776, except Sound Transit which collects 0.3% MVET since tax revenues are pledged against bonds).
  - Employer tax – up to \$2/month/employee
- City Transportation Authority (monorail)
  - Taxes (require voters' approval)
    - Sales and use tax on car rentals – Up to 1.944%
    - Motor vehicle excise tax – Up to 2.5% (includes authority for rental car tax)
    - Car tabs – Up to \$100
  - Other revenue
    - Revenues earned by activities not associated with public transportation services such as sales of maintenance services, rental of vehicles and buildings, non-transit parking lots, and investments.
    - Revenue bonds

(See the *Local Tax* section, page 107 of this manual for information on *Local Option Taxes*.)

## Transit Agencies

- 1) Asotin County Transit – Public transportation benefit area (PTBA) serving Asotin County
- 2) Ben Franklin Transit – PTBA serving Benton and Franklin Counties
- 3) Clallam Transit System – Countywide PTBA serving Clallam County
- 4) Columbia County Public Transportation – County Transportation Authority (CTA) serving Columbia County
- 5) Community Transit – PTBA serving urban and rural areas of Snohomish County
- 6) Cowlitz Transit Authority (CUBS) – PTBA serving Kelso and Longview
- 7) C-TRAN – PTBA serving urban communities and small cities of Clark County
- 8) Everett Transit System – City operation
- 9) Garfield County – Unincorporated county benefit area serving Garfield County
- 10) Grant Transit Authority – Countywide PTBA serving Grant County
- 11) Grays Harbor Transportation Authority – CTA serving entire county
- 12) Intercity Transit – PTBA serving urban portions of Thurston County
- 13) Island Transit – Countywide PTBA serving Island County
- 14) Jefferson Transit Authority – Countywide PTBA serving Jefferson County
- 15) King County Metro Transit – County transportation system serving King County
- 16) Kitsap Transit – Countywide PTBA serving Kitsap County
- 17) Link Transit – PTBA serving Chelan County and a portion of Douglas County
- 18) Mason County Transportation Authority – Countywide PTBA serving Mason County
- 19) Pacific Transit System – Countywide PTBA serving Pacific County
- 20) Pierce Transit – PTBA serving Pierce County
- 21) Pullman Transit – City operation
- 22) Selah Transit – City operation
- 23) Skagit Transit – PTBA serving Skagit County
- 24) Sound Transit – Regional Transit Authority serving urban areas of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties
- 25) Spokane Transit Authority – PTBA serving Spokane County
- 26) Twin Transit – PTBA serving Centralia and Chehalis
- 27) Union Gap Transit – City operation
- 28) Valley Transit – PTBA serving Walla Walla County
- 29) Whatcom Transportation Authority – PTBA serving Whatcom County
- 30) Whitman County Unincorporated Transportation Benefit Authority – serving unincorporated areas of Whitman County
- 31) Yakima Transit – City operation



**Transit Size**

- Urban
- Small Urban
- Rural
- Regional District
- City

- 1 Asotin County PTBA
- 2 Ben Franklin Transit
- 3 Clallam Transit System
- 4 Columbia County Public Transportation
- 5 Community Transit
- 6 Cowlitz Transit Authority (CUBS)
- 7 C-TRAN
- 8 Everett Transit
- 9 Garfield County Public Transportation
- 10 Grant Transit Authority
- 11 Grays Harbor Transportation Authority
- 12 Intercity Transit
- 13 Island Transit
- 14 Jefferson Transit Authority
- 15 King County Metro
- 16 Kitsap Transit
- 17 Link Transit
- 18 Mason County Transportation Authority
- 19 Pacific Transit
- 20 Pierce Transit
- 21 Pullman Transit
- 22 Selah Transit
- 23 Skagit Transit
- 24 Sound Transit District
- 25 Spokane Transit Authority
- 26 Twin Transit
- 27 Union Gap Transit
- 28 Valley Transit
- 29 Whitman County UTBA
- 30 Whatcom Transportation Authority
- 31 Yakima Transit

Boundaries established by the Washington State Department of Revenue are not necessarily consistent with transit service areas.

**JURISDICTION:**

**Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID)**

**RCW:**

Chapter 36.120

**BACKGROUND**

- Objective is to permit the King, Pierce and Snohomish county area-to form a special district to plan and finance certain highway improvements.
- The RTID would be a separate legal entity.
- The district is formed by vote of county councils of multiple contiguous counties, or by a single county, which then must be approved by voters living within the affected area.
- Authorized in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties only, and may include multiple contiguous counties, or a single county. The district is encouraged to include at least the portion of each member county located within a regional transit authority serving that county.

**FORMATION**

- Planning Committee formation required by the county councils proposing a RTID. The committee membership is comprised of county council members of each county proposing a RTID. Decisions are made by 60% majority vote based on proportional representation. Secretary of Transportation serves as non-voting member. Seven-member executive board. Planning committee may dissolve with two-thirds weighted vote.
- Planning Committee develops plan for improvements and submits plan to county councils. If a county opts not to participate in the district, but two contiguous counties do proceed, plan is redefined and submitted back to participating counties. If counties adopt plan, plan is submitted to voters.
- If RTID approved by voters, the governing board is comprised of county council members of member counties.
- In 2007, the plan developed by the then-existing Planning Committee was required to go on the November 2007 General Election ballot, along with a Sound Transit Phase II proposal. Both plans were required to be approved by the voters for either to be validated. The voters rejected this joint proposal, therefore the proposed RTID was not formed.

**ELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

- Capital improvements to highway of statewide significance (HSS) that adds a lane or new lanes, repairs or replaces a lane or lanes damaged by the 2001 earthquake;
- Capital improvements to all or portions of a HSS including an extension, and may include certain multi-modal capital improvements including approaches, HOV lanes, flyover ramps, park and ride lots, bus pullouts, vanpool vans and transportation system management improvements;
- Up to 10% of funds may be for capital improvements to all or portions of a city street, county road or existing highway or new highway that intersects with an HSS if: the project is included in a plan that adds capacity to a HSS; the DOT Secretary finds that the project would better relieve congestion than the same expenditure on the HSS; 15 percent of the cost is paid by the local jurisdiction; and the RTID contribution may not exceed \$1 Billion.

- No funds may be used for operation, preservation or maintenance of the facility except for toll facilities where tolls have been pledged to finance facilities and for traffic mitigation for projects in the investment plan.

### FUNDING

- RTID tax options: (must be voter approved)
  - Sales and use tax - up to 0.1%
  - Vehicle registration fee - up to \$100/year
  - Local option fuel tax at 10% of the state fuel tax rate
  - Parking tax
  - Tolls on facilities identified in the Improvement Plan, and as approved by the State. Transportation Commission
  - \$2/month/employee tax
  - 0.8% Motor Vehicle Excise Tax

(See the *Local Tax* section of this manual for information on *Local Option Taxes*.)

### ACCOUNTABILITY & OTHER FEATURES

- Accountability including: public vote on projects and taxes; process to address project cost escalation; district does not own projects; and limits the percentage of design/construction costs that may go to administration.
- Agency and taxes imposed sunset after projects are constructed and debt is retired. Limited RTID staff, DOT provides staff support.

**JURISDICTION: Regional Transportation Planning Organizations**

**RCW: 47.80**

**BACKGROUND**

- In order to ensure local and regional land use and transportation coordination, cities and counties are authorized to create Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs).
- RTPOs are formed through the voluntary association of local governments within a county or within geographically contiguous counties. Each organization must meet the following criteria:
  - Encompass at least one complete county.
  - Have a population of at least 100,000 or contain a minimum of three counties.
  - Have as members all counties within the region, and at least 60% of the cities and towns within the region, representing a minimum of 75% of the cities' and towns' populations.
- Once formed, a lead planning agency must be designated to coordinate preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan and carry out the other responsibilities of the RTPO. (One RTPO, QuadCo, rotates this responsibility among the four member counties.)
- RTPOs must have a policy board with representatives from major employers, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), transit districts, ports, and member counties and cities. Under RCW 47.80.040, any members of the House of Representatives or the state Senate that have at least some of the RTPO area as part of their legislative district are *ex officio*, nonvoting policy board members.
- RTPOs invite tribal nations to participate in their transportation planning process.
- Fourteen RTPOs have been formed, including 38 of 39 counties (San Juan County has not yet chosen to become part of an RTPO).
- In urbanized areas, the lead planning agency for the RTPO is the same as for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated for federal transportation planning purposes (RCW 47.80.020).

**PROGRAM**

- Establish guidelines and principles pursuant RCW 47.80.026 that provide specific direction for the development and evaluation of the transportation elements of local comprehensive plans.
- Prepare and periodically update a transportation strategy for the region.
- Prepare a Regional Transportation Plan as set forth in RCW 47.80.030 that is consistent with applicable countywide planning policies for those counties fully planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36.70A).
- Certify that the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties, cities, and towns within the region reflect the guidelines and principles developed by the RTPO and are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Where appropriate, certify that countywide planning policies are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Develop a six-year regional transportation improvement program in cooperation with WSDOT, operators of public transportation services, and local governments in the region.

- Certify that the six-year capital facility plans (RCW 36.70A.070) developed by cities and counties for street and road improvements and six-year capital and service improvement plans developed by transit agencies are consistent with the regional transportation plan.
- Review level of service methodologies used by cities and counties planning under the GMA to promote a consistent regional evaluation of transportation facilities and corridors. Work with cities, counties, transit agencies, WSDOT, and others to develop level of service standards or alternative measures (RCW 47.80.023).
- Review the regional transportation plan biennially for currency and send documentation of the review to WSDOT.
- WSDOT has the following responsibilities:
  - Establish minimum standards for regional transportation plans. (These standards are provided by WAC 468-86; further requirements of regional transportation plans are defined by the GMA, RCW 36.70A.)
  - Facilitate coordination among RTPOs.
  - Provide general administrative oversight.
  - Identify and jointly plan improvements and strategies within corridors providing regional or statewide movement of people and goods, through the regional planning process and state planning efforts (per RCW 47.01.071).

### FUNDING

The Legislature appropriated \$4.4 million to WSDOT from the Motor Vehicle Account (State) in the 2009–11 Biennium for the RTPO program. This appropriation was distributed, as agreed to among the WSDOT and RTPOs, in two parts:

- \$2.4 million was distributed among the RTPOs for regional transportation planning. Each RTPO received \$15,000 for each county within the RTPO; the remainder was distributed based on a population formula (one half on a per capita basis of total population and one half on a per capita basis of the rural population in each RTPO).
- \$2 million was distributed among the RTPOs for participation in statewide long-range transportation planning. Each RTPO received an annual allotment portion dependent upon its federally classified type: Transportation Management Areas (TMAs, that is, MPOs under federal law with over 200,000 population) – \$50,000; MPOs between 50,000 population and 199,999 population – \$30,000; and non-metropolitan RTPOs – \$10,000; with the remainder of the \$1 million annual allotment distributed on a per capita basis.

### ADMINISTRATION

Grants and compliance for RTPOs in Washington State are managed by WSDOT’s Transportation Planning Office within the Strategic Planning Division.

# Regional Transportation Planning Organizations



Asotin County is an adjunct member of the Palouse RTPO  
 Kitsap County is in both Peninsula and Puget Sound Regional Council  
 San Juan County is not a member of any RTPO

 Washington State Counties  
 RTPO Boundaries

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JURISDICTION:                      **Sound Transit-The Central Puget Sound**

RCW:                                      81.112.030

BACKGROUND

- Separate legal entity
- Formed by vote of county councils of two or more contiguous counties
  - Approved by King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties in 1993
- Authorized in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties only and may include all or portions of counties
- Eighteen-member governing board composed of city and county elected officials appointed by county executives and the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation, with at least half of local officials serving on transit boards in member counties.

PROGRAM

- To provide new high capacity transportation services for the Central Puget Sound region.
  - Intercity bus operations and facilities (Regional Express) contracted through Community Transit, King County Metro Transit, and Pierce Transit.
  - Light rail operations (Link Light Rail) in Tacoma and Seattle – SeaTac
  - Commuter rail operations (Sounder) between Seattle and Tacoma and Everett contracted through BNSF, maintenance through Amtrak.

FUNDING

- High capacity transit tax options (must be voter approved)
  - Sales and use tax - up to 0.9%
  - Motor vehicle excise tax - up to 0.8%\* (includes authority for rental car sales tax)
  - Employer tax - up to \$2/month/employee
    - \* ***Revoked with the passage of I-776; however, the tax rate is still imposed at the rate of 0.3% since those revenues have been pledged for bond indebtedness***
  - Other revenue:
    - ◆ Farebox
    - ◆ General obligation bonds
    - ◆ Revenue bonds
    - ◆ Federal grants

(See the *Local Tax* section, page 107 of this manual for information on *Local Option Taxes*.)

APPROVAL OF SOUND TRANSIT (formally Regional Transit Authority)

- Vote in November 1996 approved plan and authorized funding within the urban areas of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. The vote passed by about 57%.
- The current voter-approved Sound Transit plan includes the following:
  - A 1.6-mile light rail line in downtown Tacoma.

- About 24 miles of new light rail from Seattle to SeaTac. An initial 14 mile segment between downtown Seattle and South 154th Street began construction in 2003. The line, now 15.6 miles, extends to Sea-Tac airport and opened in July, 2009.
- A 3.1 mile University extension, from downtown via Capital Hill to the University of Washington at Montlake, is under construction. Sound Transit received a \$813 million Federal Transit Administration grant to match local funds. Passenger service would begin on this segment in 2016.
- Nineteen new Regional Express bus routes serving King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. All the routes are in service as of October 2002.
- More than 82 miles of commuter rail from Lakewood and Tacoma to Seattle and from Everett to Tacoma. Service between Tacoma and Seattle began in the fall of 2000. Service between Seattle and Everett began December 2003.
- Numerous HOV lane direct access ramps have been completed; several transit centers, including Bellevue and Federal Way are complete and numerous park-and-ride lots have been developed.
- Funding plan approved by voters
  - 0.4% sales and use tax
  - 0.3% motor vehicle excise tax (revoked with the passage of I-776, but still being collected due to the pledge of tax revenues for bonds)
  - Both taxes took effect April 1, 1997

#### APPROVAL OF SOUND TRANSIT 2

- Vote in November 2008 approved plan and authorized funding within the urban areas of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. The vote passed by 57%.
- The Sound Transit 2 plan includes the following:
  - A 36-mile extension of light rail north, east and south of Seattle.
  - Four new Sounder round trips between Tacoma and Seattle.
  - 100,000 more hours of ST Express bus service.
- Funding plan approved by voters
  - 0.5% sales and use tax
  - Taxes took effect April 1, 2009

**JURISDICTION:**                      **Transportation Benefit Districts (TBD)**

**RCW:**                                      36.73

**BACKGROUND**

- Cities and counties may establish TBDs to fund capital improvements and operation of city streets, county roads and state highways, high capacity transportation systems, public transportation, and other transportation programs of regional or statewide significance including transportation demand management.
- Counties or cities may create a TBD through interlocal agreement. The areas may include multiple jurisdictions, including all or portions of transit district or port districts, with the approval of those agencies.
- A city TBD may include areas of another city or unincorporated area with approval of the governing jurisdiction.
- Creation of the district requires a public hearing and a finding of public interest for formation.
- The Governing body is the legislative authority of the city or county creating the district, acting in an ex-officio capacity. A multi-jurisdiction district must have at least a five member governing body, with at least one member from each participating jurisdiction. Alternatively, under certain circumstances, a multi-jurisdiction district may be governed by the metropolitan planning organization serving the district.
- Interlocal agreement is provided for multi-jurisdiction districts and the electors are all residents within the district.
- Ownership of the facilities revert to appropriate jurisdictions after improvements are made.

**FUNDING**

- Single-year, voter-approved excess property tax levies
- Multi-year, voter-approved excess property tax levies for bond redemption
- General obligation bonds and revenue bonds
- A voter approved sales tax of up to 0.2%, which may not exceed a ten-year period without voter reauthorization (unless the revenues are dedicated to the repayment of debt, such as general obligation bonds, in which case the sales tax may exceed a ten-year period)
- A \*voter approved motor vehicle license renewal fee of up to \$100 (\*except for passenger only ferry transportation improvements, up to \$20 may be imposed without voter approval if imposed in a jurisdiction-wide TBD)
- With voter approval, vehicle tolling; however, tolls on state routes must be administered by WSDOT. All tolls potentially impacting state facilities must be approved by the state Transportation Commission.
- LID formation
- Border area motor fuel/special fuel excise tax (only for a district that has an international border crossing within its boundaries)
- Commercial and industrial development fees related to transportation projects
- Acceptance of gifts, grants, and donations

(See the *Local Tax* section, page 107 of this manual for information on *Local Option Taxes*.)

JURISDICTION:

**Seattle Popular Monorail Authority -- The City of Seattle  
Boundary--Now Dissolved**

RCW:

Chapter 248, Laws of 2002 (Chapter 35.95A, RCW)

BACKGROUND

- Separate municipal corporation
- Formed in a city with a population greater than 300,000 in one of two ways:
  - By an ordinance by the city council and approved by a majority vote of city voters; or
  - By a petition submitted by the citizens of the city and approved by a majority vote of city voters
- Includes the territory within a city
- Authorized in the City of Seattle only

PROGRAM

- To provide a public monorail function in the City of Seattle
  - Will provide five monorail lines
  - The Green Line, the first line, will be 14 miles long and run from Ballard and West Seattle to downtown. There will be 19 stations along the line.

FUNDING

- Taxes (must be voter approved)
  - Motor vehicle excise tax on vehicle re-licensing - up to 2.5% (excludes new vehicles)
  - Sales and use tax on retail car rentals – up to 1.944%
  - Car tab fee upon vehicle re-licensing – up to \$100
- Other revenue and revenue options available
  - Fares
  - Excess levies on property
  - General obligation bonds
  - Revenue bonds
  - Regular property taxes

APPROVAL OF SEATTLE POPULAR MONORAIL AUTHORITY (formally City Transportation Authority - CTA)

- Vote in November 2002 within the City of Seattle approved the creation of the CTA, the plan to build the green line, and funding. The vote passed by 50.23%.
- The Seattle Popular Monorail Authority plan approved by voters includes the following:
  - An initial 14-mile monorail line from Ballard and West Seattle to downtown Seattle. Service was expected to begin in December 2007
  - Four additional lines were planned to be proposed totaling 44 miles
  - Initiative 83, the monorail recall, was defeated by voters in November 2004
- Funding plan approved by Seattle voters
  - 1.4% motor vehicle excise tax on vehicle re-licensing
  - Collection of the motor vehicle excise tax began in June 2003 and was set at .85% for the initial planning year. The full 1.4% began being assessed on vehicles with renewal dates of June 1, 2004 and later. (Now repealed)

TERMINATION OF SEATTLE POPULAR MONORAIL AUTHORITY (formally City Transportation Authority - CTA)

- Vote in November 2005 within the City of Seattle rejected a shortened monorail project and funding for it. The vote passed by more than 60.0%.
  - Provisions of the ballot measure required termination of the Seattle Popular Monorail project and dissolution of the Authority after payment of outstanding debt.
  - Collection of the motor vehicle excise tax was terminated as of August 1, 2006.