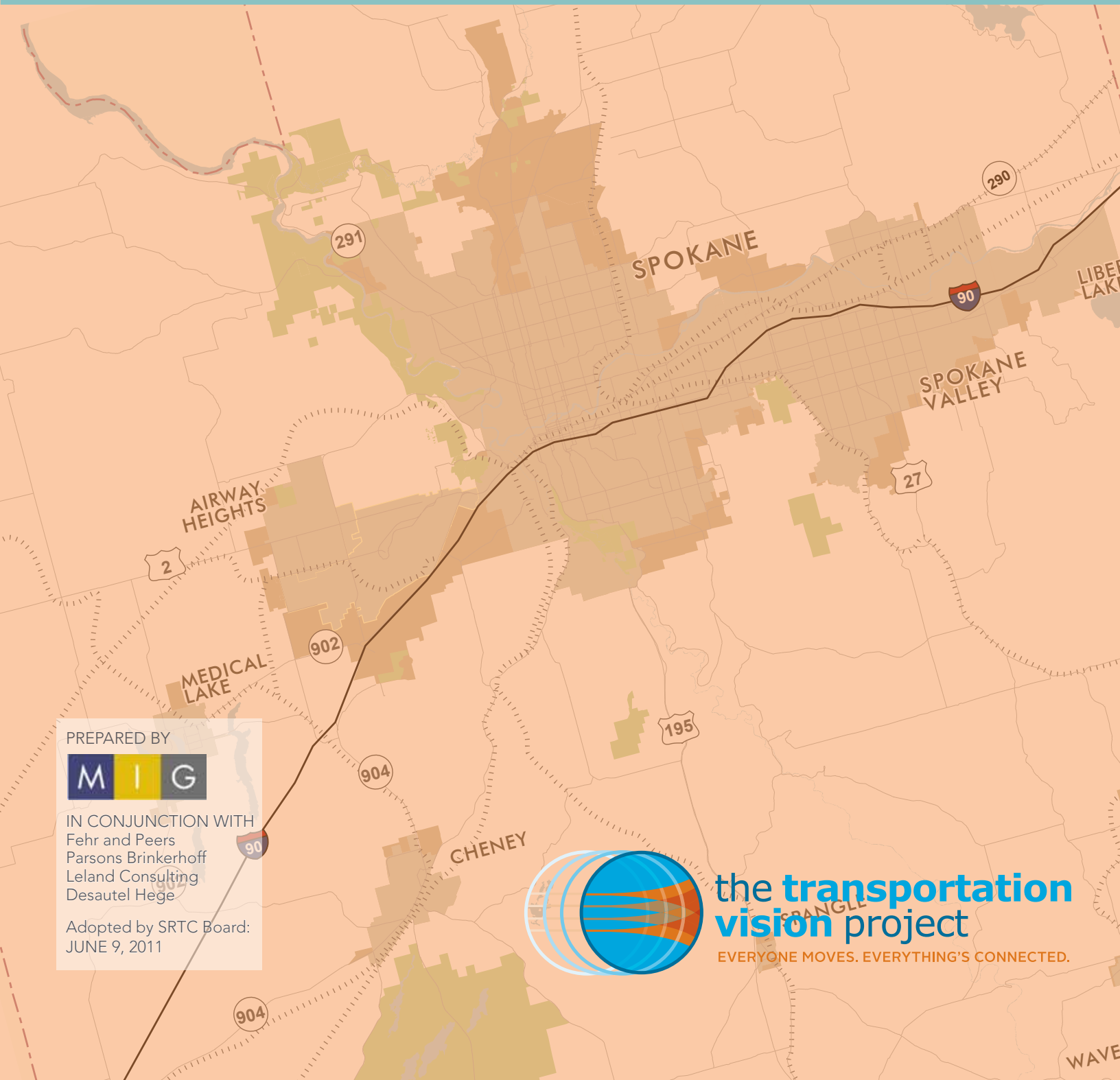


# Spokane Unified Regional Transportation Vision and Implementation Strategy

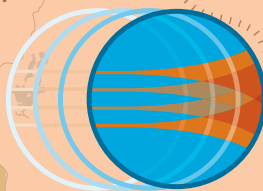


PREPARED BY



IN CONJUNCTION WITH  
Fehr and Peers  
Parsons Brinkerhoff  
Leland Consulting  
Desautel Hege

Adopted by SRTC Board:  
JUNE 9, 2011



the transportation  
vision project

EVERYONE MOVES. EVERYTHING'S CONNECTED.



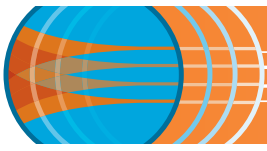


# ***Spokane Unified Regional Transportation Vision and Implementation Strategy***

Adopted by SRTC Board:  
June 9, 2011



**Spokane Regional Transportation Council**  
221 W. First Avenue, Suite 310  
Spokane, WA 99201-3613  
509.343.6370



## acknowledgements

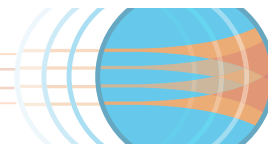
*The Spokane Unified Regional Transportation Vision is the result of extensive hard work and collaboration among a range of stakeholders, community leaders, elected officials and members of the public who care deeply about the future of Spokane. In particular, the following people are recognized for their contributions to this effort:*

### **SRTC BOARD**

Gary Schimmels	Chair
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Barb Chamberlain	Board Member
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Wendy Van Orman	Board Member
Jim Williams	Board Member
Todd Woodard	Board Member

### **SRTC STAFF**

Glenn Miles
Staci Lehman
Anna Regaza-Bourassa



## acknowledgements

### VISION PROCESS TEAM MEMBERS

Barbara Chamberlain	Washington State University
Marty Dickinson	Downtown Spokane Partnership
Rich Hadley	Greater Spokane Incorporated
Latisha Hill	Avista
Lunell Haught	Haught Strategies
Keith Metcalf	WSDOT Eastern Region
Jon Snyder	Spokane City Council
Susan Meyer	Spokane Transit Authority
Todd Mielke	Spokane County Commissioner
Neal Sealock	Spokane International Airport
Frank Tombari	Banner Bank
Joe Tortorelli	Resident
Wendy Van Orman	Mayor of Liberty Lake
Kim Zentz	Sirti

### CONSULTANT TEAM

#### MIG, Inc.

Daniel Iacofano, Principal  
Jay Renkens, Project Manager  
Jonathan Pheanis  
Laurie Matthews  
Rachel Edmonds

#### Fehr and Peers

Jeremy Klop  
Seleta Reynolds  
Kendra Breiland

#### Parsons Brinkerhoff

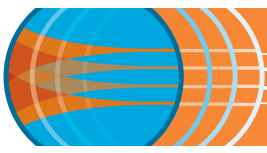
Michael Zachary

#### Leland Consulting

Chris Zahas  
Brian Vanneman

#### Desautel Hege

Andrei Mylroie  
Tyler Tullis  
Sara Johnston



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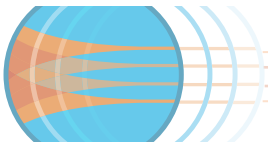
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## executive summary

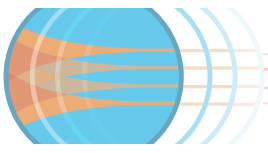
The Spokane Regional Transportation Vision reflects the needs and desires of the Spokane Region as articulated by previous and concurrent efforts, as well as a broad community outreach effort. Over a thousand residents and stakeholders participated during the visioning process through different input opportunities to define what transportation in the region means to them, and what it will take to reach their envisioned future.

The Vision framework includes a series of elements that reflect the community's desires and provide the foundation for the Transportation Vision Project. These include:

- Community Values: The values express what community members consider to be Spokane County's most intrinsic and treasured characteristics;
- Vision: The vision puts into words how the community envisions the future pattern of physical, economic and social development for the Spokane Region; and
- Big Moves: The big moves are goals that articulate the direction for future policies, projects and programs to fulfill the vision.



Figure 1: Community Values



## executive summary

### Community Values

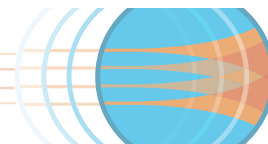
The Vision Framework is grounded in the set of values expressed by stakeholders and community members throughout the planning process. Common themes identified by the public resulted in 16 overarching community values.

### Vision

The vision statement builds on momentum from past investments and accomplishments while incorporating the aspirations, needs and ideals of today's regional community.

*Future transportation investments will help the Spokane Region maintain its appeal as a livable community with a thriving business and cultural atmosphere nestled within the beautiful scenery of eastern Washington. A well-maintained regional transportation system will provide a high level of service across both urban and rural areas with a variety of sustainable transportation choices and connectivity that advance accessibility and reliability for all users.*

*The region's prosperity will also be the result of direct and indirect investments in our transportation systems to move freight and facilitate commerce that will ensure retention and attraction of new employers and family wage jobs, as well as increase our ability to attract quality employees. Implementing sustainable, efficient, effective and reliable solutions to existing and future transportation challenges in the Spokane Region will be key to making the Inland Northwest a fantastic place to visit, live, work, play and raise a family.*



## executive summary

### Big Moves

Big Moves are the best ways to achieve the vision. Based on key findings from the document review and public input, Big Moves and related recommendations can make the vision a reality.

**A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning.** Land use and transportation planning decisions should be made in coordination and collaboration with one another because of their potential impact on the character and quality of the region.

#### Recommendations

- A.1: Implement the policies articulated in the 2008 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and continue to coordinate future MTPs with the County's and cities' Comprehensive Plans.
- A.2: Provide access to safe, frequent, reliable and convenient public transportation, especially in commercial, mixed-use and higher density residential areas.
- A.3: Improve transportation corridors for all modes that connect to Downtown Spokane, other major employment centers and major routes such as I-90.
- A.4: Continue to coordinate with local jurisdictions to evaluate transportation levels of service for all modes, communities and residents.
- A.5: Provide affordable and convenient housing where transportation choices exist for a range of incomes, and where the provision of new transportation infrastructure is practicable.

#### TARGETS

##### A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning

Maintain or Improve  
Average Commute Time:

**21.0 minutes**

Baseline: 21.0 minutes in 2009

Mode Split:

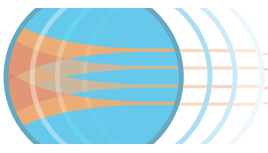
**70% or less region-wide drive alone rate**

Baseline: 77.5% drive alone rate in 2009

Jobs-Housing Balance Ratio:

**1.4 jobs per household**

Baseline: 1.3 jobs per household in 2005



## executive summary

### TARGETS

#### B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth

Per Capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for Spokane County:  
**increase per capita GDP by 15% by 2020**

Baseline: per capita GDP of \$34,040 in 2009

Private Sector Employment for Spokane County:  
**increase the ratio of private sector employment to 84%**

Baseline: ratio of private sector employment of 82% in 2010

#### C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network

Commute Mode Share For Transit:  
**increase by 1% basis point year over year**

Baseline: 0.5% of commutes by transit

Increase Linked Trips:  
**improve the percentage of trips linked to transit by bicycling and walking to 88%**

Baseline: 78% of transit trips linked by bicycling and walking

#### B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth.

Build the physical infrastructure and other related programs that can support a wide range of occupations, businesses, industries and services that are essential to the regions economic success.

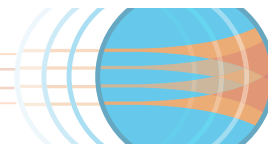
##### **Recommendations**

- B.1: Directly and indirectly support job creation through strategic investments in all modes of transportation infrastructure and services.
- B.2: Address the efficient flow of cargo through the region.
- B.3: Target freight infrastructure projects that will generate local, sustainable economic development.
- B.4: Design streetscapes that are accessible, safe and inviting for all modes.

#### C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network. Invest in targeted improvements to connect between all modes to facilitate seamless travel between destinations to decrease regional dependency on the personal vehicle.

##### **Recommendations**

- C.1: Create facilities that balance the opportunity of all modes to support the movement of people and goods in a sustainable and community-friendly environment.
- C.2: Resolve, to the extent possible, potential conflicts with multiple designations for the same corridors through coordination, integration and design.
- C.3: Require project descriptions to demonstrate their ability to address various modes of transportation.
- C.4: Implement the High Performance Transit Network (HPTN) with a variety of service levels and transit modalities serving the region.



## executive summary

C.5: Provide better multi-modal connections for people and goods to interregional rail and air travel.

**D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices.** To prepare for future growth, increase access, convenience and support for sustainable transportation choices.

### **Recommendation**

D.1: Implement multi-modal projects identified in existing transportation system and modal plans.

D.2: Clearly identify the locations where jurisdictions should invest capital funds for transportation improvements to ensure that they are well used and help build towards the region's goals for encouraging choices.

D.3: Seize every opportunity to add transportation modes to reconstruction projects.

**E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places.** Encourage transportation choices and appealing streetscapes to promote neighborhood values and local businesses particularly in centers and corridors where affordable and convenient housing development is located.

### **Recommendations**

E.1: Invest in an appropriate mix of transportation choices.

E.2: Increase the level of education and outreach related to improving community and environmental health, particularly in regard with alternative transportation choices.

E.3: Promote development of complete streets that are designed for all users.

### **TARGETS**

#### **D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices**

Realign Funding Criteria and Construct Non-Motorized Network:  
**5% regional funding allocation for non-motorized modes**

Baseline: 2% of MTP expenditures for bicycle and pedestrian projects

Actively Manage Travel Demand:  
**prioritize projects and programs that remove bottlenecks and provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips**

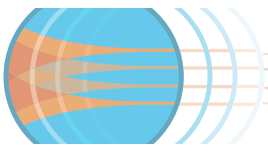
Secure Additional Transit Funding:  
**increase revenue available for transit capital projects by 10%**

Baseline: 2004-2009 average capital expenditures, \$9.8 million annually

#### **E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places**

Total Miles of Bike Facilities:  
**construct 10% (approximately 12 miles) of the proposed network per year**

Baseline: 179 total miles in 2009



## executive summary

### TARGETS

#### E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places (continued)

Rural and Natural Resource Land Uses:  
maintain rural and natural resource land uses near 88% in Spokane County  
Baseline: rural and natural resource land approximately 88% of Spokane County

System Preservation and Maintenance Expenditures:  
increase annual average expenditures by 10% of existing levels  
Baseline: \$12 million annual average

#### F. Supporting the Regional Environment

Greenhouse Gas Emissions:  
1990 levels by 2020

Spokane River Quality Index:  
range between 80 to 90  
Baseline: historical measurements between 40 and 87 on scale of 100

Obesity Index:  
reduce by 15%  
Baseline: 28.9% of adults in Spokane County are obese

**F. Supporting the Regional Environment.** Continue to support programs and policies that enhance regional values to protect , restore and enhance the natural environment.

#### Recommendations

F.1: Increase investment in stormwater system improvements, particularly low impact development techniques, integrated with transportation projects.

F.2: Restructure the regional transportation system to respond to climate change.

F.3: Invest in system-wide transportation facility rehabilitation, preservation and maintenance while diversifying the region's mix of transportation choices.

F.4: Support the promotion of personal health and wellness of the region's residents by investing in transportation projects that improve opportunities for active transportation.

**G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and Sustainability.** Seek transportation funding resources and tools that support the vision.

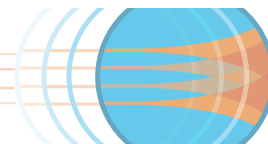
#### Recommendations

G.1: Measure and communicate the economic, environment and health impacts of transportation investments.

G.2: Ensure that those who benefit from the improved transportation network pay a meaningful share of the cost.

G.3: Make use of and leverage public-private partnerships when it is in the best interest of the public.

G.4: Actively seek new funding sources for transportation system maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation and expansion.



## executive summary

G.5: Maintain flexibility in the way we design and implement our transportation investments.

G.6: Develop a unified strategy to demonstrate that the region is focused, well-coordinated and proactive in being a great place to live, work and recreate.

**H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen.** Integrate regional collaboration through strong community leadership to identify and work closely with stakeholders to measure and monitor progress.

### **Recommendations**

H.1: Work closely with local and regional stakeholders to gain unified support for various plans and projects.

H.2: Build regional collaboration based on recommended policy.

### **TARGETS**

#### **G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability & Sustainability**

Ratio of State and Federal Funds to Local Funds

Devoted to Transportation:

at least 50% state and federal funds for transit projects and at least 75% state and federal funds for all other projects

Transportation Funding and Rate of Inflation:

transportation funding growth (from all sources) keeps pace with or exceeds the rate of inflation

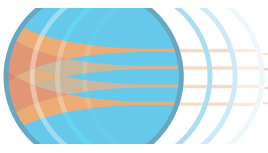
Baseline: average annual national rate of inflation between -0.4% to 3.8% from 2001 and 2010

Bond Ratings:

at least a rating of Aa3 (lowest high quality rating) and aim for bond ratings of Aaa (best rating)

#### **H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen**

Develop a Regional Pact to Implement the Vision as Outlined in Chapter V: Implementation Strategies.



## **Implementation Strategies**

Implementing the vision will require a collaborative regional approach. Strategic decisions related to funding, collaboration and leadership and the measurement of progress are the three primary considerations for implementing the regional vision.

### ***Funding***

The envisioned regional transportation system will require new sources of funding that are both feasible and sustainable. Overall, the public expressed interest in increasing funding to pay for transportation projects in the Spokane Region. However, there are several existing considerations that impact new funding sources and additional education and outreach will be needed before any funding sources are placed before voters. Once the preferred funding resources have been identified, the County will need to determine a benefit area to generate revenue and receive funding.

### ***Regional Pact***

To be successful, the vision and its direction will need the long-term support of as many regional stakeholders as possible. Implementation of the vision will benefit from a unifying resolution, or pact, that serves as a cooperative agreement. The pact is a commitment to pursuing the regional vision, understanding what is at stake for the future and increasing regional collaboration.

### ***Monitoring and Measuring Success***

The Big Moves needed to advance the vision will occur at different periods of time and require a different level of effort and resources. A deliberate monitoring and measuring effort will be crucial as the final ingredient of implementation. There are 20 targets designed to measure progress of the eight Big Moves within a five- to ten-year time frame.



## chapter i. introduction

In spring 2010, the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) partnered with jurisdictions and stakeholders across Spokane County to initiate the region's first long-term transportation vision. The unified regional transportation vision for Spokane County will guide transportation investments over the next 30 to 50 years. The vision identifies the necessary steps to drive sustainable economic growth and improve mobility while protecting and enhancing livability, the environment and the region's competitiveness in a global economy. The vision is political, technical and functional, and goes beyond outlining what is needed to prepare the region for the future. Based on a comprehensive look at existing and future conditions, it includes a set of strategic actions, or Big Moves, which identify the direction needed to position the Spokane Region for prosperity in the future. The role of this document is not to identify specific projects, alignments or design details. Through the guidance of the vision and Big Moves, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and other future planning efforts throughout the region will identify specific projects and priorities.

### Benefits of a Unified Vision

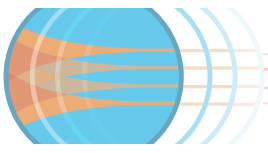
A unified vision for the region is needed now more than ever. There are over 470,000 people living in Spokane County, moving among its cities, neighborhoods and rural areas every day. Resources are insufficient to keep up with the wear on roads, the need for improved movement of goods, and the growing demand for public transit, bicycle facilities and walkable environments. By 2030, there will be an estimated 93,400 new residents that will increase the need for maintenance, access and service to existing population centers and new growth areas.

Over the past decade, entities throughout the region have developed a range of plans related to motor vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, truck freight, public transportation, rail and aviation. Most of these efforts focus on individual modes of transportation, or plan transportation infrastructure at a local level. As a result, the Spokane Region lacks a clear and overarching vision for how different modes fit together and how the regional transportation network will ensure a vibrant, livable and economically sustainable community.



"THE BEST WE CAN DO IS SIZE UP  
THE CHANCES, CALCULATE THE  
RISKS INVOLVED, ESTIMATE OUR  
ABILITY TO DEAL WITH THEM, AND  
THEN MAKE OUR PLANS WITH  
CONFIDENCE."

- HENRY FORD



## introduction



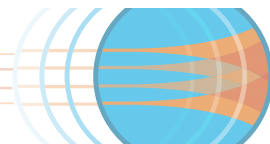
### **Everyone Moves, Everything is Connected**

There is more to the transportation network than getting around the region. Infrastructure design and traffic impact the livability of our community and the livelihood of businesses. An integrated transportation network provides residents and visitors access to goods and services. To encourage new businesses and stimulate job growth, the region's potential as an economic hub will require increased investment in the freight network and interconnections to different modes. Improving community place making and implementing the vision will depend on strong leadership, supported by the collaboration of the region's stakeholders.

The Spokane Region has many assets which provide a solid foundation for the future transportation system. Perhaps one of the most fundamental assets is the area's high quality of life. The Spokane Region is family-friendly and relatively affordable, with short trips to destinations, and an excellent system of parks and easy access to a wide variety of outdoor recreation. Another significant asset is access to several high-quality higher education providers and employment opportunities, including those in the biomedical and health industries. These and other assets position the Spokane Region for future economic growth.

Leveraging these assets will require a collective effort to reach this common vision. Achieving the community's vision will require addressing a range of issues facing the region now and in the future. Some of the primary issues facing the region include:

- Transportation infrastructure needs are comprehensive in scale;
- Multiple demands and plans exist for individual roadways and alignments;
- Transportation funding is not always aligned with stated transportation priorities;
- Differences exist between urban and rural transportation priorities;
- Cities and the County sometimes compete for high tax generating uses;



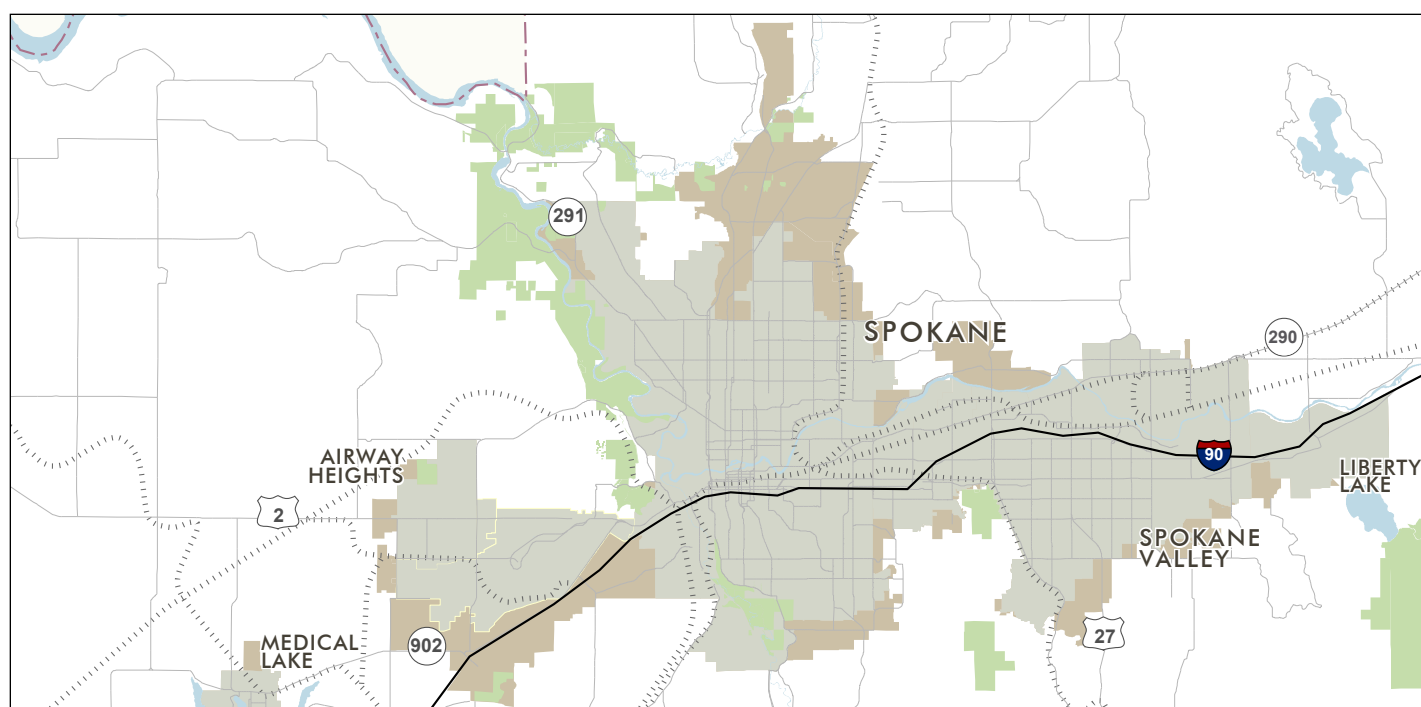
## introduction

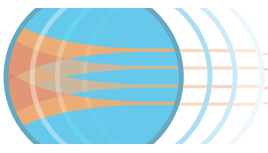
- Willingness to support local funding limits the region's competitiveness for state and federal funding; and
- Stakeholders believe that a stronger regional leadership structure is needed to forge agreement for implementing the unified transportation vision.

### CRAFTING THE VISION

The vision summarized in this report reflects the expectations and desires of the Spokane Region as articulated by previous and concurrent efforts, as well as a broad community outreach effort. Plans and documents, such as the County-wide Planning Policies, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), land use and transportation agency plans, city and neighborhood plans all helped the project team focus on the larger-scale issues and priorities at the heart of providing transportation in the Spokane Region. In the future, the Regional Vision will serve to guide updates to these plans and policies. A review of relevant planning efforts is available under separate cover in the *Existing Conditions and Trends Analysis Report*.

*The City of Spokane neighbors several other municipal areas along Interstate 90.*





## introduction

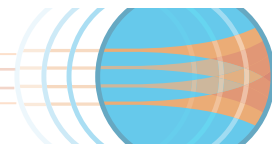
Over a thousand residents and stakeholders participated during the visioning process through different input opportunities to define what transportation in the region means to them, and what it will take to reach their envisioned future. To generate as much input as possible, public outreach began early in the visioning process in spring 2010. The design of the process included outreach opportunities for each of the three project phases (see below). Outreach opportunities included a series of meetings with the Visioning Process Team (an advisory group comprising a variety of representatives from local and regional agencies, organizations and interest groups), interviews with regional stakeholders, multiple public workshops, community intercept events, visioning roundtables targeting a variety of interest groups, social media, the project website featuring the *Thousand Visions Game* and a statistically valid telephone survey. Feedback from the public generated a number of key findings and common themes. A summary of input gathered via each of the outreach methods is available under separate cover in the *Vision Process Summary Report*.

### The Planning Process

The planning process for the Transportation Vision Project consisted of three phases (Figure 2). To guide the development of this project, the SRTC and its community partners established a Visioning Process Team (VPT) that met multiple times throughout each of the planning phases.

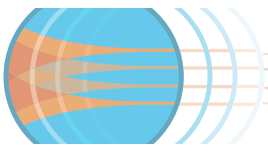


Figure 2: The Planning Process



## introduction

- **Phase I: Project Goals, Visioning Process Refinement and Plan Inventory.** The first phase of the project began with goal setting and process refinement to help define measures of success and allow for the development of outreach and analysis tools. Additionally, the *Existing Conditions Summary and Trends Analysis Report* was included in this phase. This report included an inventory of existing planning efforts in order to identify gaps and inconsistencies in existing plans, as well as to ensure that ongoing planning efforts were reflected in the regional vision. The report also included analysis of key trends and issues related to transportation in the Spokane Region.
- **Phase II: Visioning Process Unified Transportation Vision and Implementation Strategy.** Phase II focused on a comprehensive outreach and engagement effort centered on a series of community roundtables, workshops and intercept events. Supplementing this effort was a coordinated media campaign and online presence that leveraged social media to help drive turnout and participation. One of the primary outreach tools launched in this phase was the project website ([www.spokanetransportationvision.com](http://www.spokanetransportationvision.com)) that allowed the public to review and comment on the process and project documents. These efforts included use of a range of mapping and visualization tools to help the public and key partners better understand the issues, opportunities and choices facing the region. During this phase, the planning team began to refine and synthesize community and stakeholder input into an overall vision with strategic directions for implementation. The planning team then tested this vision with community members and key partners to ensure that the vision and strategic directions met the needs of the region.
- **Phase III: Draft and Final Unified Vision and Implementation Strategy Reports.** Based upon feedback received on the draft vision and implementation strategy, the planning team created the final Unified Regional Transportation Vision and Implementation Strategy report with integrated maps and graphics. The final phase of the planning process also included final presentations to the community and regional leaders as part of the adoption process.



# introduction

## **Document Organization**

This document is organized into five chapters.

- Chapter I. Introduction describes the background and purpose of the plan, the planning process and the organization of this document.
- Chapter II. Vision Context provides an overview of the regional setting, including population growth, employment and the economy, transportation policy, land use and transportation funding. This chapter includes a description of the existing regional transportation system.
- Chapter III. Vision Framework presents the unified regional vision for transportation. This includes the supporting community values and a summary of the Big Moves discussed in Chapter IV.
- Chapter IV. Big Moves identifies the specific assets, challenges and recommendations for moving the Regional Transportation Vision forward.
- Chapter V. Implementation Strategies provides targets, funding considerations for future transportation projects, policies and programs, the Regional Pact and methods for monitoring and measuring success.



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## chapter ii: vision context

The Spokane Region depends on an efficient and reliable transportation system to move people and goods both within the region and to national and global destinations. To effectively envision the region's future transportation system, it is critical to summarize the regional characteristics that have important implications upon the planning process and the transportation system. This chapter summarizes the regional characteristics that provide context for the vision.

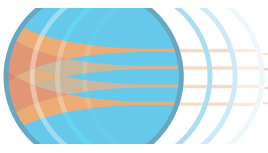
### The Setting

Spokane County is a business, trade, and cultural center for the Inland Northwest, a 36-county region that covers much of eastern Washington, North Idaho and parts of eastern Oregon, western Montana and the southern sections of British Columbia and Alberta, Canada. Spokane County is one of four eastern Washington counties along the Washington-Idaho border.

Spokane County comprises a total area of 1,758 square miles, and shares its border with four other Washington counties and two counties in Idaho. Pend Oreille and Lincoln Counties bound the county to the north and west with the northwest corner shared with Stevens County. To the south is Whitman County and to the east are Kootenai County and Benewah County in the State of Idaho.

This document uses several terms to describe the different jurisdictions and entities that exist in the region.

- **Spokane County Cities and Towns** include Airway Heights, Cheney, Deer Park, Fairfield, Latah, Liberty Lake, Medical Lake, Millwood, Rockford, Spangle, Spokane Valley and Waverly.
- **Spokane Metro Area** includes the cities of Spokane, Spokane Valley, Liberty Lake, Airway Heights and Millwood.
- **Spokane Region** includes Spokane County, its cities and neighboring counties and communities.



## vision context

### ***Population Growth***

Population growth in the County and the region is one of the major forces impacting the regional transportation system. Table 2.1 shows that population forecasts predict an increase of 20% (equivalent to an additional 93,400 residents) in Spokane County between 2010 and 2030. The annual growth rate for households in Spokane County was 1.3% from 2000 to 2009. This rate of growth is above the national rate of 1.1%, but less than the Washington State rate of 1.4% for the same period. According to projections developed by Intermountain Demographics, the County is expected to have 240,600 households by 2030.

Population growth will not be equal in all parts of the County. The majority of cities in the County are smaller, with populations under 10,000. While the region's smaller cities will grow by 15% to 87% between 2010 and 2030, the total population of most cities will remain relatively small in 20 years (under 10,000 residents). Growth in the County's largest cities (Spokane and Spokane Valley) will add 14% to the 2010 County-wide population.

Unincorporated areas of Spokane County are forecast to add approximately 15% or 21,000 residents by 2030. In 2010, 71% of the County population lived in cities and towns while 29% lived in unincorporated areas. This ratio is forecast to remain the same in the future.<sup>1</sup>

The City of Spokane is the second largest city in the State of Washington. Yet the city is physically isolated from other cities with a similar population. Similarly, Spokane County has a larger population than its neighboring counties. Table 2.2 shows that growth among Spokane's neighboring counties has varied since 2000. Among neighboring Washington counties, only Pend Oreille County and Stevens County have experienced similar growth. Lincoln County to the west has grown the least, while Whitman County has experienced a moderate growth rate.

Spokane County's largest neighbor, Kootenai County, Idaho has grown at a rate over twice that of Spokane County. Since 2000, Kootenai County has

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<sup>1</sup> Intermountain Demographics 2030 Population Forecasts by TAZ.



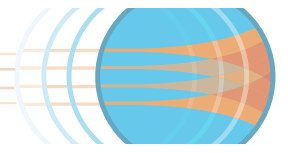


Table 2.1: Population Growth in Spokane County (2005-2030)

Jurisdiction	Population		
	2010 <sup>1</sup>	2030 <sup>2</sup>	% change (2010-2030)
Unincorporated Spokane County	137,712	159,000	15%
City of Spokane	206,900	255,000	23%
City of Spokane Valley	90,210	106,000	18%
City of Airway Heights	5,600	7,000	25%
City of Cheney	10,680	13,000	22%
Deer Park	3,480	4,000	15%
City of Liberty Lake	7,620	10,000	31%
City of Medical Lake	4,785	6,000	25%
City of Millwood	1,660	2,000	19%
Fairfield	589	700	19%
Latah	193	300	55%
Rockford	489	600	23%
Spangle	275	500	82%
Waverly	107	200	87%
Total	470,300	563,700	20%

Sources: 1. 2010 Estimates provided by State of Washington Office of Financial Management; 2. Intermountain Demographics 2030 Population Forecasts by TAZ.

grown by about 31% or 34,000 residents. A majority of the growth has occurred in the City of Coeur d'Alene, roughly 30 miles from the City of Spokane.

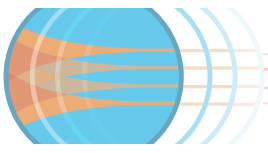
### **Employment and Economy**

Between 2000 and 2007, unemployment in Spokane County decreased from 5.1% to 4.7%.<sup>2</sup> However, similar to state and nationwide trends, a more recent estimate indicates that this rate increased to 8.9% in 2009<sup>3</sup> and 9.1% in 2010.<sup>4</sup> Between 2005 and 2030, employment in the region is projected to increase by 90,000 jobs, reaching a total of 339,000 employees by 2030. Employment

<sup>2</sup> US Census, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2005-2009)

<sup>3</sup> Community Indicator Initiative of Spokane

<sup>4</sup> Washington State Employment Security Department, Workforce Explorer, 2010



## vision context

Table 2.2: Regional Population Growth (2000-2009)

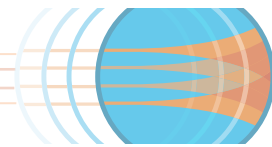
State and County	Population		
	2000 <sup>1</sup>	2010 <sup>2,3</sup>	% change (2000-2010)
Washington			
Spokane	417,939	470,300	
Pend Oreille	11,732	13,100	13%
Stevens	40,066	44,300	12%
Lincoln	10,184	10,500	11%
Whitman	40,740	43,600	3%
Idaho			
Kootenai	108,685	142,681	31%
Benewah	9,171	9,469	3%

Source: 1. 2000 US Census; 2. 2010 Estimates for Washington Counties provided by State of Washington Office of Financial Management; 3. 2010 Estimates for Idaho Counties provided by Applied Geographic Solutions, 2010.

growth is projected to be geographically focused in the areas of Airway Heights/West Plains, the northern portion of the North Spokane Corridor, and the areas north of Liberty Lake. Employment at Fairchild Air Force Base is forecast to increase by 2,000 employees during the same period. According to Greater Spokane Incorporated (GSI), the 2007 average annual wage for the region was \$43,000.

Regional services historically driving Spokane's economy include:

- Government;
- Higher education;
- Medical services;
- Transportation and warehousing;
- Finance; and
- Durable goods sales like cars, furniture and clothing.



## vision context

According to Washington state labor economist Doug Tweedy, a number of key industries in the Spokane area show promise for expansion in 2011 and beyond due to the strength of the local workforce and pent up demand.<sup>5</sup>

These include:

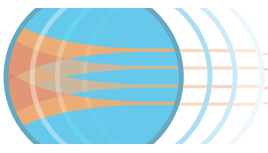
- Professional and technical services (especially in research, design and consulting);
- Waste management;
- Remediation;
- Transportation (including aviation);
- Advanced manufacturing;
- Health care;
- Military; and
- Agriculture.

The forecast also assumes that energy will become a well-defined industry cluster, affecting almost every sector of the economy, consistent with national strategic priorities set by the U.S. Economic Development Administration.<sup>6</sup> Renewable energy is another sector for which Spokane and Eastern Washington are well positioned to receive future employment expansion, according to reports completed by Washington State's Employment Security Department in 2008 and 2009. The 2008 report shows that, while these industries are still in their infancy, the Spokane Region and Eastern Washington are among several areas of the state with concentrations of renewable energy jobs.

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5 <http://www.workforceexplorer.com/article.asp?PAGEID=94&SUBID=&ARTICLEID=10872&SEGMENTID=0&printerFriendly=true>

6 <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/InvestmentPriorities.xml>



## vision context

Local resources include bio-refineries, an abundance of bio fuels, and wind technologies.<sup>7</sup> The natural resources of the area were an important driver of the economy in the past, and could again provide jobs in rural areas as the nation seeks to increase capacity for alternative energy sources and decrease dependence on oil. Many industries such as high tech manufacturing and data companies seek areas with dependable, cost-effective energy sources.

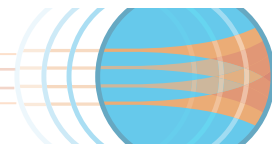
Health care is a key industry, not only in Spokane, but also in the State of Washington. Health care, along with education, is one of the only sectors to have grown during the recession. It is also one of the highest-paying sectors overall. The Spokane area is poised to reap many benefits since it is a healthcare hub for the region. Registered nurses are expected to have the largest projected increase in employment through 2017 in the State of Washington, and will earn a mean annual wage of \$72,334. However, competition for regional health care services is also increasing with the expansion of services in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

### ***Transportation Policy***

The Spokane Region is composed of several stakeholders that create a relatively dynamic policy environment. The State's Growth Management Act (GMA) and State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) are the bodies of legislation that drive statewide transportation and land use related policy impacting Spokane County. Along with statewide legislation, the policy realm in Spokane County is multi-layered, with regional (SRTC, Spokane County and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)) and local (cities) entities responsible for setting policies that impact the future of the regional transportation system. Transportation policy set at the local level must comply with regional and state-wide goals, while also setting-forth policy that reflects the envisioned future of local communities.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/stories/2009/02/09/focus6.html>; also see [http://www.commerce.wa.gov/\\_CTED/documents/ID\\_3543\\_Publications.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/_CTED/documents/ID_3543_Publications.pdf)



## vision context

As the federally established Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Spokane County, SRTC is responsible for coordinating transportation policy among planning and transportation departments with the Washington State Department of Transportation, Spokane County, and cities and towns within the County. SRTC ensures that Federal, State and regional policies are carried out at the local level. Thus, local transportation and land use plans must be reviewed for consistency with SRTC policies prior to local adoption.

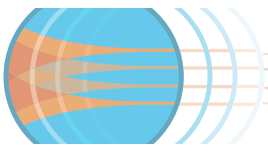
### ***Land Use Policy***

Land use and development patterns have a significant effect on the regional transportation system. Land use is directly linked with transportation, as a growing population will require housing, jobs, services and related infrastructure. In Washington, the State's Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties of a certain size and growth rate, and the cities within them, to adopt comprehensive plans and development regulations which are guided by statewide goals. Through this framework, population forecasts and land use planning are closely coordinated among the State, County and local jurisdiction levels.

In compliance with the GMA, Spokane County has adopted a Comprehensive Plan, as well as County Wide Planning Policies that serve as a framework for the Comprehensive Plan's development. Among the required elements specified by the State, the policies must address countywide transportation facilities and strategies, as well as joint County and City planning within urban growth areas.

### ***Population Forecasts***

The growth of the region and the resulting needs of the future population are the primary reasons for planning and coordination between SRTC and local jurisdictions. The State's Office of Financial Management (OFM) establishes the official population estimates and 20-year growth forecasts for local governments. County officials are responsible for selecting a 20-year GMA planning target from the forecasts prepared by OFM. Within each county, population planning targets for cities, towns and unincorporated areas are worked out among the affected local jurisdictions as part of City and County



## vision context



*Southeast Boulevard connects many residential neighborhoods in Spokane and features sidewalks, a landscaped median and street trees.*

planning processes. Population forecasts are the primary indicator for determining the amount of growth and development within urban growth areas.

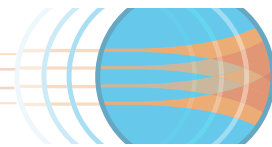
### **Urban Growth Area**

The State's GMA requires the majority of new growth to be directed within urbanized areas. However, based on building permit data, development in the Spokane Metropolitan Area has mostly occurred outside of historically urbanized areas or along the urban fringe. Retail uses are mostly located along major transportation corridors including Division Street and Highways 395 and 291 in north Spokane, I-90 and East Sprague Avenue in Spokane Valley and Highway 2 through Airway Heights. According to the County's Comprehensive Plan, commercial uses will be focused along these same routes in the future, with higher density residential uses located nearby.

As required by the State, each County and its cities must coordinate review of Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) every ten years. Since adoption of the current UGA in 2001, the County has added a total of 1,188 acres to the metro area. In the fall of 2009, Spokane County and the Cities of Spokane, Spokane Valley, Liberty Lake, Airway Heights, and Millwood initiated an evaluation of the metropolitan UGA to determine its ability to accommodate the projected 2030 population. According to the County, the existing UGA land area has capacity to accommodate an additional 113,797 residents which will easily accommodate the projected population growth over the next 20 years.

To oversee the coordination of planning within urban growth areas, the Countywide Planning Policies set forth a steering committee of elected officials to define standards for urban growth area delineation, as well as minimum levels of service, distribution of future growth, and to negotiate designations for urban growth areas. As the UGA update process moves forward, it will be critical for the SRTC to coordinate future phases of regional transportation planning with this effort.

The Countywide Planning Policies provide clear guidance for how growth and development should occur in Spokane's rural areas. While the policies



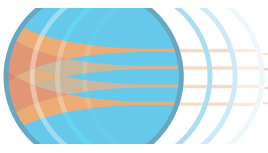
## vision context

limit urban levels of development and services to UGAs, rural areas are largely preserved for farming and/or forestry, or as designated urban reserves. Extension of urban governmental services outside UGAs should only be provided to maintain existing levels of service, provided that such extensions do not induce growth.

### ***Transportation Funding***

Funding for Spokane's regional transportation system consists of a relatively complicated patchwork of funding from a range of sources. Some funding sources are specific to certain modes of transportation (including road, bicycle, pedestrian, transit and freight rail), some to particular geographic areas and others are linked to related goals, like job creation or maintaining environmental quality. In the Spokane Region, transportation funding comes from federal, state, regional and local sources.

- *Federal.* The federal agencies that have historically distributed the greatest amount of funds in Washington State are the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Rail Administration (FRA) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Most FHWA funds are first channeled through the state, or to the MPO based upon an allocation formula. MPOs and local jurisdictions typically do not seek direct competitive grants from the FHWA; however, this has changed in recent years with more nationwide competitive grant programs being initiated by Congress. FTA urban formula funds flow directly to the region's "designated recipient" for those funds: Spokane Transit Authority (STA). FTA funding for rural and inter-city programs is managed by WSDOT.
- *State.* The State of Washington manages a wide variety of transportation funding programs, including those managed by WSDOT; Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development; Transportation Improvement Board; County Road Administration Board; and other agencies. Some state funding sources are grants (outright cash awards that often require a local match), while others can be loans (often at low interest rates, but requiring repayment). In addition, some state funds are formula



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*Many residents of Spokane County rely on personal vehicles for their work commutes.*

funds (allocation determined through a formula that includes population or other variables) which make securing larger allocations difficult. Direct legislative appropriations (earmarks) are currently another source of state and federal funding.

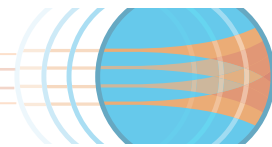
- *Regional.* Spokane Transit is the only transportation agency within the region that currently levies a regional tax that directly funds public transportation.
- *Local.* At the local level, there are many funding sources. These include city and county funds generated from property, sales and other local taxes, fees and revenue sources. Local districts, such as transportation benefit districts or local improvement districts, are also viable funding sources. An advantage to local funding is that local jurisdictions have the greatest amount of control. A disadvantage is that there are almost always more needs than resources (including non-transportation needs) competing for these funds. In addition, many require a public vote. Most local funding sources often involve higher rates or new taxes or fees, and should always be carefully evaluated and tailored to meet the needs and expectations of the community.

### The Transportation System

As the transportation hub of Eastern Washington, the Spokane Region has a multimodal transportation system, which includes both an international airport and a variety of surface transportation facilities that accommodate autos, motorcycles, commercial vehicles, buses, bicycles and pedestrians. While the multimodal system keeps people moving, the regional economy also relies on the transportation network for the shipment of air, rail and truck freight.

Like most communities, commuters in the Spokane Region primarily rely on motor vehicle travel. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, the share of commuters driving alone in Spokane County was 77.5% in 2009, up from 76.7% in 2000. Spokane's drive alone rate is also 5.1% higher than the state average. In the same time period, the percentage of commuters using public transit has remained unchanged at 2.8%. Commuters





## vision context

walking or using other means increased slightly from 4% in 2000, to 4.4% in 2009. Still, the Spokane Region's existing assets and future investments in the transportation system provide the largest potential benefit for regional quality of life and economic prosperity.

### **Roadways**

The region's roadway network serves as the heart of the transportation system. On average, approximately nine out of ten people in Spokane County commute to work in an automobile or on a bus. Single occupant vehicle travel is the predominant mode of transportation in the region. Yet roadway congestion is relatively minimal and generally stable. Overall, Spokane has experienced less congestion than other medium-sized metropolitan areas.<sup>8</sup>

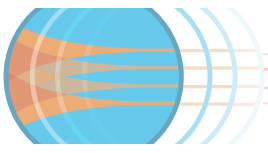
Increases to roadway capacity have kept pace with the growth in vehicle travel, expressed in terms of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) between 1997 and 2007. During this period, VMT increased 25%. At the same time, the region's arterial and freeway capacity increased 27% from 1,175 lane miles to 1,495 lane miles with projects like the I-90 widening (completed in 2005) and the region's ongoing roadway paving efforts. In 2005, the share of single occupant vehicle travel was 78.4% in Spokane County and 75.2% for the region.<sup>9</sup> Increasing road capacity is not without its drawbacks however. New and widened roadways can lead to an increase in commuters driving alone.

The roadway system in Spokane is classified by a functional hierarchy of local roads, collectors and arterials. However, roadway classifications do not always accurately reflect the existing characteristics of the transportation network. Several arterials, such as State Route (SR) 27 and SR 278, receive lower traffic volumes than other highways with the same classification. Similarly, some roadways classified as collector streets can receive higher amounts of traffic than similarly classified roadways.

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<sup>8</sup> Texas Transportation Institute, 2009

<sup>9</sup> Spokane Regional Commute Trip Reduction Plan, 2008



## vision context

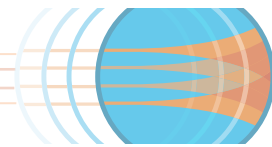


*Division Street is an important arterial road in the Spokane Region.*

### Arterials

The primary arterials in the Spokane Region include local roads and state and federal highways. The highway system forms the major spines of Spokane's regional transportation system. Local arterials are also major elements of the street network and in many cases carry more vehicles than area highways. The key highway facilities described here include Interstate 90 (I-90), US 2, US 195, US 395, SR 290, and SR 291. Other significant arterials in the region include Sprague Avenue, Division Street, Maple Street/Ash Street, Argonne Road and Market Street.

- I-90 serves as the region's primary east-west route, which originates in Seattle and terminates in Boston, Massachusetts. I-90 is a grade-separated freeway facility and provides a high-speed, high capacity connection for both regional and interregional travel. Connecting with I-90 in Coeur d'Alene, I-95 is another important element of the regional system of arterials and is a major freight crossing between Canada and Idaho.
- Similar to I-90, US 2 is a cross-country route that can provide a direct connection between interregional destinations. However, US 2 is constructed as a standard two-to-four lane highway that meanders through urban and rural areas. US 2 is largely at-grade and serves as the main street for towns like Airway Heights. Given the presence of traffic signals and direct access from properties adjacent to US 2, it largely serves as a lower speed connection providing local service in the Spokane Region. In terms of the regional economy, the route serves as an important international trade route for freight.
- US 395 is a major federal north-south route which ultimately connects Southern California with the Canadian Border. US 395 largely parallels I-90 in the western part of the Spokane Region, then turns north and parallels US 2 (along the Division Street corridor), before breaking off into a more standard two-lane highway serving residential areas to the north. The planned US-395 North Spokane Corridor (NSC), once complete, will be a 60-mile per hour, 10.5 mile long limited access corridor connecting



## vision context

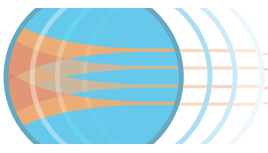
north Spokane to I-90. The project seeks to improve mobility by allowing motorists and freight to move north and south through metropolitan Spokane, decreasing travel time, fuel usage and congestion, while improving safety by reducing collisions on local arterials. By fall of 2011, an expected 5.7 miles of the NSC will be operational.

- SR 290 (Trent Avenue) is an east-west arterial roadway providing access between Downtown Spokane, Spokane Valley and points east. It provides an alternative route to I-90 and provides more local access.
- SR 291 (Francis Avenue) is an east-west arterial roadway in the north part of Spokane. It is largely flanked by residential and commercial uses and is not a high speed roadway.

### *Collectors and Local Roads*

While arterial roads within Spokane County accommodate a higher amount of VMT, they represent only about 20% of the roadway (see Tables 2.3 and 2.4). Conversely, individual collector and local roadways accommodate a lower number of VMT, yet account for far more miles of the entire network. As a result, local roads in rural and urban settings create the majority of roadway miles in the network and carry approximately two-thirds of the region's vehicle travel.

WSDOT is responsible for operating, maintaining, and preserving Interstate and State owned highways outside of communities with a population over 5,000. Local jurisdictions with over 5,000 residents are responsible for their arterials, collectors and local streets. WSDOT participates in the preservation and reconstruction of State highways within these communities. Spokane County and its cities collectively maintain over 4,000 miles of arterials, collector and local roadways throughout the region. Most of these facilities are two-lane local roads, which provide direct access to residences, schools, retail centers, commercial and industrial centers, as well as transportation services such as airports, rail yards, and freight distribution centers.



## vision context

Table 2.3: Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in Spokane County by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Average Daily VMT
City of Spokane	2,246,257
Unincorporated Spokane County	2,247,871
City of Spokane Valley	988,327
Cheney	18,465
Airway Heights	11,763
Medical Lake	9,694
Liberty Lake	75,410
Deer Park	15,382
Millwood	22,720
Fairfield	1,391
Rockford	86
Spangle	1,519
Latah	80
Waverly	210
Fairchild AFB	28,347
Spokane International Airport	24,576
WSDOT Federal Routes	5,371,147
WSDOT State Routes on City Streets	85,066
Spokane County Total	11,148,310

Source: SRTC

The amount of locally maintained roadway miles and extent of the arterial, collector and local roadway system exemplifies the importance of the local transportation system of the region. In some cases, the difference between functional roadway classification and existing roadway facilities (design) can result in conflicts between busy roads, non-motorized and/or public transportation systems, and the freight network.

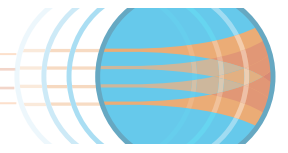


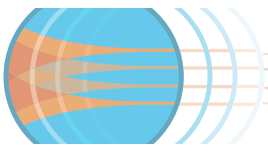
Table 2.4: Road Miles in Spokane County by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Road Miles
City of Spokane	952
Unincorporated Spokane County	2,666
City of Spokane Valley	436
Cheney	41
Airway Heights	24
Medical Lake	31
Liberty Lake	42
Deer Park	36
Millwood	11
Fairfield	8
Rockford	6
Spangle	5
Latah	4
Waverly	3
Spokane Airports	13
WSDOT	295
<b>Spokane County Total</b>	<b>4,573</b>

Source: SRTC

### ***Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities***

Non-motorized travel is a small, but important component of the region's transportation system. Bicycle and pedestrian travel modes account for about 10% of travel modes in the region. SRTC has recently published a Regional Bicycle Plan (2008), Regional Pedestrian Plan (2009) and SmartRoutes 2010 Initiative (2008). These plans list a number of high priority projects to facilitate non-motorized modes and include policies for the design of regional transportation facilities to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. In addition to regional plans, efforts such as the City of Spokane's Master Bike Plan and Complete Streets Resolution, the City of Spokane Valley's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan project and the City of Airway Heights' Complete Street Ordinance provide guidance for non-motorized transportation at the local level. Currently recommended facilities include shared-use trails and paths,



## vision context

sidewalks, bicycle lanes and roadways designated for shared-use between drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Nationally, as well as locally, transportation and land use planners have been challenged to clearly identify socio-economic and land use factors that can positively influence levels of bicycling and walking. However, as the research continues to emerge, it should be easier to quantify the effects of these factors on a latent demand for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. GIS-based planning tools can help to identify the locations where jurisdictions could invest capital funds for non-motorized improvements to help ensure that they are well used and help build towards the region's goals for increasing the use of bicycles and walking. Provisions for bicyclists and pedestrians in new major road projects are critical, but they do not necessarily lead to shifts in mode split on their own. Spokane's SmartRoutes 2010 Initiative quantifies the mode shift, public health and economic benefits for implementation of a large scale regional non-motorized improvement plan.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Transit***

Spokane Transit Authority (STA) provides fixed-route bus service throughout the region. This service includes 40 routes that connect Downtown Spokane with various destinations, including the Spokane Airport, Airway Heights, Spokane Valley, Liberty Lake, Fairchild Air Force Base and Cheney, and the number of universities and medical centers in the region. Bus service provides convenient public transportation every 15 minutes within many neighborhoods. Each year, STA completes an assessment of route service in an effort to ensure that public transit is meeting the needs of the public. The review measures several elements of the transit system including ridership, cost efficiency (cost per revenue hour) and service effectiveness (passengers per revenue hour). Based on the most recent report, STA has been performing well over the past four years when compared to other urban public transportation systems in the state (Table 2.5). Although the percentage of commuters relying on public transit has remained unchanged since 2000, transit ridership has increased 45% since 2005, with gains in each service type. In 2009, the overall cost per

<sup>10</sup> [www.smartroutes.org](http://www.smartroutes.org)

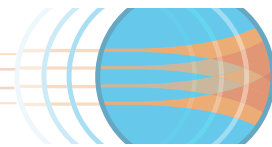


Table 2.5: Spokane Transit Performance

Service	Ridership			Cost/Hour		Passengers/Hour	
	2007	2009	% change (2007-2009)	STA	State Average*	STA	State Average*
Fixed Route	9,436,662	11,152,408	15%	\$104.4	\$123.0	27.4	26.8
Paratransit	506,710	521,578	3%	\$67.4	\$83.5	2.9	2.4
Rideshare	186,654	209,787	11%	---	---	---	---
Total	10,130,036	11,883,773	15%	\$171.8	\$206.5	30.3	29.2

\* Average of Washington's urban transportation systems.  
Source: STA Performance Measures First Quarter 2010.

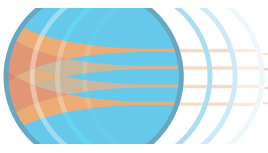
revenue hour was lower than the state average, while serving a higher number of passengers.

Spokane Transit has historically expanded slowly, funded on a cash basis. Spokane's transit system is funded by a special taxing district similar to a fire or school district. Known as the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA), the taxing district was established by Spokane County and its cities in the urban area in 1980 for the purpose of providing public transportation for the Spokane Region. In 2006, STA redrew the PTBA boundary to more closely reflect the urban nature of public transportation. The revised 248 square mile area closely conforms to the Spokane County Urban Growth Area (UGA), urban growth reserve boundaries, and on current precinct and school district boundaries.

The local sales tax levied in the PTBA provides the majority of STA funding, along with federal funding and customer fares. While the State of Washington requires transit agencies to rely on local sales and use tax, transit agencies are limited to allocating no more than 0.9% of the tax to fund public transit. Currently, STA levies 0.6% and any increase would require a vote of the public.

### ***Passenger Air***

One of the Spokane Region's most notable assets is the Spokane International Airport (GEG). Jointly owned by Spokane County and the City of Spokane, the 4,800-acre facility is operated under the authority of the Spokane Airport



## vision context

Board. The airport offers convenient direct domestic flights throughout the west as well as connections to other domestic and international destinations from seven passenger carriers and two air cargo carriers. With efforts by Greater Spokane Incorporated, there is potential for new direct flights to other major cities such as Los Angeles, New York and Chicago, as well as Calgary, Canada.

The number of total passengers in the airport has increased 89% year over year, from 1,619,880 total passengers in 1990, to 3,055,081 in 2009.<sup>11</sup> A 2010 survey<sup>12</sup> found that the majority of airport travelers are visitors (60% in Summer 2010; 57% in Spring 2010) and that the majority use the airport for business (34% in Summer 2010; 42% in Spring 2010). The same survey also found that between 83% to 74% of residents rated GIG as very important for their business. Another facility, Felts Field, is a 400-acre general reliever airport in eastern Spokane County near the City of Spokane Valley.

### ***Other Modes and Emerging Technology***

There are other transportation choices available in the Spokane Region that are difficult to define by a common transportation category. These mode types include increasingly popular types of transportation such as long board type skateboards as well as common mobility devices like wheelchairs. Some modes that are typically oriented for recreational use, such as rollerblades or scooters, usually share the same surfaces used by pedestrians, bicyclists and even motor vehicles.

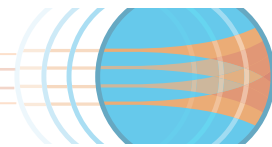
When accounting for other transportation modes, it is equally important to consider emerging technology that may have an impact on the future system. In Spokane, smaller Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEVs) are becoming more common as an alternative to their larger, petroleum based counterparts. Similar to golf carts, NEVs typically travel at slower speeds and are more commonly used on the local street network. While the use of these mode types may only account for a small fraction of the total existing transportation

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11 Spokane International Airport Historic Passenger & Cargo Data. [www.spokaneairports.net](http://www.spokaneairports.net)

12 2010 Spokane International Airport Passenger/Customer Survey





## vision context

system, they still must interact with the larger transportation network, playing a small but legitimate role in regional mobility.

### **Freight**

The Spokane Region's freight network is composed of several interconnected modes. Regional economic development initiatives and land use planning processes are critical to defining freight transportation corridors for a "systematic approach" to the efficient movement of freight. Congruency of the system is needed to reduce the environmental impacts of congestion, idling, extraneous routings of trucks while at the same time creating economic benefit to businesses and the citizenry with cost effective, safe and secure transportation of goods.

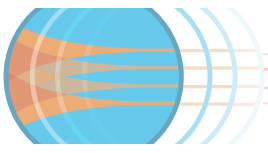
SRTC, in conjunction with state and local agencies, are incorporating existing and planned land uses into the transportation planning framework to create connectivity to major transportation corridors and major industrial and retail development areas while avoiding neighborhoods, schools and other sensitive areas. This is especially critical where access to airports, rail yards, industrial centers, shopping and retail areas and major manufacturers and distributors from the road network may conflict with local traffic patterns.

To best understand the regional freight system, the Inland Pacific Hub Study (IPH)<sup>13</sup> provides the most comprehensive analysis of all modes of freight in the Inland Pacific Hub; a 30,000 square mile region that comprises Spokane County and the eastern third of Washington as well as the panhandle of Idaho. Although still in progress, the consultant team for the Transportation Vision Project has reviewed and discussed the findings and current conclusions of Phase 1 with the IPH Team and the SRTC Program managers.

SRTC, as part of the IPH planning effort, has worked very closely with WSDOT's Freight Systems Division and planning agencies in Idaho, Oregon and Puget Sound to identify a series of freight initiatives that provides a fairly

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13 We encourage the reader to obtain additional information relating to freight and goods movement within the 19-county area of the IPH to visit the SRTC's website for the study, <http://www.inlandpacifichub.org>.



## vision context

comprehensive picture of the movement of freight in the Pacific Northwest. Through the IPH study, SRTC and WSDOT have used the state's Freight and Goods Transportation System which classifies roadways based on tons of product moved annually. These facilities are mostly principle and minor arterials in the urban areas and major collectors in the rural areas.

The current findings from the IPH Phase 1 Study showed that the top five outbound freight commodities of 2007 were:

- Lumber or woods products (10.9 million tons);
- Retail and consumer goods (7.7 million tons);
- Farm products (5.9 million tons);
- Nonmetallic minerals (2.9 million tons); and
- Food and kindred products (2.1 million tons).

### *Freight Modes*

In Spokane, freight includes use of roadways, rail and air cargo and parcel. According to the IPH study, roadway/truck freight was the most popular mode, at 54%, followed by rail at 43% and air at less than one percent. The 2.7% by water is based on other navigable waters in the IPH region and does not reflect conditions within Spokane County. Forecasts through 2027 show a net inbound change of 8.3 million tons (22% increase) and a net outbound change of 4.8 million tons (9.5% increase). While the majority of freight flow is through traffic (52.6%) there is a substantial amount of freight coming from or going to the region. The 8.3% of internal freight suggests there is potential to expand local economic development within the region.

The total existing freight flow (in millions of tons) by mode and direction in the IPH study area is shown in Table 2.6. To better understand the freight context of the region, there are several related terms that require definition.

- Inbound Freight (or "into" the region) - Freight that has its origin outside of the region and a destination within the region. The destination can be the final delivery point, a distribution hub or a value added enterprise.

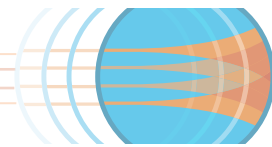


Table 2.6: Existing Freight Flows by Mode (Millions of tons, rounded)

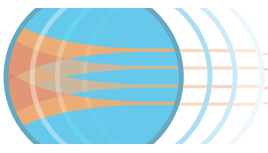
Freight Flow	Truck	Rail	Water	Air	Total	Direction of Flow (% of total)
Internal	13.8	0.09	0.0	0.0	13.8	8.3%
Inbound	18.7	5.4	1.5	0.02	25.6	15.3%
Outbound	29.0	7.8	3.0	0.04	39.9	23.9%
Through	29.7	58.3	---	---	88.0	52.6%
Totals	91.1	71.6	4.6	0.06	167.3	100%
Mode %	54.4%	42.8%	2.7%	0.04%	100%	---

Source: Inland Pacific Hub Study, Phase 1 Study, Working Paper 3.5, June 2010

- Outbound Freight (or “out of” the region) - Freight that has an origin within the Spokane area and leaves the area.
- Within - Freight that has both the origin and the destination points within the general Spokane Region, including the 19 counties studied as part of the IPH effort.
- Through - Freight that doesn’t stop anywhere within the region. This would typically be rail and motor freight that is transiting from Western Washington to other parts of the US and Canada.

### Roadway

In the area of truck/motor freight, the total transportation of goods into, out of, within and through the region totaled 83 million tons. The directional flow for motor freight, (measured in tons) was 23% within the local area (IPH study area) counties. The western movement of goods was 43% of traffic; southern direction was 20%, eastern 12%, and northern 2%. Providing an efficient north-south connection between the region and Canada via US 2 has significant potential to strengthen the regional economy. Fifty-two percent of all truck moves are one-way to or from outside of the region, with 33% through the region, and the remaining 15% within the region.



## vision context

### Rail

Rail moving inbound carried 8% of the total freight traffic (5.5 million tons), outbound rail carried 11.6% (7.9 million tons), and local less than 1% (98,000 tons). However, 80.4% of the freight moving through the region is on the rails (54.7 million tons). Of this traffic, 85% is east-west movements and 14% are north-south movements. This reflects the strong port related container movements from Asia to the U.S. and Canada.

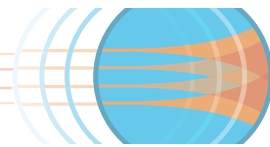
The IPH forecast for 2027, not taking into account through traffic, shows an inbound increase of 900,000 tons (18.8%), an outbound decrease of 940,000 tons (-11.8%) and a local decrease of 49,666 tons (-49%) in rail movements. Decreases may be due to conversion to truck freight or an overall decrease in tonnage produced such as timber products.

### Air Cargo and Parcel

Spokane International Airport (GEG) is an important trans-load facility for FedEx and UPS connecting Spokane to their major domestic hubs. The transferring of cargo between aircraft provides efficiencies and cost savings for the two integrated cargo carriers (aircraft to aircraft cargo transfer). In addition, the airport serves as a consolidation point which equates to truck trips to and from the airport for both integrated express and belly cargo movements. Air cargo is freight moved via aircraft specifically designed for cargo, exclusive of UPS, DHL and FedEx aircraft that handles parcel freight as their primary cargo.<sup>14</sup> In general, most state and regional goods movement studies handle parcel freight as a truck or motor carrier move, with the origin or destination of cargo being the airport and the counter point of distribution being within the local region. Spokane does not have any dedicated all-cargo carriers (such as Polar Air, Atlas, Tiger), but the airport does have the integrated express operators (FedEx, UPS, DHL) and commercial passenger airlines (United, Southwest, Horizon) with "belly cargo" and some on-demand cargo charter flights.

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<sup>14</sup> The IPH Working Paper 3.5, Modal Issues, dated June 2010, has a very detailed description of air cargo (pages 102-119) and the growth potential for the Spokane Region.



## vision context

One of the airport's economic development tools is the use of a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) to promote commerce and international trade. The zone allows for foreign or domestic merchandise to enter Spokane without formal customs entry, payment of custom duties, or government excise taxes. The zone covers over 5,300 designated acres at the Spokane International Airport's port of entry, with additional sites at the Spokane Airport Business Park and Inland Empire Distribution System, located in the City of Spokane Valley. There is also extensive commercial development adjacent to the airport, including commercial aviation offices and maintenance areas, business parks and developable land.

### Water

While the IPH Study indentified potential water borne cargo into and out of the IPH study area, only the Columbia and Snake River ports are capable of moving any kind of significant freight. The Spokane area does not move any freight by water as the Spokane River is not a navigable waterway. Any cargo that originates at or is destined for a port will be drayed or trucked into or out of the region.

### Future Transportation Network Projects

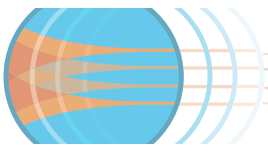
Based on a review of the existing plans available in the Existing Plan Summary and Trends Analysis Report prepared for this project, there are a number of major transportation-related projects planned for the Spokane Region. A major theme of these documents was that planned improvements include a diverse range of modes and location.

#### **Capital Projects**

- Future Roadway Corridors – North Spokane Corridor; Interstate 90 widening; SR-195 improvements;
- Transit – The High Performance Transit Network (HPTN);
- Multimodal Streets Enhancements – US 2 Revitalization, Division Street and Sprague Avenue;



*Rail freight that terminates in the Spokane Region is offloaded from rail cars onto tractor trailer trucks.*

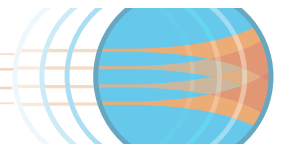


## vision context

- Bicycle Improvements – Spokane River crossings, improvements on Hatch Road, Northwest Boulevard, the Maple/Ash corridor, Five-Mile Prairie, Post Street, Wall Street, Assembly Street, “close the gap” projects such as Centennial Trail improvements and sections to the Farwell/Hastings park and rides;
- Pedestrian Improvements - University District Pedestrian Bridge; sidewalk infill programs for Spokane Valley and Airway Heights; conversion of the Post Street Bridge into a pedestrian bridge; connections to Farwell/Hastings park & rides; and improved pedestrian crossings along US 2;
- Trail Improvements – The Regional Pedestrian Plan includes a project list mainly focused on trails, including improvements to the Fish Lake Trail gap closure, Centennial Trail gap and safety projects, Ben Burr Trail, Little Spokane River Trail, Gleneden Trail, Liberty Lake trails, North Green Acres Trail and Millwood Trail in the Spokane Valley, Children of the Sun Trail, along with several new trail connections including a recommended trail system in Airway Heights;
- Bridges – Reconstruction is imminent for many of the region’s bridges which are reaching the end of their design life. Major bridge improvement projects include a pair of bridges over the Spokane River at Sullivan Road in Spokane Valley, the Bruce Road Bridge over Peone Creek and the Little Spokane River Drive Bridge near Wandermere, Sunset Highway Bridge, Post Street Bridge and Howard Street Bridge; and
- Bridging the Valley – A collection of highway and railroad safety projects that will ultimately eliminate 52 railroad crossings and separate vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians from train traffic in the 42 mile rail corridor between Spokane, Washington and Athol, Idaho.

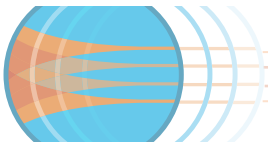
### ***Other Priorities***

- Local roads rehabilitation – This is an on-going effort, but is viewed as an important major investment;



## vision context

- Transit – Maintaining on-going transit operations, providing demand-responsive services to serve people whose disabilities prevent them from using regular bus service, implement the high performance transit network;
- Non-motorized facilities – Fulfilling goals of the City of Spokane’s Complete Streets initiative and realizing additional funding for active transportation projects via SRTC’s SmartRoutes 2010 initiative. Also includes development of a North/South bicycle route; improved connections to the South Hill, bicycle boulevards in the City of Spokane; Browne’s Addition and the Downriver area; and
- Congestion relief for I-90 – This includes widening from Spokane Valley to the Idaho State line from a rural four-lane freeway to a six-lane facility with necessary freeway interchange improvements.







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## chapter iii: vision framework

The Transportation Vision Project establishes the direction for how transportation within the Spokane Region will change, grow and develop over the next several decades and beyond. Community values, the vision and eight ‘big moves’ provide a framework to guide the policy, planning and design decisions for transportation in the Spokane Region, as well as a structure for organizing the report’s recommendations.

The Vision Framework includes a series of elements that reflect the community’s desires and provide the foundation for the Transportation Vision Project. These include:

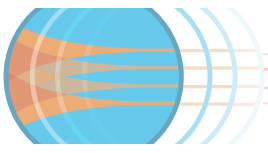
- **Community Values:** The values express what community members consider to be Spokane County’s most intrinsic and treasured characteristics;
- **Vision:** The vision puts into words how the community envisions the future pattern of physical, economic and social development for the Spokane Region; and
- **Big Moves:** The big moves are goals that articulate the direction for future policies, projects and programs to fulfill the vision.

In addition, a set of performance measures and targets was developed to provide clarity about the specific objectives that must be achieved in order to realize the community’s vision. The performance measures should also be used to monitor and gauge the success of the region in realizing the community’s vision for transportation.

### **Community Values**

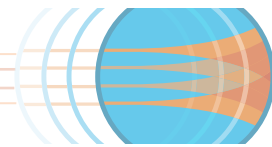
The Vision Framework is grounded in the set of values expressed by stakeholders and community members throughout the planning process (listed in alphabetical order).

- *Access to the Outdoors:* A regional asset built upon the prevalence and relative ease of accessing natural areas and recreation areas;
- *Affordability:* A region that offers a combination of low cost housing and transportation as well as a relatively low overall cost of living that caters to and attracts different household types and income levels;



## vision framework

- *Choices and Flexibility:* A system that offers choices in transportation for all users that are flexible as well as affordable and efficient;
- *Economic Diversity:* A regional economy that comprises a variety of industries and specialties provides a wide range of employment opportunities and greater long-term stability;
- *Education:* A region that is aware of available transportation options and alternatives, and the impacts of relying on motor vehicles;
- *Environmental Quality:* A system that carefully weighs impacts to the environment with well-thought-out alternatives and potential outcomes;
- *Healthy Environment:* A system that minimizes air pollution, excessive noise and visual impacts;
- *Housing Choice:* A range of housing options for all people with supporting sustainable transportation infrastructure and provisions of ancillary services;
- *Independence of Movement:* Provide an integrated system of transportation facilities for all modes and for all users and abilities, and allow for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services;
- *Intraregional and Interregional Connectivity:* A desirable transportation system should provide opportunities for safe and convenient connections across modes of transportation within the Spokane Region and beyond;
- *Quality Employment:* A region with reasonable and reliable access to employment centers and an economic infrastructure that enables job growth and employment opportunities to flourish and family wage jobs to be provided;
- *Quality of Place:* Future investments apply context sensitive design to create transportation infrastructure and facilities that meet the desired form and function of individual communities;
- *Regional Perspective:* A region that is well served while meeting the unique needs of urban and rural communities;



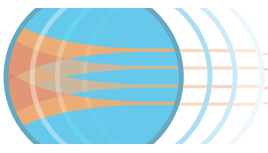
## vision framework

- *Safety*: All modes of transportation function with a high degree of safety, with a focus on addressing areas and facilities where potential conflict may be the greatest;
- *Self-determination/Independence*: The overall needs of the region are balanced with the ability to enable individual jurisdictions and their neighborhoods to achieve unique ambitions and goals that distinguishes themselves from others; and
- *Social Connectivity and Relationships*: A more connected region, with strong relationships creating a sense of unity and trust on key issues that make this area stand above others.

### Vision

The Transportation Vision Project articulates the preferred future for transportation in the Spokane Region, particularly over the coming decades. The vision statement builds on momentum from past investments and accomplishments while incorporating the aspirations, needs and ideals of today's regional community. The product of the intensive citizen and stakeholder engagement process is not a one-size-fits-all vision. It incorporates the unique differences among our cities and rural areas. Still, it inspires and motivates community members, jurisdictional staff and decision makers at all levels to work toward a collectively desired future.

The success of the Spokane Region over the next half century will depend on how we tackle interrelated challenges like aging infrastructure, traffic congestion, energy costs, environmental restoration and protection, population growth, the need for more affordable housing, sustainable development, economic development, as well as education and health challenges. Transportation is directly or indirectly related to each of these key challenges. Other regions—our competitors in the United States and globally—are in the same race to maintain and grow regions that have clean air and water, safe and healthy neighborhoods, resilient economies and access to housing and sustainable transportation choices. The Spokane Region's transportation vision will help guide the area's future growth by directing the creation and



## vision framework

maintenance of infrastructure and programs that help to ensure Spokane County's livability, accessibility, prosperity and sustainability.

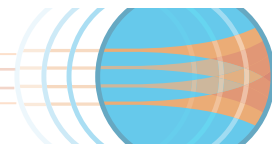
### *Vision Statement*

*Future transportation investments will help the Spokane Region maintain its appeal as a livable community with a thriving business and cultural atmosphere nestled within the beautiful scenery of eastern Washington. A well-maintained regional transportation system will provide a high level of service across both urban and rural areas with a variety of sustainable transportation choices and connectivity that advance accessibility and reliability for all users. The region's prosperity will also be the result of direct and indirect investments in our transportation systems to move freight and facilitate commerce that will ensure retention and attraction of new employers and family wage jobs, as well as increase our ability to attract quality employees. Implementing sustainable, efficient, effective and reliable solutions to existing and future transportation challenges in the Spokane Region will be key to making the Inland Northwest a fantastic place to visit, live, work, play, do business and raise a family.*

### *Vision Elements*

The future quality of life in the Spokane Region will rely on **accessibility** to a variety of housing, quality employment, entertainment, recreation and daily needs. People and goods will move efficiently on an **interconnected** transportation system, including roads, sidewalks, trails, public transportation and both on-street and off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The integrated, **multi-modal** transportation network will provide the backbone for future development of mixed-use centers and complete neighborhoods in the Spokane Region. All new development will be friendly to pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation users and **well-connected** to existing development.

Guiding the growth of multi-modal transportation infrastructure will help reduce suburban sprawl and **preserve and enhance the environment**. More people and jobs in mixed-use centers combined with greater investment of transportation infrastructure and services will create truly **active and**



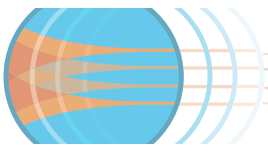
## vision framework

**accessible places.** In particular, future transportation investments will better link new and existing centers to one another and provide **reliable travel times** between them. **Coordination** of transportation and land use decisions will help prioritize the resources required to construct new infrastructure and allow for greater investment in maintaining existing transportation assets. The extension of urban services to rural areas will be provided to maintain existing levels of service and not be increased to induce growth.

The benefits of further integrating land use planning, environmental and transportation system planning will be evident in the **preservation of natural areas** and in the quality of air and water. Preserving the **quality of life**, significant views and landscape in rural parts of Spokane County will help to ensure a resilient and healthy region. Rivers, streams and lakes, including many within urbanized areas, will continue to contribute to the quality of life for the people living here. Integration of transportation, environmental and land use planning will help the Spokane Region maintain its position as one of the nation's most attractive and desirable mid-sized metropolitan areas.

The Spokane Region will prosper because of our **resiliency** in the face of changes in the economy, work force, and needs of businesses. The region will retain and grow existing businesses with talented workers that have specialized skills while also attracting and supporting **new businesses** using our diverse educational backgrounds and the many training opportunities that exist in our area. Residents and businesses will pursue a path of growth that is environmentally **sustainable and inclusive** of diverse needs and interests. Along with jobs and educational opportunities, individuals and families will stay in the Spokane Region because of the many **livable communities** where people can easily and comfortably walk, bike and use public transportation to get around.

Focusing on affordable housing, healthy environments, and **safe neighborhoods** will be a priority at key centers inside the Spokane Metropolitan area. Residents will be able to make informed **choices** about where to live and work with an understanding of the true costs of where they live and how they get to their many destinations. Residents will be able to walk,



## vision framework

bike or take public transportation to access a variety of venues and services such as parks, health care, schools and retail shops. The entire Spokane Region will be safer for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists through improved design, public outreach campaigns and law enforcement efforts.

### **Big Moves**

The Regional Transportation Vision will need bold steps to translate the vision statement into implementable strategies, or Big Moves. Big Moves are the best ways to achieve the vision. Based on key findings from the document review and public input, there are eight Big Moves that can make the vision a reality.

- A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning;
- B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth;
- C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network;
- D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices;
- E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places;
- F. Supporting the Regional Environment;
- G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and Sustainability; and
- H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen.

Chapter IV presents each Big Move in detail, including related assets, challenges and recommendations.

## chapter iv: big moves

Realizing the vision for the Spokane Region requires a collection of Big Moves, incorporating a comprehensive array of strategic actions. Each Big Move has a set of targets that will allow the region to measure progress and evaluate related projects. The targets were developed throughout the visioning process and were refined to ensure they could be measured with readily available data sources. Chapter V. Implementation Strategies, outlines additional responsibilities for monitoring and measuring success.

### A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning

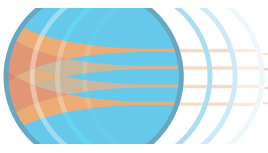
To be most effective, land use and transportation planning decisions should be made in coordination and collaboration with one another because of their potential impact on the character and quality of the region. New development patterns in urbanized areas should focus on service delivery (police, fire, water, sewer, public transportation, etc.), efficiency and improve quality of life characteristics uniquely tailored to specific areas. While the State's Growth Management Act limits growth to urban areas, transportation and land use connections must also be coordinated in unincorporated areas to ensure those living in rural areas have reasonable access to goods, services and employment.

#### Assets

The State's Growth Management Act (GMA) guides new growth to designated urbanized areas. To this end, jurisdictions within Spokane County have a variety of plans and policies to ensure that land use decisions address community needs. The Countywide Planning Policies for example provide a unified framework from which Spokane County and local jurisdictions' plans are developed and adopted. Perhaps most importantly, Policy Topic 1: Urban Growth Areas and Policy Topic 5: Transportation, provide guidance for how land use coordination and transportation planning will be conducted. Under the authority of the GMA, transportation and land use planning at the local level must be consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan also addresses how the coordination process should take place, ensuring consistency among local jurisdictions and agencies. In addition, SRTC is responsible for ensuring transportation coordination at the regional level.



*Urban services such as water and sewer are planned and upgraded in coordination with transportation investments.*



## big moves



THE POPULATION OF SPOKANE'S  
URBAN AREAS IS EXPECTED TO  
GROW BY 30% IN THE NEXT 20  
YEARS, PRESENTING THE NEED TO  
ENSURE CLOSE COORDINATION  
BETWEEN LAND USE AND  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

The Countywide Planning Policies also set standards for urban growth area delineation, as well as minimum levels of service, distribution of future growth, and to negotiate designations for urban growth areas. Guided by these policies, comprehensive plans and subsequent land use zoning establishes the framework to implement the desired uses and densities of development. The 2008 Spokane Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) outlines multiple goals linking land use and transportation, with design guidelines to encourage use of transit and land use policies that cities in the County have already implemented.

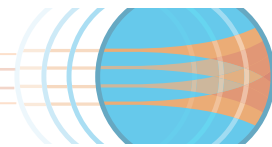
The region's urban centers provide a mix of commercial, residential and civic uses. These downtown and main street locations provide the greatest range of transportation choices for people working in, living in and visiting the region. These regional centers provide a wide array of amenities, future development and redevelopment capacity and an opportunity to support a variety of infill projects that can create a dynamic environment to residents and visitors in the region.

### *Challenges*

Growth within the Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) is forecast to add approximately 30% or 37,000 residents by 2030. The 2003 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) identified that anticipated growth and development would cause traffic gridlock on the existing transportation system and cause routine exceedances of air quality standards. Yet, many efforts to relieve congestion including new road construction, can conflict with goals of mode shift and reduction of single occupancy vehicle trips. Forty-one percent of survey respondents rated the existing transportation system as below average/poor.

Building permit data indicates that development in the Spokane Metropolitan Area has mostly occurred along the perimeter of the Spokane Urban Growth Boundary. This growth pattern will negatively impact the regions ability to provide sustainable transportation choices that are meaningful. Providing services to unincorporated rural areas creates additional strain on financial resources and County services. While the provision of reasonable services need to be provided to residents outside urban areas, the level of service may





## big moves

not include the same transportation choices provided inside more densely developed communities.

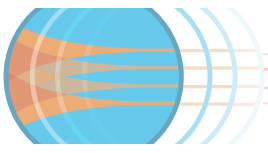
Often, the development of new and affordable housing at the edge of urban areas attracts lower income residents where transportation alternatives are limited. While new housing generates tax revenue, much of the gains are offset by the need to provide additional transportation services and related infrastructure to these growth areas. Increased distances to employment centers, schools and services also impacts affordability for residents. Without alternative transportation choices and convenient public transit options, many low income residents are further isolated and become less mobile, spending more on transportation.

Perhaps among the most important challenges is the need for transportation options that can provide safe, reliable and convenient alternatives to driving. Bicycling and walking become less attractive as trips become longer. At the same time, the provision of transit service to less densely populated areas can be cost prohibitive. According to the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute Plan for the Spokane Regional Area, the Spokane area contains high concentrations of households that have no vehicles available. In turn, a greater concentration and balance of housing and businesses are needed to efficiently provide alternatives to driving personal vehicles.

Some of the strategies for addressing congestion can be in conflict with other transportation goals. Roads to service new growth areas or projects to accommodate through freight may only provide temporary congestion relief. Without looking from a holistic approach, such projects can lead to future congestion through an increase in vehicle trips, higher speeds and other challenges. One of the major issues identified by the community is how new roads can impact quality of life and growth patterns. The approach of improving congestion through new and wider roads must therefore be balanced with traffic demand management strategies and efforts to provide quality transportation choices.



*Commercial uses can potentially invigorate and improve areas of downtown Spokane that lack pedestrian amenities along established transit routes.*



## big moves



*Pedestrian and bicycle networks should be well-connected to residential and mixed-use development.*

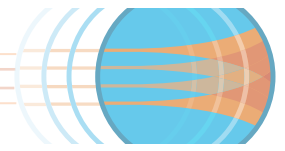
Commercial uses also impact the future of the transportation system. Currently, retail uses are primarily located along major transportation routes, including Highways 395, 291 and Division Street in Spokane, I-90 and East Sprague Avenue in Spokane Valley and Highway 2 through Airway Heights. Some of these areas are isolated, or are currently difficult or unsafe to reach by a means other than driving a car. In addition, few of the commercial retail areas around the region integrate housing or have housing development nearby.

### **Recommendations**

Integrating land use and transportation requires projects and programs that can respond to existing and potential transportation issues such as congestion, access, travel distances and travel time. Continuing to integrate land use and transportation will require a forward thinking approach to transportation investments that anticipates future needs ahead of actual development; thereby guiding the future rather than reacting to what has already been decided or constructed. The following recommendations outline several transportation demand management strategies to improve how the region moves through a comprehensive approach. Coordinating walking, bicycling and public transportation access and infrastructure with roadway enhancements and a clearly delineated freight network in activity centers will be a key to long-term success.

**A.1: Implement the policies articulated in the 2008 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and continue to coordinate future MTPs with the County's and cities' Comprehensive Plans.** The existing MTP has several goals that encourage land use and transportation. These policies should be applied throughout all regional jurisdictions, through a combination of incentives, design standards and regulatory measures. Some of the key policies include:

- » Development of public transportation compatible designs and encourage mixed-use residential development along established transit routes;



## big moves

- » Creation of high-quality and well-connected pedestrian and bicycle networks leading to and from higher density residential and mixed-use development; and
- » Encouraging well-designed and appropriately scaled mixed-use commercial centers that are near transit (development within one-quarter mile of transit service should have a minimum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0 in business districts and 0.5 in urban transit activity centers along arterial corridors served by transit).

**A.2: Provide access to safe, frequent, reliable and convenient public transportation, especially in commercial, mixed-use and higher density residential areas.** Depending on specific conditions various types of public transportation can offer the greatest gains in linking land uses by connecting jobs and accessible housing. The extent of improvements and level of investment should be based on specific projects that are directly linked to defined growth areas, making once isolated uses in urban areas more accessible and vibrant. While a regional transit network can link various areas in the region, connections between higher employment centers, housing and closer-in nearby destinations should be the higher priority in the short and medium terms.

**A.3: Improve transportation corridors for all modes that connect to Downtown Spokane, other major employment centers and major routes such as I-90.** Currently, some arterial streets become congested at peak commute times, leading to increased traffic on local streets and longer travel times. Arterial improvements that increase the connectivity between north and south Spokane, through the use of a “Complete Streets” approach, could improve the relationship between land use and transportation related activities. By designing for the right mix of users, future transportation projects can accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as motorists, while helping reduce motor vehicle congestion.

### TARGETS

#### A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning

Maintain or Improve

Average Commute Time:

21.0 minutes

Baseline: 21.0 minutes in 2009

Mode Split:

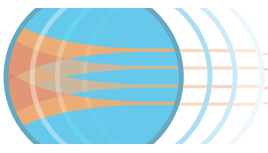
70% or less region-wide drive alone rate

Baseline: 77.5% drive alone rate in 2009

Jobs-Housing Balance Ratio:

1.4 jobs per household

Baseline: 1.3 jobs per household in 2005



## big moves



*Spokane's college and university system is a regional resource that produces and educated workforce and growth in research and technology sectors.*

### **A.4: Continue to coordinate with local jurisdictions to evaluate transportation levels of service for all modes, communities and residents.**

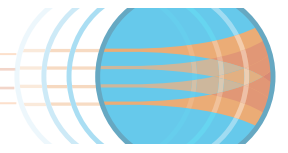
While Countywide Planning Policies are designed to restrict the extension of urban services outside of UGAs, customary transportation improvements in these areas such as safety improvements and road resurfacing should continue to be provided at sustainable levels. Increased opportunities for residents to discuss rural public transportation options with regional decision makers can also improve the unique needs of rural communities.

### **A.5: Provide affordable and convenient housing where transportation choices exist for a range of incomes, and where the provision of new transportation infrastructure is practicable.**

Low income residents are more effected by transportation costs, especially when commuting from great distances and without affordable transportation alternatives. Concurrency between affordable housing and affordable transportation modes is key in economic stability at the community and county-wide level.

## **B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth**

The Spokane Region's economic future depends on its ability to retain and attract quality employers and employees. According to survey responses, unemployment and jobs are the most important issues facing Spokane County. Building the physical infrastructure and other related programs that can support a wide range of occupations, businesses, industries and services will be essential to the region's economic vitality and success. By capitalizing on the region's many assets – including a high quality of life, reliable transportation access, educational institutions and medical facilities – the Spokane Region and Inland Northwest are well-positioned to stimulate economic growth. Focused investment in upgrading truck, rail, air and cargo assets will help maintain the flow of goods and services within and across the region well into the future.



## big moves

To retain and attract businesses and jobs, the Spokane Region will need to invest in physical and human capital that prepares the area for economic growth and helps to catalyze that growth. As the freight and goods hub for the Inland Northwest, the transportation system will need to accommodate the safe, reliable and efficient flow of goods through its highways, railways and airports. Targeted improvements will keep cargo moving on all modes, by improving freight corridors, grade separations and environmental controls. A sustainable strategy for building the economy will require the careful weighing of long term impacts to the community, environment and economy. The design of streets affects both businesses and residents, and the availability of efficient and convenient transportation options (including motorized and non-motorized options) will be one of the key ingredients to attracting and retaining a high-quality workforce and building the economy.

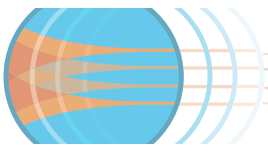
### Assets

There are a number of key industry sectors in the Spokane area that show promise for expansion in the future. Healthcare and clean technology are two primary sectors for which Spokane and Eastern Washington are well positioned to receive future employment expansion. Residents and business owners frequently cite the region's high quality of life and proximity to outdoor recreation as some of the biggest reasons making the area such a great place to live and work. There are several higher education facilities that promote a well-educated work force, which in turn has the opportunity to spur growth in research and technology.

Connected by major transportation routes, Spokane's proximity to Canada and location in the region makes it a hub for trade. SRTC has worked to develop a series of freight initiatives that provide a Pacific Northwest regional approach to the movement of freight with Spokane as a major hub. The SRTC, in partnership with WSDOT, KMPO, Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and the USDOT, commissioned the Inland Pacific Hub Study (IPH), which is a detailed study examining ways to establish the Inland Pacific Region as a multi-modal global gateway to increase domestic and international commerce. As identified in the IPH charter, regional assets that serve to strengthen economic growth include:



*Spokane's regional rail system connects critical ports along the west coast to east coast destinations and into Canada.*



## big moves



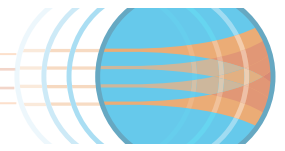
*Most international goods arriving in Spokane County are carried in shipping containers carried by large trucks.*

- Affordable landing fees at Spokane International Airport;
- Movement toward completion of the North Spokane Corridor;
- An existing state-of-the-art international port of entry at Eastport, Idaho with rail access as well as a new state port of entry on Interstate 90 near the Washington/Idaho state line;
- Interstate 90 as a major east-west running freeway linking the West Coast to Chicago and Boston;
- Two class 1 railroads serving west coast seaports to the east coast, agricultural and timber areas and Canada;
- Proximity to barge transportation to and from inland seaports in Lewiston, ID, Clarkston, WA, and Whitman County; and
- An ultra high-speed (terra-byte) fiber optic network tying the region together.

### Challenges

Similar to state and nationwide trends, the unemployment rate has nearly doubled over the past four years. In addition, transportation system maintenance and operation expenditures exceed revenue sources. Improvements to the current transportation network and new projects to increase efficiency and freight flow can position the region for a bright economic future. However, increasing capacity for freight needs to be conducted strategically and can increase vehicle miles traveled and the potential for environmental impacts including air quality. An increase of imports and exports originating from the Spokane Region and the industries and businesses that generate them will help to justify the timely expansion of freight infrastructure. While positioning to building the regional economy, some important considerations include:

- The economics of freight distribution and the benefits (jobs) to the local region;
- Proximity to freight modes, truck corridors, industrial and warehousing developments and design, permitting and zoning regulations;



## big moves

- Environmental factors in evaluating infrastructure investment decisions;
- Safety and security considerations from a local and national perspective; and
- Operations and maintenance, especially during the winter storm season, and the preservation of infrastructure with preventive maintenance.

### Recommendations

The Spokane Region is in the process of positioning itself for continued long-term economic success. The following recommendations should be considered in conjunction with local and regional economic development strategies, as well as the results of IPH Phase 2.

#### **B.1: Directly and indirectly support job creation through strategic investments in all modes of transportation infrastructure and services.**

The transportation system can directly and indirectly help bolster the regional economy. Directly, the region can create jobs through design, construction, operations and maintenance of the transportation system. Investment in the transit system should be prioritized to improve mobility and access to jobs, as well as provide transit related jobs. Indirectly, investments supporting the movement of goods and people—including a strong freight network, convenient transit system and walkable and bikable communities—can help to attract new businesses to the region, as well as support the growth of those already in the Spokane Region.

#### **B.2: Address the efficient flow of cargo through the region.**

As identified in the truck and motor freight mode discussion, an imbalance of cargo flows is a challenge for the motor freight industry. Paying the cost of operating and maintaining a truck, while driving many miles without any freight revenue has forced many motor carriers in the region to go out of business. Typically a motor carrier that has a dispatch function within the business reduces empty backhauls to about 20%. An owner-operator or non-dispatched trucker has an 80% or greater chance of an empty return (dead haul). This means that approximately 30 to 40% of trucks operating in the region are at some point operating empty. This has a significant

### TARGETS

#### **B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth**

Per Capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for Spokane County:

**increase per capita GDP by 15% by 2020**

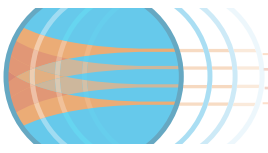
Baseline: per capita GDP of \$34,040 in 2009

Private Sector Employment for Spokane County:

**increase the ratio of private sector employment to 84%**

Baseline: ratio of private sector employment of 82% in 2010





## big moves



*Regional growth will depend on the ability to move a growing volume of cargo using a combination of transit mode corridors.*

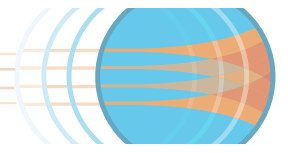
impact on economic sustainability, economic livelihood of businesses dependent of trucking, non-revenue generating wear and tear on existing infrastructure from use, non-productive traffic congestion and environmental quality.

In addition, Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) discrepancies between states/provinces will continue to be a large issue in several areas of the country that are tied to interstate commerce as trucks moving freight across state and international boundaries have to deal with differing regulations. This often results in lower yielding trips and breaking trailers apart at the state line. As an example of the complex return of moving freight by truck, there isn't a uniform basis to move freight. Washington State has a GVW (no permit required) of 105,500 lbs assuming the national bridge formula is complied with; Idaho allows a GVW of 105,000 lbs but only on National Network (NN) designated highway. If not on a NN highway, the limit is 80,000 in Idaho, Oregon and Montana. Alberta and British Columbia are limited at 87,080 lbs for a five-axle unit.

As identified in the rail modal discussion, Spokane does have significant presence in the intermodal container market (double stack service or dedicated intermodal yard). The Spokane area does not have any strong ties to a major port that specializes in container movements. As a result, international cargo coming into or out of the region arrives via containers on trucks. Both UP and BNSF have indicated that they will stop to pick up cars on their transcontinental intermodal routes, but that they prefer full unit trains with a balanced east and west flow. The Port of Quincy's (WA) intermodal yard is a good example of this restriction; it generally stands empty with little traffic due to the seasonal nature of the products being shipped.

There is a regional and national need for a coordinated freight strategy, which requires coordination of federal-state and local corridors for freight and application of benefit-cost criteria for projects and infrastructure system improvements. In addition, there is a current legislative effort for greening of the supply chain, such as Cap & Trade and California's AB





## big moves

32. Legislation like this targets the quantification of the carbon footprint of the overall supply chain as well as the modes of transportation within the supply chain.

**B.3: Target freight infrastructure projects that will generate local, sustainable economic development.** In the 2009 Marine Cargo Forecast Technical Report prepared for the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Washington Public Ports Association, and updated with WSDOT's 2010 State Rail Plan Update, the forecasted waterborne commerce cargo coming through Washington's ports is estimated to grow at an average annual rate of 1.7% through 2030. Containerized cargo and grain will grow at higher rates (4.1% and 6%) and most of the cargo will be transferred within the Pacific Northwest by motor freight and "the challenge will be to protect the functionality and reliability of the transportation system for truck transport".<sup>1</sup> Thus the more significant impact to Spokane's freight system as identified in the IPH technical reports will be based upon domestic growth in freight and cross-border trade with Canada. With this growth, capacity will become a much larger issue as it affects all of the aforementioned issues for quality of life and economic benefits.

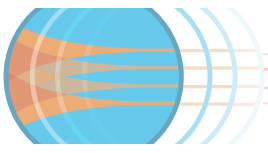
Capacities for both road and rail are limited at the present time, even with the downturn in the economy. Both rail and motor freight "through" traffic are expected to increase as there is not a viable east-west alternative route. For north-south moves, especially to the Calgary area, Interstate 15 does provide an alternative route for freight from the southwest portion of the U.S. In the 2011 State of the Union Address, President Obama laid the foundation for investment in the nation's infrastructure that will have a direct and positive impact on the Spokane Region. The USDOT's 2012 Budget clearly lays out a plan to "Promote Regional Planning by bolstering state and metropolitan planning to award funds to high performing communities; and empower the most capable communities and planning organizations to determine which projects deserve funding."<sup>2</sup>



*Pedestrian improvements to Spokane's streetscapes are needed in many places where surface parking lots define the on-street experience.*

<sup>1</sup> Washington Ports Forecasts 2009 by BST Associates, Dated March 23, 2009, page ES-3

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Highlights  
from <http://www.dot.gov/budget/2012/fy2012budgethighlights.pdf>, page 5



## big moves



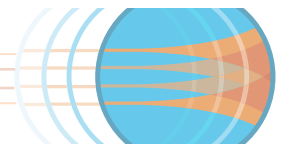
*Making walkable communities in the Spokane Region through planning and design is a critical step in creating an integrated transportation network.*

With the cutback in “earmarks” for transportation projects, the new reauthorization bill will have a series of performance metrics on which states, MPO’s and the Federal Government will base funding decisions. FHWA’s Strategy 5.5 lays out the foundation to make the public sector transportation system and investments more accountable and performance outcome-oriented and the 2012 Budget, Exhibit III-2 provides five performance metrics:

- » Safety
- » Environmental Sustainability
- » State of Good Repair
- » Livable Communities
- » Economic Competitiveness

It is the last goal of Economic Competitiveness that has a specific measurement of “increasing travel time reliability in freight significant corridors” that will have the greatest impact on the Spokane Region transportation system in which the region will be required to identify (along with WSDOT) freight corridors in compliance with the enhanced National Highway System (NHS) which includes Interstate Highways and other principal arterials, intermodal connectors and highways of important to the U.S. strategic defense policy. The enhanced NHS will be defined in the Reauthorization Bill.

As trucks must share the road with passenger and public transportation vehicles, the freight industry is often viewed negatively for its perceived impacts to congestion, safety and environmental issues. Thus one of the key transportation projects identified to help this situation is the North Spokane Corridor (NSC) and the ability to extend it beyond the current 10.5 miles. This will create new economic opportunity for industrial, commercial and distribution development in the northern part of Spokane. The project would also improve congestion by reducing the extent of through truck traffic on local streets such as Division Street. This opportunity was identified as a high priority in the Phase I IPH Study.



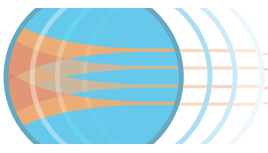
## big moves

A key to positioning the region for economic growth will be keeping cargo moving on all modes through a combination of improved freight corridors and grade separations. Additionally, environmental concerns such as Cap & Trade, GHG emissions, and air quality restrictions in California may have a causal effect on current supply chain routing criteria used by shippers and carriers. These concerns primarily affect the international containerized cargo, which directly relates to the number of trucks and trains transiting the Spokane area.

### **B.4: Design streetscapes that are accessible, safe and inviting for**

**all modes.** Streetscapes – comprising public rights-of-way and the intersection of the public and private realms – are important elements of the transportation system because they help to define local communities. Complete street strategies can be a valuable economic development tool, serving to make communities livable, memorable and economically strong. Through appropriate redesign efforts, streetscapes can create more vibrant downtowns and street corridors, serving to encourage business investment while promoting walking, biking and transit. Land use designations are related to creating better streetscapes, as a mixture of uses can offer closer distances between home, shopping and work. WSDOT's new Main Street program, which focuses on urban non-access regulated state routes, is an example of a transportation policy with strong economic development goals. Other successful examples, such as the City of Spokane's Neighborhood Business Districts, have transformed transportation infrastructure to support center and corridor business development.

The Spokane Region already has several planning documents and policies that guide the design of streetscapes, including the City of Spokane's Neighborhood Planning Assessments and Downtown Plan Update, and the Sprague and Appleway Corridors Subarea Plan. The Countywide Planning Policies call for transportation corridors that preserve the character and quality of neighborhoods, as well as site design requirements that support pedestrian scale and mixed-use development. These policies should be considered for transportation projects to ensure the region is positioned for strong economic growth.



## big moves



*The Spokane Region is aiming to reduce vehicle emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 with projects that increase non-motorized transportation choices.*

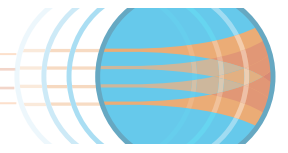
### C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network

An integrated transportation network - one which comprehensively considers streets and transit routes, bikeways, sidewalks, greenways, freeways, railways and airways - is the basis for improved regional and urban mobility. Targeted strategic improvements to connections between modes can facilitate the movement of people and goods while providing transportation choices. A multi-modal transportation network can complement neighborhoods, communities and economic development opportunities.

#### Assets

The region can draw upon two major assets in developing a well-planned and inter-connected transportation network: a strong planning foundation and the presence of a regional agency responsible for transportation. The region has several plans and policies that guide transportation investments. Taken as a whole, these plans guide the region towards the construction of an integrated network to serve a wide variety of travelers. These plans include the Regional Bicycle Master Plan, the Regional Pedestrian Master Plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and the Transit Development Plan. In addition, the Bridging the Valley project and North Spokane Corridor each address a wide variety of transportation needs.

As the federally mandated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Spokane County, SRTC is responsible for coordinating transportation policy among planning and transportation departments with the WSDOT, Spokane County and cities and towns within the County. Through an interlocal agreement that voluntarily commits regional entities to comply with SRTC policies, SRTC ensures that Federal, State and regional policies are carried out at the local level. Thus, local transportation and land use plans must be reviewed for consistency with SRTC policies prior to local adoption. This process improves communication and collaboration among local agencies, which leads to more integrated overall transportation planning and implementation.



## big moves

### Challenges

Further development of an integrated transportation network throughout the region will require strengthening inter-agency coordination and regional leadership, balancing multiple demands on individual roadways and segments, preserving and enhancing quality of life, improving freight operations efficiency, and addressing complex design issues.

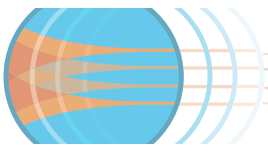
As previously discussed, the efficient movement of freight within the current and planned infrastructure and transportation network is critical to continued economic development and the vitality of the Spokane Region. The ability of SRTC to plan and coordinate freight transportation corridors with other transportation modes is critical for balancing quality of life with a safe, secure, cost effective, environmentally sensitive and efficient transportation network for the region. It is especially important to enhance collaboration at the local level, where municipalities can have conflicting plans and policies and compete for funding.

Even regions with a high level of coordination among plans and agencies may struggle to balance competing interests along individual corridors (i.e. "too many trucks on this road"). In some cases, a single corridor has been identified as part of the High Performance Transit Network, a high priority bikeway, and a freight route. Street design can help accommodate the demands of multiple modes, but limited right-of-way and other constraints may require amending existing plans and route designations.

Not surprisingly, some of the toughest design challenges often occur at transition points between modes, which are the test of a truly integrated network. Several documents govern design on the federal, state and local levels. However, these documents sometimes fall short in addressing unique, complex interactions between modes in a safe, efficient manner. Creativity and a better understanding of the evolving field of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit design considerations are useful tools for engineers and planners who must still work within boundaries established through rules and regulations.



*Pedestrians benefit from generous sidewalks planted with trees that provide separation from the vehicle zone, shade and visual interest.*



## big moves

### TARGETS

#### C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network

Commute Mode Share For Transit:

increase by 1% basis point year over year

Baseline: 0.5% of commutes by transit

Increase Linked Trips:

improve the percentage of trips linked to transit by bicycling and walking to 88%

Baseline: 78% of transit trips linked by bicycling and walking

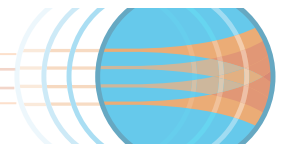
### Recommendations

In order to complete an integrated transportation network that connects various modes and progresses towards a regional vision, the Spokane Region should move to implement the following recommendations:

**C.1: Create facilities that balance the opportunity of all modes to support the movement of people and goods in a sustainable and community-friendly environment.** Multi-modal corridors, such as the North Spokane Corridor (NSC), can accommodate virtually all modes of transportation. Many of the region's existing streets have ample right-of-way to better accommodate most modes. In particular, many areas have the type of residential and employment densities that are necessary to support better integration of transit into existing streets. Such facilities must be part of a broader network that is connected to multiple destinations. The region must evaluate strategic investments to the network, drawing upon reliable indicators for where people are likely to walk and bike in order to close gaps and create an efficient and effective system.

**C.2: Resolve, to the extent possible, potential conflicts with multiple designations for the same corridors through coordination, integration and design.** The SRTC can assume a leadership role in developing guiding design principles and an overall process to educate planners and engineers in the identification of potential conflicts to ensure connections and seamless transitions between transportation modes. Creating design principles helps to guide trade-offs. It is possible to map potential modal conflicts, devise design principles, conceptual designs, or potential conflict solutions to assist local agencies in resolving the multiple demands being placed on streets or at specific problem intersections.

**C.3: Require project descriptions to demonstrate their ability to address various modes of transportation.** At a micro level, the current non-motorized plans place a relatively high priority on recreational trail projects. These projects can play an essential role in improving livability, as they provide a key amenity for residents. In order to construct an



## big moves

integrated transportation network for bicycling and walking, the region should consider refining project descriptions and prioritization to focus on the following two types of projects:

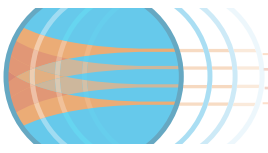
- » Bicycle and pedestrian projects that connect major residential, commercial and employment centers to transit transfer centers and major transit stops. Every transit trip begins and ends with a pedestrian trip, and access to transit can be extended with high quality bicycle facilities. Many of these improvements are captured in existing modal plans, but this step would require a network evaluation and perhaps re-thinking of the purpose of various streets in order to prioritize and implement projects.
- » Gap-closure projects for bicyclists and pedestrians along transit routes. A complete, integrated network provides safe, continuous door-to-door facilities for all modes. As a starting point, identify gaps in the existing network, particularly in places where pedestrians make transit connections or places where bicyclists transition from off-street trails to transit routes.



*STRC's transportation management center*

**C.4: Implement the High Performance Transit Network (HPTN) with a variety of service levels and transit modalities serving the region.** A major element of an integrated transportation network is a robust transit system. Completion of the HPTN will be based on a number of individual projects in different areas that will occur over time. STA has a plan for the HPTN that better responds to existing and planned land uses, densities and demographic characteristics of the region. There are three types of service within the HPTN that include the Blue Line (longer distances with 15-30 minute frequency that can be effectively served by modes such as commuter rail, motor bus and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)); Red Line (direct service to major destinations in metropolitan areas with 10-15 minute frequency that can be served by modes such as BRT, light rail and electric trolley bus); and Green Line (short distances with 6-15 minute frequency that can be served by modes such as electric trolley bus, trolley bus and streetcar).





## big moves



*The Spokane River*

**C.5: Provide better multi-modal connections for people and goods to interregional rail and air travel.** The relatively dispersed development patterns prevalent throughout the Spokane Region make it challenging to provide convenient access to rail and air travel for the movement of people and goods. Projects should be identified that improve connections between modes. Nearly all personal rail and air travel require connectivity to at least one additional mode of transportation to make them a viable option. Improvements should be made to improve intermodal connectivity with a focus on end-of-trip facilities for bicycles, better transit service and pedestrian linkages. As stated previously, several opportunities exist to expand rail and air freight movement in the Spokane Region.

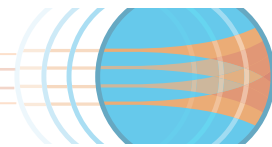
### D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices

The Spokane Region is committed to providing a transportation system that caters to a diversity of physical ability levels, income groups, ages and mode preferences. A sustainable choice weighs long-term impacts to resources, the community and environment, while providing a transportation system that is efficient, accessible and economically feasible. Taking cues from how people use transit today, the region can anticipate a growing demand for access, convenience and choice in transportation options including facilities for ridesharing, pedestrian, bicycle and transit.

#### **Assets**

The region can draw upon three major assets in providing transportation choices: supportive land uses, a strong policy foundation, and a track record of congestion management. Compact land use patterns facilitate transportation choices. As more people choose to bicycle, walk, or take transit, planning and funding a well planned and connected transportation network to support these choices becomes easier. The region's urban centers provide a mix of commercial, residential and civic uses that set the stage for future infill development and a wide array of transportation choices. For example, many existing streets in the City of Spokane have sufficient width for a range of redesign and redevelopment potential.





## big moves

Outside individual plans, agencies across the region continue to partner on key policy initiatives such as SmartRoutes and the High Performance Transit Network, which includes the Central City Transit Alternatives Analysis currently underway. SmartRoutes reflects collaboration among the SRTC, Spokane Regional Health District, local political and business leaders, community activists, walking and bicycling advocates, and local planners and engineers to make the case for further investments in the bicycle and pedestrian networks. The High Performance Transit Network and the renewed focus on a high quality transit spine in Downtown Spokane provide clear direction for transit improvements.

The Spokane Region has generally built its roadway system commensurate with increased demands. This is documented in the Texas Transportation Institute's 2009 Urban Mobility Report, which shows that overall roadway congestion and delay experienced per driver is lower than other similarly sized cities. With limited congestion, it is likely that the majority of trips will continue to be single-occupant vehicle trips. With that said, both transit reliability and freight mobility rely upon predictable levels of congestion.

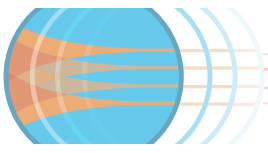
### **Challenges**

The challenges to providing transportation choices in the region include redesigning existing streets, aligning transportation funding with policy and balancing urban and rural priorities. Providing a truly multi-modal – or “complete street” – where it is most needed can prove challenging, particularly in built-out environments where street widening is not an option. On other streets, engineers can readily incorporate wider sidewalks, marked crosswalks, dedicated transit right-of-way, or dedicated bikeways. Clearly communicating the potential benefits and trade-offs of these choices requires a careful public process and thorough analysis, which can increase the resources and time necessary to implement high-priority projects.

Many regions struggle to find enough resources to fund competing transportation project needs. The SRTC, through its regional scoring criteria, provides additional points for projects that consider alternative transportation choices as part of a projects design. In addition, virtually all of the federal Transportation Enhancement funding is used to support alternatives to the



*Compact land use patterns in Downtown Spokane make it possible to provide an array of transportation choices to residents and visitors.*



## big moves



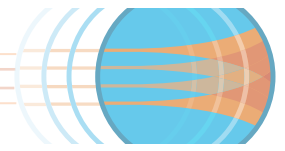
*Spokane County's residents benefit from the close proximity of nature and natural resource lands that support an array of recreation activities.*

single occupant vehicle. SRTC applies the majority of federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding towards Intelligent Transportation Systems such as SRTC's transportation management center. Safe Routes to Schools funding and funding from the Washington State Department of Parks and Recreation have also contributed significantly to sidewalk and trail projects, on a competitive funding basis. Spokane Transit Authority levies a 0.6% sales tax for funding bicycle, pedestrian or transit projects. In addition, the City of Spokane relies on a Transportation Benefit District which includes \$250,000 a year for pedestrian projects; the region's first local resource specifically targeted to alternative modes.

The current project selection criteria acknowledge projects that are multi-modal in nature. However, funding is not based on predetermined allocation which does not necessarily promote a consistent level of resources for multi-modal projects each year. Selected projects therefore will vary on their ability to help achieve the stated policy goal of increasing the mode split for bicycling, walking, and transit. The Spokane Regional Pedestrian Plan has a goal to increase the pedestrian mode split from 8.5 percent to 10.5 percent in the next four to six years, and both the MTP and the Spokane Regional Bicycle Master Plan have goals to increase the mode split for bicycling and walking.

While increased highway capacity, new roadway corridors or additional public transportation service may be necessary in more suburban settings, urban activity centers, such as the University District/Downtown Spokane Central Business District, North Bank, or Hamilton Street Corridor will rely on the completion of the NSC as well as future street retrofitting projects to relieve congestion on key City of Spokane streets. The movement of intercity and international traffic to the NSC will provide the opportunity to reduce the amount of road capacity previously needed in the downtown core and increase the potential for mixed-use development projects. Future street redevelopment to accommodate different modes will also serve to offset increases in congestion.

For rural communities and rural areas, maintaining existing roads, and possibly providing limited public transportation access to essential services, such as



## big moves

education, employment and medical services will play an important role in providing for the needs of residents living in agricultural areas. Transportation choices in this context of addressing regional challenges will require ongoing assessment of regional priorities.

### **Recommendations**

The Spokane Region currently provides a range of transportation options, but not all options are available to everyone or for all types of trips. A collection of projects, programs and policies will be necessary to ensure that the transportation system of the future provides transportation choices for all users.

**D.1: Implement multi-modal projects identified in existing transportation system and modal plans.** Many transportation network components have already been identified in other related planning documents. Completion of these projects will serve to meet the targets for providing sustainable transportation choices. Selected projects should be reviewed for conformance and coordination with other plans to prevent conflicts. The discussion of future transportation network improvements discussed previously in the Vision Context provides a complete list of future capital projects and other priorities to improve the transportation system.

**D.2: Clearly identify the locations where jurisdictions should invest capital funds for transportation improvements to ensure that they are well used and help build towards the region's goals for encouraging choices.** This includes investments in projects that support public transportation, rail, freight and goods movement, aviation, and non-motorized projects that could be implemented regionally, or along specific corridors such as part of the SmartRoutes program.

**D.3: Seize every opportunity to add transportation modes to reconstruction projects.** Achieving the regional vision will take many years and many more individual projects. A key strategy to providing sustainable transportation choices is designing streets to accommodate a variety of modes within each transportation project. This can range from new

### **TARGETS**

#### **D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices**

Realign Funding Criteria and Construct Non-Motorized Network:

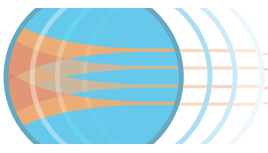
**5% regional funding allocation for non-motorized modes**

Baseline: 2% of MTP expenditures for bicycle and pedestrian projects

Actively Manage Travel Demand: **prioritize projects and programs that remove bottlenecks and provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips**

Secure Additional Transit Funding: **increase revenue available for transit capital projects by 10%**

Baseline: 2004-2009 average capital expenditures, \$9.8 Million annually



## big moves



*Road resurfacing is a scheduled maintenance task required to keep a high quality transportation system.*

bike lanes and wider sidewalks on local streets, or transit dedication and HOV lanes along major arterials. Piece by piece, individual projects can collectively build a system that accommodates multiple users.

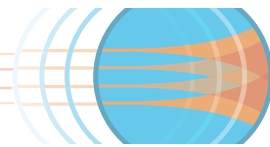
### E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places

The Spokane Region's overall appeal is based on its scenic beauty, access to outdoors, safety, affordability, medical access, educational opportunity and family oriented atmosphere. The urban areas of the region contribute a tremendous amount to this appeal, with thoughtfully designed and functional streets that support a variety of community uses and placemaking opportunities. Building on these assets through transportation choices and appealing streetscapes can promote neighborhood values and local businesses particularly in centers and corridors where affordable and convenient housing development is located. This in turn will make Spokane an appealing place to work, visit and live.

#### **Assets**

The Spokane Region has a wealth of natural and built assets that contribute to its sense of place and community identity. First and foremost, the Spokane metropolitan area is a gateway to great natural outdoor areas of Eastern Washington. Mount Spokane (elev. 5,883 ft) is the setting for skiing, hiking, snowmobiling and biking activities. There is close proximity to many lakes and rivers for boating, rafting, swimming and fishing. The Spokane River, a tributary of the Columbia River, can be experienced in both rural and urban settings of Spokane County and is recognized as an important regional resource. An extensive trail system enjoyed by commuter and recreational users also serves as a link between different parts of the region. Overall, the region's recreational assets are very strong and well-used resources.

The City of Spokane is the largest downtown center in Northeastern Washington and serves as the region's cultural capital. For example, the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture features world class collections



## big moves

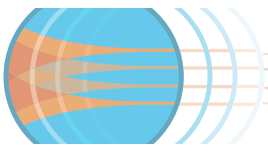
of Native American artifacts and antiquities, and Spokane's downtown is home to a symphonic ensemble and six semi-professional sports teams. Higher education also contributes to place making and community identity in Spokane, with the strong presence of public and private campuses such as Spokane and Spokane Falls Community Colleges, Eastern Washington University, Whitworth, Washington State and Gonzaga Universities.

Apart from the City of Spokane's downtown assets, the region has a wealth of diverse neighborhoods and neighborhood centers that contribute to the region's overall livability. A number of Spokane's neighborhoods today provide walkable goods and services at pedestrian friendly neighborhood centers. Neighborhoods are one of the major building blocks of the region. On the whole, the region is characterized by low to medium building density (1-4 stories on average in Spokane County). Higher building densities are found in the City of Spokane's downtown and lower South Hill (1-20 stories on average).

The region has a host of historic structures punctuating the urban and rural fabric with unique and period architecture telling of the region's past. For example, the Review Building in the Riverside neighborhood of Spokane is one of the tallest buildings in Spokane and has been home to the City's major newspaper since it was constructed in 1890. The Arbor Crest winery located on the north side of the Spokane Valley occupies the site of the former Riblet Mansion, and Mount St. Michael's overlooks the north side of the Spokane Urban area. These landmarks and many others stand as a testimony to the visions of our forefathers and a legacy to carry on to the future.



*Neighborhood-scaled stormwater management projects show residents how water moves through their watersheds.*



## big moves

### TARGETS

#### E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places

Total Miles of Bike Facilities:  
construct 10% (approximately 12 miles) of the proposed network per year

Baseline: 179 total miles in 2009

Rural and Natural Resource Land Uses:  
maintain rural and natural resource land uses near 88% in Spokane County

Baseline: rural and natural resource land approximately 88% of Spokane County

System Preservation and Maintenance Expenditures:  
increase annual average expenditures by 10%

Baseline: \$12 million annual average

### Challenges

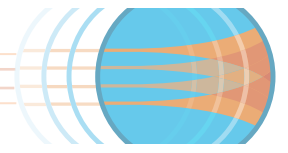
Like any region, the Spokane area faces a number of challenges to re-establishing community and re-investing in place making. Auto-oriented development patterns characterize both urban and suburban areas. A prevalence of surface parking lots further fragments the urban fabric and adds to the suburban feel of traditionally highly built out areas.

Overall, the Spokane Region's density is relatively low and widely dispersed, making it a challenge to get around without the use of a personal vehicle. As a result, more and more residents are reliant on driving as opposed to walking or biking, which poses a public health concern due to lack of exercise. For example, a lack of pedestrian and bicycle routes between schools and neighborhoods diminishes opportunities for children to get daily exercise. Simply stated, children raised in auto dependent environments are more likely to lack the exercise they need to maintain healthy normal lives. The extinction of the traditional neighborhood grocery, barber or hardware store of the 1940s, '50s and '60s eliminated many of the trips that would have been made by walking or biking.

The pedestrian experience in the Spokane Region is further hampered by the lack of sidewalks, inadequate crosswalk facilities and an incomplete bicycle network. Gaps in basic pedestrian and bicycle facilities reduce their effectiveness as a system, and further diminish a sense of community when poor access restricts a community's ability to interact with and enjoy shared resources. Gaps in pedestrian and bicycle facilities also diminishes the effective access to places around Spokane's destinations when they are difficult to reach without a car or have a great deal of nearby space dedicated to vehicle parking. In many areas and residential developments, the lack of through streets and linkages limits connections for pedestrians and bicyclists.

### Recommendations

Building a livable region and making places will require investments in existing and new transportation projects that serve to reduce impacts to the environment. Coordination of regional prioritizing, and enforcement and



## big moves

education of environmental policy will also serve to make more prosperous and healthy communities.

**E.1: Invest in an appropriate mix of transportation choices.** The Spokane Region is well prepared to support the sense of community and environmental integrity that residents and regional leaders have invested in. However, protecting these assets is a continual struggle and will require additional investment in non-motorized transportation that serves to improve air and water quality.

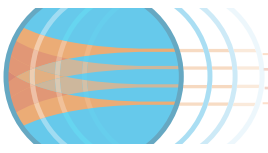
**E.2: Increase the level of and education and outreach related to improving community and environmental health, particularly in regard with alternative transportation choices.** Enforcement of air (Spokane County Clean Air Agency) and water quality (Spokane County Water Resources Program) regulations should be prioritized and may require an update of fees and charges. A regional education campaign that focuses on rules of the road, safety and awareness of designated routes will also be critical in increasing overall safety and alternative transportation use.

**E.3: Promote development of complete streets that are designed for all users.** Streets that prioritize motor vehicles discourage other users such as pedestrians and bicyclists and can make unsafe and unwelcoming streetscapes. Along with discouraging non-motorized transportation, such environments can also limit economic development potential for attracting and retaining new businesses. Complete streets serve to improve the relationship between street front and street, by addressing the role these environments have in making more livable places. Streets that are designed for all users create places that are as important for transportation as they are for other important elements such as stronger neighborhoods, recreation opportunities and stormwater recharge.



*An urban infiltration planter with decorative trench grate.*





## big moves



*As development expands into rural areas of Spokane County, it will become necessary to improve transportation levels of service.*

### F. Supporting the Regional Environment

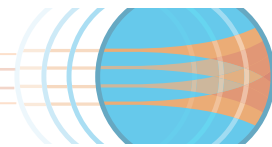
The Spokane Region is composed of many communities that are impacted by the transportation system in different ways. Through programs and policies, the region should support continued efforts to protect, restore and enhance the natural environment through sustainable development measures. Non-motorized transportation modes such as walking and biking can promote health, while off-setting the negative effects of motor vehicle use. Stormwater management systems, reducing auto congestion and improved street and surface materials can be used to promote community and environmental health throughout the region. Community education can also help raise the public's awareness of regional transportation issues, laws and regulations, while serving to promote the reduced use single-occupant vehicle trips.

#### Assets

As a region, Spokane is well prepared to support its communities and its environment. Feedback from the public outreach process demonstrated that residents of the Spokane Region are proud of their high quality of life, and engaged in the protection of the environment. There are several programs and policies in place to promote a healthy future. In 1993, Spokane County implemented the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution and petroleum consumption through employer-based programs that reduce the number and distance of commute trips in single occupant vehicles. Since its creation, the drive alone rate of participating businesses has been reduced, resulting in a reduction in air pollutant emissions. The Regional Bicycle Plan (2008) and Regional Pedestrian Plan (2009) both outline policies for improving non-motorized transportation, including policies for the design of regional transportation facilities to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

In 2009, the state adopted a new law establishing statewide benchmarks for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Local jurisdictions may be expected to adhere to the statewide goals, implemented through a variety of policies and programs. The Comprehensive Plan to





## big moves

Address the Challenges and Opportunities of Climate Change sets-forth policies to reduce transportation emissions by increasing public transit and rideshare options and promoting compact development that minimizes VMT. The plan also calls for a cap-and-trade program to allow industry a degree of flexibility to determine how to best reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Based on federal requirements, Spokane County is required to accomplish tasks associated with six minimum stormwater control measures: education and outreach; public involvement and participation; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction site runoff and post-construction management; and municipal good housekeeping. The Spokane Region also has two state-of-the-art regional stormwater facilities. The Brownes Mountain Regional Stormwater Facility and the Price and Wall Regional Stormwater Facility are the first of their kind in the Spokane County area.

The Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency is responsible for enforcing federal, state and local air pollution standards and governing air pollutant emissions from new and existing sources. The Agency also provides education and outreach programs to reduce air pollution including campaigns to encourage driving less, reducing vehicle idling, upgrading heating stoves and keeping vehicles well-maintained. The Spokane Region is currently in attainment of carbon monoxide standards and is involved in a maintenance plan to ensure ongoing air quality.

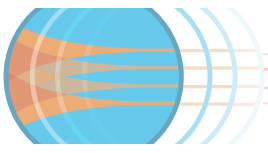
County zoning also protects Spokane's natural resources. County land zoned for resource-based uses protect and preserve the County's valuable agriculture and forest resources, by discouraging non-compatible uses. Overlay zones, such as Planned Unit Developments and Aesthetic Corridor Overlay, foster creative and efficient site development and pleasing and clutter free appearances along major transportation routes, respectively.

### **Challenges**

The transportation system has continued to address many challenges growth has brought to the region's quality of life and environmental integrity. Sometimes those environmental challenges have been addressed better than others. There are many challenging streetscapes that lack pedestrian



*A vision process workshop attended by residents of Spokane County.*



## big moves

### TARGETS

#### F. Supporting the Regional Environment

Greenhouse Gas Emissions:  
1990 levels by 2020

Spokane River Quality Index:  
range between 80 to 90  
Baseline: historical measurements  
between 40 and 87 on scale of 100

Obesity Index:  
reduce by 15%  
Baseline: 28.9% of adults in  
Spokane County are obese

and bicycle facilities. Residents cite noise, speed and dust from vehicles and trains and a lack of regulatory enforcement (e.g. municipal and motor vehicle code enforcement), maintenance and regulation are also noted as common concerns. Community health is another challenge, evidenced by an increasing level of obesity. Land use decisions have created an environment where more and more residents are not getting enough exercise and are reliant on driving as opposed to walking or biking to their destinations.

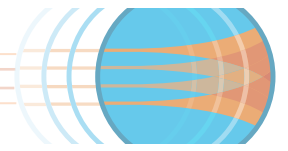
Water quality is one of the most pressing issues facing the environment. There are many streets and rural roads that experience flooding and erosion damage during periods of high runoff. In addition, older street construction encroached into natural drainage ways leading to flooding. Sediment carried along streets eventually reduces the effectiveness of stormwater conveyance resulting in flooding and water quality impacts.

According to the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan, unincorporated Spokane County was developed without stormwater pipe systems in urbanizing areas. Many of the grassy swales installed to replace older drywells, have become ineffective as a result of neglect and deterioration. With new development growing into areas with shallow soils, high groundwater, poorly drained soils or steep slopes, the opportunity to rely on infiltration to dispose of stormwater runoff is limited.

### Recommendations

The Spokane Region is well prepared to support the sense of community and environmental integrity that residents and regional leaders have invested in. However, protecting these assets is a continual struggle and will require additional investment in transportation system and water quality improvements.

**F.1: Increase investment in stormwater system improvements, particularly low impact development techniques, integrated with transportation projects.** Especially when applied to transportation projects, the promotion of natural drainage systems and “green” storm and surface water management facilities can greatly reduce



## big moves

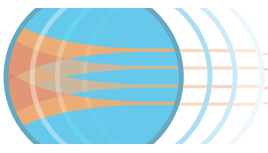
flooding and associated impacts to water quality. Examples include the Brownes Mountain and Price and Wall Regional Stormwater Facilities that transform underused sites into wildlife habitat and opportunities for passive recreation. Low impact development projects such as the City of Spokane's Lincoln Street project improve street design while at the same time providing naturally treated stormwater runoff. The 2005, Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan, outlines specific policies and recommendations for integrating stormwater with transportation improvements. These include the continued coordination with County stakeholders for plan implementation.

**F.2: Restructure the regional transportation system to respond to climate change.** One of the most significant drivers of regional transportation policy is the State of Washington's efforts (in association with Oregon, California and British Columbia) to curb greenhouse gas emissions. In 2009, the state adopted a new law establishing statewide benchmarks for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Local jurisdictions are required to adhere to the statewide goals, implemented through a variety of policies and programs. According to the Comprehensive Plan to Address the Challenges and Opportunities of Climate Change, the State goals call for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. By 2035, the plan calls for a reduction in emissions by 25% below 1990 levels, and 50% below 1990 levels by 2050. One of the primary policies contained in the plan is to reduce transportation emissions by increasing public transportation and rideshare options and promoting compact development that minimizes VMT.

**F.3: Invest in system-wide transportation facility rehabilitation, preservation and maintenance while diversifying the region's mix of transportation choices.** Much of the existing transportation system revenue cannot keep up with current demands. While new development should pay its fare share of transportation improvements, more resources should be leveraged to improve the overall condition of a truly multimodal transportation system. Clearly identify the locations where jurisdictions should invest capital funds for transportation improvements to ensure that



*Road repainting is a long-term maintenance task required to keep the transportation network running smoothly.*



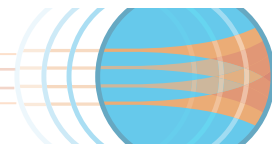
## big moves

they are well used and help build towards the region's goals for increasing alternative transportation choices. Increase the level of education and outreach of regional policies related to community and environmental health. Enforcement of air and water quality regulations should continue to be prioritized and may require an update of fees and charges. And public transit buses and government and public agency vehicle fleets should be upgraded to increase fuel efficiency or run on alternative power.

**F.4: Support the promotion of personal health and wellness of the region's residents by investing in transportation projects that improve opportunities for active transportation.** Transportation modes such as walking and bicycling are a great way to exercise and stay healthy. Projects that allow for safe and convenient walking and bicycling make it easy to choose healthier, cleaner and more affordable modes of transportation.

### **G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and Sustainability**

The success of the regional transportation vision is dependent on a project and program funding and implementation system that is transparent and accountable to the public, and is supported by a sustainable revenue base. Fiscal transparency and accountability are critical to establishing the public's trust, understanding, engagement, and support in transportation planning and implementation. This visioning process has established an excellent foundation for public engagement and the Region should build and improve upon this approach in the coming years. The second fiscal priority is to align the vision with the funding tools to make it happen, and to align revenues with expenditures. The Spokane Region needs to have transportation funding resources and tools that support the vision set forth by its people. This will be a two-pronged process in which new revenue sources are explored, while at the same time ways are sought to reduce costs through project design and efficiencies.



## big moves

### Assets

This Vision itself is an extremely important part of establishing fiscal responsibility, accountability, and sustainability; it sets the “north star” by which the Spokane community can steer for years to come. By iteratively checking new transportation projects and Metropolitan Transportation Plan updates against the Vision (and adjusting the Vision if necessary), the region can stay on course and ensure that the public dollars being spent are consistent with the public’s expectations. Another asset is the public support demonstrated through the visioning process. Through public meetings, the *A Thousand Visions Game* and other means, the visioning process shows that the region’s residents have high expectations for the future of transportation in the region, and are willing to put additional revenue sources in place to make the vision possible.

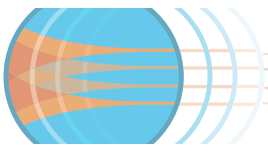
While the list of desired projects is long, the region has many different funding mechanisms at its disposal that can be prioritized and used to fund projects. The types of tools already in place range from property taxes, gas taxes, sales taxes, impact fees and numerous state and federal programs. The recession has amplified the community’s recognition of the value of infrastructure in supporting economic development and community livability.

Another outcome of this visioning process was a series of eight transportation investment criteria endorsed by the Vision Process Team and the public. Developed by community members during the public outreach process, these criteria have been integrated into the Big Moves and associated targets and will be very useful in the future as the Region attempts to build the most transparent and sustainable system possible. The eight criteria are:

- Robust Economy;
- Multimodal Connectivity;
- Access and Mobility;
- Environmental Stewardship;



*Local improvement districts can benefit local property owners and small businesses by funding street improvement projects that provide signage and lighting.*



## big moves



*Leadership at the local, county and state level is required to jumpstart needed transportation projects in the Spokane Region.*

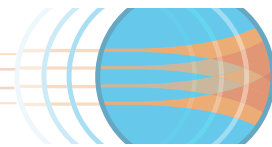
- Health and Wellness;
- Safety;
- Social Equity; and
- Fiscal Responsibility.

Communication is one of the primary methods of heightening fiscal responsibility and accountability. People want to understand how transportation decisions will be made and how they can be a part of the process. The internet, print media, open houses, email and other means of communication are essential to maintaining an open process. The project website ([www.spokanetransportationvision.com](http://www.spokanetransportationvision.com)) and other media created during the Transportation Vision Project add to the foundation that can be leveraged and built upon going forward. The more technical information that is available to people on-line and in print, the more accountable the process. The internet's ability to provide easy access to a great depth of information makes it a great tool for disseminating public information.

### **Challenges**

The Spokane region faces many challenges to maintaining and enhancing fiscal responsibility, accountability and economic sustainability.

- Operations and maintenance funding is often more challenging to fund on an ongoing basis than one-time capital construction.
- Rising costs for materials and labor. Post recession inflation and/or increased competition among contractors could make infrastructure projects more expensive than ever.
- Shrinking budgets for public infrastructure. The current recession has amplified an ongoing trend of fiscal struggle for public agencies at all levels of government. Tax revenues are down, yet expenses continue to rise.



## big moves

- Competing uses for funds. The trend of infrastructure needs exceeding government's ability to pay is expected to continue and worsen in the future. There will be many potential projects competing for the same limited pool of funding.
- Multiple layers of government. A sustainable transportation funding strategy will require thorough cooperation between many government agencies throughout the region. This inherently creates coordination challenges, where conflicting goal setting and budget prioritization must be coordinated between counties, cities, special districts, and state and federal agencies.

### Recommendations

The Spokane Region is well-prepared to maintain and enhance fiscal responsibility, accountability and sustainability. The following recommendations will help ensure long-term viability and strong public trust.

#### **G.1: Measure and communicate the economic, environment and health impacts of transportation investments.**

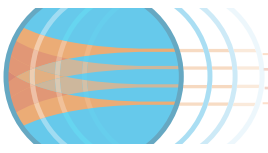
As part of the annual budgeting process, each of the targets discussed in this category and other categories should be measured to evaluate progress against the benchmarks. Provide a mechanism to distribute these results broadly to policy makers and the community at-large. Such communication will not only help identify where investments are having the most impact, but it will provide transparency to the community, making them better informed about where public resources are spent and the tangible impacts that those investments are making in the region. Communication should, at a minimum, be done through the internet, making sure that findings and reports are written with the layperson in mind and that financial information is understandable and readily accessible.

**G.2: Ensure that those who benefit from the improved transportation network pay a meaningful share of the cost.** This is one of the most basic principles of fiscal fairness and of "demand management." When people have to pay some of the cost for a good or service, they will moderate their



*Spokane County is the provider of regional services for all County residents, but also provides a range of local services for residents living in unincorporated areas.*





## big moves

### TARGETS

#### G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability & Sustainability

Ratio of State and Federal Funds to Local Funds

Devoted to Transportation:

at least 50% state and federal funds for transit projects and at least 75% state and federal funds for all other projects

Transportation Funding and Rate of Inflation:

transportation funding growth (from all sources) keeps pace with or exceeds the rate of inflation

Baseline: average annual national rate of inflation between -0.4% to 3.8% from 2001 and 2010

Bond Ratings:

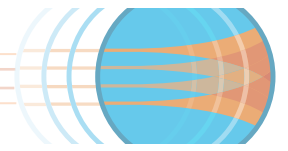
at least a rating of Aa3 (lowest high quality rating) and aim for bond ratings of Aaa (best rating)

usage/demand with one outcome being that the system is not overtaxed. Examples of this principle include bridge tolls, gas taxes and transit fares. Another example that is becoming more widespread and could be implemented locally is development impact fees. Conversely, a situation in which one group provides transportation benefits to another without expecting a fair share of the costs results in unbalanced investment in an underutilized but heavily subsidized mode of travel.

**G.3: Make use of and leverage public-private partnerships when it is in the best interest of the public.** While it is not always explicitly recognized and recorded, when done right, public infrastructure results in private investment. Thus, public agencies can achieve investment leverage by locking together public and private investments. For example, a rail siding may not be built unless an adjacent freight distributor commits to building a new distribution center; a streetcar may not be built unless developers commit to building new housing or a convention center. Public private partnerships are a way of leveraging public funds and achieving public vision for their community and the region. In recent years, local governments have partnered with large national and international firms to build and operate many different types of transportation infrastructure, including highways, transit systems, and terminals.

In Spokane, public-private partnerships could be used to help implement an urban rail line or system, or major pieces of freight distribution infrastructure. In both cases, the private sector could be bound to make investments that correspond with public investments, or to play a key role in financing, design, operation, or another project role. Since every project and partnership is different, roles need to be customized to the project at hand. Sources for understanding and implementing these partnerships include The National Council for Public-Private Partnerships, the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Innovative Program Delivery, and the Urban Land Institute's infrastructure investment series.





## big moves

**G.4: Actively seek new funding sources for transportation system maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation and improvement.** Even if all the region's partners are extremely judicious with their funds, the region should at least consider supplementing its current funding sources with new ones. The visioning process clearly shows that residents have high expectations for their transportation system, and will support new funding sources under certain conditions. The region—including all local jurisdictions and all anticipated state and federal grants—is expected to be able to access approximately \$3.8 billion in transportation capital and operating funds over the next 20 years. Unfortunately, the anticipated costs of the needed transportation capital improvements and operations are expected to be significantly higher. Thus the short fall will need to be either closed by additional revenue or the anticipated needs prioritized to determine what should be deferred.

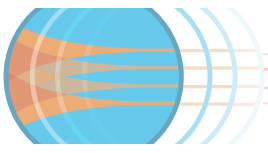
Different funding sources are better suited to different transportation challenges. For example, a local improvement district is a good way to fund a series of streetscape improvements that will primarily benefit local property owners. Conversely, a regional sales tax covers a very broad area and thus is best suited to fund region-wide improvements. Specific funding recommendations are outlined in Chapter V. Implementation Strategies.

**G.5: Maintain flexibility in the way we design and implement our transportation investments.** Flexibility can be achieved by ensuring that not all funds are allocated far in advance of their need, and that local jurisdictions and the region as a whole should be given considerable latitude in determining how to use the available transportation dollars to meet the defined needs. Both measures ensure a funding system that is flexible and responsive.

**G.6: Develop a unified strategy to demonstrate that the region is focused, well-coordinated and proactive in being a great place to live, work and recreate.** Potential investors are willing to deal with many policies and restrictions, but frequently walk away from uncertainty in the marketplace. The Spokane Region is well prepared to support the sense of



*SRTC's leadership on regional planning issues will cultivate better transit service provision for County taxpayers.*



## big moves

community and environmental integrity that residents and regional leaders have invested in. However, protecting these assets is a continual struggle and will require additional investment in a wide range of transportation infrastructure investments to provide sustainable transportation choice and reliable freight and good movement non-motorized transportation and water quality improvements.

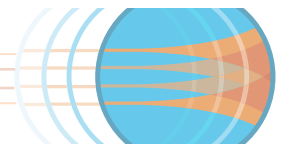
### **H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen**

Region-wide progress will require a deliberate collaborative effort among the jurisdictions, stakeholders and neighbors. This strategy calls upon all stakeholders to work together towards the collective vision for the region. At the region-wide level, the extensive scale of the vision calls for strong community leadership to identify and work closely with stakeholders and to measure and monitor progress. Leadership will support the long-term commitment and continuity of the future success of the region, despite an uncertain economic future and changing political landscape. There is a need to improve collaboration among regional agencies while coordinating with the local jurisdictions related to land use, transportation, health and the environment.

#### **Assets**

Governments within the Spokane Region generally have a proven track record of working together towards progress. The Countywide Planning Policies support the concept of regional collaboration and coordinated planning efforts. One of the most recent examples is the development of the Spokane County Regional Water Reclamation Facility. County officials have spent nearly ten years working together on plans for the new, regional facility. Recent stormwater projects, such as Brownes Mountain, were the result of a coordinated effort among Spokane County, the City of Spokane, the State Department of Ecology and area residents.

In December 2009, regional governments worked together to produce a regional guide to land use planning and growth. *Collaborative Planning:*



## big moves

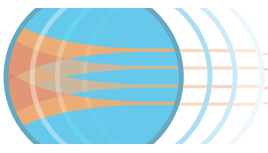
*Implementation in Spokane County's Metro Urban Growth Area* outlines necessary steps to collaboratively plan for urban growth areas and outline policies for funding and service delivery. The document also provides guidance on interlocal agreements; the most common form of joint planning in Spokane County. Good examples of this mechanism are the approximately fifteen interlocal agreements that Spokane County has with the City of Spokane Valley to provide various services from law enforcement to information systems services at an annual cost (2009) of approximately \$18.5 million. There are also several special purpose districts that are responsible for providing a range of public services. SRTC, Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, Spokane County Conservation District and STA are all examples of these regional entities.

### **Challenges**

With thousands of residents spread across a large land area within different jurisdictions and with different lifestyles, the Spokane Region is faced with several challenges related to the provision of services and collaboration. The array of regional stakeholders and planning efforts can potentially lead to divergent decision making, conflicting policies and competition for resources. Stakeholders initiated the collaborative planning process for growth and services within urban growth areas because of a lack of agreement among area officials. Participants cited differences in land use regulations and development standards, dependency on revenues generated from urban growth areas, undefined joint planning areas, and an unclear role of the County as a service provider.

Higher income households have tended to locate in the unincorporated County causing revenue disparities between the cities and the County, they also compete for high-tech employment centers. The lack of an agreed-upon unified regional vision or strategy linking transportation, land use and economic development has tended to facilitate an environment of competition and limited cooperation.

Traditionally, land is cheaper in the unincorporated areas of the County than in the cities of Spokane County. Cheaper land tends to attract developers for both home builders and employers. There are many other factors that



## big moves

### **TARGETS**

#### **H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen**

Develop a Regional Pact to Implement the Vision as Outlined in Chapter V: Implementation Strategies.

are considered when making a decision about location. Developers, families and employers all attempt to balance their desire for inexpensive land with reasonable taxes, transportation costs, provision of services and amenities, access to attractive destinations, and type of lifestyle or ambience they are trying to achieve.

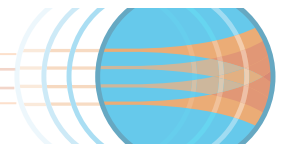
Spokane County and its cities continue to face increasing demands for better services while experiencing significant fiscal constraints related to a slowing of growth and the economy. The challenge of providing sustainable services becomes even more apparent during downturns in the overall economy, especially in the absence of guaranteed funding streams. There can also be a level of uncertainty for who is responsible for providing services.

As a regional service provider, the County provides some services for all residents within the County. At the same time, Spokane County is also a local provider, responsible for providing services in various areas of the County. In 2009, the County divided general fund expenditures for services at a ratio of 70% for regional services, and 30% for local services.

A recent study conducted by Berk & Associates found that with the incorporation of Spokane Valley, the clear distinction of roles changed, creating uncertainty for future responsibilities and funding. This has the potential to become even more compounded if extensive unincorporated areas are to become incorporated. The same study found that if unincorporated areas within urban growth areas were to incorporate, some County funds could diminish, including cuts to the County Road Fund and Real Estate Excise Tax that is dedicated to funding capital projects.

### **Recommendations**

The real or perceived lack of cooperation and communication between jurisdictions is a major concern of area residents and stakeholders, and is a common theme found through the document review and stakeholder interviews. The need for clear communication, inclusive planning, coordination and then follow through with implementation is key to addressing these challenges.



**H.1: Work closely with local and regional stakeholders to gain unified support for various plans and projects.**

Residents and businesses are more likely to participate in the decisions that affect them if they feel a greater sense of participation and understanding by all levels of government. This should include a campaign to educate the public about what different area governments do, how they do them and what the different roles and responsibilities are among regional, local and agency governments.

**H.2: Build regional collaboration based on recommended policy.**

SRTC should take a leading role in coordinating regional planning. As the agency responsible for transportation planning in the Spokane metropolitan area, SRTC is also most suited to coordinate regional land use planning to promote its integration with transportation. Through this role, SRTC should take the next steps discussed in the Collaborative Planning: Implementation in Spokane County's Metro Urban Growth Area document including development of a coordinated plan that identifies County priorities and what role, if any, cities will play in assisting the County to achieve a stronger fiscal footing. This also includes identifying how and to what extent the County should be providing services. Through this role, SRTC can provide greater input on WSDOT priorities in the region. SRTC should lead the coordination efforts for regional stakeholder outreach and collaboration and continue to follow the policies and recommendations of the 2005 Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan, including the continued coordination for plan implementation. Ultimately, partnership leveraging with regional stakeholders will be necessary to move forward with projects, plans and policies over which SRTC has no jurisdiction or limited control.

Table 4.1 summarizes recommendations as they relate to each of the Big Moves. As shown in the table, SRTC can either assume a primary or secondary role in implementing the recommendations. Through a primary role, SRTC will take the lead ensuring each recommendation is carried forward. Through a secondary role, SRTC can identify a partnering jurisdiction, agency or stakeholder to move a recommendation forward.

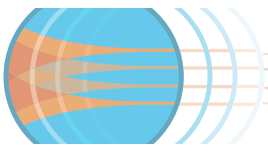


Table 4.1: Summary of Recommendations and Related Big Moves

Recommendations	Big Moves							
	A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning	B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth	C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network	D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices	E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places	F. Supporting the Regional Environment	G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and Sustainability	H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen
Implement the policies articulated in the 2008 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and continue to coordinate future MTPs with the County's and cities' Comprehensive Plans.	P	S	P	P	S		S	
Provide access to safe, frequent, reliable and convenient public transportation, especially in commercial, mixed-use and higher density residential areas.	P	S	P	P	S	S		
Improve transportation corridors for all modes that connect to Downtown Spokane, other major employment centers and major routes such as I-90.	P	P		S	S			
Continue to coordinate with local jurisdictions to evaluate transportation levels of service for all modes, communities and residents.	P			S	S	P		S
Provide affordable and convenient housing where transportation choices exist for a range of incomes, and where the provision of new transportation infrastructure is practicable.	P	S		S	P		S	
Directly and indirectly support job creation through strategic investments in all modes of transportation infrastructure and services.	S	P			S	S		
Address the efficient flow of cargo through the region.		P			P			
Target freight infrastructure projects that will generate local, sustainable economic development.	S	P			P			

P= Primary Support      S= Secondary Support

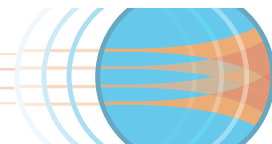


Table 4.1: Summary of Recommendations and Related Big Moves (continued)

Recommendations	Big Moves							
	A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning	B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth	C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network	D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices	E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places	F. Supporting the Regional Environment	G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and Sustainability	H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen
Design streetscapes that are accessible, safe and inviting for all modes.	S	P		S	S			
Create facilities that balance the opportunity of all modes to support the movement of people and goods in a sustainable and community-friendly environment.			P	P	S	S		
Resolve, to the extent possible, potential conflicts with multiple designations for the same corridors through coordination, integration and design.			P	S	S			
Require project descriptions to demonstrate their ability to address the various modes of transportation.			P	P	S			
Implement the High Performance Transit Network (HPTN) with a variety of service levels and transit modalities serving the region.	P	S	P	P	P	S		
Provide better multi-modal connections for people and goods to interregional rail and air travel.	S	P	P	S	S			
Implement multi-modal projects identified in existing transportation system and modal plans.			P	P	S			
Clearly identify where jurisdictions should invest capital funds for transportation improvements to ensure they are well used and support the region's goals for encouraging choices.			P	P			S	S
Seize every opportunity to add transportation modes to reconstruction projects.			P	P	S		S	

P= Primary Support      S= Secondary Support

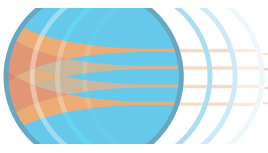


Table 4.1: Summary of Recommendations and Related Big Moves (continued)

Recommendations	Big Moves							
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Invest in an appropriate mix of transportation choices.				P	P	P	P	
Increase the level of and education and outreach related to improving community and environmental health, particularly in regard with alternative transportation choices.					S	P	P	
Promote development of complete streets that are designed for all users.			P	P	P		S	
Increase investment in stormwater system improvements, particularly low impact development techniques, integrated with transportation projects.					P	P	P	
Restructure the regional transportation system to respond to climate change.					P	P		
Invest in system-wide transportation facility rehabilitation, preservation and maintenance while diversifying the region's mix of transportation choices.		S	S			P	P	S
Support the promotion of personal health and wellness of the region's residents by investing in transportation projects that improve opportunities for active transportation.			S	P	S	P		
Measure and communicate the economic, environment and health impacts of transportation investments.							P	S
Ensure that those who benefit from the improved transportation network pay a meaningful share of the cost.						S	P	

P= Primary Support      S= Secondary Support



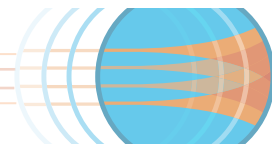
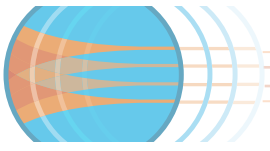


Table 4.1: Summary of Recommendations and Related Big Moves (continued)

Recommendations	Big Moves							
	A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning	B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth	C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network	D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices	E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places	F. Supporting the Regional Environment	G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and Sustainability	H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen
Make use of and leverage public-private partnerships when it is in the best interest of the public.	S						P	S
Actively seek new funding sources for transportation system maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation and improvement.		S					P	
Maintain flexibility in the way we design and implement our transportation investments.		S		S			P	
Develop a unified strategy to demonstrate that the region is focused, well-coordinated and proactive in being a great place to live, work and recreate.		S			S		S	P
Work closely with local and regional stakeholders to gain unified support for various plans and projects.							P	P
Build regional collaboration based on recommended policy.								P

P= Primary Support      S= Secondary Support



## chapter v. implementation strategies

As an interconnected system, the transportation network has a pervasive affect on the entire region. The growth or change in one community will have impacts to another, with region-wide changes to traffic, implications for quality of life and economic prosperity and a greater demand on existing funding and resources. To respond to these realities, a collaborative regional approach to implementing the vision will be the most effective solution. Strategic decisions related to funding, collaboration and leadership and the measurement of progress are the three primary considerations for implementing the regional vision.

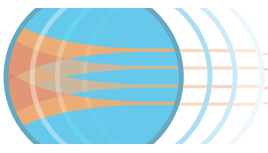
### Funding

Existing funding resources are stretched thin largely due to needed improvements to the existing transportation system, and projects needed to meet growing demand. In addition, Washington's cities and counties are generally limited to a one-percent annual increase in the amount of property taxes they collect, even when property values and the costs of providing public services are increasing at three percent per year or faster. Maximizing existing funding sources can help secure some of the needed funding. However, the envisioned regional transportation system will require new sources of funding that are both politically feasible to implement and fiscally sustainable to fund new projects and the ongoing funding demands associated with transportation infrastructure.

There are several existing considerations that impact new funding sources. A common theme generated during the public outreach process was the concern about a perceived lack of long-term thinking related to spending. Infrastructure needs in the region are widespread, limited funding is available for maintenance and there is a lack of basic infrastructure, such as sidewalks, in many areas. Throughout the public involvement process, many participants addressed the existing state tax structure as a potential challenge to economic growth. While this can be due to other factors, differences in state tax structures can impact where business locate. There has recently been a shortage of sales tax revenue due to unemployment, reduced consumer spending and the current economic downturn.



*The diversity of community needs for transit resources in the Spokane Region constantly evolves as economic conditions fluctuate.*



## implementation strategies

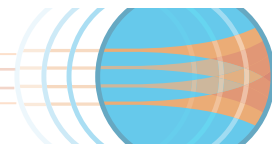


*Public outreach to Spokane's communities in the spring of 2010 generated a list of seven potential funding sources for future transportation planning projects.*

### **Funding Options**

Spokane County residents and key stakeholders identified seven potential funding sources through public outreach conducted early in the planning process. While some resources can be used for a variety of projects, other sources can only be used for a specific purpose such as funding for transit or for roadway projects. The financial impacts and potential benefits also vary by funding source. Due to the complexity of the state's tax and revenue rules, regional representatives should consult with the legislature's Transportation Resource Manual, County assessors, and other experts and sources of information before moving forward to implement any of the funding options summarized below. Many nuances and conditions apply, and in the words of one public finance expert, "it pays to plan ahead."

- **Property Tax Special Levy.** A "special" property tax is one that can be levied in addition to the property taxes imposed by existing jurisdictions (city, county, schools, etc). There are no limits to the tax rate or revenue, except that it must receive support from at least 60% of the voters affected—a considerable threshold of support. There are two categories of special levies, both subject to the same rules of implementation: maintenance and operation (M&O), which usually last for one year; and bond, which service the bond debt for capital projects, and are usually levied for 20 years.
- **Levy Lid Lift.** A levy lid lift allows a given jurisdiction (cities, counties, or special districts) to raise its property tax levy from its current rate to the statutory maximum rate, if approved by a majority of voters in the district. Thus, unlike a special levy, a lid lift is only useful when a jurisdiction is assessing property at a rate below the statutory maximum. (For example, the City of Spokane Valley's current levy rate is \$1.51 per \$1,000 of assessed value, well below the statutory maximum of \$3.375 for cities.) Levy lid lifts can be used for any transportation or other general government purpose.

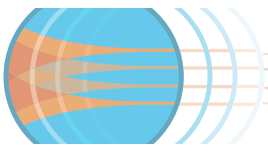


## implementation strategies

- *Sales Tax (Local Option).* This is an additional local option sales tax of up to 0.2% of sales within the Transportation Benefit District. The proceeds from this tax are more flexible than the “transit” sales tax, and can be used for construction, operation and maintenance of roads, and transit among other things. This funding source can be implemented along with the transit sales tax or on its own. An additional 0.1% of sales tax is also available to support fixed route transit service.
- *Sales Tax (For Transit).* This local option sales tax is already levied by the Spokane Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA), which generally follows the boundaries of the Spokane “Urban Growth Area.” Through referendum, the tax can be increased from its current rate—0.6% of sales transactions—up to the maximum allowed rate of 0.9%. Proceeds could be used to finance local transit systems, including bus, paratransit, rail or streetcar, or other systems.
- *Sales Tax (High Capacity Transit).* This local option sales tax could be levied in addition to other local options sales taxes. Proceeds must be devoted to high capacity transportation systems such as light rail or other systems that operates on an exclusive right-of-way (i.e., its own lane). Through referendum, the maximum rate allowed in Spokane County is 0.9 percent of sales transactions, due to other local option taxes currently in effect.
- *Impact Fees (Residential & Commercial).* Impact fees are one-time charges applied to offset the additional public service costs of new development. The City of Spokane is the only city within Spokane County that charges an impact fee for transportation, and there are few cities with such a fee statewide. They are usually applied at the time that landuse approvals are sought by a developer and are dedicated to provision of net new additional services made necessary by the presence of new residents or services in the area—over and above the needs that are already anticipated. The funds collected cannot be used for operation, maintenance, repair, alteration, or replacement of existing capital facilities and cannot just be added to general revenue. For example, if a new retail center is expected to generate considerable traffic, it would be charged in proportion to the cost of the intersection improvements or other improvements needed.



*Costs associated with new development projects can be addressed with residential and commercial impact fees tied to the permitting process.*



## implementation strategies

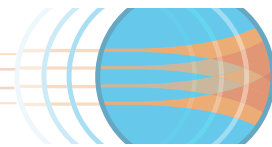


*Public support of various transportation funding sources was gauged during public meetings using game simulations.*

- **Local Vehicle Registration Fees.** This is an annual local vehicle registration fee of up to \$100 for vehicles registered in Spokane County, which would be in addition to registration fees that the state collects. A fee of up to \$20 can be implemented by the governing board of a Transportation Benefit District; fees in excess of \$20 and up to \$100 must be approved through a public vote. (Vehicles that weigh 6,000 pounds or more, and some other vehicles such as some trailers and farm vehicles, are exempted.)
- **Local Gas Tax.** Counties can establish a local option tax of up to 10% of the state tax, or up to 3.75¢ per gallon, since the state tax is 37.5¢ per gallon which is then mostly redistributed to cities and counties. Proceeds can be used for “highway purposes” only, including construction, maintenance and operations of city streets, county roads, and state highways. This tax has not been implemented in any of Washington’s counties, probably due to lack of public support.
- **New and emerging sources.** Transportation funding sources are continuously changing. New and emerging resources such as bonds related to transfer of development rights offer innovative solutions to pay for needed infrastructure. The State of Washington introduced legislation allowing cities to bond against increasing density from development transfers to pay for urban infrastructure such as new streets. Similar to Tax Increment Financing, HB 1469 and SB 5253 would allow jurisdictions receiving the increased density to bond against the increase in property tax revenue which denser development would generate. Bond revenue could be used to build infrastructure needed to offset growth impacts.

### **Funding Preference**

Most new mechanisms to fund public improvements require the will of voters; the major exceptions are the \$20 vehicle registration fee and transportation impact fees, both of which can be implemented by the governing body of a Transportation Benefit District. While there are a range of options, some will be more palatable to the public than others. Each option and funding level presents different economic impacts to the public. To determine the



## implementation strategies

most publicly acceptable funding mechanisms and appropriate funding level, the planning process presented a range of funding options to community members as an educational tool and gauge of potential interest. To achieve these outcomes, the process included the *A Thousand Visions Transportation Planning Game*<sup>1</sup> as well as a statistically valid phone survey.

Based on the same funding sources presented in the *A Thousand Visions Game*, the survey asked Spokane County residents how they felt about specific transportation projects and funding alternatives. The survey was used to determine whether the transportation vision, several key recommendations included within this document, and game results related to funding were truly representative of Spokane County residents. The results of the *A Thousand Visions Game* and phone survey are available under separate cover in the *Vision Process Summary Report*.

Preference of funding sources varied between outcomes of the online game and the survey. Results from both activities show that participants are willing to pay higher taxes or fees for the transportation system. Survey respondents conveyed less support for new funding sources than participants in the game. While both tools help in understanding the preferences of certain community segments, it will be important to employ rigorous education and continued outreach before any specific funding mechanism is attempted.

### *A Thousand Visions Game Results*

Participants expressed an overall interest in increasing funding to pay for transportation projects in the Spokane Region. All funding options were favorable to participants but at varying funding levels. Yet, the game results indicate participants are relatively conservative about taxation and paying for transportation projects. Based on feedback from 1,024 game participants, local vehicle registration fees (73%), property tax special levy (69%), local gas tax (68%) and residential impact fees (68%) appear to have the highest level of support among community members engaged in the visioning process.

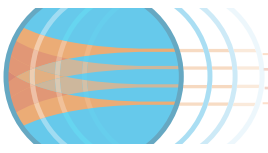


*The game simulations showed overall support to fund public transportation projects using a range of funding sources such as vehicle registration fees, property tax levies, local gas tax and residential impact fees.*

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1 The *A Thousand Visions Game* was unscientific.





## implementation strategies



*Use of a new Transportation Benefit District funding source was supported by key stakeholders in Spokane County.*

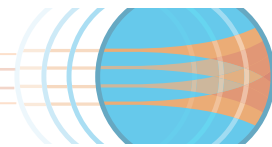
The local gas tax and residential impact fees were identified as the funding sources with the potential for the largest increases to pay for transportation projects. Funding sources that yielded the highest average revenue for all game participants (a function of predetermined potential funding levels and participant response) were sales tax for transit (\$427.7 million), local vehicle registration fees (\$329.4 million) and property tax special levy (\$208.1 million, all estimates for total revenues for the 20 year period from 2010 to 2030). It is important to note that the sales tax for transit had lower levels of support as compared to the other funding options, but was favored by a majority of participants. As noted above, impact fees received a relatively high level of support from game participants, but the amount of revenue from this option is dependent on new construction.

### *Phone Survey Results*

Results from the statistically valid phone survey indicate that respondents are concerned with maintenance of the current transportation system (50% of responses). Overall, when asked about willingness to pay higher fees or taxes in order to fund transportation improvement projects, the majority (53%) of those surveyed responded favorably. When asked another way, an even higher percentage (71%) of respondents responded favorably to paying higher fees or taxes in order to fund projects if 97% of the funds were spent on projects in Spokane County. The survey also asked respondents if they would support higher fees or taxes for transportation projects based on a given description of the existing transportation system or potential future outcomes. Of these eight scenarios, all received a majority of support for higher fees or taxes. Of the most favorable responses, 70% indicated they are likely to support higher fees or taxes when posed with the statement: "safe, reliable and convenient public transportation is an important asset for our region." The statement that received the second highest percentage of supporters (66%) was related to an improved economy. Both messages resonated well with survey respondents and may be valuable when considering additional outreach strategies.

Yet when asked about support for specific funding measures, survey respondents were less supportive than participants in the online game.





## implementation strategies

Of eight potential funding sources, only the local option sales tax received a majority of support (55%) from survey respondents. Sources of funding that received the highest opposition included local vehicle registration fee (75% oppose), local gas tax (68% oppose), increased property tax levy (67% oppose) and increases to commercial impact fees (66% oppose). Interestingly, a slightly higher percent favored residential impact fees (36% favor) compared to commercial impact fees (29% favor).

Based on survey results, there is general support for additional funding to pay for transportation projects. However, additional education and outreach should be employed before any specific funding source is put before voters. Aside from a local option sales tax, the results indicate that all other methods currently lack support from residents of Spokane County. While game participants did not provide a representative sample of Spokane County residents, linking a potential tax or fee to a specific project or set of projects in Spokane County may contribute to more favorable responses to new funding sources in the online game. Linking new funding sources to specific projects will be critical to a successful funding strategy.

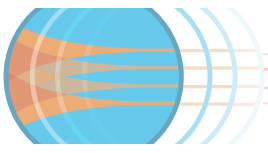
### **Funding Strategy**

After identifying the preferred funding sources, the County will need to determine the appropriate benefit area to create revenue and receive funding. Authorized through the State of Washington, a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) is a funding mechanism for acquisition, construction, provision and improvement of transportation facilities within a designated district. TBDs must be consistent with existing state, regional and local transportation plans such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and are based on existing or estimated future congestion levels.

Funding leveraged through a TBD can be used towards capital projects and programs such as street maintenance and preservation. Distribution of funds are equally weighted among local jurisdictions by population and vehicle miles traveled. A smaller percentage of revenues is channeled to transportation improvements of regional significance.



*Stakeholders with many different interests and backgrounds will converge to make the Spokane Region's transportation vision a reality.*



## implementation strategies



*Future growth in Spokane County will require coordination between land use planning and the region's transportation network.*

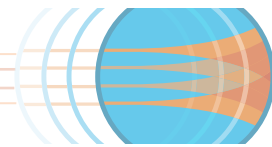
To establish a regional TBD, the Board of County Commissioners must adopt an ordinance and propose an interlocal agreement signed by 60% of the jurisdictions representing 75% of the population. As part of this process, each jurisdiction develops a detailed six-year transportation project list, specifying funding sources and amounts. The proposal must then be approved by voters. The MPO board tends to serve as the regional TBD board.

Many key stakeholders have expressed interest in and support for a TBD in Spokane County. The interrelationship between the County and cities within the planning area make the TBD an attractive long-term solution. Full implementation of a TBD tends to take multiple years of negotiations, education and organization. Thus, it is important that the process to establish a TBD begins immediately.

### **Regional Pact**

The Spokane Regional Transportation Vision establishes the framework to create the transportation system of the future. The Vision will be implemented by multiple transportation agencies and local governments. To be successful, the vision and its direction will need the long-term support of as many regional stakeholders as possible. Towards this end, implementation of the vision will benefit from a unifying resolution, or pact, that serves as a cooperative agreement.

One of the keys to the future success of Spokane's transportation system is strong leadership and inter-jurisdictional cooperation. Throughout the public involvement process, many community members and stakeholders felt that stronger partnerships can be leveraged to implement regional goals. However, participants also cited inconsistent cooperation and communication between jurisdictions as a major concern. A lack of trust among the jurisdictions and a need for stronger regional governance were common themes identified through the public involvement activities.



## implementation strategies

### *Creating the Pact*

Based on opportunities and challenges identified in the Vision Plan, the Big Moves will require a high level of engagement to build partnerships and improve regional cooperation. The Spokane Regional Transportation Pact can be the key to moving the vision forward by developing a regional pact. The pact will serve as an agreement that will bring area leaders and residents together to create the transportation system needed to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century.

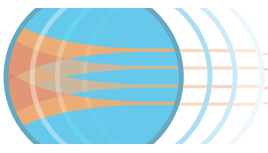
The pact is a commitment to pursuing the regional vision, understanding what is at stake for the future and increasing regional collaboration. Through the regional vision, SRTC is positioned to reach out to local governments, the County WSDOT to endorse the pact and work together towards advancing the Regional Vision. The pact should also serve as an open invitation to other entities that may be interested in supporting the vision. Primary elements of the pact should include the purpose and intentions of the Spokane Regional Transportation Pact, regional goals and responsibilities of pact members and an open invitation to other jurisdictions. To support regional collaboration, all local jurisdictions must be involved and ultimately adopt the regional pact.

### *Building Collaboration*

The Spokane Regional Transportation Pact will help ensure a continued level of effort and support among the region. There are also many existing models of inter-governmental collaboration within Spokane County that further the Regional Vision. These efforts serve as examples of regional collaboration, and should be continued as new partnerships are built.

- SRTC Transportation Technical Committee

The SRTC Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) is made up of representatives from transportation agencies, Spokane County, several local jurisdictions and other transportation organizations. The group meets regularly and collaborates to provide recommendations to the SRTC Board.



## implementation strategies



*Spokane County residents have seen their average commute times increase in the last several years.*

- Urban Growth Area Collaboration

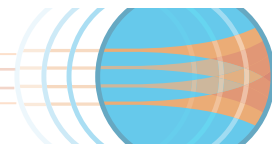
The recent comprehensive Urban Growth Area plan (Collaborative Planning: Spokane County's Metro Urban Growth Area) provides several useful elements for enhancing regional communication and steps for ensuring process clarity. Some of the recommendations that help provide greater concurrency and communication among jurisdictions include:

- » Inter-jurisdictional pre-application/pre-development meetings involving representative from adjoining jurisdictions;
- » Notification to adjoining municipalities of projects near jurisdictional boundaries; and
- » Permit status reporting that provides project milestones to the public, increasing transparency of the review process.

As the agency responsible for transportation planning in the Spokane metropolitan area, SRTC should take a larger role leading regional urban growth area planning in the future. The goals and policies of Spokane's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) are already carried out by SRTC. To ensure that the regional transportation system is integrated with land use, SRTC is uniquely positioned to coordinate future urban growth area planning efforts for the region. The future update of the MTP will also require integration of the vision and strategies outlined in this Plan. This update will carry forward the Regional Transportation Vision and Big Moves. The Vision and Big Moves will supplement the goals and policies in the updated MTP related to transportation in the metropolitan area.

- State-wide Partnership

The State of Washington has many of the same challenges that are facing the Spokane Region including impacts of future population growth and a lack of funds for regionally significant transportation projects. In 2005, the State of Washington enacted the Transportation Innovative Partnership Act, allowing transportation related projects and programs of all modes to be eligible for development as a public-private partnership. Known as the Transportation Innovative Partnership Program (TIPP), the funding effort



## implementation strategies

is administered by WSDOT with oversight and approval authority by the Washington State Transportation Commission.

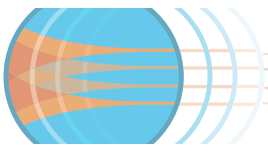
The Spokane Region already benefits from the TIPP partnership. The core principles that drive the Partnership are in-line with the Regional Vision, including supporting an integrated approach for a multi-modal transportation system, reducing transportation emissions, investing in transportation system management strategies and preserving existing assets.

### **Monitoring and Measuring Success**

The Regional Transportation Vision has a long-term focus that is based on the implementation of several key ingredients. The envisioned transportation system of the Spokane Region will require an increase in new and sustainable funding sources and strong regional leadership that is supported by the regional community. Yet, the Big Moves needed to advance the vision will occur at different periods of time and require a different level of effort and resources. A deliberate monitoring and measuring effort will be crucial as the final ingredient of implementation. Central to this effort is the need to develop an annual progress report that measures success in achieving the vision. SRTC should take the lead role developing such a report to distribute to regional stakeholders. As available resources and priorities change over time, SRTC can adjust the level of effort needed to improve targets related to different Big Moves.

#### *Project Oversight*

The primary agency responsible for implementing the regional vision should be SRTC. As the federally designated agency for managing the regional transportation system, SRTC's primary role will be coordinating periodic measuring and monitoring of the vision, its targets and recommendations. Regional jurisdictions will ultimately share the responsibility associated with measuring progress, and making adjustments to improve outcomes. To guide this process, SRTC will establish clear goals and responsibilities to organize the region-wide effort.



## implementation strategies



*Spokane County's growing private jobs sector indicates economic return on investment in its transportation infrastructure .*

SRTC's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) provides a transparent opportunity for the regional community to be involved with SRTC. One of the functions of the Committee is to advocate for transportation improvements on behalf of the region, while reviewing and monitoring regional transportation plans, programs and projects. As the reviewing bodies for the regional transportation system, the TAC and TTC can also serve to advance the Regional Vision, and monitor its progress.

### **Targets**

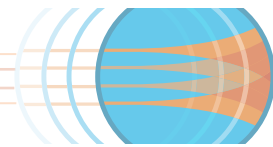
There are 20 targets designed to measure progress of the eight Big Moves within a five- to ten-year time frame. The targets are also designed to be used as a collective assessment of progress towards achievement of the regional Vision. All targets should be used as a benchmarking tool and evaluated annually by SRTC. Targets that show progress towards a Big Move indicate that the region is moving forward towards achieving the vision, while targets moving the opposite direction indicate that more attention is needed.

### **A. Further Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning**

- Maintain or Improve Average Commute Time: *21.0 minutes*

Commute time impacts a number of factors including quality of life, accessibility, affordability, and the environment. Generally, a shorter commute time can be an indication of a closer balance between housing availability and access to employment opportunity; or it can be indicative of better access to safe and efficient transportation services. The amount of time it takes to get to work is a direct result of the distance from where one lives to where one works and access to safe, efficient and reliable transportation. Shorter distances between where people live and work also increase the convenience of alternative modes of transportation.

In the period from 2005 to 2009, the Spokane County average commute time increased from 19.3 minutes to approximately 21.0 minutes, an increase of nearly two minutes since 2000. The increase can be attributed



## implementation strategies

to a combination of factors including growth in outlying communities and congestion. Yet the existing travel time is better than comparable regions and 4.4 minutes less than the statewide average.<sup>2</sup> When combined with the other targets, maintaining or improving the current average commute time of 21 minutes relates positively to either increasing the integration of land use and transportation or improving the access and reliability to the existing transportation system.

- Mode Split: *70% or less region-wide drive alone rate*

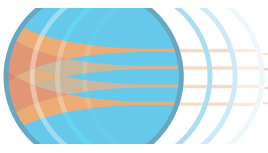
It can be very telling to compare the proportion of commuters that travel by single occupant vehicle to all other transportation choices, such as carpool, vanpool, public transportation, walking, bicycling, and working from home. This target can help measure the extent to which commuters continue to rely on the private automobile for transportation. Survey results used to obtain this target may also be used to follow other discrete transportation choices. When compared to other data, such as transit use, the mode split indicator can help address how to coordinate other transportation improvements. For example, improving the mode split may indicate a need to increase transit capacity as more commuters rely on alternate modes of transportation.

In 2009, the share of single occupant vehicle commuters in the County was 77.5%, up from 76.7% in 2000.<sup>3</sup> Statewide, the same rate is 72.4%. The Regional Commute Trip Reduction Plan establishes a region-wide drive alone target of 67.7% for employers that are part of the Commute Trip Reduction Program. Based on the statewide average and regional commute trip reduction goal, a target of 70% relates positively to increased public education and outreach, and facility and infrastructure development related to ridesharing, public transportation, and non-motorized transportation.

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<sup>2</sup> American Communities Survey 2005-2009; Spokane Regional Travel Survey, 2005

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.



## implementation strategies



*STA Plaza in Downtown Spokane*

- Jobs-Housing Balance Ratio: *1.4 jobs per household*

This target refers to the approximate [equal] distribution of employment opportunities and workforce population within a defined geographic area. It is usually measured in terms of the proportion of jobs per household. The aim of jobs-housing balance is to provide a mix of employment opportunities that reflect the needs of the area, with housing available in

locations that reduce overall commuting distances for residents. A ratio of 1.0 to 1.5 is considered a beneficial range; a lower ratio indicates fewer jobs and more housing units while a higher ratio indicates the opposite. The most recent estimate for Spokane County was a ratio of 1.3 (2005).<sup>4</sup> The jobs-housing balance should be considered in light of how well local residents match the local skills, interest or qualifications being sought by employers in the area.

As land use and transportation plans are updated and refined, consideration should be given to establishing jobs-housing benchmarks for discreet geographic areas to evaluate the effectiveness of land use changes and transportation investments designed to meet the target objective.

### **B. Focusing Investment to Position the Region for Economic Growth**

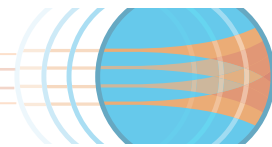
- Per Capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for Spokane County: increase per capita GDP by 15% by 2020

Metro GDP is the most comprehensive measure of the region's economic activity. The measure incorporates values for residential housing, corporate profits and depreciation, among others. Regional GDP measures the sum of incomes earned by labor and capital and the costs incurred in the production of goods and services. It is computed by applying the ratio of state GDP to state earnings by place of employment to regional estimates of earnings by place of employment. When divided by the total County population, the result is per capita GDP for Spokane County.

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<sup>4</sup> SRTC TAZ data for Spokane County





## implementation strategies

In 2009, the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the region was \$17,640 million (2009 constant dollars). This represents an increase of 17% percent (in adjusted dollars) since 2001. In 2001, the County's per capita GDP represented 78% of Washington State figures. In 2009, the County's per capita GDP represented 76% of Washington State figures.<sup>5</sup> While this percentage has remained relatively constant over time, an additional target may be to increase the percentage to the 2001 level (78%) by 2020.

- Private Sector Employment for Spokane County: increase the ratio of private sector employment to 84%

While there are a range of factors that influence job growth, the private sector employment ratio can help indicate whether improvements to the transportation system are impacting job creation in the Spokane Region. Closely linked with GDP, growth in private sector jobs relate positively to a stronger regional economy when the percentage of public sector jobs remains unchanged. The majority of revenue to fund transportation projects stems from employment opportunities and associated private investment and taxes. Along with quality of life, growth in the private job sector is one of the metrics that reflect the economic return on transportation investments.

In 2010, the ratio of private sector employment to total employment in Spokane County was 82%. This percentage has decreased slightly from 83% in 2000, and 84% in 1990. Increasing the current ratio of 82% private sector jobs to 1990 levels relates positively to positioning the region for economic growth.<sup>6</sup>

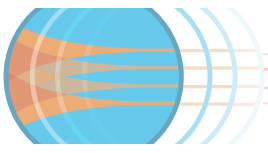
Additional targets will be established as part of IPH Phase 2 and may include such measures as industry location quotients, shift-share analysis, tons and value of inbound and outbound cargo (truck, rail and air), and rate of employment among others.



*Investment in multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trails would contribute to the Spokane Region's non-motorized transportation network.*

<sup>5</sup> Community Indicators Initiative of Spokane

<sup>6</sup> State of Washington Employment Security Department, Labor Market and Economic Analysis



## implementation strategies



*Spokane County's quality of life is defined by its close access to rural and natural resource lands.*

### C. Defining and Developing an Integrated Transportation Network

- Commute Mode Share for Transit: *increase by 1% basis point year over year*

Transit ridership in Spokane has increased 48% since 1994 and 31% since 2000.<sup>7</sup> However, while some data suggests the economic downturn that began in 2008 may have had a negative impact on mode share, STA has an opportunity to continue to increase mode share into the future. One of the most obvious ways to extend transit's reach is to integrate it more thoroughly with the bicycle and pedestrian network and to invest in transit improvements in places with land use and demographic characteristics supportive of transit. STA has projects underway to guide the right kind of investment to the routes with the most potential for increased ridership, usually adjacent to high density employment and residential destinations, or to corridors with a rich mix of land uses.

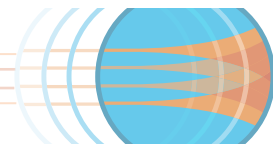
- Increase Linked Trips: *improve the percentage of trips linked to transit by bicycling and walking to 88%*

Per the Interim Report to U.S. Congress on the Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program, 78% of trips on transit in Spokane are linked by bicycling and walking. The average for the other three similar comparison sites (including Sheboygen County, Wisconsin which has a very similar population density to Spokane County) is 87%. Improving this percentage will be direct evidence of an integrated network.<sup>8</sup>

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7 Community Indicators Initiative of Spokane sourcing Spokane Transit Authority data

8 Interim Report to U.S. Congress on the Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program, 2007



## implementation strategies

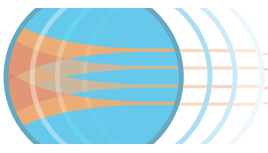
### D. Providing Sustainable Transportation Choices

- Realign Funding Criteria and Construct Non-Motorized Network: 5% *regional funding allocation for non-motorized modes*

Currently, 2% of the future expenditures in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan are for bicycle and pedestrian projects. A greater investment is needed in order to implement an integrated network that would result in a 15% mode split for non-auto modes. An increase to 5% would more than double this allocation while still incorporating a modest portion of the overall budget for Capital Projects. The Smart Routes network envisions \$50 million of investments into bicycling and walking infrastructure, driven by a set of projects which includes major trail spines, new bicycle and pedestrian bridges, sidewalk infill, and new bikeways. New transportation projects geared for bicycle and pedestrian improvements will require a diversity of funding resources and regional collaboration. Securing adequate funding to meet the needs of the Smart Routes system projects will serve to provide sustainable transportation choices.

- Actively Manage Travel Demand: *prioritize projects and programs that remove bottlenecks and provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips*

A combination of strategic projects, operational improvements and Transportation Demand Managements (TDM) strategies should be used to sustain acceptable congestion levels and travel times on arterial corridors. Provided there are safe and convenient alternatives to SOV trips, it should be acceptable for intersections to perform at a Level of Service E during peak times. Strategies such as improved travel times for transit, high occupant vehicle (HOV) lanes and access management can help minimize the potential for trip diversion into and through neighborhoods. In turn, this will allow these areas to be more pedestrian, bike and public transportation friendly. One example of actively managing travel demand is the Central City Transit spine identified as a high priority within the High Performance Transit network. As the project study nears completion, it



## implementation strategies



*Making walkable destinations for those living in the Spokane Region promotes physical health and reduces vehicle emissions.*

will include a set of recommendations for investment in a specific type of transit technology along a route likely to draw high ridership. This investment will set the stage for future transit improvements and will significantly offset demand on existing roadways in Spokane.<sup>9</sup>

- Secure Additional Transit Funding: *increase revenue available for transit capital projects by 10%*

A comprehensive public transit system provides transportation choice while offsetting congestion and vehicle miles traveled. Such a system requires significant resources that can support capital project costs and long-term operation and maintenance needs. Like most transit systems, Spokane's public transit system is subsidized by tax payers similar to other public services such as emergency services. As a result, it is essential that new and alternative sources of funding are secured to adequately meet demand of new transit projects. There are several funding alternatives that can meet this need and ultimately provide the sustainable transportation choices that public transit provides. Between 2004 and 2009, the Spokane Region spent an average of \$9.8 million annually on transit capital projects.<sup>10</sup> Increasing revenue for transit capital projects by 10% above the previous six year annual average serves as a measurable target.

### E. Building a Livable Region and Making Places

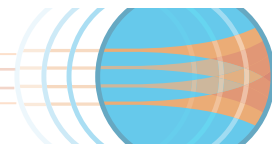
- Total Miles of Bike Facilities: *construct 10% (approximately 12 miles) of the proposed network per year*

Bike facilities include all designated bike routes, separated bikeways and shared use trails and lanes. Together, the proposed bike network will add an additional 121 miles to the existing system. The miles of such facilities in Spokane County grew between 2006 and 2009 from 163 to 179 total miles. Between 2006 and 2009, however, the mileage ratio of bike facilities per

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<sup>9</sup> SRTC

<sup>10</sup> National Transit Database



## implementation strategies

1,000 people actually decreased from 2.7 to 2.6 miles. The County will need to construct portions of the proposed network each year to maintain and improve service levels across the region. This is even more important when considering the continued population growth and the desire to make its neighborhoods more livable and accessible and at the same time decrease dependency on personal vehicles for discretionary trips.<sup>11</sup>

- Rural & Natural Resource Land Uses: *maintain rural and natural resource land uses near 88% in Spokane County*

The Spokane Region's character is greatly defined by its close proximity to and wealth of rural and natural resource lands. Residents feel strongly about preserving natural areas and directing growth and transportation infrastructure to urbanized areas and growth centers. These areas also promote a high quality of life and strengthen the economy by attracting new residents, visitors and businesses. Preserving these lands and limiting urban level transportation services and infrastructure to these areas will maintain quality of life and sustain funding resources. Rural land uses include rural traditional, rural conservation, urban reserve and limited development categories for residential and commercial land uses. Natural resource land uses include large and small tract agriculture, forest and mineral land categories. To maintain the quality of life in Spokane County, it is important to ensure rural and natural resource lands are maintained for future generations. In 2005, rural and natural resource land uses occupied 88% of all land uses in Spokane County.

Future growth and development in the Spokane Region should respect this percentage as a guide during periodic updates to the urban growth boundary. Maintaining the amount of rural and natural resource lands can be accomplished by focusing growth in already developed areas and increasing densities in appropriate areas such as along transit corridors.<sup>12</sup>

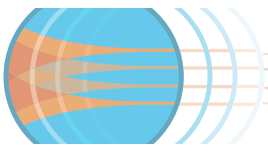


*Making needed scheduled repairs on existing transportation infrastructure ensures the network will run smoothly with minimal disruptions.*

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11 SRTC

12 SRTC



## implementation strategies

- System Preservation and Maintenance Expenditures: *increase annual average expenditures by 10%*

The existing transportation system is a major asset in Spokane County. In the future, additions to the system will add to the extensive system of public streets, sidewalks and pathways and transit facilities. Preserving this system is of great importance to residents of the region and many feel that the current level of investment dedicated to maintaining these assets is inadequate. The estimated 10-year average for system preservation and maintenance expenditures is \$120 million, representing an annual average of \$12 million. An increase of 10% to this annual average will serve to improve preservation and maintenance efforts of the transportation system.

### F. Supporting the Regional Environment

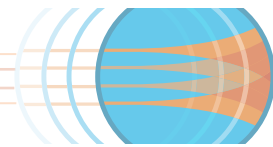
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions: *1990 levels by 2020*

Greenhouse gas (GHG) increases both directly and indirectly related to land use decisions and auto vehicle emissions, with population increases leading to more vehicles on the road. According to the Comprehensive

Plan to Address the Challenges and Opportunities of Climate Change, the State goals call for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (RCW 70.94..011). By 2035, the plan calls for a reduction in emissions by 25% below 1990 levels. It is important to note that the linkage between VMT and GHG emissions will likely weaken over time as low emission and zero emission vehicles become more prevalent. Promoting a multi-modal transportation system, with freight transportation planning and the establishment of freight corridors, especially for through rail and truck movements, are critical in achieving the reductions noted above.<sup>13</sup>

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13 Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency. Chapter 173-441 WAC.



## implementation strategies

- Spokane River Quality Index: *range between 80 to 90*

The relationship between transportation and water quality is vital to the quality of life, long-term economic prosperity and overall health valued by Spokane County residents. One of the largest contributors to Spokane River water pollution is impervious surface stormwater, worsened from untreated runoff from streets. Growth and development of new streets adjacent to the river and construction of bridges across the river also impact water quality. Residents feel strongly about protecting the water quality of the Spokane River and support ways to reduce the impacts of the transportation system on the river. The Washington State Department of Ecology has monitored water quality in the Spokane River since 1993. Since this time, the overall water quality index has ranged between 40 and 87 at two different testing sites, with 100 being best.

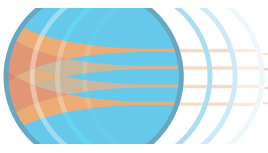
While seasonal flows and water quality vary by season and by monitoring location, maintaining an overall water quality index of 80 to 90 relates positively to supporting the regional community and environment, when combined with other targets.<sup>14</sup>

- Obesity Index: *reduce by 15%*

Opportunities to walk and bike to a destination can support the region by providing healthier alternatives to driving. Providing options and alternatives to driving, such as safe and convenient routes for walking and biking, are key in creating healthy lifestyles and reducing obesity. Obesity is becoming a major health threat to the region and nation. Chronic disease is closely linked and is increasing at both levels. Increased calories and poor diet are only one half of the equation. The other is a lack of physical activity and exercise that can be offset by walking and biking as a means of transportation and recreation. According to the National Center for Chronic Disease and Health Prevention, approximately 35% of adults in Spokane County were overweight and 28.9% were obese in 2009. In 2003,

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14 Washington State Department of Ecology



## implementation strategies

38% of adults were overweight and 22% were obese. At 23.4% in 2008, the percentage of youth overweight (grades 8th, 10th, and 12th) for Spokane County and has remained virtually unchanged since 2006. The percentage of youth overweight at the State level was higher than that of the County, at 25.6%.

Reducing percentage of obesity in Spokane County for adults and youth by 10% relates positively to supporting the regional community and environment, when combined with other targets.<sup>15</sup>

### G. Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and Sustainability

- Ratio of State and Federal Funds to Local Funds Devoted to Transportation: *at least 50% state and federal funds for transit projects and at least 75% state and federal funds for all other projects*

One of the goals of the Vision is to better position the region to secure state and federal transportation money. The experiences of other metropolitan regions shows that grant and loan applications that demonstrate how individual projects are aligned with long-term regional priorities (such as this Vision) are more likely to be successful. In addition, the region and project applicants should stay informed and positioned for the latest federal and state priorities, and tailor applications to meet those priorities.

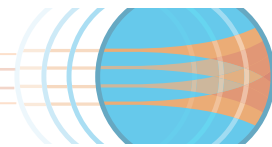
For example, the recent federal “Partnership for Sustainable Communities” sets forth six livability principles upon which upcoming rounds of funding will be based. Additionally, state and federal funding will be more likely when formal partnerships are formed across jurisdictions to demonstrate that the transportation goals are shared regionally. This can include joint plans, intergovernmental agreements and even public-private partnerships when key private or nonprofit partners are involved. This target should be measured by identifying the total amount from state and federal sources, then determining the ratio of non-local to local dollars.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> National Center for Chronic Disease

<sup>16</sup> State of Washington Office of Financial Management





## implementation strategies

- Transportation Funding and Rate of Inflation: *transportation funding growth (from all sources) keeps pace with or exceeds the rate of inflation*

In recent years, transportation funding has not kept up with the rate of inflation. Funding for operations and maintenance should meet or exceed the rate of inflation every year in order to ensure that there is no ground lost in the maintenance of existing infrastructure. Since some funding sources, such as property tax revenues will not keep pace with the cost of inflation, funding from other sources (i.e., sales taxes, levy lid lifts, fees, state and federal grants) must make up the difference. Since capital investments may not be evenly distributed every year, measure anticipated increases in capital spending against inflation on a multi-year basis, using three or five-year trending in order to set revenue targets.<sup>17</sup>

- Bond Ratings: *maintain at least a rating of Aa3 (lowest high quality rating) and aim for bond ratings of Aaa (best rating)*

Most municipalities and transportation related organizations in Spokane are evaluated by bond rating agencies, who evaluate a wide range of criteria to determine the relative risk of any bond debt issued by the agency. For example, Moody's assigns an Aa2 rating (high quality) to Spokane County Limited Tax General Obligation Bonds. As a benchmark, bond ratings are a good overall measure of the health and stability of a government agency's financial status. Thus, bond ratings, and the trend in any changes in ratings, should be tracked.

### H. Working Together as a Unified Voice to Make It Happen

- Develop a Regional Pact to Implement the Vision as Outlined in *Chapter V: Implementation Strategies*.

The pact is a commitment to pursuing the regional vision, understanding what is at stake for the future and increasing regional collaboration. As a recommendation and target, adoption of the regional pact will prove the high level of dedication to which the region is willing to work together.

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17 SRTC