Transportation in a Small Community

2022 AWC Conference in Vancouver – Joint Transportation Committee
June 21, 2022
Steve King, PW Director
Fun Fact: Did you know Port Townsend is located on the nose of a Dragon?
Introduction to Port Townsend

Statistics:
- Population = 10,000+
- Median Age = 56 and rising
- Economy: Marine Trades, Tourism, Healthcare

Streets Statistics
- Miles of Street = 84
- Area = Approx. 7.0 sq. miles
- Streets Maintenance Budget = $950k
- Streets Preservation Budget = $0
- Streets Grant’s Match Budget = Debt

Kinetic Sculpture Race

Always trying something new and having a little fun along the way!
Introduction to Port Townsend

Fun Fact:

Port Townsend’s Urban Growth Area is coincident with the City Limits. The city was platted in the 1800’s in anticipation of 25,000 people or more.
Presentation Goal: Share Three Key Transportation Focus Points

1. Equity
2. Regional Transportation System
3. Infrastructure Challenges in Port Townsend
Equity Concerns in Port Townsend

- Housing shortage and costs are working against our community, especially in the realm of transportation.

- Age and Disability – Our aging population creates a disproportionate share of disabilities and needs for services.
Housing affordability Index

Wash. St. = 86.3
Jeff. Co. = 74.5
(100 being considered affordable)

Source: AWB Institute
Lack of supply: Houses on the market today
Commuting Challenges: Remember Small Communities
Aging Population and Disabilities

National Trend: Persons over 65 with a disability = 35% +/-
Macular degeneration is a primary concern of our local disability advocacy group.
The North Olympic Peninsula Lives by the Regional Transportation System. Thank you!

- Wash. St. Ferries
- State Route 104
- State Route 3
- Highway 101
Washington State Ferry System
Five Ferry Routes Play a Role
The Hood Canal Bridge & Hwy 101
Looking forward… What we do today matters… Just like what we did in the past is impacting us today.

Forced and Embraced Minimalism… Has our community accepted small streets without amenities in residential areas?
Port Townsend Population History

Hard Economic Times = Poor Infrastructure

Economic Health Matters
Poor Infrastructure in the Past Haunts Us Today

Typical Port Townsend Local Access Street. Most of our streets are chip seal over dirt, 12 to 20 ft wide.
Non-motorized Transportation

Extensive undeveloped right of way = 31 miles of trails connecting streets in a grid network. Pedestrians walk the streets and trails.
Typical Arterial Pavement Failure

One of our major arterials…. Stress cracks revealed the beginning of failure only two short years ago.
Keeping the character of Local Access Streets with a focus on transferring vegetation control to the adjoining property owner and fixing drainage problems.
What Are We Doing?
Dark Sky Initiative

• Converted to LED street lights
• Removed lights
• Turned intensity down to 30% of Max
• Target 400 - 500 ft spacings
What Are We Doing?
Testing Edge Lane Roads
What Are We Doing?
Arterial Grants

Thank goodness for TIB/STBG/HSIP, etc grants!
What Are We Doing? 
Asking the Public & 
Developing a Program

**Comprehensive Streets Program**

What do you want for your streets? How do we best preserve, improve, operate and program our streets sustainably into the distant future?

Funding goal: Increase local street investments by $1 million per year for preservation, grant match, complete streets, and non-motorized improvements:

Probable Sources: TBD (Sales Tax), Property Tax, REET, and Impact fees
Questions

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