

CPT-HSTP

Skagit Council of Governments

Coordinated Public Transit-

Human Services Transportation Plan

2022

SCOG 
Skagit Council of Governments

transpogroup 
WHAT TRANSPORTATION CAN BE.

PREPARED FOR:

Skagit Council of Governments

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October 2022



SKAGIT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

315 South Third Street, Suite 100 • Mount Vernon • WA • 98273

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RESOLUTION 2022-07

TO ADOPT SKAGIT COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) is the designated regional transportation planning organization for Skagit County and includes member jurisdictions from the region;

WHEREAS, SCOG is required to update the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan for the region every four years pursuant to RCW 47.80.023(10); and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Policy Board, which is a governing body of SCOG, has considered the attached Skagit Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan as the 2022 update to the plan.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SKAGIT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS:

The Skagit Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, as attached herein, is hereby approved.

Adopted: November 16, 2022

DocuSigned by:

Peter Browning

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Commissioner Peter Browning, Skagit County
Transportation Policy Board Chair

DocuSigned by:

Kevin Murphy

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Kevin Murphy
Executive Director

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ADA NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

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AVISO ABREVIADO DE LA ADA AL PÚBLICO

El Consejo de Gobiernos de Skagit cumple plenamente con la Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973 y la Ley de Americanos con Discapacidades de 1990 (ADA) y no discrimina por motivos de discapacidad. Para obtener más información, o para presentar una queja, póngase en contacto con el Coordinador de la ADA, Kevin Murphy en 360-416-7871 or kmurphy@scog.net.



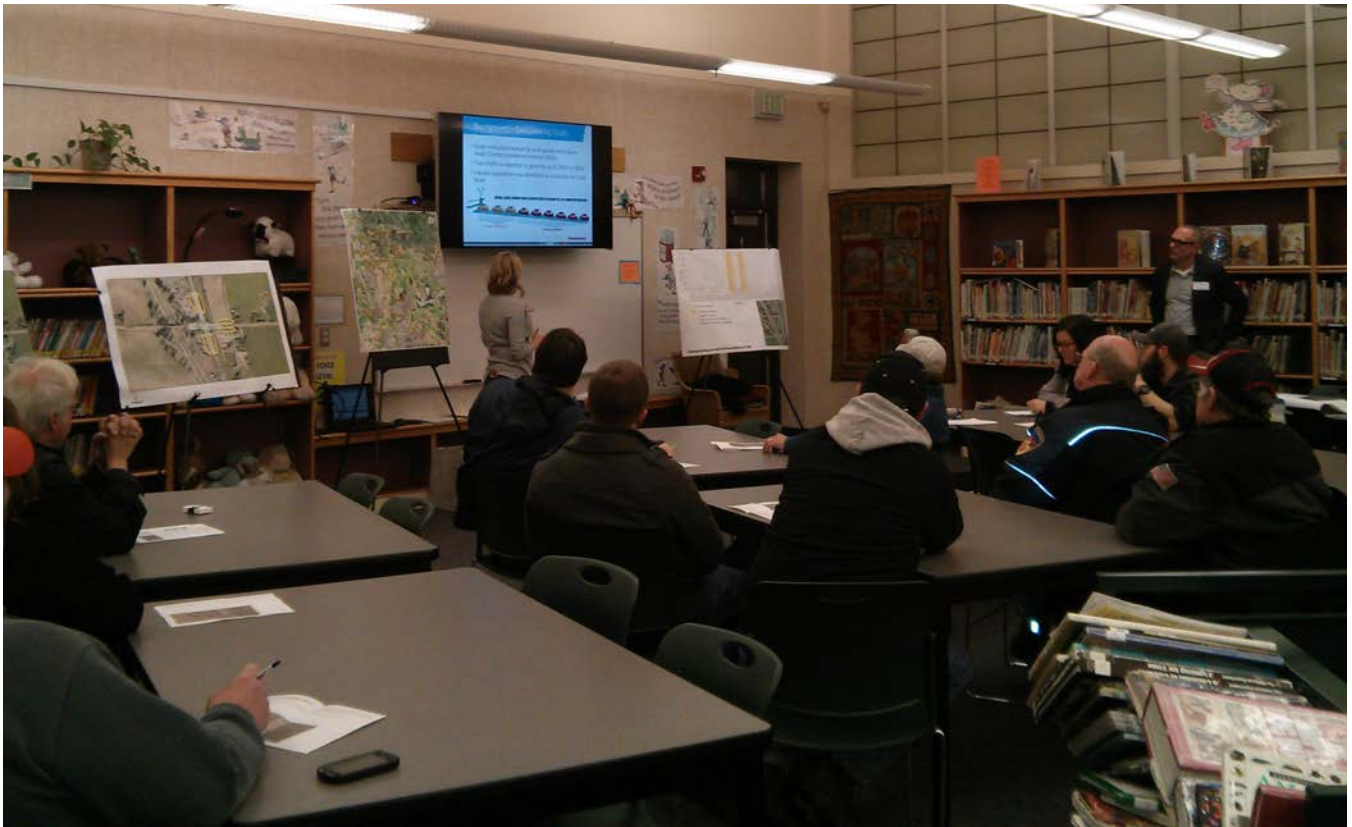
SKAGIT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TITLE VI POLICY STATEMENT

ABBREVIATED TITLE VI NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Skagit Council of Governments fully complies with Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, visit SCOG's website at <http://scog.net/about/nondiscrimination/>.

AVISO RESUMIDO DEL TÍTULO VI AL PÚBLICO

El Consejo de gobiernos de Skagit cumple plenamente con el Título VI de la Ley federal de derechos civiles de 1964 y los estatutos relacionados, y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color u origen nacional. Para mayor información, o para obtener un Formulario de queja del Título VI, visite el sitio web del SCOG en <http://scog.net/about/nondiscrimination/>.



1 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

This report documents the 2022 Skagit Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP) developed for the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) which is the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the Skagit region. This plan updates the 2018 Skagit Human Services Transportation Plan.

The report is organized into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 provides background information and an overview of the planning process including the stakeholder engagement and public outreach activities conducted as part of the planning process.

Chapter 2 provides an inventory of current transportation services in the region. Particular focus is on the public transit and human service transportation providers, who were key participants in the coordinated transportation planning process.

Chapter 3 provides an assessment of transportation needs in the region in relation to existing transit services. It includes both quantitative data (U.S. Census and American Community Survey) as well as qualitative data (input on needs from Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee members and public outreach activities).

Chapter 4 indicates the transit technologies currently in use in the region and summarizes transportation provider involvement in regional emergency management practices.

Chapter 5 discusses the COVID-19 pandemics impacts on transportation within the Skagit Region.

Chapter 6 presents potential strategies and possible mobility management efforts to improve transportation services in the region.

Appendix A lists the members of the Ad Hoc Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee.

Appendix B provides the public involvement plan for this planning process.

Appendix C presents the detailed input collected on qualitative transportation needs from the Survey.

BACKGROUND

FEDERAL REQUIREMENT FOR HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed into law Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) that went into effect on October 1, 2012. This legislation continued the coordinated transportation planning requirements established in previous law for certain Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding for specialized transportation. Under the preceding federal transportation funding authorizing legislation, SAFETEA-LU, local funding under three FTA programs (Sections 5310, 5316, and 5317) required that projects be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. This coordinated planning requirement was designed to be a participatory process including public, private, and human service transportation providers.

Under MAP-21, the Section 5316 and Section 5317 programs were eliminated, but the coordinated planning requirement continued to apply to the Section 5310 Program (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) under MAP-21, as well as the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act which President Obama signed into law on December 4, 2015.

Currently effective FTA guidance (FTA Circular C 9070.1G, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Guidance and Application Instructions, issued June 6, 2014) defines a coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan as one that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities and older adults; provides strategies for meeting those local needs; and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation. In total, there are four required plan elements:

- An assessment of available services that identifies current providers (public, private, and non-profit); and
- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service; and
- Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
- Relative priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies/ activities identified

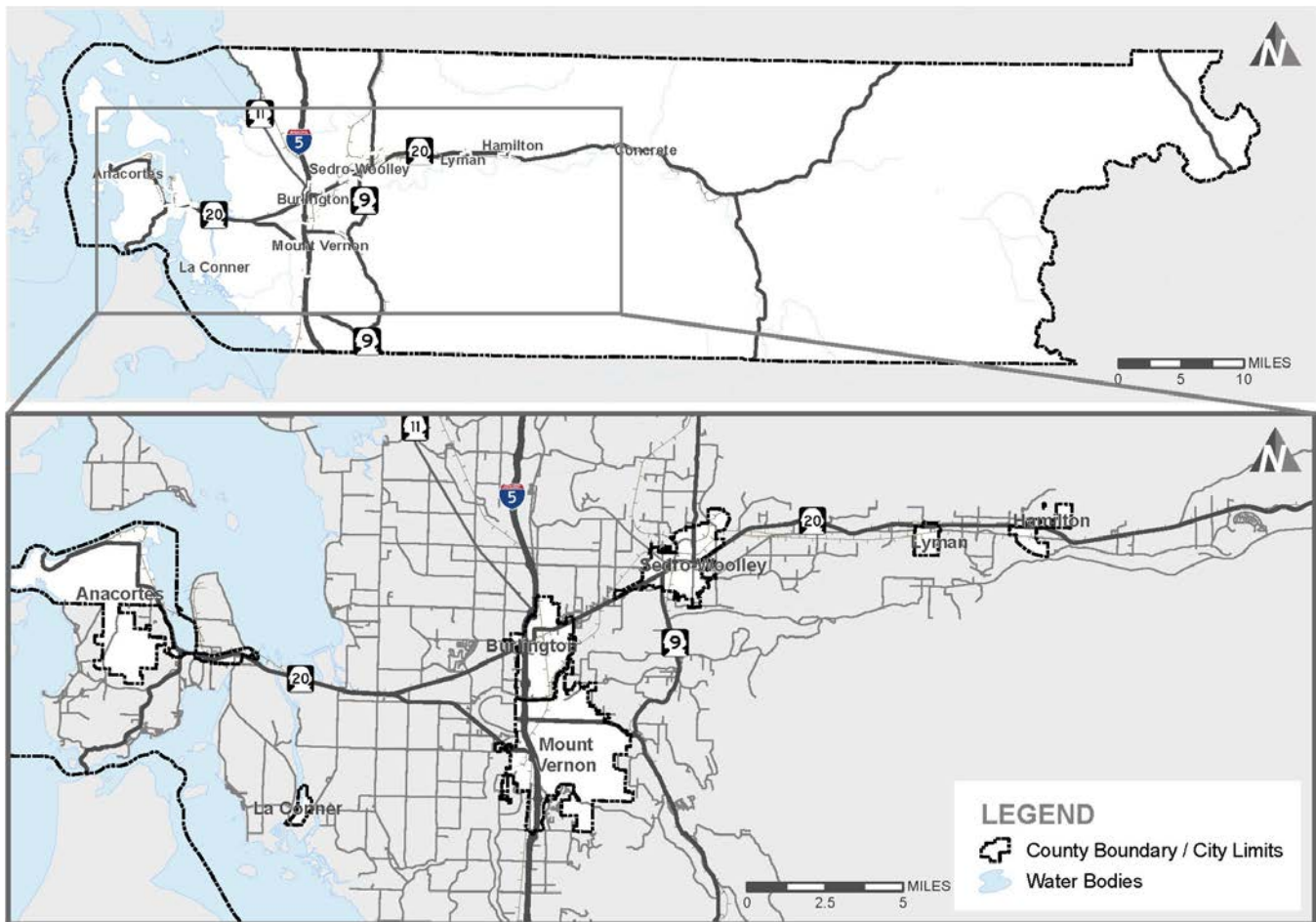


Figure 1. Skagit Council of Governments Planning Area

SKAGIT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) is a voluntary organization of local governments whose purpose is to foster a cooperative effort in resolving problems, policies and plans that are common to the membership and region. The SCOG Board of Directors is the governing body of SCOG, and is comprised of elected officials from the following jurisdictions:

- City of Anacortes
- City of Burlington
- City of Mount Vernon
- City of Sedro Woolley
- Port of Anacortes
- Port of Skagit
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
- Samish Indian Nation
- Skagit County
- Skagit PUD
- Skagit Transit
- Town of Concrete
- Town of Hamilton
- Town of La Conner
- Town of Lyman

The SCOG Board of Directors meets monthly to discuss regional issues and make administrative decisions regarding the Skagit Council of Governments.

SCOG is a regional transportation planning resource that facilitates, advocates and educates through technical and professional expertise, public outreach, grants and other funding opportunities. SCOG is the Regional Transportation Planning Organization, as enabled by Washington state law, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization, as enabled by federal law. SCOG works with State and Federal legislators to inform them about funding needs for transportation related projects and programs in Skagit County.

COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING IN WASHINGTON STATE

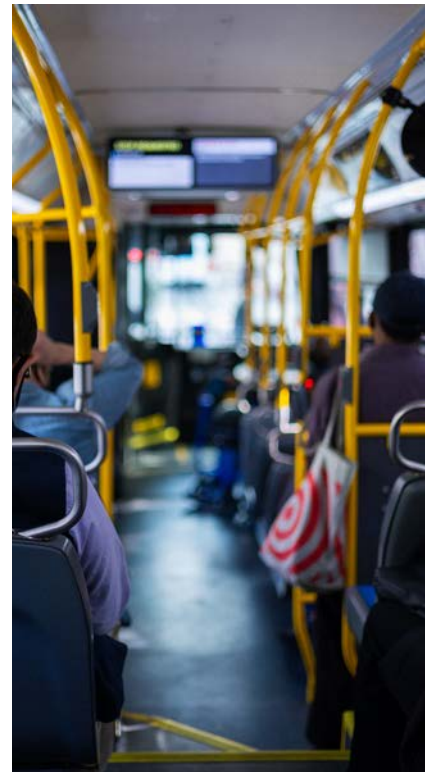
At the state level, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) requires that each RTPO identify human service transportation needs and prioritize human service transportation projects in the region for funding through WSDOT's consolidated grant application process for public transportation funds. An RTPO is formed through a voluntary association of local governments within a county or contiguous counties, and for the purpose of WSDOT's Statewide Human Services Transportation Plan, each of the RTPOs provide the local perspective for their respective regions.

Applicants for WSDOT's public transportation grant program are required to participate in the local planning process with their RTPO. This process creates and updates the region's CPT-HSTP, a document that is required by WSDOT to be updated every four years. WSDOT publishes a template with instructions for developing a CPT-HSTP. WSDOT's 2021 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Guidebook was used as a guide to develop this plan.

OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

This CPT-HSTP was developed between June 2022 and January 2023. The process included:

- A kick-off meeting was conducted with the Ad Hoc Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee (Committee) on June 6, 2022.
- The Committee met again on July 11, 2022 to discuss the Public Involvement Plan (Appendix A).
- The inventory of existing transportation services was compiled in June and July.
- Online Open House and Online Survey went live on July 11, 2022.
- A list of approximately 70 stakeholders (primarily representing human service agencies and social service organizations) and their contact information was compiled and an online survey on transportation services and needs was developed. In July, SCOG staff sent an email to each stakeholder with information on the plan and a link to the survey.
- Unmet needs, identified through the preceding steps, were compiled, and analyzed in July and August of 2022.
- The consultant team conducted an analysis of population data related to transportation dependency to identify geographic areas with high numbers and percentages of disadvantaged persons.
- The Committee met on August 8, 2022 to finalize the need and gaps evaluation and update the Committee on the update project evaluation criteria timeline.
- Strategies for meeting the unmet needs were developed.
- The draft CPT-HSTP was prepared and sent to Committee and WSDOT on September 1, 2022 for their review.
- A proposed prioritization criteria was provided to the Committee on September 12, 2022.
- The Committee met on September 12, 2022 and discussed the prioritization criteria.
- On October 3, 2022 SCOG staff sent the Evaluation criteria documents to the Committee for review.
- October 3, 2022: Draft CPT-HSTP sent to Ad Hoc Committee for review.
- October 10, 2022: Committee met to recommend project evaluation criteria to Transportation Policy Board.
- October 11-18, 2022: Public Comment Period on Project Evaluation Criteria.
- October 19, 2022: Transportation Policy Board Meeting to Approve Evaluation Criteria.
- October 19, 2022: Transportation Policy Board discusses draft CPT-HSTP and releases for public comment.
- October 21-Nov 4, 2022: CPT-HSTP Public Comment Period
- October 27, 2022: Project applications due in WSDOT Grants Management System.
- October 27-November 4, 2022: SCOG staff conducts call for projects.
- November 14, 2022: Projects and evaluation materials sent to committee members.
- November 16, 2022 - Transportation Policy Board approves CPT-HSTP.
- November 21, 2022: Committee Meeting for project sponsors to present their projects to committee.
- NLT December 1, 2022- CPT-HSTP submitted to WSDOT
- December 5, 2022: Deadline for committee members to submit project evaluations to SCOG.
- December 12, 2022: Committee Meeting to recommend Prioritized List of Projects to Transportation Policy Board.
- December 21, 2022: Transportation Policy Board Meeting to discuss prioritized projects and release for public comment.
- December 23, 2022-January 6, 2023: Public Comment Period for Prioritized Projects.
- January 18, 2023: Transportation Policy Board Meeting to Approve Prioritized Project List.
- No later than January 27, 2023: Prioritized Project List Submitted to WSDOT.



2 EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

This chapter provides a summary of the existing transportation services that serve Skagit County, as well as organizations and programs that help those in need with covering the cost of transportation. The “family of transportation services” in Skagit County is provided by public transit systems, tribes, human service agencies/non-profit programs, local school districts, ferry services, long distance bus and rail providers, medical transportation providers, and other private providers such as taxis.

PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEMS

Skagit Transit provides the vast majority of public transit services in Skagit County. Other public transit systems in northwest Washington make regional connections in Skagit County, including Island Transit and Whatcom Transportation Authority.

SKAGIT TRANSIT

Skagit Transit provides fixed route public transit, ADA paratransit, and vanpool services.

Formerly known as SKAT, Skagit Transit was established in 1993 under RCW 36.57A, originally serving the Mount Vernon and Burlington area. Over the past 25 years, the Skagit Public Transit Benefit Area (PTBA) has grown to cover about 750 square miles, including Mount Vernon, Burlington, Anacortes, La Conner, Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, Hamilton, Concrete, and several unincorporated areas of Skagit County. Headquartered in Burlington, Skagit Transit also owns and staffs Skagit Station in Mount Vernon.

FIXED ROUTES

Skagit Transit operates 17 fixed bus routes, including local routes serving urban areas, routes connecting rural areas to the urban areas, and express commuter routes connecting with other regional services. Table 1 lists Skagit Transit's fixed route with the general service area and operating hours. The commuter routes (40X, 80X, and 90X) are also referred to as County Connectors.

Skagit Transit's fixed routes make connections at several key facilities and transfer points in Skagit County including:

- Skagit Station, 105 E. Kincaid in downtown Mount Vernon. Skagit Station is a regional multimodal transportation hub served not only by Skagit Transit, but also by Amtrak, Greyhound, and regional Connector routes. Station amenities include Skagit Transit customer service, Greyhound customer service counter, Amtrak ticketing machine, passenger waiting area, parking, coffee shop, vending machines, and community meeting room with conference capabilities.
- Chuckanut Park and Ride, north Burlington near I-5. Washington State DOT owns the parking facility; Skagit Transit owns the bus island and transfer location and operates the parking facility.
- March's Point Park and Ride, near Anacortes off Highway 20 at Christianson Road. This facility is owned by Skagit Transit and the land is leased through a long-term lease agreement.
- South Mount Vernon Park and Ride, Old Hwy 99 South and Hickox Road near I-5. This facility is owned by Skagit Transit.

Several smaller park and ride facilities are served by Skagit Transit in Alger, Burlington, Mount Vernon, and Sedro-Woolley.

Skagit Transit Fare is \$1 when traveling inside Skagit County and \$2 on Route 80X and 90X when traveling out of Skagit County. Monthly passes are also available (\$30 for local routes, \$50 for commuter routes) along with \$6 daily passes for all Skagit County routes. Youth, seniors (age 65 or older), Medicare cardholders, and people with disabilities qualify for a reduced fare of one-half of the regular fares and passes.

Through its Ride Pass Grant Program, Skagit Transit offers free one-day local bus passes to eligible non-profit organizations and government agencies that serve PTBA residents who meet income and/or disability requirements without other transportation resources. In 2022, the Skagit Transit Board of Directors approved 25 organizations and agencies ride passes through the Ride Pass program.

Skagit Transit offers travel training to individuals who need assistance in learning to ride the bus. Fixed route buses are accessible to people with disabilities and can accommodate two passengers using wheelchairs. Skagit Transit buses are also equipped with bike racks that can accommodate two or three bikes at a time.

In 2021, 287,537 passenger trips were provided on Skagit Transit fixed routes.

Table 1. Skagit Transit Fixed Routes

ROUTES	GEOGRAPHY SERVED	CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER TRANSIT SERVICES	WEEKDAY SERVICE HOURS	WEEKEND SERVICE HOURS
40x	Mount Vernon, Anacortes	Island Transit Route 411W to Oak Harbor, other Skagit Transit routes	6:10 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturday; 8:40 a.m. to 5:40 p.m.; every 60 minutes
70x	Concrete, Hamilton, Lyman, Sedro-Woolley, Mount Vernon	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:40 a.m. to 8:55 p.m.; every 3 hours	Saturday; 8:10 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Frequency varies (Becomes route 717)
80x	Mount Vernon, Burlington, Alger, Bellingham	Whatcom Transit Authority, WWU Shuttle, other Skagit Transit routes	6:45 a.m. to 8:07 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:05 a.m. to 6:45 p.m.; every 2 hours
90x	Burlington, Mount Vernon, Everett	Other Skagit Transit routes	4:45 a.m. to 8:15 p.m.; frequency varies (15 to 120 minutes)	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:05 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; every 2 hours
202	Mount Vernon	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:15 a.m. to 8:40 p.m.; every 30 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:15 a.m. to 6:10 p.m.; every 30 minutes
204	Mount Vernon, Skagit Highlands	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:15 a.m. to 8:50 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:15 a.m. to 6:05 p.m.; every 60 minutes
205	Mount Vernon	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:35 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; every 30 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; every 30 minutes
206	Mount Vernon	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; every 30 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:05 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; every 30 minutes
207	Mount Vernon	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:15 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:15 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; every 60 minutes
208 South	Mount Vernon, Burlington	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:20 a.m. to 8:45 p.m.; usually every 30 min. (60 min. before 7:15 a.m./after 7:15 p.m.)	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:15 a.m. to 5:50 p.m.; every 30 minutes
208 North	Mount Vernon, Burlington	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:45 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; usually every 30 min. (60 min. After 6:45 p.m.)	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.; every 30 minutes
300 East	Burlington, Sedro-Woolley	Other Skagit Transit routes	7:15 a.m. to 8:50 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:15 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; every 60 minutes
300 West	Burlington, Sedro-Woolley	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:20 a.m. to 8:32 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:20 a.m. to 5:55 p.m.; every 60 minutes
305 North	Mount Vernon, Clear Lake, Sedro-Woolley	Other Skagit Transit routes	8:14 a.m. to 5:37 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:14 a.m. to 5:37 p.m.; every 60 minutes
305 South	Mount Vernon, Clear Lake, Sedro-Woolley	Other Skagit Transit routes	7:40 a.m. to 7:04 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturdays, Sundays; 8:40 a.m. to 6:04 p.m.; every 60 minutes
409	Anacortes	Guemes Ferry, other Skagit Transit routes	7:25 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.; usually every 30 minutes	Saturday; 8:25 a.m. to 4:50 p.m.; every 30 minutes
410	Anacortes	WA State Ferries, Guemes Ferry, Island Transit Route 411, other Skagit Transit routes	6:38 a.m. to 8:19 p.m.; usually every 60 minutes	Saturday; 8:06 a.m. to 5:35 p.m.; every 60 minutes
513	Anacortes, Burlington	Other Skagit Transit routes	7:10 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.; frequency varies (4.5 round trips per day)	none
615	Anacortes, La Conner, Mount Vernon	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:15 a.m. to 7:05 p.m.; frequency varies (4 round trips daily)	Saturday; 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; every 2 hours
717	Concrete (will deviate for scheduled flex pickup/drop-off)	Other Skagit Transit routes	6:35 a.m. to 7:58 p.m.; every 60 minutes	Saturday; 8:40 a.m. to 5:12 p.m.; every 4 hours

PARATRANSIT

Skagit Transit's Paratransit Service, formerly known as Dial-A-Ride, provides pre-scheduled shared-ride demand-response transportation for people who are unable to ride fixed route services due to their disability. There is an application process to qualify for this service that is determined by each individual's functional abilities to ride fixed route. Paratransit service is provided up to ¾ mile from local fixed routes and operates weekdays 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and weekends from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Service can be scheduled the day before and up to seven days in advance of the day of travel. Fare for Paratransit rides are \$2 one-way per trip. A ten-ride punch card can be purchased for \$20, and a unlimited ride monthly pass can be purchased for \$60. Paratransit clients can ride Skagit Transit's Fixed Route service free by showing their Paratransit ID. In 2021, Skagit Transit's Paratransit service provided 42,180 passenger trips.

VANPOOL PROGRAM

Skagit Transit's Vanpool Program allows groups of commuters to share the ride in a van or minivan for a shared cost. A vanpool group needs a minimum of five individuals (up to 15) starting or ending their trip in Skagit County. A member of the vanpool group drives the vanpool. Skagit Transit provides the van, vehicle maintenance, fuel, and insurance. The vanpool group pays a \$200 monthly fee plus a mileage charge (\$0.34 per mile for a 7-passenger van and \$0.42 per mile for a 12 to 15-passenger van). About 90 percent of Skagit Transit's vanpool users travel to Boeing employment in Snohomish County. Current vanpool destinations within Skagit County include the Mount Vernon VA Clinic, Boeing in Everett, and U.S Army Corps of Engineers in Seattle. The program currently has 21 active vans.

ISLAND TRANSIT

The Island County Public Transportation Benefit Area, doing business as Island Transit, provides public transportation on Whidbey Island and Camano Island. Two Island Transit routes make connections in Skagit County:

- **Route 411W** operates from Oak Harbor on Whidbey Island, providing express service between Deception Pass to the March's Point Park and Ride in Anacortes, where it connects with Skagit Transit Route 40X to Mount Vernon. The Route 411W operates weekdays 6:35 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. Weekday headways are approximately 60 minutes, and Saturday's route has a headway of 120 minutes.
- **Route 411C** operates from Terry's Corner on Camano Island to Skagit Station in Mount Vernon, stopping in Conway. This route operates weekdays from 5:55 a.m. to 6:40 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:10 p.m. Weekday headways are 60 minutes, while Saturday headway varies with three round trips daily. At Skagit Station, Route 411C connects with Skagit Transit Route 40X to March's Point.

Routes 411C and 411W operate fare-free (as do most of Island Transit's routes and paratransit).

Island Transit's vanpool program roster currently lists a vanpool operating from Oak Harbor to Mount Vernon for 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. work shifts at Veterans Affairs (with numerous other vanpools operating to destinations in other counties).

WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) provides public transportation services throughout Whatcom County. As previously described, WTA and Skagit Transit jointly operate the Route 80X between Bellingham Station and Skagit Station, stopping at the Lincoln Creek Park and Ride, Alder Park and Ride, and Chuckanut Park and Ride en route.

TRIBES

SAMISH INDIAN NATION

The Samish Indian Nation operates informal transportation services for tribal members and clients of tribal programs. Several programs serve special needs Native Americans and provide transportation related to their services. Eligibility requirements vary by program, as do service area boundaries, and times of service. These services are provided at no cost to riders, with tribal vehicles (primarily cars, SUVs, and vans), and are very minimally funded by direct service programs.

Headquartered near Anacortes, the membership of the Samish Indian Nation is quite dispersed. The tribe does not have a reservation, and tribal members live mainly throughout Skagit, Whatcom, Snohomish, King, Thurston, and Pierce counties, with some families living at an even greater distance.

SAUK-SUIATLE INDIAN TRIBE

The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe is headquartered near Darrington, with tribal lands at the junction of the Sauk and Suiattle Rivers. The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe provides two different transportation services:

- **Darrington Concrete Direct Shuttle Bus (DC Direct):** This public transit service, provided by the Planning and Development Department, connects the reservation with Concrete, where riders can connect with Skagit Transit, and to Darrington, where riders can connect with Community Transit in Snohomish County. The DC Direct is a fixed route service that operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Each weekday, four round-trips are made to Concrete, and five round-trips are made to Darrington. The service is provided using one bus that is equipped with a wheelchair lift and a bicycle rack. The DC Direct service is open to the public, and no fares are charged (donations are accepted). This service began operations in October 2016, with funding from a 2015-2017 WSDOT Consolidated Grant. The DC Direct service is coordinated with both Skagit Transit and Community Transit. DC Direct has a Dial Ride service available for disabled community members. To arrange Dial Ride transportation, passengers must submit a request at least one business day in advance.
- **Health and Social Services:** The Health and Social Services Department provides transportation to Tribal members and other Native Americans to access medical and social services in Mount Vernon and Sedro-Woolley in Skagit County and Everett, Arlington, and Marysville in Snohomish County. This service is funded by Tribal funds and federal funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Services.



SWINOMISH INDIAN TRIBAL COMMUNITY

The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community is composed of approximately 900 tribal members, the majority of whom live on the Swinomish Reservation or nearby in Skagit County. The Swinomish Tribe is headquartered in the Swinomish Village area, located on the southeast corner of the Reservation, which is on eastern Fidalgo Island. The Swinomish Tribe provides transportation services for tribal members, including:

- Transportation for elder trips,
- Transportation for youth events,
- Transportation to and from correctional facilities for detainees with the criminal justice system, serving facilities as distant as Yakima, and
- Shuttle transportation to and from the didgwálich Wellness Center in Anacortes. The Swinomish Tribe operates the didgwálich Wellness Center, which provides chemical dependency outpatient treatment and mental health counseling for all enrolled Native American tribal members. The didgwálich Wellness Center is a regional medical destination as a methadone clinic among other services.

HUMAN SERVICES AGENCIES AND NON-PROFIT PROGRAMS

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY/ ROAD TO RECOVERY PROGRAM

The American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery program coordinates volunteers who drive their own vehicles to take people with cancer to cancer-related medical appointments at no cost to the patient. This service must be coordinated several business days in advance.

ANACORTES FAMILY CENTER

The Anacortes Family Center (AFC) provides emergency shelter, transitional housing, affordable housing, and case management to women and families with children. AFC creates an individualized plan to help each family reach self-sufficiency, with a goal of ending their reliance on social services. As part of its comprehensive support, which includes helping adult residents find employment, AFC provides limited transportation support, including providing bus passes (participating in Skagit Transit's Ride Pass Grant Program), and occasionally paying for a taxi ride when public transportation is not operating.

CHINOOK ENTERPRISES

Chinook Enterprises is a social enterprise non-profit agency designed to operate as a business, but with a social mission: supporting full participation in community life for people with disabilities or other barriers. Based in Mount Vernon, Chinook Enterprises provides vocational services for transitioning high school students and adults with disabilities, Community Employment Services, assembly services, and grounds maintenance services. Chinook Enterprises occasionally provides transportation to jobs or community inclusion activities when public transportation (Skagit Transit or Dial-A-Ride/Paratransit) or other transportation supports are not available and participates in Skagit Transit's Ride Pass Grant Program.

COMMUNITY ACTION OF SKAGIT COUNTY

The mission of Community Action of Skagit County is to foster and advocate for self-sufficiency among low-income people in Skagit County.

Established in 1979, today Community Action supports numerous programs that stabilize lives and equip people to move out of poverty, working in collaboration with the community to create ongoing pathways to prosperity. Community Action is based in Mount Vernon with additional locations in Oak Harbor, Concrete, and Sedro-Woolley. Its programs include adult education, assistance for homeless families and individuals, employment services, energy assistance, services for seniors and people with disabilities, veteran's services, supplemental nutrition for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and a food bank distribution center.

Community Action of Skagit County provides limited transportation as part of its Volunteer Services Program for seniors and people with disabilities. This service is provided primarily by volunteers driving their own vehicles. Community Action has participated in Skagit Transit's Ride Pass Grant Program. Some of Community Action's programs also fund the purchase of daily and monthly passes for eligible participants, funded through a previous WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program cycle. Additionally, some programs can assist with gas vouchers in emergency situations.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES/ WORKFIRST TRANSPORTATION

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) supports transportation for needy families through the WorkFirst Transportation Initiative Pilot program. The Washington State WorkFirst program assists recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to meet their goals and provide well-being for their family. The Transportation Initiative Pilot provides enhanced transportation services and supports for WorkFirst families. The goal of this initiative is to have zero transportation issues for individuals with a WorkFirst Individual Responsibility Plan. This includes people preparing for and seeking jobs as well as individuals recovering from chemical dependency or mental health issues, all parents, and all who are in transition plan to work.

Support provided through the Transportation Initiative Pilot includes funding for vehicle repairs and fuel, assistance with reinstatement of driver's license in circumstances other than DUI, driver training, and on-demand transportation services for individuals without access to a vehicle who are unable to get to a public transit route. The Transportation Initiative Pilot supports not only work-related travel, but also travel to obtain treatment for chemical dependency or mental illness.

In Skagit County, the on-demand transportation is contracted from a private transportation provider based in King County. Trips are authorized in the local DSHS Community Service Office in Arlington and scheduled through a computerized system. Individuals are authorized for up to five rides, up to 50 miles one-way, either door-to-door to the destination, or to a transit stop. An individual's needs may be reassessed for additional rides.

VETERANS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Transportation

DAV provides van transportation operated by volunteer drivers to take eligible veterans to the VA Medical Center in Seattle. To schedule a ride riders must call the DVA Transportation Coordinator at least seven days before the scheduled appointment needing transportation. The DAV vans that serve Skagit County are not wheelchair accessible.

Other Transportation for Veterans

American Legion Veteran Service Offices informally provide transportation services in the form of arranging private carpools for veterans to reach their medical appointments at the VA Medical Center in Seattle. American Legion Post 91 in Burlington has an informal program where funds are used to purchase \$25 gas cards to help reimburse volunteer drivers to use their vehicles on these trips. Recipients must already be connected to Community Action of Skagit County in order to receive a gas card.

The Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) also coordinate private carpools. VVA has a Service Officer in Mount Vernon.

NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL/MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The Northwest Regional Council (NWRC) is an association of county governments that has been serving people of Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom Counties since 1971. NWRC serves as Northwest Washington's Area Agency on Aging (AAA), implementing state and federal programs for seniors and people who need long-term care through such community-based care programs as Senior Information and Assistance, Congregate Meals, Meals on Wheels, Respite Care, Adult Day Services, Case Management and Family Caregiver Support.

NWRC serves as the region's Medicaid transportation broker under contract to the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA).

NWRC operates a Medicaid Transportation Call Center that authorizes and arranges for non-emergency medical transportation for Medicaid-eligible individuals who live in Island, San Juan, Skagit, or Whatcom counties. As the transportation broker, NWRC is responsible for identifying the most appropriate, least costly mode of transportation to the nearest appropriate medical provider. NWRC contracts with numerous transportation providers in the region. Transportation available for Skagit County residents who are Medicaid-eligible include transit passes for public transportation, gas vouchers for use of personal vehicles, mileage reimbursement for use of personal vehicles, and tickets or vouchers for intercity bus (such as Greyhound), taxi, paratransit service, cabulance service, and ferry. Rides must be pre-authorized and pre-scheduled. There is no cost to the rider for Medicaid-eligible rides.

Individuals whose Medicaid-eligible trips can be made using fixed route public transit—those who live within ¼ mile of a bus route—are issued a 31-day bus pass that can be used for any trip purpose during the pass period, in addition to the medical trips.

For individuals who are not eligible for Medicaid (such as seniors), NWRC provides information on/referral to other transportation services. NWRC coordinates with numerous organizations to match those in need with appropriate transportation, including Skagit Transit, Catholic Community Services, Community Action of Skagit County, and most of the Tribes in the region. On the healthcare side, NWRC coordinates with hospitals, dialysis centers, and Swinomish Tribe's didgwálic Wellness Center (the region's only methadone treatment center).

ADDITIONAL SKAGIT TRANSIT RIDE PASS GRANT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

In addition to the Anacortes Family Center and Chinook Enterprises, the following organizations were awarded ride passes in Skagit Transit's Ride Pass Grant Program in 2022:

- Anacortes Police Department
- Brigid Collins Family Support Center
- Catholic Community Services
- City of Burlington and Mount Vernon, Public Defenders Office
- Community Action
- DSHS Community Services Office
- Family Promises of Skagit Valley
- Friendship House
- Mount Vernon Police Department, Outreach Coordination
- Mount Vernon Police Department, Patrol Division
- Northwest Youth Services
- Northwest WorkSource Council
- Sea Mar Clinic
- Seattle Goodwill Industries
- Skagit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services
- Skagit Gleaners
- Skagit/Island Head Start
- Skagit Regional Health, Skagit Valley Hospital
- Swinomish Tribe, didgwálic Wellness Center
- Tierra Nueva
- United General Hospital
- Washington Vocational Services
- YMCA, Oasis Teen Center

INFORMATION, REFERRAL, RIDER EDUCATION, AND ADVOCACY

Numerous human service agencies, non-profit agencies, and public agencies in Skagit County provide information on and referral to transportation services and resources, and some organizations help their program participants learn to ride public transit.

- As previously described, Skagit Transit has a **Mobility Outreach Specialist** who conducts regular outreach to an extensive list of service organizations; they also have a travel trainer.
- **The North Sound Transportation Alliance (NSTA)**, formerly known as the Farmhouse Gang, is hosted by the Whatcom Council of Governments. The NSTA is a coalition of citizens, elected officials, and professional staff of transportation agencies from Whatcom, Skagit, Island, San Juan and northern Snohomish counties. NSTA strives to develop better ways for people to travel in the region through these objectives: collect travel and system data to identify needs; improve regional connections and sustain and expand services; enhance mobility through sustainable, equitable, and innovative transportation solutions; and inform the public about transportation services to enhance awareness of the regional transportation network.
- **The Snohomish County Transportation Coalition (SNOTRAC)** advocates for transportation service and solutions to better connect people and community in and beyond Snohomish County. SNOTRAC's mission is advocating for improvement in transportation service and solutions through community input, coordination of resources, and strategic partnerships. SNOTRAC's regional coalition includes representatives from Skagit Transit, the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, and other public agencies, tribes, human service agencies, and transportation providers from King, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties. SNOTRAC's mobility management services include information and referral to Skagit County transportation services.
- **The Community Transportation Association of the Northwest (CTANW)**, a membership-based organization of non-profit, for-profit, and public transportation providers, as well as Medicaid brokers, planning organizations, service agencies (such as senior centers), and other partners, focuses on specialized transportation needs throughout Washington State and the Northwest region (Washington and Oregon). CTANW created RideSourceNW, an online database of transportation services, mobility managers, travel trainers, and more.

SCHOOLS

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Each local school district in Washington State is mandated to provide students with transportation to school, and determines how best to achieve this (such as operating own vehicles or contracting for student transportation services). In Skagit County, this is primarily achieved through the school districts operating their own buses. There are seven local school districts in Skagit County:

- Anacortes School District #103
- Burlington-Edison School District #100
- Concrete School District #011
- Conway School District #317
- La Conner School District #311
- Mount Vernon School District #320
- Sedro-Woolley School District #101

Although each local school district has a defined transportation service area, their transportation services may cross into another district's area to accommodate homeless students (under the federal McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act) as well as to transport students needing special programs not available in their home district (such as alternative schools).

NORTHWEST EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT 189

Skagit County is part of the Northwest Educational Service District 189, one of nine Educational Service Districts (ESDs) in Washington State, which serves a region that includes 35 public school districts and several private schools in Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties. ESDs serve as liaisons between local school districts and the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in Olympia. ESDs share information about OSPI programs and requirements with the local school districts, and local school districts provide information to the ESDs which they report to the state.

The Northwest Educational Service District does not provide student transportation, but rather serves as a resource for the local school districts. An example of the type of assistance that may be provided is helping a school district to develop its local plan for the local district's Transportation Vehicle Fund. This fund is allocated to local school districts to purchase school buses. School districts are reimbursed for the base cost of each bus over the useful life of the vehicle, and

at the end of the vehicle's life (typically 13 years for large buses and 8 years for small buses), the school district has resources to purchase a replacement bus.

NORTHWEST CAREER & TECHNICAL ACADEMY

The Northwest Career and Technical Academy (NCTA) is a consortium of six Skagit County school districts (Anacortes, Burlington-Edison, Concrete, Mount Vernon, La Conner and Sedro-Woolley), two Whatcom County school districts (Bellingham, and Meridian), and Skagit Valley College. NCTA provides professional technical training for approximately 400 students, including juniors and seniors in high school and some college students. The main campus is in Mount Vernon, with programs also provided in Anacortes, Sedro-Woolley, and Bellingham. In addition to information and referral to transit services, NCTA provides bus passes to students, but does not operate its own transportation.

FERRY SERVICES

WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES

The Washington State Ferries connects Anacortes with the San Juan Islands and Vancouver Island (BC). During the summer of 2022 (June 19 through September 24), ferry sailings departed from Anacortes daily between 4:10 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. (11:00 p.m. on Fridays) and arrived at Anacortes between 7:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight every day of the week. The time span in between sailings from Anacortes currently ranges from 15 minutes to 90 minutes. Washington State Ferries' schedules change seasonally (four times per year) with a new schedule taking effect September 24, 2022.

GUEMES ISLAND FERRY

Skagit County Public Works operates the Guemes Island Ferry between Anacortes and Guemes Island. This small ferry transports vehicles and walk-on passengers. During the 2022 peak season (May 20 through September 30), sailings typically depart Anacortes every 30 to 45 minutes, Monday through Thursday from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 6:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., and Sundays from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Peak round trip fares for passengers are \$5.00 for regular passengers; \$3.00 for seniors (65+), youth (6-17 years), and passengers with disabilities; and free for children up to age 5. Round trip fares for vehicles, including the driver, start at \$15.00. Multi-ride tickets are available.



LONG DISTANCE BUS AND RAIL PROVIDERS

AMTRAK CASCADES

The Amtrak Cascades service provides high-speed passenger rail between Vancouver, B.C., and Eugene, Oregon. Service north of Seattle on the high-speed passenger rail was temporarily suspended from May 2020 to Late 2022 due to COVID-19 and ongoing staffing shortages. The Washington segment of Amtrak Cascades includes stops in Bellingham, Mount Vernon, Stanwood, Everett, Edmonds, Seattle, and six other stations south of Seattle. Four round trips per day are made between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. via Amtrak Thruway bus. Amtrak contracts with MTR Western to operate connecting Thruway bus schedules as part of the Cascades service between Bellingham and Seattle. MTR Western does not sell separate tickets on these schedules—the service is dedicated to Amtrak passengers.

In Mount Vernon, Amtrak Cascades trains and Thruway buses stop at Skagit Station. The current schedule includes the following departures from Mount Vernon on the Amtrak Cascades Thruway bus:

- Southbound: 12:15 p.m., and 4:00 p.m.
- Northbound: 1:45 p.m., and 5:30 p.m.

One-way coach fares for service between Mount Vernon and Seattle (King Street Station) on the Amtrak Cascades Thruway Bus are \$18. Between Mount Vernon and Bellingham, fares range from \$12. A ten percent discount is available to passengers ages 65 and older. Ticket fares and the state Departments of Transportation in both Washington and Oregon fund the service.

GREYHOUND

Greyhound Lines operates intercity bus transportation along the I-5 corridor, stopping at Skagit Station in Mount Vernon, under Timetable 601: Vancouver, B.C. – Seattle – Portland, Oregon.

Intermediate stops in Skagit County include Bellingham, Mount Vernon, and Everett. Current departure times from Mount Vernon are:

- Southbound: 10:05 a.m., and 11:20 p.m.
- Northbound: 3:00 a.m., and 6:50 p.m.

For service between Mount Vernon and Seattle, one-way fares range from \$20 to \$30. Between Mount Vernon and Bellingham, fares range from \$12 to \$24. Passengers ages 62 and older are eligible for a discount fare.

BELLAIR AIRPORTER

Bellair Charters and Airporter is a charter and tour bus company that operates regularly scheduled airport shuttle service along the I-5 and I-90 corridors to Sea-Tac Airport. The Anacortes Airporter operates along the I-5 corridor north of Seattle, offering six trips per day from Blaine to Sea-Tac, making three stops in Skagit County in Anacortes, La Conner and Burlington and five daily northbound trips from Sea-Tac to the three Skagit County stops. The Bellingham Airporter, which makes a Skagit County stop in Burlington, makes eight round trips per day on weekdays, and 7 round trips on the weekends. The Burlington stop is at 844 South Alder.

One-way fares range from \$5.75 to \$160.00, depending upon trip origin and destination. A trip from Anacortes to La Conner is \$5.75 and from Anacortes to Burlington is \$11.00. From La Conner to Burlington, the fare is \$9.00. From Burlington to Bellingham, the fare is \$9.75, and Burlington to Seattle is \$49.00 one-way. For many of the pick-up points on trips originating from Anacortes, prepaid 24-hour advance reservation is required. Discounts are available for seniors, youth and military members.



MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

CARE-E-ME NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

Based in Skagit County, Care-E-Me provides non-emergency medical transportation serving the Skagit Valley and beyond, including the San Juan Islands, with a fleet of fourteen vehicles. In addition to medical transportation, Care-E-Me also offers service for other trip purposes. Service is available on a door-to-door and door-through-door basis. Regular hours of operation are 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, and 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Fares are based on a pick-up charge plus a mileage charge. For wheelchair-accessible service, the pick-up fee is \$50.00, plus \$4.00 per mile, with a \$75.00 minimum. For car service, the pick-up fee is \$35.00, plus \$3.50 per mile, with a \$35.00 minimum. There are additional charges for service on holidays or after hours, waiting time, hospital discharges, and wheelchair trunk storage. Care-E-Me offers reduced/flat rates for long distance travel and a 15 percent discount for active or retired military and police force. Care-E-Me is family owned and operated and committed to the safety and comfort of their passengers.

CASCADE AMBULANCE SERVICE, INC.

Cascade Ambulance Service, Inc., provides emergency and non-emergency medical transportation. Based in Whatcom County, Cascade Ambulance serves Skagit and Island counties. Professional services are available to individuals who use wheelchairs and includes not only transportation but also personal care assistance. Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

PRIVATE IN-HOME CARE SERVICES OFFERING TRANSPORTATION

There are number of individuals and small businesses that provide transportation services among the services they offer to clients (which include in-home care—medical and non-medical, housekeeping, meal preparation). One such service is Beck & Call Concierge Service based in La Conner.

OTHER PROVIDERS

TAXIS

Four taxi companies are based and operate in Skagit County:

- A Cab for You, based in Anacortes
- Mert's Taxi, based in Anacortes
- Quick Cabs, based in Mount Vernon
- Yellow Cab, based in Bellingham

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES

Transportation network companies are ride-hailing services that match individual drivers operating their own personal vehicles for payment with people seeking rides, through a smartphone technology interface. Lyft and Uber appear to offer service in at least western Skagit County as part of their Bellingham service areas, although the availability of drivers may be limited.



3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND GAP ANALYSIS

Needs for rural and specialized transportation services in Skagit County were identified through the following activities:

- Review of demographics and travel patterns, including:
 - General population data
 - Profile of population groups with transit dependency
- Common service locations for Paratransit trips identified by Skagit Transit
- Public involvement activities that included:
 - Special Needs Transportation Committee Member Workshops
 - Online Open House and Public Survey
 - Inviting comments from individuals participating in human services programs

This section of the Skagit Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan presents the findings related to transportation needs from each of the above activities, and concludes with a summary of unmet needs.

REVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRAVEL PATTERNS

This section provides an analysis of current and future population trends in Skagit County for this planning effort, as well as an analysis of the demographics of population groups that often depend on transportation options beyond an automobile. Data sources for this analysis include the 2020 U.S. Census and the American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-2022 5-year estimates.

This demographic analysis, coupled with input from regional stakeholders and others through the outreach activities, provides a broad transportation needs assessment. This assessment can then be used to develop strategies to meet identified needs and expand mobility and to generate recommendations to improve coordination within the region.

POPULATION ANALYSIS

This section examines the current population and population density in Skagit County, and discusses population projections for the region.

Total Population

Table 2 shows the U.S. Census population counts for Skagit County from 2000 to 2020. During this timeframe, Skagit County experienced a substantial 25.17 percent growth rate. Many major cities and towns saw substantial growth as well. Sedro-Woolley saw the largest percent growth (39.22 percent) followed by Burlington (32.77 percent). Hamilton was the only major city in the study area that saw a slight decline in population of 3.24 percent.

Table 2. Historical Population by City

AREA	YEARLY POPULATION			2000-2010 %CHANGE	2010-2022 %CHANGE	2000-2022 %CHANGE
	2000	2010	2020			
Skagit County	103,475	117,004	129,523	13.07%	10.07%	25.17%
Mount Vernon	28,817	31,764	35,219	18.45%	10.88%	22.22%
Anacortes	14,589	15,771	17,637	8.10%	11.83%	20.89%
Sedro-Woolley	8,922	11,073	12,421	24.11%	12.17%	39.22%
Burlington	6,893	8,407	9,152	21.96%	8.86%	32.77%
La Conner	778	891	965	14.52%	8.31%	24.04%
Concrete	798	705	801	-11.65%	13.62%	0.38%
Lyman	409	438	423	7.09%	-3.42%	3.42%
Hamilton	309	301	299	-2.59%	-0.66%	-3.24%

Source: U.S. Census

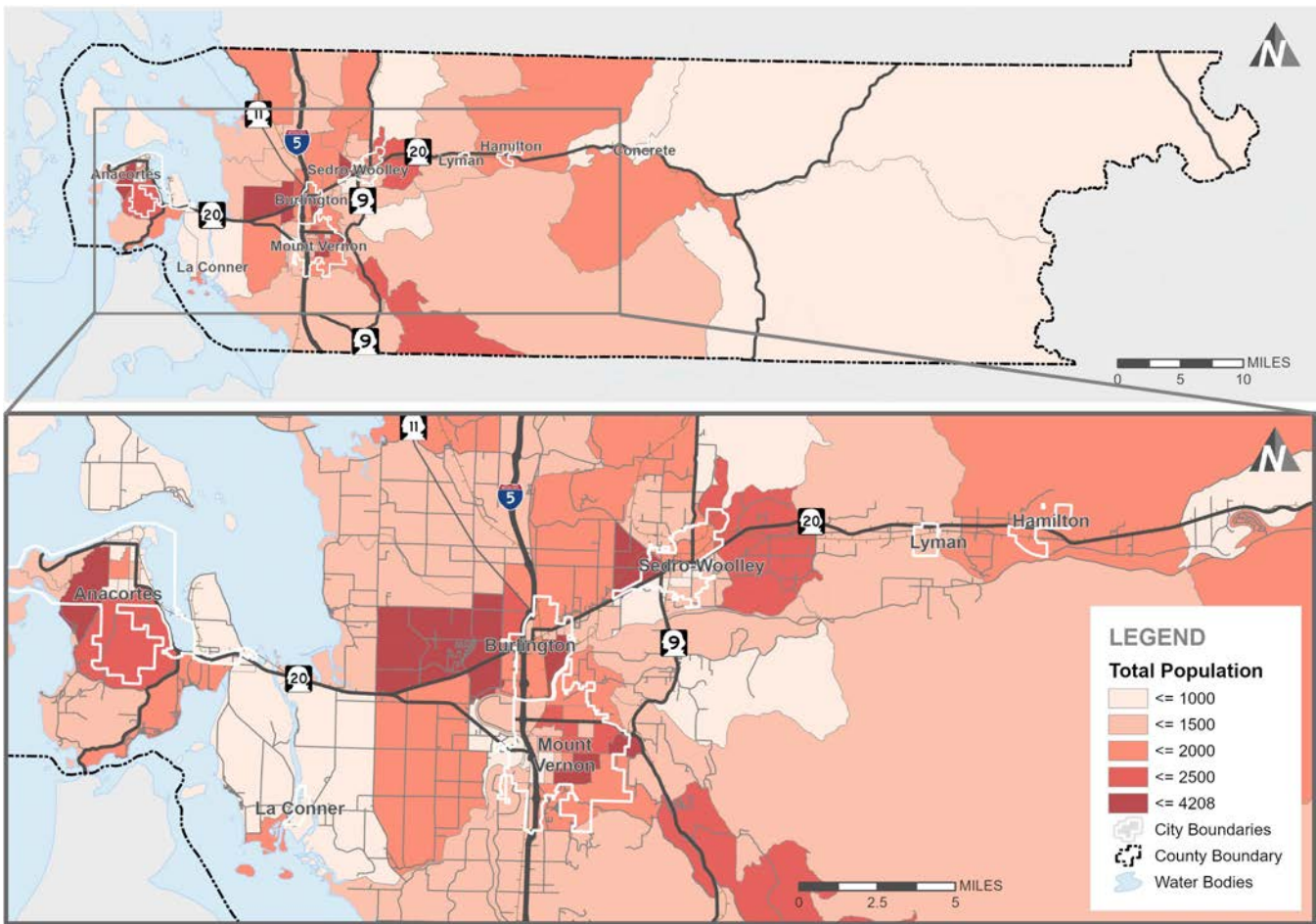


Figure 2. Population in Skagit County

Figure 2 illustrates the county's total population at the census block group level. This map depicts higher overall population in the areas in Mount Vernon, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, and Anacortes. To supplement this map, a population density analysis will be shown later in this technical memorandum.

Table 3 features recent population estimates from the ACS. The data shows that since 2010 the county has been growing steadily. Skagit County has grown by 10.60 percent during this timeframe. The fastest growing city is Sedro-Woolley with a growth rate of 15.49 percent from 2010 to 2020. Concrete has shown a negative growth rate meaning that the population decreased at a rate of 6.35 percent during this timeframe.

Table 3. Recent Population Trends

AREA	2010	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2010-2020 %CHANGE
Skagit County	115,231	120,475	121,725	123,907	125,612	127,442	10.60%
Mount Vernon	31,044	33,388	33,787	34,504	35,026	35,502	14.36%
Anacortes	15,668	16,229	16,425	16,725	16,977	17,231	9.98%
Sedro-Woolley	10,320	11,225	11,360	11,579	11,739	11,919	15.49%
Burlington	8,171	8,572	8,590	8,743	881	9,085	11.19%
La Conner	852	782	789	819	934	974	14.32%
Concrete	977	744	837	703	738	915	-6.35%

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

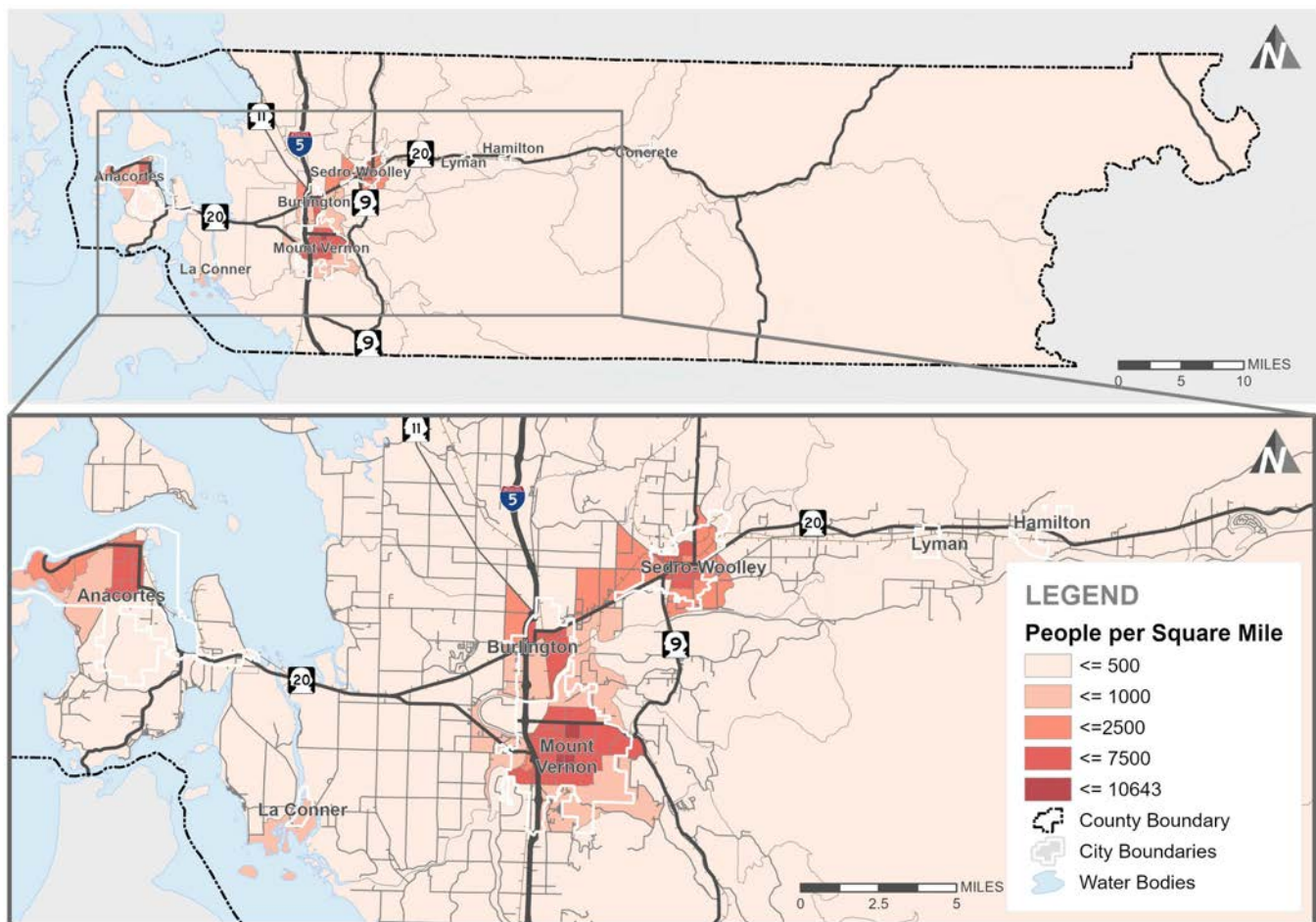


Figure 3. Skagit County Persons per Square Mile by Block Group

Table 4. Population Forecasts

AREA	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Skagit County	118,117	122,207	127,387	132,275	138,164

Source: State of Washington, Office of Financial Management.
State Population Forecast, November 2017

Population Density

One of the most important factors in determining the most appropriate transportation mode for a community is population density. Population density is often used as an indicator of the type of public transit services that are feasible within a study area. Typically, an area with a density of 1,000 persons per square mile will be able to sustain some form of daily fixed route transit service. An area with a population density below 1,000 persons per square mile may be a better candidate for some form of fixed schedule or demand response services.

Figure 3 shows the region's population density at the census block group level. Not surprisingly the most densely populated areas are along the I-5 corridor in Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley. Anacortes and La Conner also show block groups with higher densities. The remainder of the county has low population densities and is defined by its rural nature.

Population Forecast

Future forecasts for the region all anticipate low population growth. Population trends in Skagit County arc toward sustained growth for the foreseeable future. For the purposes of this study the State of Washington, Office of Financial Management, State Population Forecast were used. The trends shown earlier in Table 2 indicate a steady increase throughout the county particularly in Mount Vernon. Analyses from other efforts confirm the population trend in the region as well as future projections. The region is expected to experience a 17 percent growth rate during the period from 2020 to 2040. During that same timeframe, the State of Washington is expected to grow from 7 million in population to 7.9 million, an increase of 12 percent. Even though Skagit County is predominantly rural in geography it is expected to grow at a more rapid rate than the state. Table 4 provides the forecasted population growth for Skagit County out to 2040.

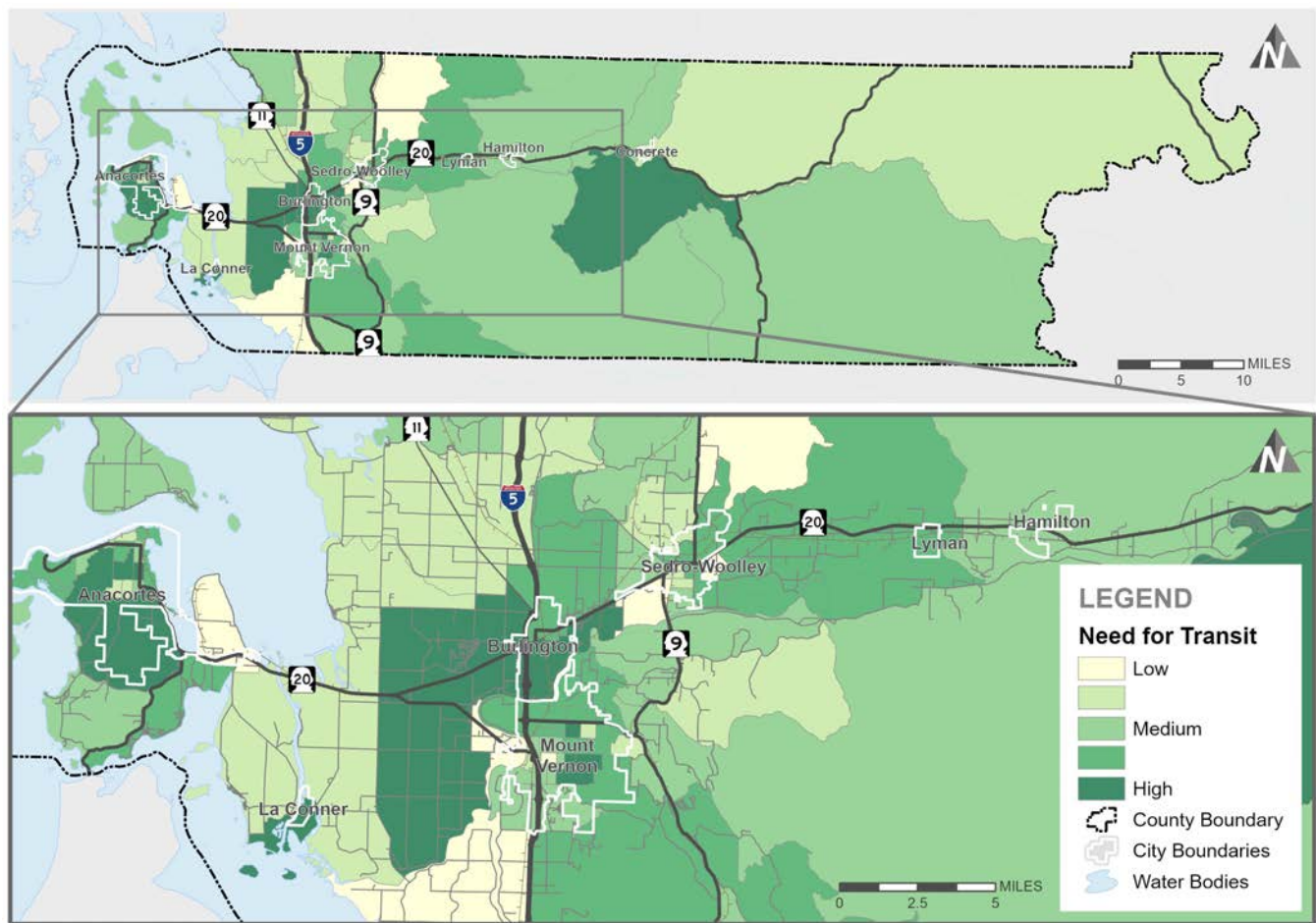


Figure 4. Transit Needs Index

TRANSIT DEPENDENT POPULATIONS

Public transportation needs are defined in part by identifying the relative size and location of those segments within the general population that are most likely to be dependent on transit services. This includes individuals who may not have access to a personal vehicle or are unable to drive themselves due to age or income status.

Transit Need Index

The need for public transportation is often derived by recognizing the size and location of segments of the population most dependent on transit services.

Need for transit can be a result of many factors such as: no access to a personal vehicle, a disability that prevents a person from operating a personal vehicle, age, veteran status, and income. Establishing the location of transit dependent populations aids in the evaluation of the current population while identifying potential gaps in transit services. The Transit Need Index (TNI) is an aggregate measure displaying relative density of transit dependent populations. Six factors make up the TNI calculation including: people with disabilities, zero vehicle households, elderly populations (ages 65 and over), Veteran status, LEP households and below poverty populations.

The factors above represent specific socio-economic characteristics of Skagit County residents. For each factor, individual block groups were classified in quantiles according to the percentage of the vulnerable population relative to other block groups and given a score of between 1 and 5. Scores for each individual category were then tallied to yield a Transit Need Index score of between 6 (lowest score) and 30 (highest). Block groups with high scores can be said to have populations where factors that affect transit needs and access are compounded such that a large portion of the population has a need for transit. Conversely, block groups with low scores may still have individuals or groups with transit needs, but these do not make up a significant share of the population.

Figure 4 displays the TNI rankings for the county with areas scoring 10 points or less on the TNI showing a low need for transit, while areas scoring 23 or more points show a high need for transit. Areas showing medium or low medium scores are below the county average of 18 points, while areas with a medium high score are above average. Areas with high need for transit are centered around Burlington, Mount Vernon, Anacortes, and Concrete.

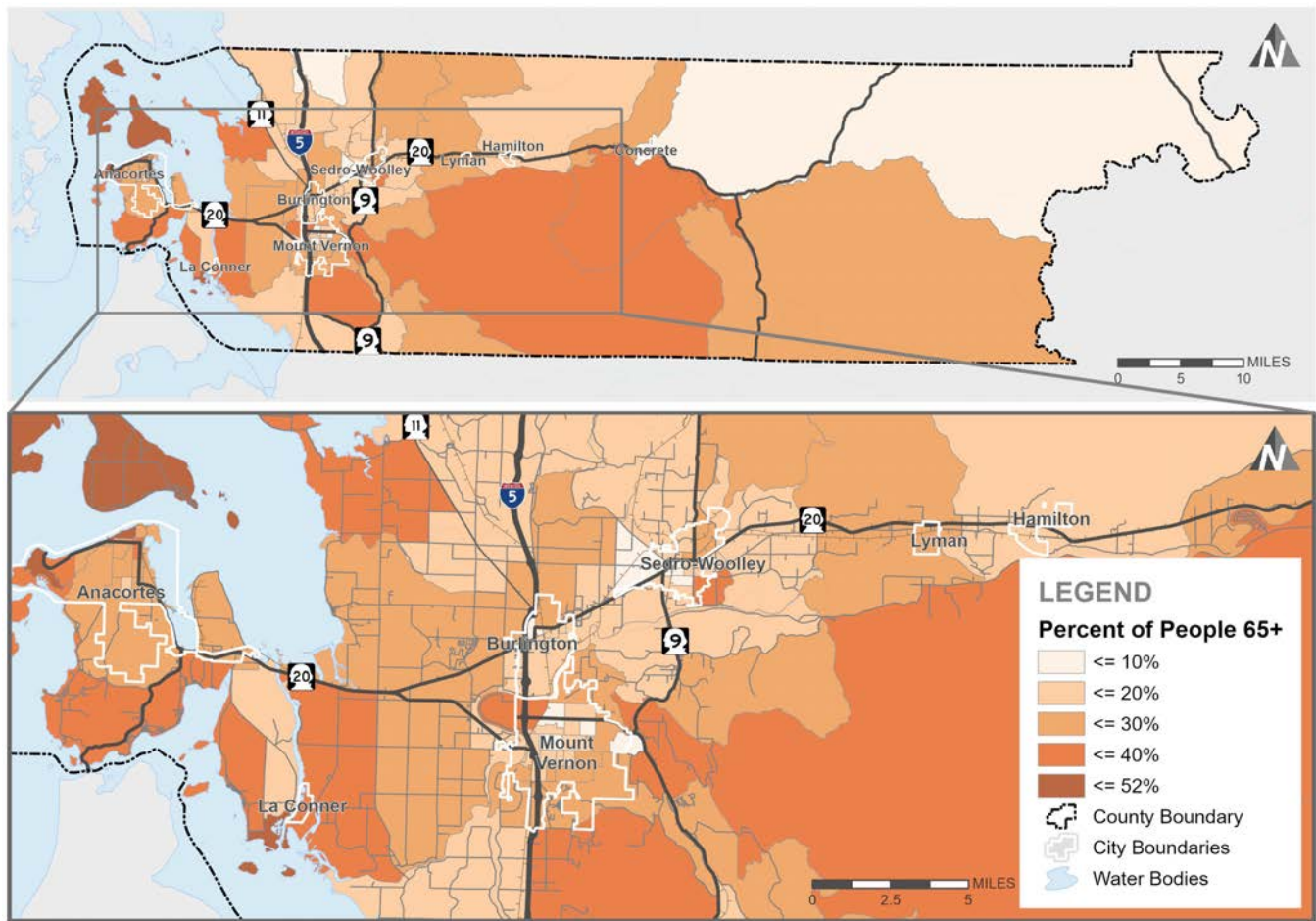


Figure 5. Percent of Population Over 65 Years Old

Senior Adult Population

One of the socioeconomic groups analyzed by the TNI is the senior adult population, which consists of individuals ages 65 and older. Persons in this age group may begin to decrease their use of a personal vehicle and rely more heavily on public transit. On average, Skagit County's population of individuals 65 and over make up 21 percent of the total population. Figure 5 shows the relative percentage of seniors in the study area. In general, unincorporated areas of the county have a higher percentage of seniors than do areas within the cities. Exceptions to this are parts of Anacortes and La Conner which have many block groups where the senior population is above the county average. This is consistent with many rural areas in America where populations in non-urbanized areas are seeing a trend of rapid aging in the demographic makeup of their communities.

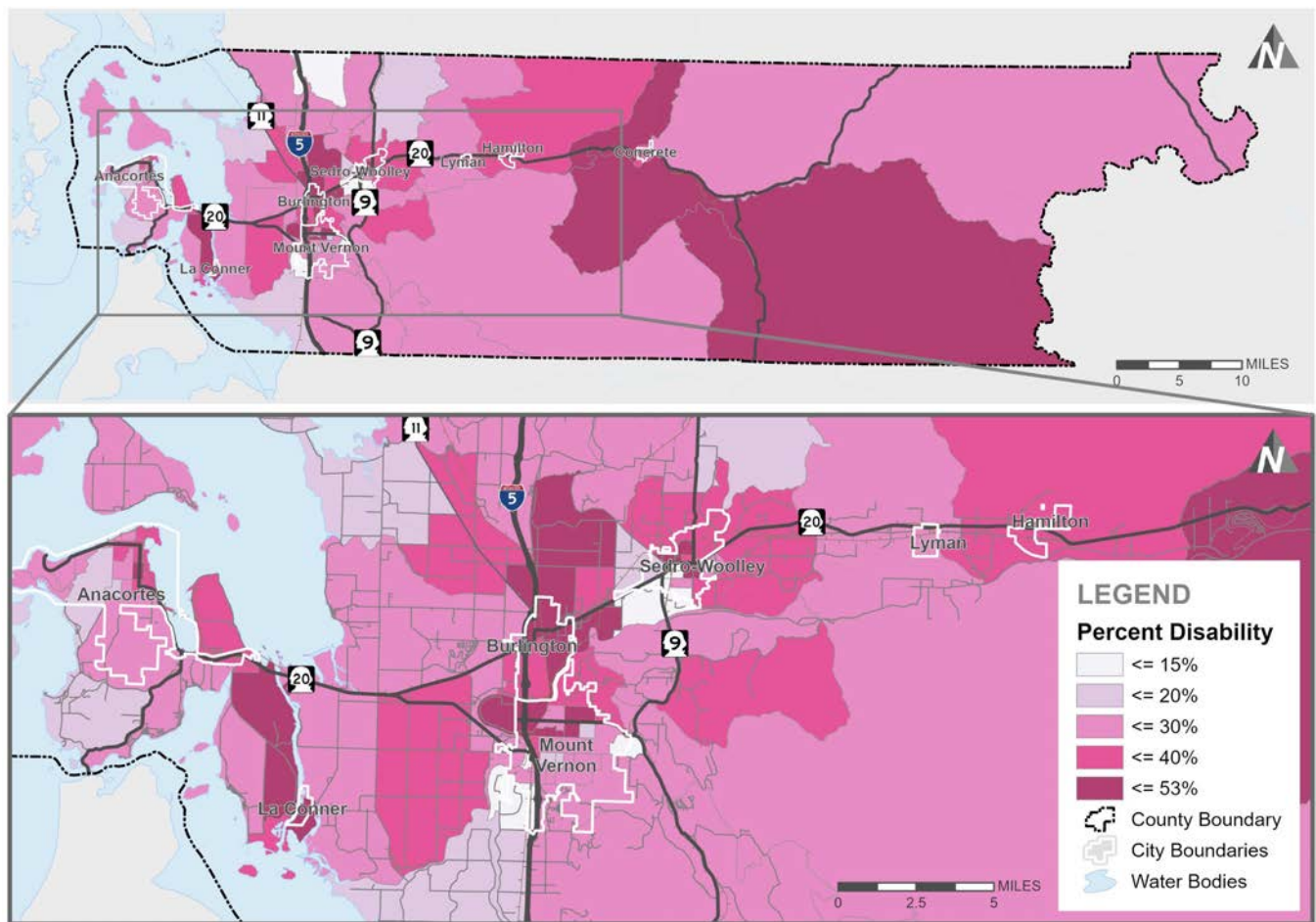


Figure 6. Percent of Households with Disabilities

Individuals with Disabilities

Figure 6 illustrates the percent of households with individuals with disabilities in the study area. The American Community Survey was used to obtain data for the disabled population. Persons who have disabilities that prevent them from owning or make it more difficult to own and operate a personal vehicle often rely on public transit for their transportation needs. Areas in the county with high or very high percentages of households with disabilities are clustered along the I-5 corridor near Mount Vernon and Burlington, in Anacortes and La Conner, as well as rural areas outside Concrete.

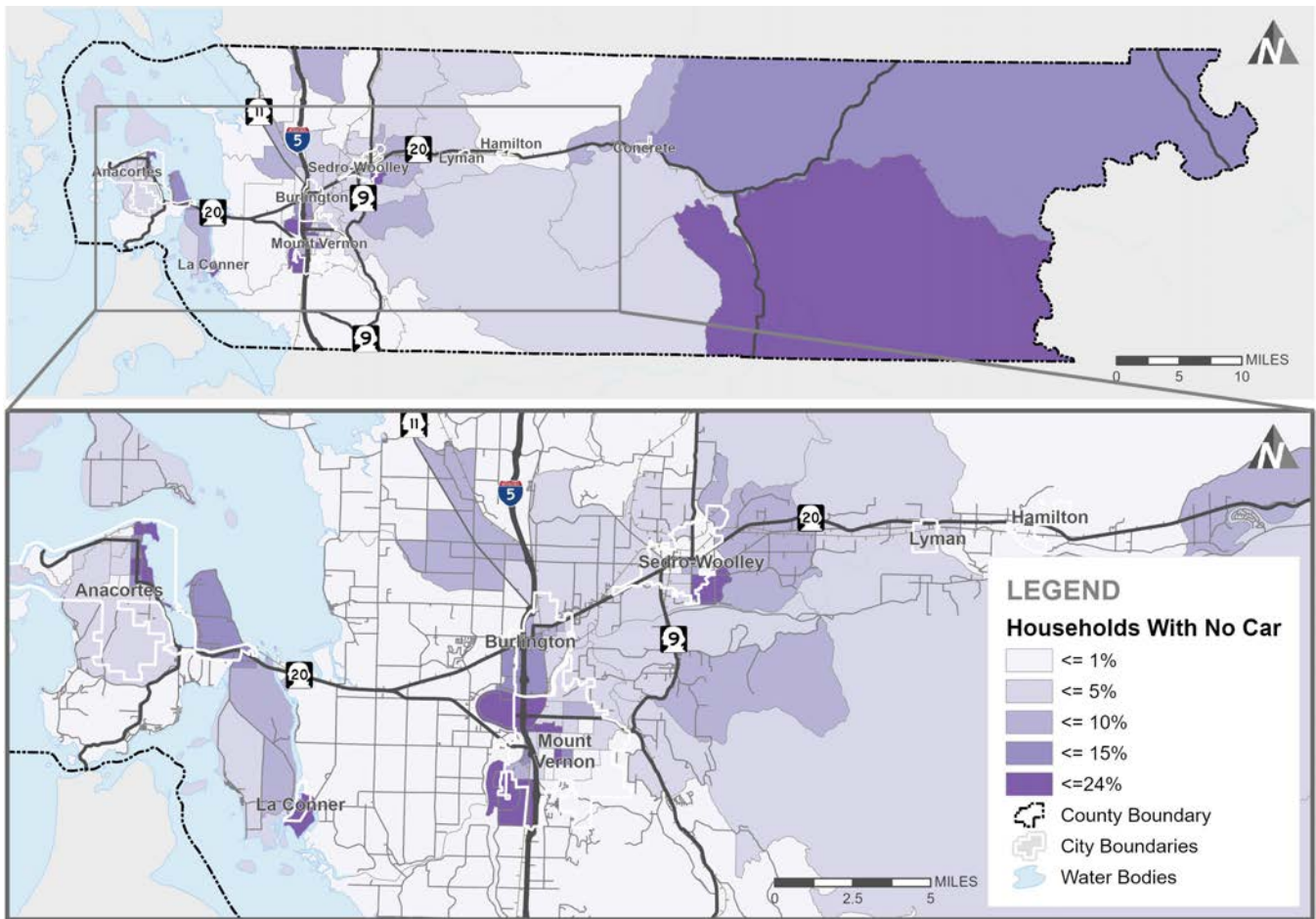


Figure 7. Percent of Households with No Vehicle Available

Zero Car Households

Households without at least one personal vehicle are more likely to depend on the mobility offered by public transit. Although households with no access to a vehicle are reflected in the TNI, displaying this segment of the population separately is important since most land uses in the study area are at distances too far for non-motorized travel. Figure 7 displays the relative percentage of households with no access to a vehicle. Areas with high percentages of households without vehicles per census block group include the I-5 corridor near Mount Vernon, areas in Anacortes and near La Conner, and the block groups south of the State Highway 20 corridor near Concrete, Rockport and Marblemount.

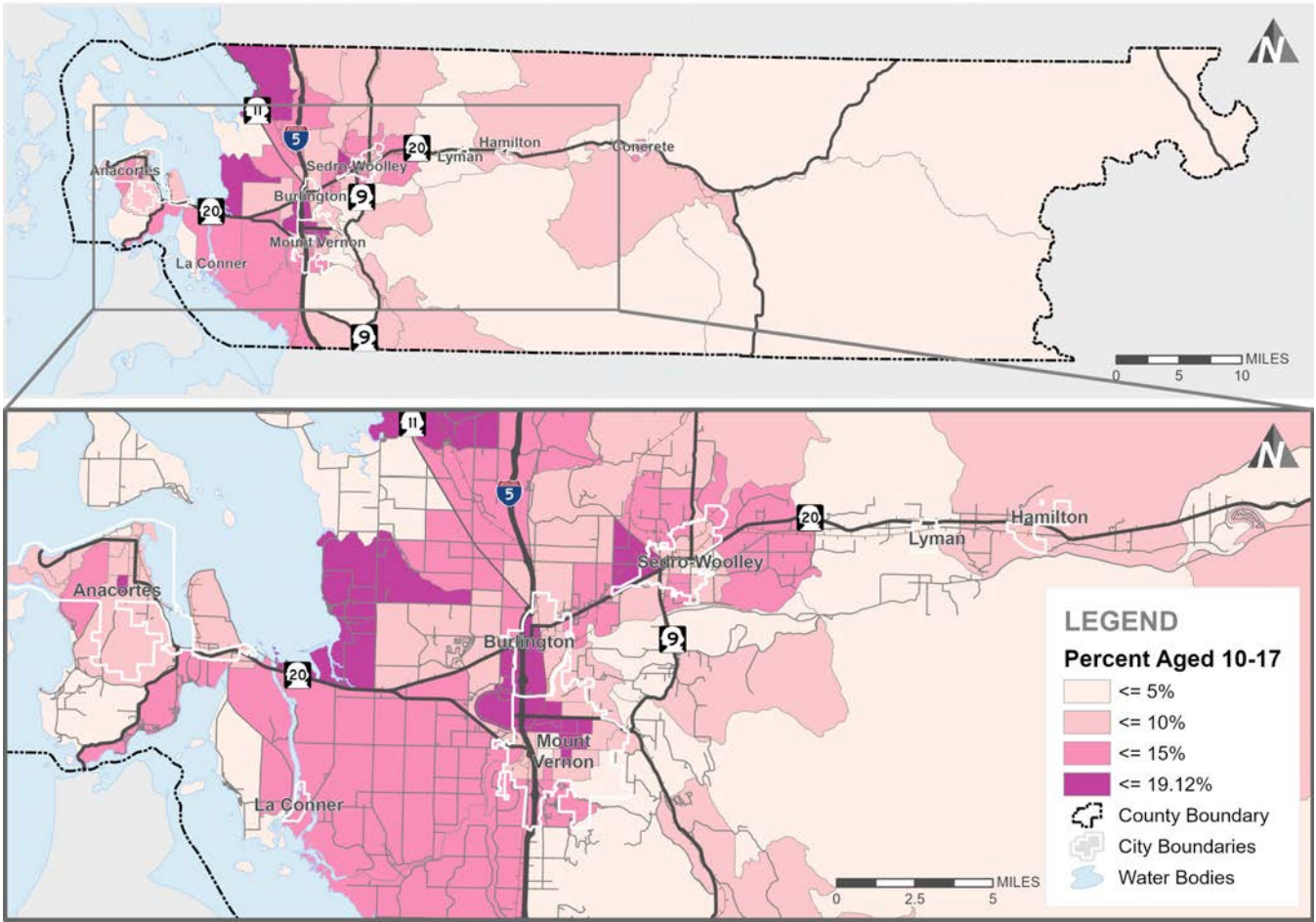


Figure 8. Percentage of the Youth Population (Ages 10 to 17)

Youth Population

The youth population is often used as an identifier of transit dependent populations. Persons ages 10 to 17 either cannot drive or are just beginning to drive and often do not have a personal automobile accessible to them. For this population, public transit is often the means that offers mobility. Figure 8 illustrates the percentage of youth populations relative to the study area. Areas around Mount Vernon and Sedro-Woolley have the census block groups with the highest youth population percentage.

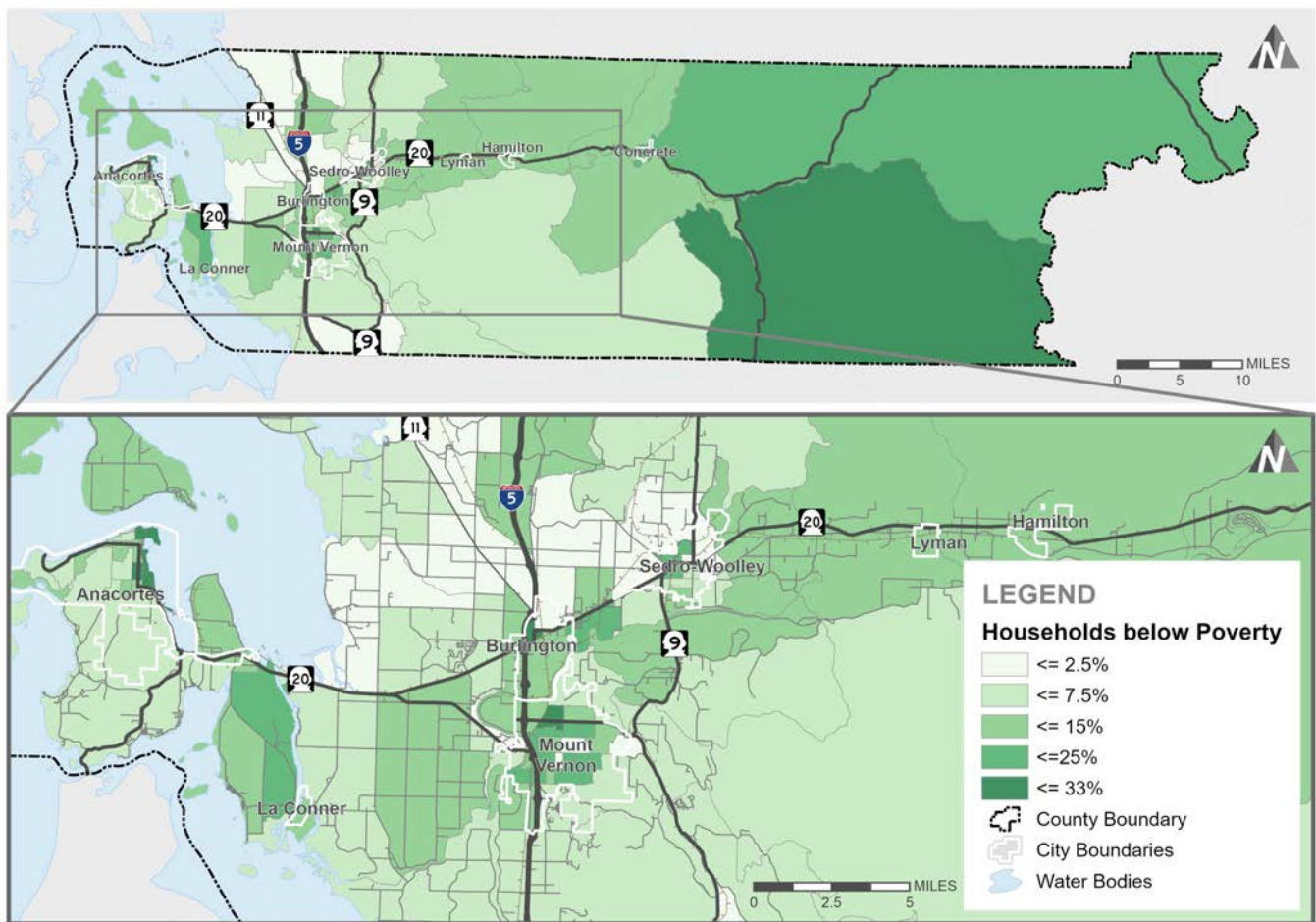


Figure 9. Percent of Households Below Poverty

Below Poverty Population

A group that is not only important regarding transit dependency but also has Title VI implications are those individuals who earn less than the federal poverty level. This segment of the population may find it a financial burden to own and maintain a personal vehicle, thus relying on public transit as their primary means of transportation. Figure 9 depicts the relative percentage of households living below the poverty level. Block groups in Mount Vernon, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, La Conner, Anacortes, and areas south of the State Highway 20 corridor near Concrete, Rockport and Marblemount have the highest percentage of residents living below the federal poverty line in Skagit County.

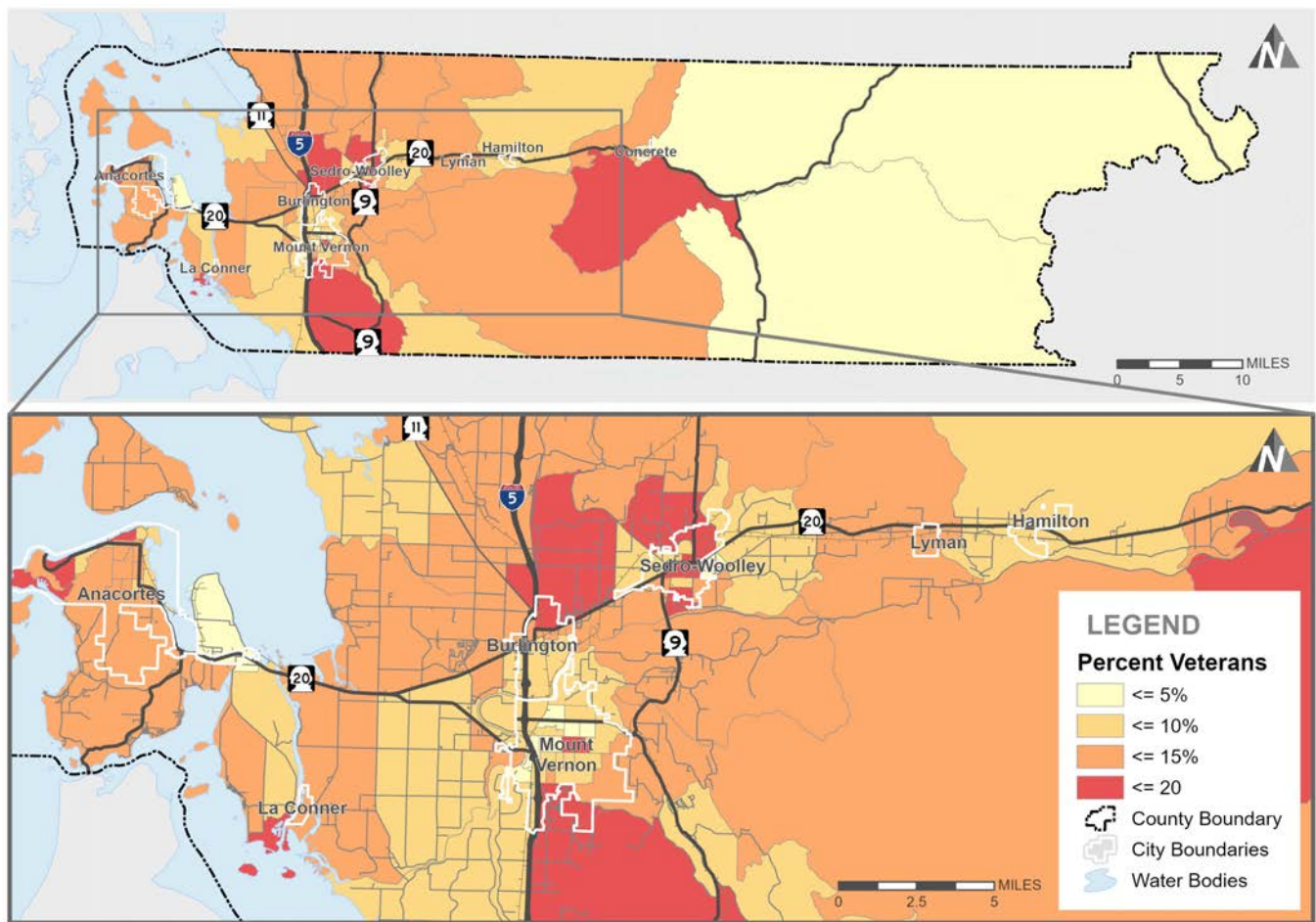


Figure 10. Veterans as a Percentage of Population 18 and Over

Veterans Population

The veteran population is often used as an identifier of transit dependent populations because this group frequently has more issues with mobility than the general population. According to the 2020 American Community Survey, Veterans of the Vietnam war have an average age of 71 years, and this group is increasingly challenged from a mobility standpoint. In addition, Veterans often need to travel long distances to access healthcare and other services through Veterans Association clinics and service centers. In Skagit County, VA service centers are located in Burlington while the main health clinic is in Mount Vernon. Figure 7 illustrates the geographic distribution of Veterans as a percentage of the adult population. Areas where veterans make up the highest percentage of the population are in block groups south of Mount Vernon and north of Burlington, as well as areas of Sedro Woolley, Concrete and Anacortes.

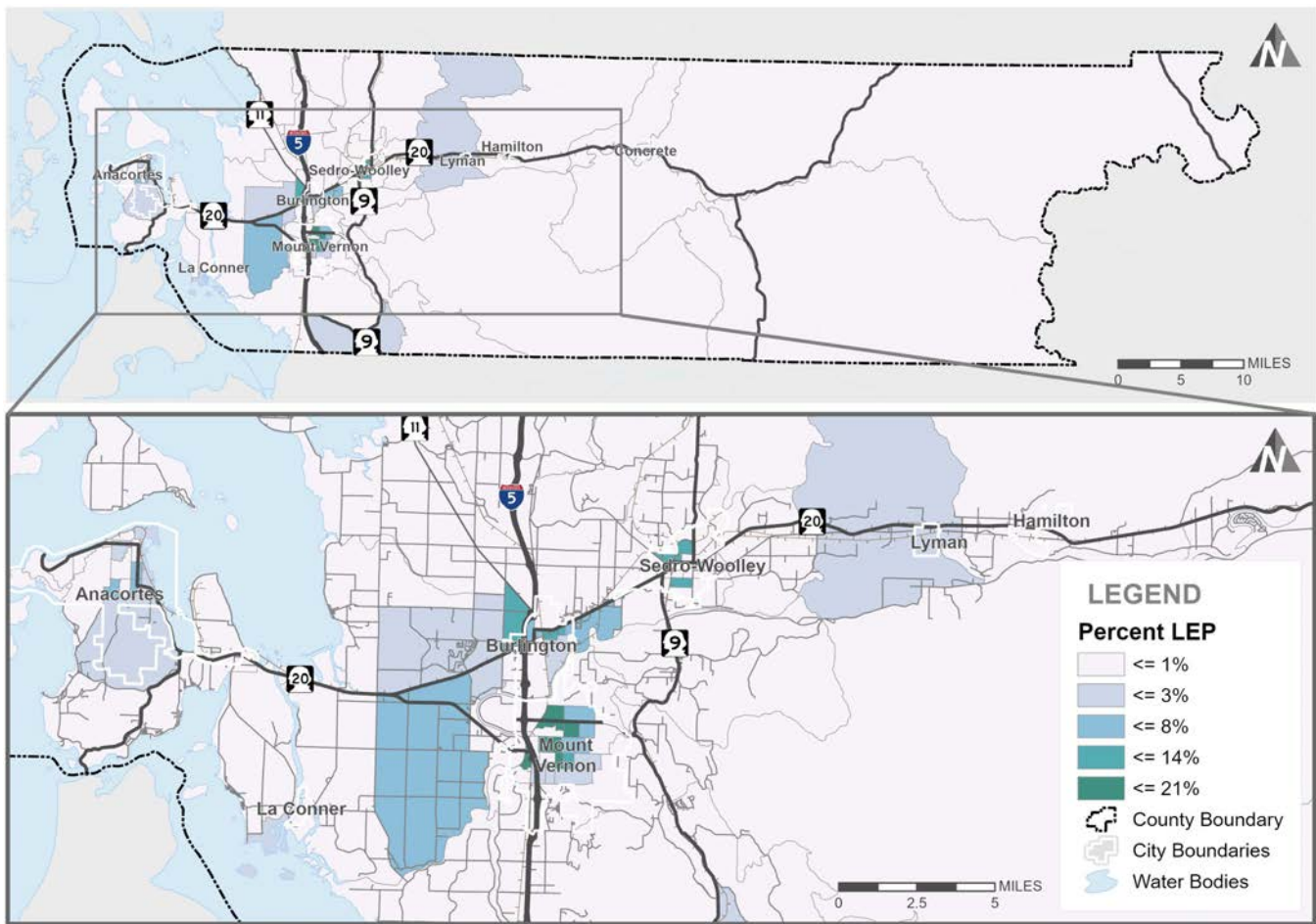


Figure 11. Limited English Speaking (LEP) Population

Limited English Proficiency

In addition to providing public transportation for a diversity of demographic groups, it is also important to serve and disseminate information to those of different linguistic backgrounds.

As shown in Table 5 and Figure 11, residents of Skagit County predominately speak English. Of those individuals that speak other languages in the home, 77 percent speak English very well or well. The most common language spoken other than English is Spanish. Through the outreach effort the project team was made aware of pockets of Ukrainian speaking residents and small pockets of residents that speak languages indigenous to northern and central Mexico, including Mazatacan languages.

Table 5. Limited English Proficiency

COUNTY		SKAGIT
5 years and up		119,871
Languages Spoken	Number	Percent
English	100,418	83.77%
Speak Non-English	19,453	16.23%
Spanish	15,723	13.12%
Indo-European languages	1,840	1.53%
Asian/Pacific Island languages	1,325	1.11%
Other	565	0.47%
Ability to Speak English:	Number	Percent
"Very Well" or "Well"	14,986	77.04%
"Not Well" or "Not at All"	4,467	22.96%

Source: American Community Survey, 2020
Five-Year Estimates, Table B16004

EMPLOYMENT TRAVEL PATTERNS

It is beneficial to account for the commuting patterns of residents intra- and inter-regionally. Table 6 presents the results of the Census Bureau's Journey to Work data which provides location of employment (in-county vs. out-of-county and in-state vs. out-of-state) and means of transportation to work. Residents in the study area typically work in their county of residence. A majority of residents drive alone to work. Slightly less than one percent of Skagit County residents use transit for commuting. Next to the personal automobile, carpooling/vanpooling is the most common commute type at 10.32 percent.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND LAND USE NEEDS SUMMARY

The Skagit region has several major geographic areas: the I-5 corridor, the North Puget Sound and islands, the farmland of the Skagit Valley, and the Cascade Mountains in the easternmost part of the county. Skagit County is also contiguous to several Native American tribal lands which are not differentiated by the U.S. Census Block Groups. Each of the communities in the Skagit region show transportation needs, many of which are indicative of small urban and rural areas throughout the State of Washington and the country. Comparatively the study area is not a demographic outlier in the state, yet it is defined by a high level of need due to the demographic makeup. The study area is defined by location in between vast stretches of open spaces with communities that have large percentages of populations that display transit dependent characteristics. This presents a particular challenge to service providers and planners. The need for expanded transportation service is apparent yet there are many operational, jurisdictional, and geographical challenges to overcome in meeting these needs.

This analysis is supplemented with qualitative input from the public outreach efforts as part of this plan as well as an assessment of current available transportation services and resources. This data along with the demographic and land use analysis informed the subsequent phases of this project including the identification of high priority projects to meet the needs of residents in Skagit County.

Table 6. Journey to Work Patterns

COUNTY		SKAGIT
Workers 16 Years and Older		56,851
Location Of Employment	Number	Percent
In State of Residence	56,531	99.44%
In County of Residence	44,155	77.67%
Outside County of Residence	12,376	21.77%
Outside State of Residence	320	0.56%
Means of Transportation to Work	Number	Percent
Car, Truck, or Van - drove alone	43,783	77.01%
Car, Truck, or Van - carpooled	5,869	10.32%
Public Transportation	375	0.66%
Walked	1,432	2.52%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, other	758	1.33%
Worked at Home	4,634	8.15%

Source: American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2016-2020), Table B08130

COMMON ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS OF PARATRANSIT PASSENGERS

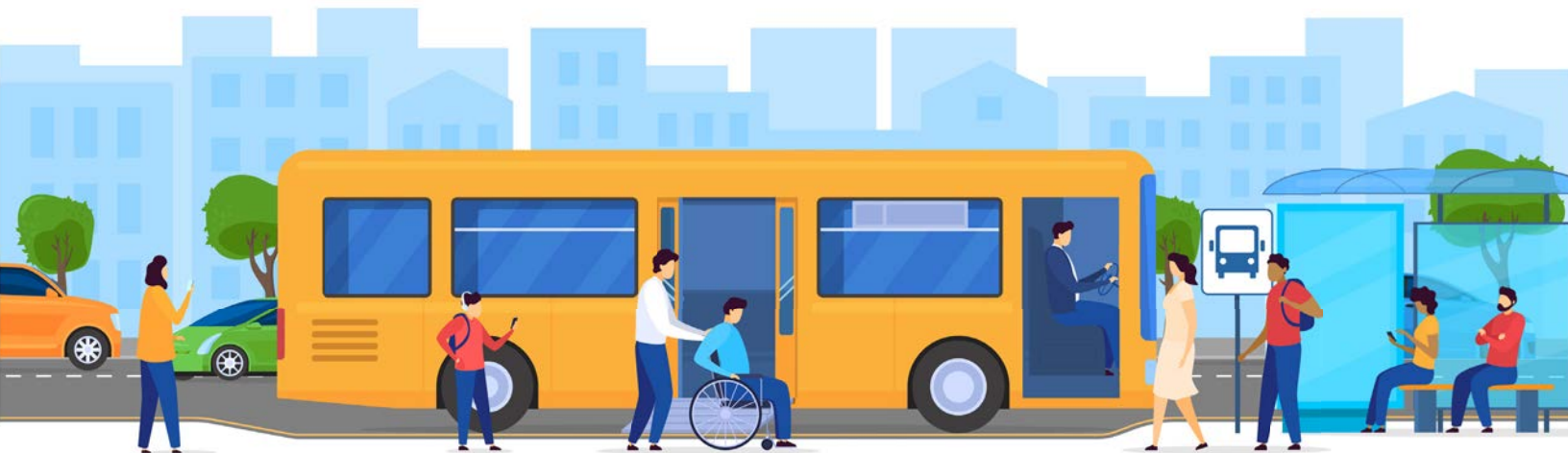
Table 7. Frequent Skagit Transit Paratransit Trip Origins and Destinations (7/1/21 – 6/31/22)

LOCATIONS SERVICED	# OF PASSENGER TRIPS
Fresenius Dialysis Center Mount Vernon	6178
SRC Clinic Mount Vernon	2556
Ovenell's Group Home Burlington	2453
Vintage Senior Apartments Mount Vernon	1977
Walmart Mount Vernon	1903
Skagit Valley Hospital Mount Vernon	1388
Mira Vista Care Facility Mount Vernon	1366
Fred Meyer Burlington	1355
Life Care Facility Mount Vernon	1309
Peace Health/United General Sedro-Woolley	996
Davita Cascade Dialysis Burlington	917
Senior Center Sedro-Woolley	862
Safeway Mount Vernon	847
YMCA Mount Vernon	827
Ridgeview Terrace Apartments Mount Vernon	765
Washington Vocational Burlington	751
Skagit Station	681
Skagit Valley View MHP Sedro-Woolley	607
Highland Green Apartments Mount Vernon	606
Life Care Facility Sedro-Woolley	595

Source: Skagit Transit

Skagit Transit provided data on the 20 most frequent paratransit trip origins and destinations for the 12-month period dated June 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022. The service locations are ranked in Table 7 in order of trip frequency.

Within the top 20 destinations, the highest number of trips involved travel to and from medical destinations, with 8,734 (57 percent) of paratransit trips taken for this purpose. The next highest number of trips was retail or grocery store locations with 4,105 trips (27 percent), followed by Senior Centers and Long Term Care facilities with 3,048 trips (20 percent). Other popular trip destinations included residential developments, Skagit Station, YMCA Mount Vernon and the Washington Vocational Services Center in Burlington. These destinations indicate that most trips taken using Paratransit can be considered "essential travel" further indicating that paratransit services are vital for those who rely on it.



SUMMARY OF UNMET NEEDS IDENTIFIED DURING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Detailed comments and breakdowns of individual survey questions provided by members of the public during the public outreach efforts are provided in Appendix C. The consultant team learned that Skagit Transit is doing an excellent job meeting many of the transportation needs of Skagit County residents. Given Skagit Transit's specific PBTA service area and constrained funding, it is not possible for the transit agency to meet all of the needs of county residents and inter-county travelers.

Six themes ("Needs") emerged from the sources of information on unmet transportation needs in Skagit County. While there are many specific individualized needs for transportation services, these six general needs summarize the overarching needs of those with mobility challenges within the Skagit region.



NEED 1: IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY

Some residents wanted to use existing transit services but were unable to access them. This occurred because residents were unable to walk a long distance to the nearest bus stop, felt unsafe accessing the bus at certain times of day or lived outside of the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile Dial-a-ride service area around existing fixed route services.



NEED 2: IMPROVE SAFETY

Several survey respondents indicated that they do not feel safe taking the bus late at night or waiting at bus stops in rural areas. These respondents wanted to take transit services but felt unsafe doing so.



NEED 3: IMPROVE EASE OF USE OF TRANSIT

Several survey respondents noted that getting information about existing services was difficult. Special Needs Transportation Committee members also echoed that getting information about existing services to those who need them can be a challenge. Special Needs Transportation Committee members also noted that many users have difficulty paying for some services and have trouble navigating the payment options.



NEED 4: MORE TRANSIT SERVICES AT TIMES WHEN NEEDED

Survey respondents indicated that they were often unable to make a complete trip using transit services. They may be able to reach their destination in the evening, but service did not extend late enough into the evening to complete their return journey. Some respondents also indicated reduced weekend service made certain trips impossible that they would like to make by transit.

Skagit Transit noted that they have had to cancel some fixed route services due to a lack of available drivers.



NEED 5: IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE DESTINATIONS

Survey respondents often noted difficulty accessing healthcare locations both within and outside the Skagit region. Many users had trouble using existing services due to long wait times, too many bus connections or service only being available in one direction. Special Needs Committee members also explained that they are seeing an increased need for veterans to access healthcare due to the increasing age of Vietnam Veterans. These veterans often rely on friends, family, and volunteers.



NEED 6: IMPROVED REGIONAL COORDINATION

Public outreach indicated that transit connections between regions (Whatcom to Skagit, or Skagit to Snohomish/King) can be very difficult. These often require long layovers, and trips to and from their destination cannot be made in one day on existing services.

4 TECHNOLOGY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter of the Skagit Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan summarizes the intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies used by the transportation providers in Skagit County. It also summarizes the current arrangements with local emergency management agencies.

ITS TECHNOLOGIES

SCOG adopted the Skagit MPO ITS Architecture in December 2011. If funding becomes available, SCOG plans to update this ITS architecture in the future to reflect changes in technology and expansion of the planning area boundaries since 2011 if funding becomes available. Skagit Transit was included in the 2011 ITS architecture.

Skagit Transit uses TripsSpark technology, including global positioning system (GPS) tracking of vehicles. Skagit Transit uses interactive voice response (IVR) telephone technology and makes automated phone calls that provide night-before reminder calls to paratransit riders. Skagit Transit recently enabled the flow of real-time information about bus locations for customer use. Bus riders can now see estimated time of arrivals online and using the Umo cell phone application.

The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe's transportation services currently rely on cell phones and hand-held two-way radios, without a dispatch station. There are no near-term plans to implement ITS technology.

The Swinomish Tribe will consider the need for ITS technology following development of its transit feasibility study. ITS could be a component to any new or supplemental transit services that arise from a feasibility study.

Mercy Transportation vehicles are equipped with technology that includes real time GPS tracking, digital dispatch for enhanced driver communications, and an on-board vehicle monitoring system.

Although Northwest Regional Council does not have ITS or plans for ITS (due to HIPAA regulations they still use fax technology), they see potential for ITS technology for Medicaid providers for consistency. Many of the non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) operators are small and unable to afford such technology themselves.

COLLABORATION WITH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

Skagit Transit has a defined role in two emergency management plans. The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan developed by the Skagit County Department of Emergency Management identifies Skagit Transit as an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) member.

The plan calls for Skagit Transit to support transportation coordination efforts including the movement of persons with special needs, including in the case of evacuation. In this role, Skagit Transit acts as a support agency with guidance from other agencies at the EOC. The plan also identifies Skagit Transit as a resource to help provide a damage assessment throughout the county. The specifics of this coordination are clearly laid out in an interlocal agreement signed in September 2007 between Skagit Transit and Skagit County. The second plan, developed by the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program includes emergency closure of I-5 and other major highways. In the long-term, increased transit service or new transit service provided by Skagit Transit was identified as a response strategy.

The Samish Indian Nation is working on building its capabilities in emergency management in partnership with local jurisdictions.

The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe has a Department of Public Safety that is responsible for emergency management on the Reservation. The tribe's transportation services are not currently included in agreements with Skagit County emergency management agencies or first responders.

The Swinomish Tribe has its own Emergency Management Department which coordinates with local fire districts and the Skagit Department of Emergency Management. SITC has its own police

department that has an interagency agreement with Skagit County Sheriff's Department.

Mercy Transportation is registered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Northwest Regional Council is an association of county governments for Island, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom counties and serves as an important support agency during an emergent event or disaster in the service area. Northwest Regional Council has an Emergency Response Plan that includes maintenance of services to high-risk clients and notification to local emergency management responders (e.g. police, fire, city emergency management, public health) when concerns for the safety of individual clients arise.

Northwest Regional Council is a member of COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disasters) in both Whatcom and Skagit counties and works with first responder organizations and the American Red Cross to coordinate services needed in the community.

Northsound 211, a provider of information and referral to transportation and other services, is a key source of information and referral to services during and following emergencies in the Skagit region and the larger North Sound area.

The Skagit Emergency Management Department Director was notified about the CPT-HSTP.

5 COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic presented many challenges for Skagit County's public transportation system. Despite the challenges, transportation providers, community-based organizations, non-profits, and government agencies found ways to ensure mobility across the region. They worked together to provide residents with transportation to essential medical appointments, jobs, food banks, shopping and other services.

During the pandemic, the increased health and safety risks of using transit services, as well as an increase in individuals working from home led to a significant reduction in transit ridership. Nevertheless, access to transit remained important for those working in and seeking access to essential services.

Table 8. Fixed Route Ridership 2019-2021

TOTAL RIDERSHIP/YEAR	WEEKDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
2019	706,554	76,997	80,201
2020	297,577	54,143	56,790
2021	287,537	67,019	70,202

Skagit Transit and other agencies responded to this emergency by increasing safety protocols, as well as reducing service for both fixed route and paratransit services in response to reduced demand. Skagit Transit implemented new deep cleaning protocols, eliminated fares, and implemented rear- boarding of buses to reduce contact between drivers and passengers. Other adaptations made by Skagit Transit and other agencies included re-allocating staff and vehicles for performing other services in the community, providing vaccine access, and leveraging social media and email to keep the public informed of changes to transit service and safety protocols.

Skagit Transit was awarded a total of \$7.1 million in grants during the COVID-19 pandemic to keep services running. The US DOT provided \$5.9 million through the CARES Act, while Puget Sound Regional Council provided an additional \$1.2 million.

Table 9. Paratransit Ridership 2019-2021

TOTAL RIDERSHIP/YEAR	WEEKDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
2019	67,072	4,953	3,481
2020	33,632	2,648	1,644
2021	36,249	3,151	1,617

Table 8 shows the total fixed route ridership for Skagit Transit Services between 2019 and 2021. Between 2019 (pre pandemic) and 2020, a 58 percent drop in transit ridership occurred during the weekday service. The weekend ridership declined by 29 percent over the same time period. Although the weekend ridership has recovered somewhat in 2021, weekday ridership in 2021 was even lower than 2020 (59 percent decrease from pre-pandemic levels).

Table 9 shows the total paratransit ridership for Skagit Transit Services between 2019 and 2021. Paratransit ridership during the weekdays decreased by 50 percent in 2020, then increased slightly in 2021. Paratransit ridership decreased slightly less than Fixed-Route Paratransit likely due to the reliance users have on paratransit for access to medical and other essential services.



6 POTENTIAL STRATEGIES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

This chapter of the Skagit Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan presents strategies that help meet the needs for transportation services identified among the target populations for this plan. The Washington State CPT-HSTP guidance calls for the development of broadly identified strategies to meet the identified gaps in service. Future projects will be prioritized regionally, and applications for funding under WSDOT's Consolidated Grant Program are evaluated at the regional level based on regionally established criteria (as discussed later in this section).

The Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee will discuss project priority criteria at their September 2022 committee meeting and will be approved by SCOG's Transportation Policy Board in October 2022. These criteria are presented later in Table 10.

The potential strategies presented in this chapter were developed based on the following inputs:

- Outreach meetings and surveys conducted during summer 2022,
- Meetings with the Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee,
- A review of existing services,
- Assessment of transportation needs and gaps in services,
- Project priority criteria established by Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee members,
- Strategies in the 2021 Washington Statewide Human Services Transportation Plan and 2018 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, and
- The consultant team's familiarity with best practices in Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan and experience with developing coordinated transportation plans in many other rural and small urban areas of the country.

The strategies identified for improving transit access for those with mobility challenges within this plan have been developed to directly address the needs identified in Section 3.



NEED 1: IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY

Strategy 1.A: Improve first/last mile connectivity for those living outside walking distance to transit

Improving first/last mile connectivity means more people are able to access existing transportation services. These improvements could range from implementing new door-to-door transit services to ensuring that existing infrastructure is ADA accessible.

Strategy 1.B: Improve the active transportation network for increased access to transit

Building a better pedestrian and bicycle network allows users to safely access existing transit services. Regional and local agencies should prioritize improving active transportation networks so people of all ages and abilities can travel safely.



NEED 2: IMPROVE SAFETY FOR USERS

Strategy 2.A: Increase safety at bus stops

Increasing safety at bus stops allows users to feel more comfortable taking transit, especially during non-peak times. Improved safety may include improved lighting, better bus stop facilities, real-time arrival information or other upgrades.

Strategy 2.B: Reduce wait times at bus stops

Reducing wait times at bus stops, especially for transfers will make taking transit much more appealing for travelers in the Skagit region. Improving on-time reliability of transportation services and better coordination between transportation providers (to reduce long transfer wait times) will help reduce the friction of travel by public transportation.



NEED 3: IMPROVE EASE OF USE OF SERVICES

Strategy 3.A: Increase access to information about available transportation services

Increasing access to information about available transportation services will help potential riders find available services. This may include: creation of a service like a comprehensive trip planning tool (One-Call/One-Click), travel training, creation of mobility coalitions, improved information referral and assistance for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), or others.

Strategy 3.B: Improve fare payment options for transit users

Skagit Transit uses the Umo electronic fare payment system which allows users to pay fares via a smartphone application and track buses in real time. This system is also used by neighboring Whatcom Transportation Authority for easy transfers. Increasing the use of this fare payment system for other transit providers will allow for smoother transfers and will reduce the need to download multiple applications and/or pay with cash.



NEED 4: MORE SERVICES AT TIMES WHEN NEEDED

Strategy 4.A: Recruit and retain an ongoing pool of drivers; maintain rolling stock and facilities in a state of good repair

One of the biggest barriers to improved transportation services has been the availability of people to drive. Skagit Transit noted that they had had to cancel services due to lack of available drivers. Veterans' services is another area that was identified as having a large need for available drivers. Recruiting and retaining an ongoing pool of drivers for both private and public agencies, as well as maintaining a fleet for services, will be critical to enable travel for special needs populations within Skagit County.

Strategy 4.B: Expanded fixed route and/or dial-a-ride service areas (geographically) to increase number of Skagit residents and visitors who can access transportation services.

Expanding the geographic service area of existing services will enable new riders to access transit services. Identifying ways to expand existing service areas should be a priority for ensuring everyone in Skagit County has access to transportation options.

Strategy 4.C: Expanded fixed route and/or dial-a-ride service times (later into evening and expanded weekend service) to increase number of Skagit residents and visitors who can access transportation services.

Skagit Transit's fixed route system generally runs from early morning into the early evening, depending on the route. Some survey respondents noted that they were often able to get to their destination in the evening on the bus but were unable to return home. Other survey respondents noted that reduced weekend hours made travel difficult on weekends. Expanding service hours will help enable Skagit County residents and visitors to travel to their destination using public transportation.

Strategy 4.D: Increase frequency of fixed route services.

Skagit Transit's fixed route system runs several routes with one-to-three-hour headways. During recent public outreach, Skagit Transit learned that increased frequency was one of the top three issues identified as a barrier to increased transit use. Increasing the frequency of fixed route transit will make it easier access for those needing service at all hours of the day.



NEED 5: IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE DESTINATIONS

Strategy 5.A: Improve transportation services for nonemergency medical appointments

Nearly 60 percent of the paratransit trips provided by Skagit Transit were to healthcare settings in the last 12 months. Accessing healthcare for those seeking to age in place, or who do not have access to their own vehicle can be a huge challenge. Ensuring that residents have access to nonemergency medical transportation will be important as the 'baby-boomer' population continues to age.

Strategy 5.B: Develop a reliable and expanded network of veteran's medical transportation services.

Reliable transportation services for Veterans were identified as a key need during the outreach process of the 2022 Skagit CPT- HSTP. Existing veterans' services are generally built on volunteer drivers and are struggling to keep up with the increasing demand from aging Veterans. Ensuring this increasing demand is met with an expanded network of services will be important within the Skagit region.



NEED 6: IMPROVE REGIONAL COORDINATION

Strategy 6.A: Improve regional coordination among transit providers and volunteer agencies

Increasing regional coordination among transit providers, volunteer agencies and other groups will help ensure that travel options are well aligned between agencies. Existing transfers are often slow and difficult. Increasing the number of agencies who coordinate regionally will help reduce friction for regional travel.

Strategy 6.B: define regional roles and responsibilities before, during and after emergencies, especially for transportation providers, emergency management agencies, and jurisdictions.

Ensuring all agencies are aware of their own roles and responsibilities during emergencies will ensure quicker response times and less confusion during emergencies.

Table 10. Criteria for Prioritizing Skagit Projects for Funding Under the Washington State DOT Consolidated Grant Program

CATEGORIES	#	CRITERIA	EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS	WEIGHTS
Project Type	1	Continues/preserves an existing transportation service or program; expands/improves an existing transportation service or program; or creates a new transportation service or program	Determine how well the project type proposed meets criterion and score application for that project type	10
Needs Addressed	2	Fills need(s) identified in planning process for coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan	refer to needs assessment for coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan	15
	3	Serves special needs populations and/or areas of high transit dependence	Refer to maps of persons with disabilities (physical or mental), seniors, youth, households without vehicles, low-income populations, minority populations and transit dependency needs index	15
	4	Serves local needs, includes trips entirely within Skagit County and local tribal lands	Evaluate the application on how well it proposes to address local needs	15
	5	Serves regional needs, including connections to Skagit County from other counties	Evaluate the application on how well it proposes to address regional needs	10
Efficiency and Effectiveness	6	Financial sustainability of project, resulting cost savings from project, leveraging of other funding sources (such as donations or volunteer support)	Evaluate the application using this cost related criterion	10
	7	Coordinate and/or collaborate with other organizations, locally and/or regionally	Evaluate the application based on documented coordination and/or collaboration with other organizations	15
	8	Utilizes innovative programs, processes and tools that improve efficiency and/or effectiveness	Score the application based on the service or programs proposed innovation - could be technological or other innovation	5
Other Project Benefits	9	Incorporates environmentally sustainable practices and/or improvements to local emergency management programs and partnerships	Determine if the project incorporates any environmentally sustainable practices and/or improvements to local emergency management programs and partnerships	5
TOTAL				100

While each strategy identified in this chapter is important to improving travel options within the Skagit region, prioritization of these projects is required for obtaining WSDOT's Consolidated Grant Funding. To prioritize these projects, a set of evaluation criteria was developed by SCOG along with their consultant, Transpo Group before being approved and scored by the Special Needs Transportation Committee. The evaluation criteria are summarized in Table 10.

This evaluation criteria will be used by SCOG and the Special Needs Transportation Committee to score and rank projects submissions by local agencies. This ranking will enable project funding from WSDOT's consolidated grant program. Project applications are due on October 27, 2022 to the WSDOT Grant Management System, after which SCOG staff will immediately issue a call from projects (October 27- November 4). The Special Needs Committee will review the project list during the November and December committee meetings, with a goal of scoring and prioritizing projects on December 12. This will enable sufficient public comment period before the prioritized project list will be approved by the Transportation Policy Board on January 18, 2023. The final prioritized project list will then be sent to WSDOT before the January 27, 2023 deadline.

Table 11. Prioritized Strategies

STRATEGY NUMBER	STRATEGY	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
1.A	Improve first/last mile connectivity for those living outside walking distance to transit	X		
1.B	Improve active transportation network for increased access to transit		X	
2.A	Increase safety at bus stops		X	
2.B	Reduce wait times at bus transfers	X		
3.A	Increase access to information about available transportation services	X		
3.B	Improve fare payment options for transit users			X
4.A	Recruit and retain an ongoing pool of drivers; maintain rolling stock and facilities in a state of good repair	X		
4.B	Expanded fixed route and/or dial-a-ride service areas (geographically) to increase number of Skagit residents and visitors who can access transportation services		X	
4.C	Expanded fixed route and/or dial-a-ride service times (later into evening and expanded weekend service) to increase number of Skagit residents and visitors who can access transportation services		X	
4.D	Increased frequency of Transit	X		
5.A	Improve transportation services for nonemergency medical appointments	X		
5.B	Develop a reliable and expanded network of veteran's medical transportation services	X		
6.A	Improve regional coordination among transit providers and volunteer agencies	X		
6.B	Define regional roles and responsibilities before, during, and after emergencies, especially for transportation providers, emergency management agencies, and jurisdictions			X



of the Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee.

Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee members, or other representatives of their respective organizations, could also apply to serve on the Skagit Transit Community Advisory Committee, or attend as a member of the public. The Skagit Transit Community Advisory Committee serves in an advisory role to the Skagit Transit Board of Directors and meets monthly to discuss transit issues, and the public is welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings.

Other organizations and governments, beyond those formally appointed by the SCOG Transportation Policy Board to the ad hoc Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee, may be interested in participating in an ongoing coordination effort. SCOG has a contact list of stakeholders from the CPT-HSTP, and this would be a good foundation for potentially expanding the reach of ongoing efforts.

come with such a grant and complexities with planning and operating a transportation service and could benefit from experienced transportation operators and FTA/WSDOT grantees.

COORDINATED PLANNING

In regularly sharing information on transportation needs and planning efforts, participating stakeholders can more collaboratively work toward meeting needs and dovetailing services and supports when feasible. In preparation for future public participation and outreach activities related to planning efforts, working collaboratively to conduct these activities among overlapping planning efforts could expand the reach of the outreach, and potentially streamline (rather than duplicate) efforts to reach the same groups of people at different times.

Creating new transportation services without collaborating with existing providers could result in potential service duplication or services that do not effectively connect. When the organization or government seeking to establish new services is new to public transit services or FTA/WSDOT-funded special transportation services, they may not be aware of the myriad requirements that

APPENDIX A AD HOC SKAGIT SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Appendix A – Ad Hoc Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee Members

Name	Organization	Type
Ron McHenry	Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County	Private Non-profit
Desiree Richards	Center for Independence: North Sound	Private Non-profit
Todd Holloway	Center for Independence: North Sound	Private Non-profit
Mariana Brandt	Community Action of Skagit County	Private Non-profit
Mark Dennis	Northwest Educational Service District #189	Regional Agency
Aly Horry	Northwest Regional Council	Area Agency on Aging
David Strich	Samish Indian Nation	Tribal Government
Brad Windler	Skagit Transit	Transit Agency
Chris Diaz	Skagit County Health Department	Local Government
Debra Bray	Swinomish Indian Tribal Community	Tribal Government
Amanda Etchey	Volunteers of America, Northsound 211	Private Non-profit
Galina Volchkova	Volunteers of America, Northsound 211	Private Non-profit
Marianna Hanefield	Washington State Department of Transportation	State Government
Julie Handy	Washington Vocational Services	Private Non-profit

APPENDIX B PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN



Appendix B – Public Participation Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to summarize the outreach methodology to gathering critical feedback about Human Services Transportation within Skagit County. This is to fulfill part of the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) requirements to prepare a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. Public involvement in the development of the CPT-HSTP is critical to ensuring that the plans outcomes reflect the needs and desires of the community.

Outreach Strategies

Based on previous experience developing CPT-HSTP's as well as input from SCOG and the Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee feedback, the following strategies are recommended to gather public feedback during the development of the Skagit HSTP.

Develop Online Open House – The Online Open House is a free-standing web page (available in both English and Spanish) that gives background information on HSTP process and the current project update. The website will be made available on 6/13/2022. The online open house is being created in lieu of public events because of lingering concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic and the limited engagement typically occurring at these public meetings. The Online Open House will invite feedback from transit operators, caregivers and those with transportation needs. Links to the public survey and online mapping tool are available on the website.

Conduct Public Survey – The public survey consists of 15 questions asking providers, caregivers or those with transportation needs about public transportation within Skagit County. The survey is hosted and accessible online through a direct link from the Online Open House. A copy of the survey is attached in Appendix C.

The survey is also being made available in hard copy. The hard copy will be a folio-style handout that includes a high-level summary of the Human Services Transportation Plan and the survey to be filled out by hand. These folios will be distributed at in person programs and in be available as requested:

Success of the outreach program depends largely upon leveraging the networks of the SCOG and the Special Needs Transportation Committee. This committee is made up from members of the following agencies and organizations, each of which have a vested interested in transportation options in Skagit County:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County
- Center for Independence: North Sound
- Community Action of Skagit County
- Northwest Educational Service District #189
- Northwest Regional Council
- Samish Indian Nation
- Skagit Transit
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
- Volunteers of America, Northsound 211
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- Washington Vocational Services

SCOG and Committee Members are expected to distribute the survey (hard copy or online access) via their existing communication channels with members (such as emails, newsletters,

social media posts, word of mouth, etc.). The survey will launch 6/13/22 and will remain open for six weeks.

Online Mapping Tool – This tool is accessible via the Online Open House and allows users to place a 'pin' in a specific geographic location noting where they need to travel. Users are then able to fill in information about the specific trip need such as what type of trip this is, how often they need to make the trip and what difficulties they encounter making the trip. This information can be downloaded and loaded into GIS software to map traveler needs in Skagit County. This will also be available 6/13 and remain open for the duration of the project.

The complete list of recommended actions, timeframes and responsibilities for both Transpo Group and SCOG are compiled below in the summary table.





Strategy	Target Populations	Tasks	Timeframe	Transpo Role	SCOG Role
Prepare and Maintain Email Distribution List	Stakeholders and other interested parties	Create email list of stakeholders	5/1/2022		X
		Update email list	As needed		X
		Send periodic updates throughout planning process	As needed		X
Develop Online Open House	Organizations representing seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, low-income persons, at-risk youth, tribal members	Develop Online Open House website	5/30-6/6	X	
		Develop Online Mapping Tool	5/30-6/6	X	
		Review Content	6/6-6/8		X
		Showcase to Special Needs Committee	6/6/2022	X	
	General Public	Publish website and sent out information	6/13/2022	X	X
Survey Public and Stakeholders	Organizations representing seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, low income persons, at-risk youth, tribal members	Develop survey distribution list	6/6-6/10		X
		develop survey questionnaire	5/30-6/6	X	
		Set up web-based survey tool	5/30-6/6	X	
		Develop transmittal email/letter	6/13/2022	X	
	General Public	Email survey request	6/13/2022		X
		Collect survey responses	6/13/22 - 7/30/22	X	X
		Compile responses submitted outside web tool	8/1-8/5	X	X
Develop informational flyer on CPT-HSTP	General public and populations targeted at specific outreach events	Summarize responses	8/1-8/5	X	
		Prepare folio style informational flyer including hard copy of survey	6/13-6/17	X	
		Translate flyer into Spanish	6/20-6/24	X	
		Provide copies of flyer for Skagit Transit and Committee members to share at community events	6/24/2022	Primary	Support
Outreach at Target Populations	Seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, low income persons, at-risk youth, tribal members	Compile list of organizations with service days/hours and locations, such as:			
		- Food banks			
		- Senior centers			
		- American Legion			
		- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFWs)	6/13-6/17	Primary	Support
		- Food Banks			
		- Community Action			
		- DSHS			
		- Boys and Girls Club			
		- Medical Centers			
		Select locations and times where flyers could be sent with representatives	6/20-6/24	X	X

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Strategy	Target Populations	Tasks	Timeframe	Transpo Role	SCOG Role
Engage with Emergency Management	Emergency Management / First Responders	Arrange for in-person translation services as needed for in-person events	As needed		X
		Collect in-person survey responses	As they arrive		X
		Summarize in-person survey responses	As they arrive	X	
		Develop contact list (organizations, individuals)	6/20 – 6/24	X	
		Develop questionnaire and email transmittal explaining project	6/27 – 6/29	X	
		Send email	6/30	X	
		Summarize responses	8/1 - 8/5	X	

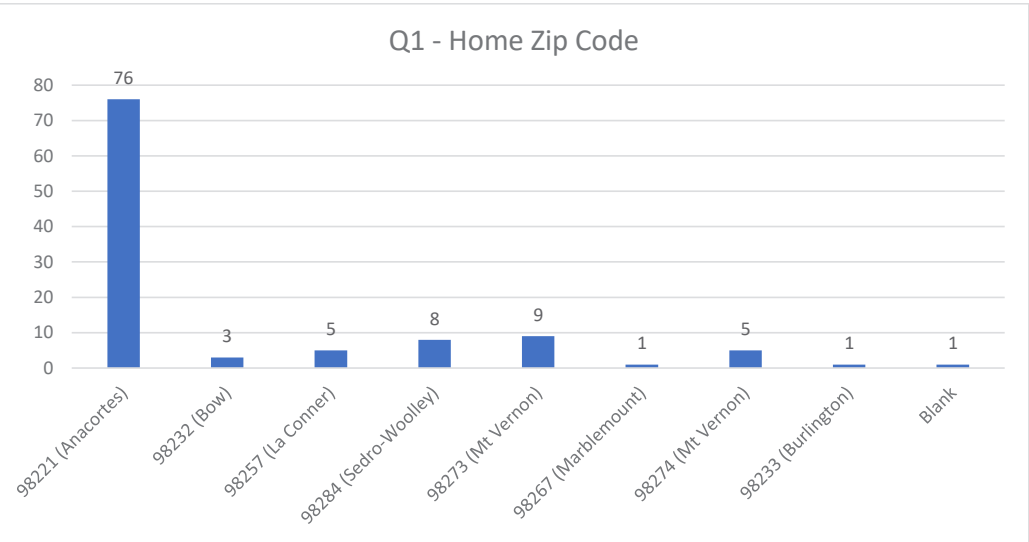
APPENDIX C

SURVEY RESULTS

Appendix C – Skagit Council of Governments 2022 CPT-HSTP Online Survey Results Summary

The 2022 Coordinated Public Transportation - Human Service Transportation Plan for Skagit Council of Governments posted an online survey to gather feedback about specialized mobility needs within the County. The survey had 15 questions and the responses are summarized below.

Question 1 – Please provide your home ZIP Code (select one)

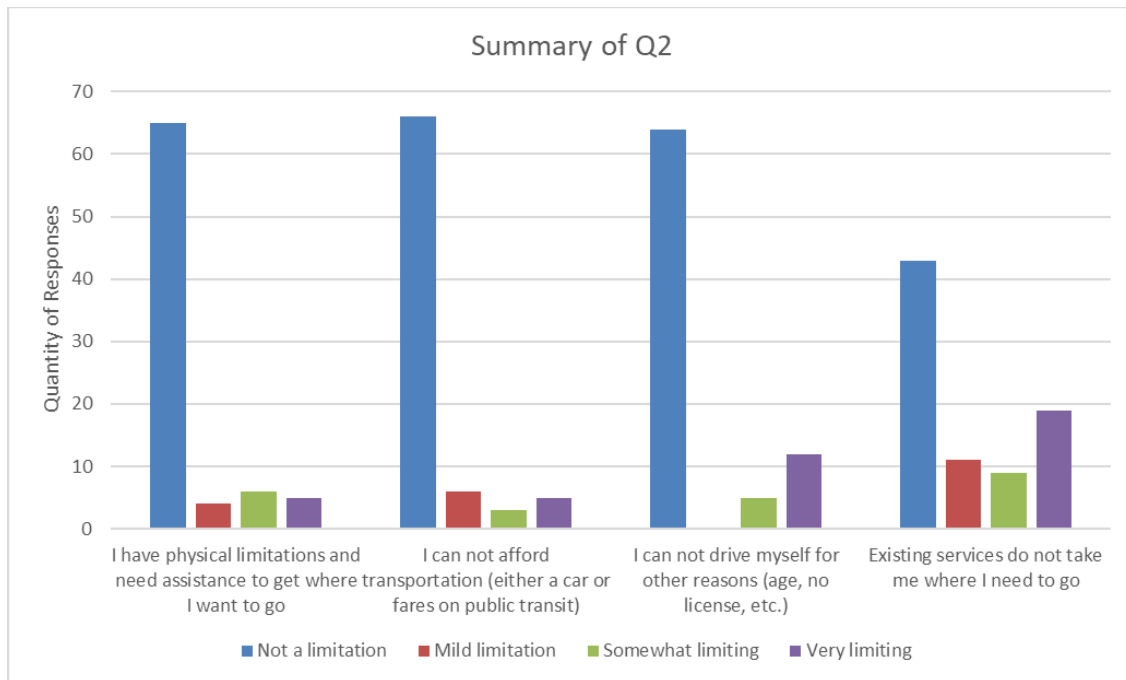


Because the survey responses were overwhelmingly from Anacortes, the project team decided to break out the answers to the questions on a geographic basis. Survey responses were grouped into the following categories based on zip code location.

Zip Code	Grouping
98221	West
98232	Central
98257	West
98284	East
98273	Central
98267	East
98274	Central
98233	Central

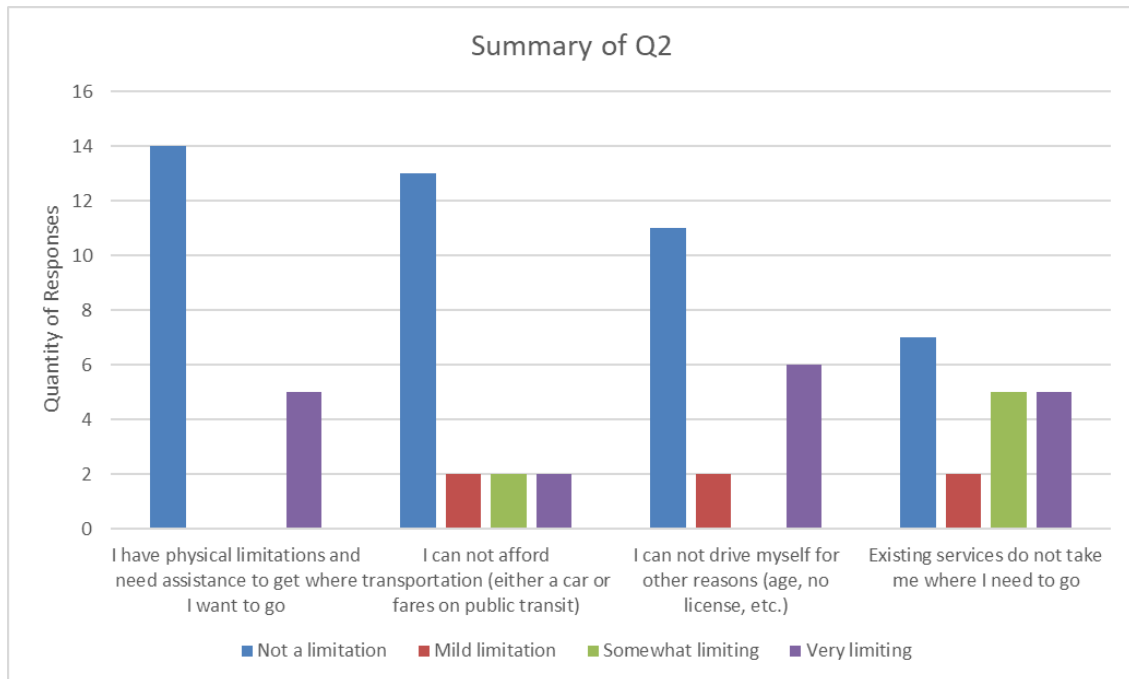
Question 2 - Which of the following transportation challenges do you (or those you help) face? How limiting are these challenges?

West:



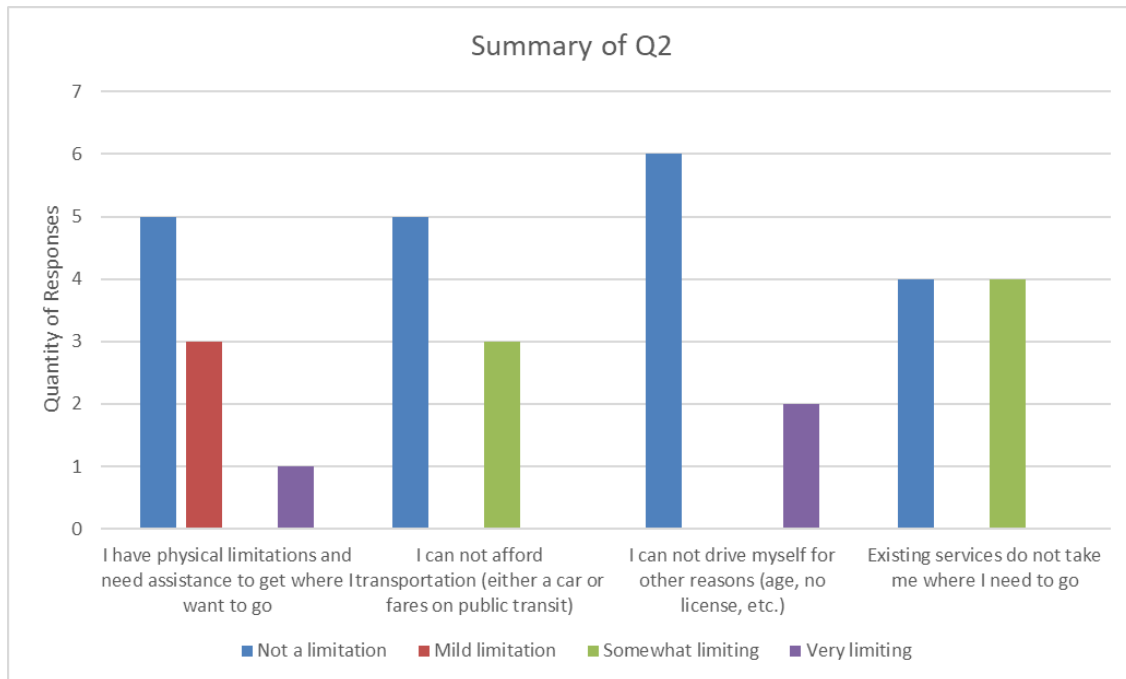
	Not a limitation	Mild limitation	Somewhat limiting	Very limiting
I have physical limitations and need assistance to get where I want to go	65	4	6	5
I can not afford transportation (either a car or fares on public transit)	66	6	3	5
I can not drive myself for other reasons (age, no license, etc.)	64	0	5	12
Existing services do not take me where I need to go	43	11	9	19

Central:



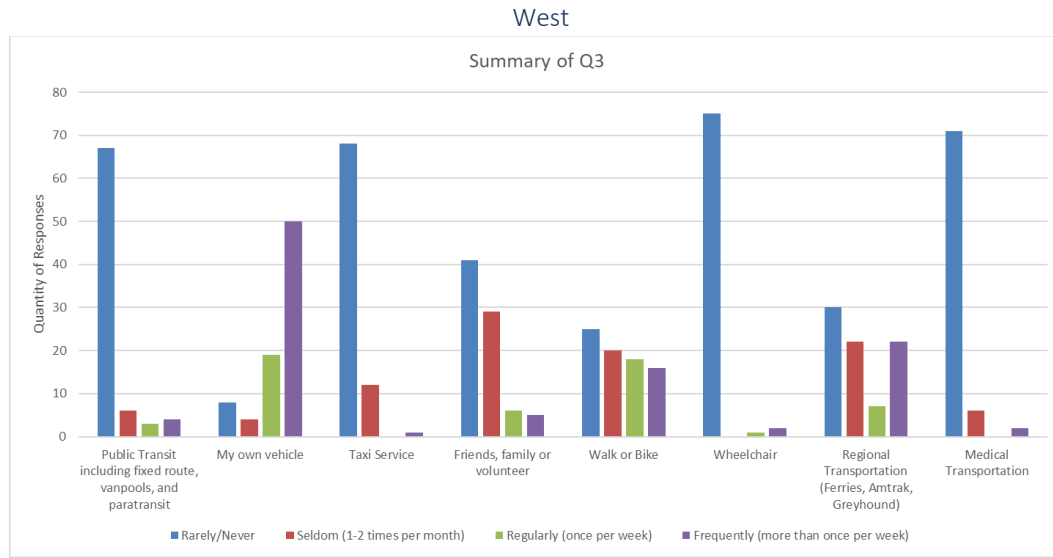
	Not a limitation	Mild limitation	Somewhat limiting	Very limiting
I have physical limitations and need assistance to get where I want to go	14	0	0	5
I can not afford transportation (either a car or fares on public transit)	13	2	2	2
I can not drive myself for other reasons (age, no license, etc.)	11	2	0	6
Existing services do not take me where I need to go	7	2	5	5

East:



	Not a limitation	Mild limitation	Somewhat limiting	Very limiting
I have physical limitations and need assistance to get where I want to go	5	3	0	1
I can not afford transportation (either a car or fares on public transit)	5	0	3	0
I can not drive myself for other reasons (age, no license, etc.)	6	0	0	2
Existing services do not take me where I need to go	4	0	4	0

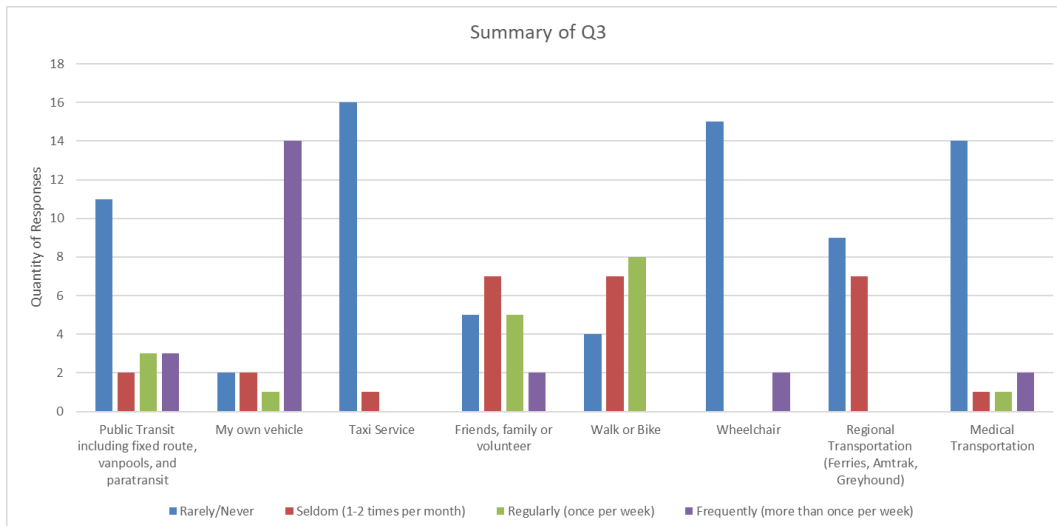
Question 3 - Which of the following means of transportation do you (or those you help) use and how frequently?



	Rarely/Never	Seldom (1-2 times per month)	Regularly (once per week)	Frequently (more than once per week)
Public Transit including fixed route, vanpools, and paratransit	67	6	3	4
My own vehicle	8	4	19	50
Taxi Service	68	12	0	1
Friends, family or volunteer	41	29	6	5
Walk or Bike	25	20	18	16
Wheelchair	75	0	1	2
Regional Transportation (Ferries, Amtrak, Greyhound)	30	22	7	22
Medical Transportation	71	6	0	2

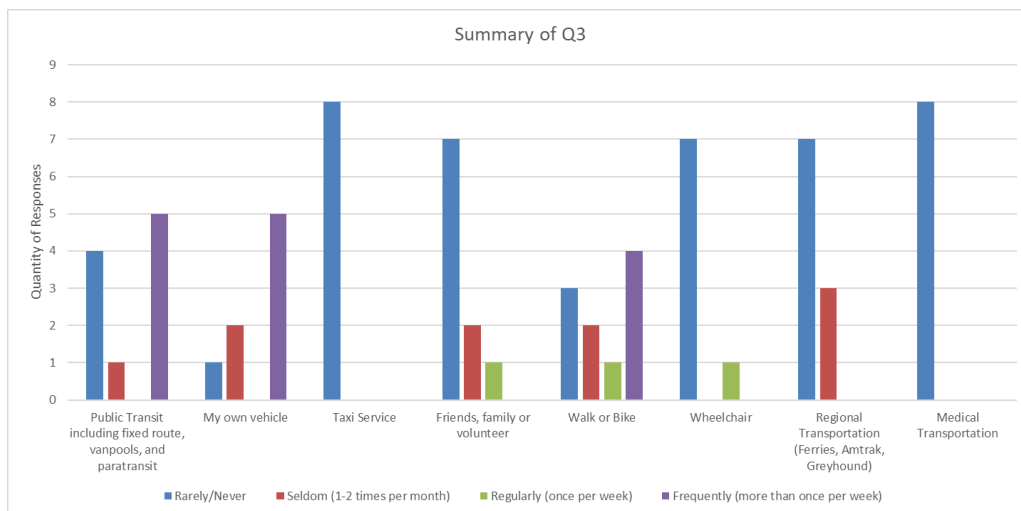
Central

Summary of Q3



	Rarely/Never	Seldom (1-2 times per month)	Regularly (once per week)	Frequently (more than once per week)
Public Transit including fixed route, vanpools, and paratransit	11	2	3	3
My own vehicle	2	2	1	14
Taxi Service	16	1	0	0
Friends, family or volunteer	5	7	5	2
Walk or Bike	4	7	8	0
Wheelchair	15	0	0	2
Regional Transportation (Ferries, Amtrak, Greyhound)	9	7	0	0
Medical Transportation	14	1	1	2

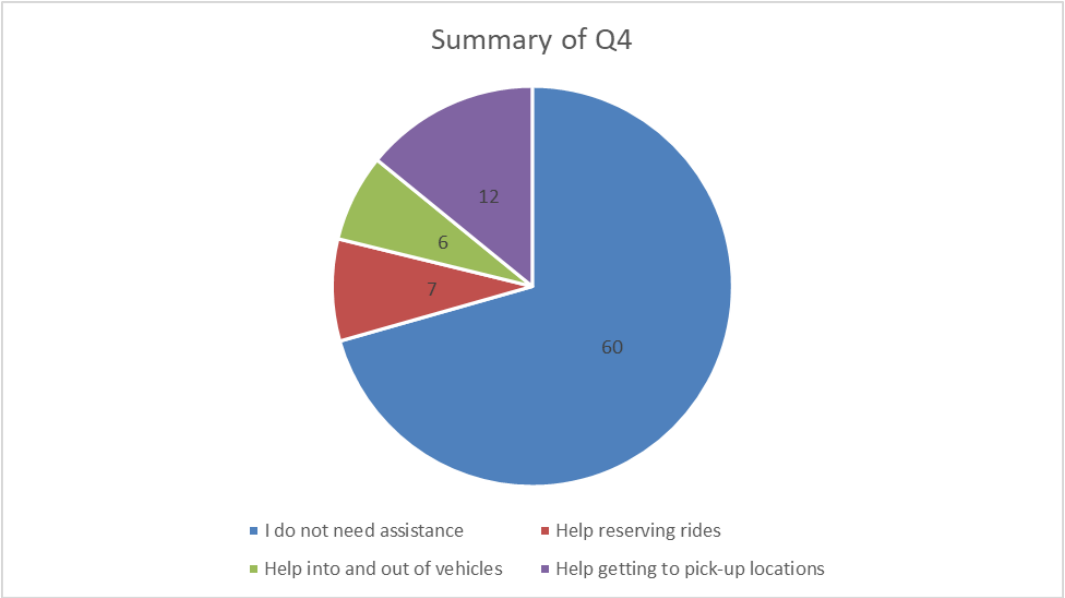
East



	Rarely/Never	Seldom (1-2 times per month)	Regularly (once per week)	Frequently (more than once per week)
Public Transit including fixed route, vanpools, and paratransit	4	1	0	5
My own vehicle	1	2	0	5
Taxi Service	8	0	0	0
Friends, family or volunteer	7	2	1	0
Walk or Bike	3	2	1	4
Wheelchair	7	0	1	0
Regional Transportation (Ferries, Amtrak, Greyhound)	7	3	0	0
Medical Transportation	8	0	0	0

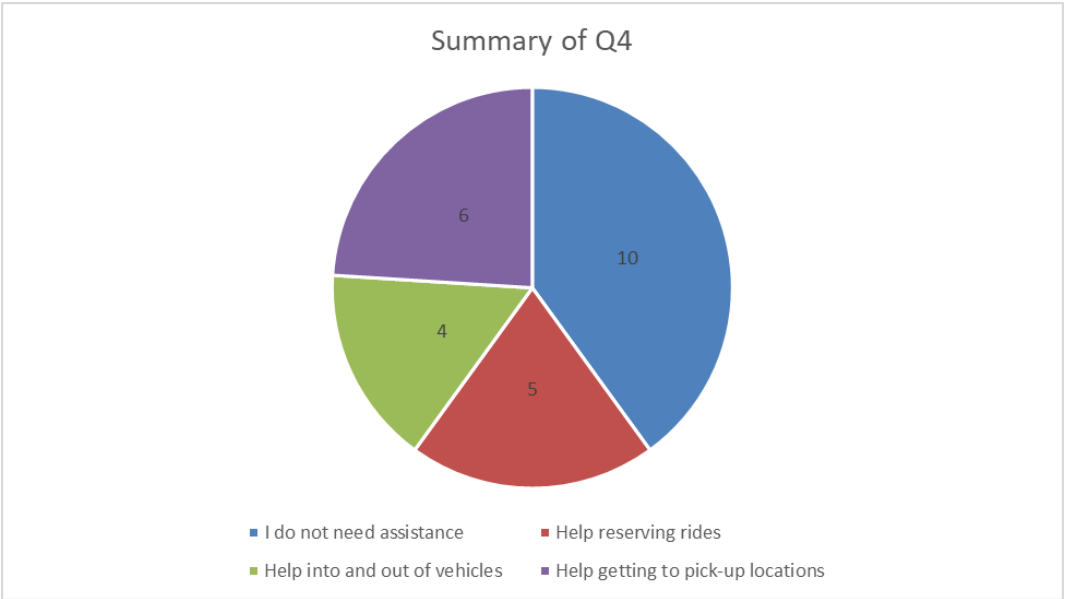
Question 4 - What additional assistance do you (or those you help) use?

West



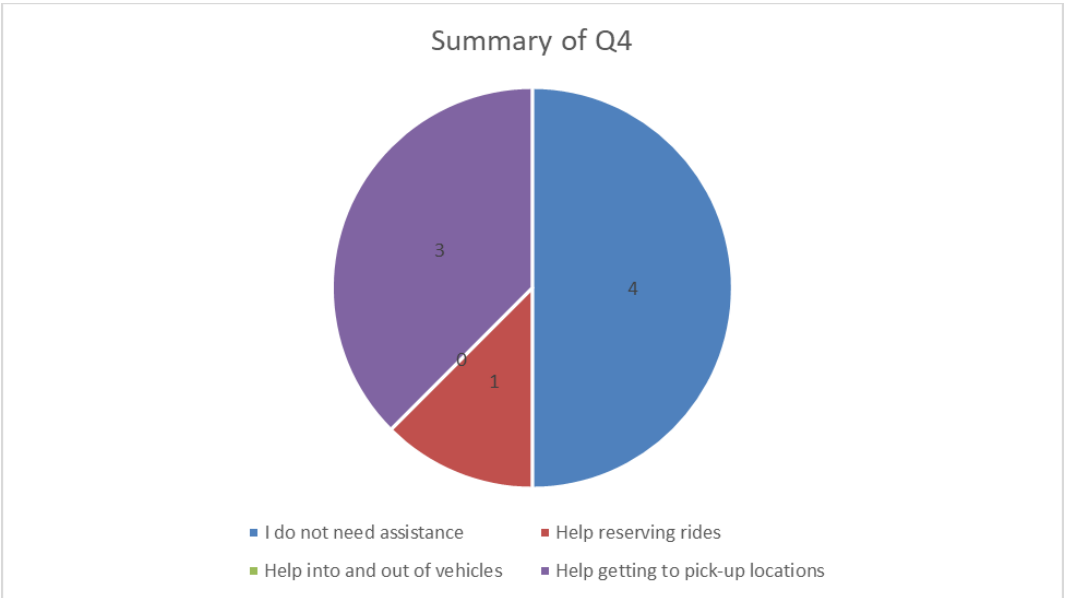
I do not need assistance	Help reserving rides	Help into and out of vehicles	Help getting to pick-up locations
60	7	6	12

Central



I do not need assistance	Help reserving rides	Help into and out of vehicles	Help getting to pick-up locations
10	5	4	6

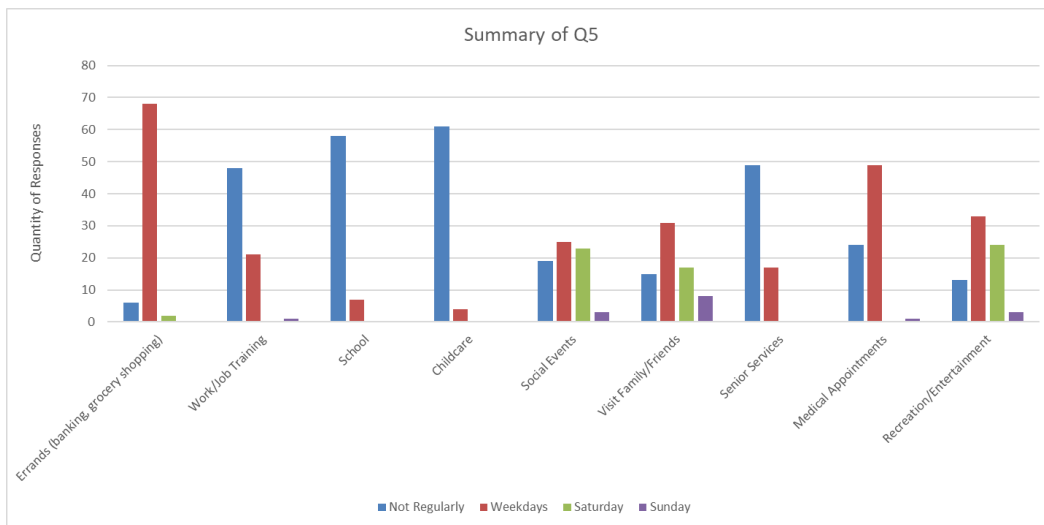
East



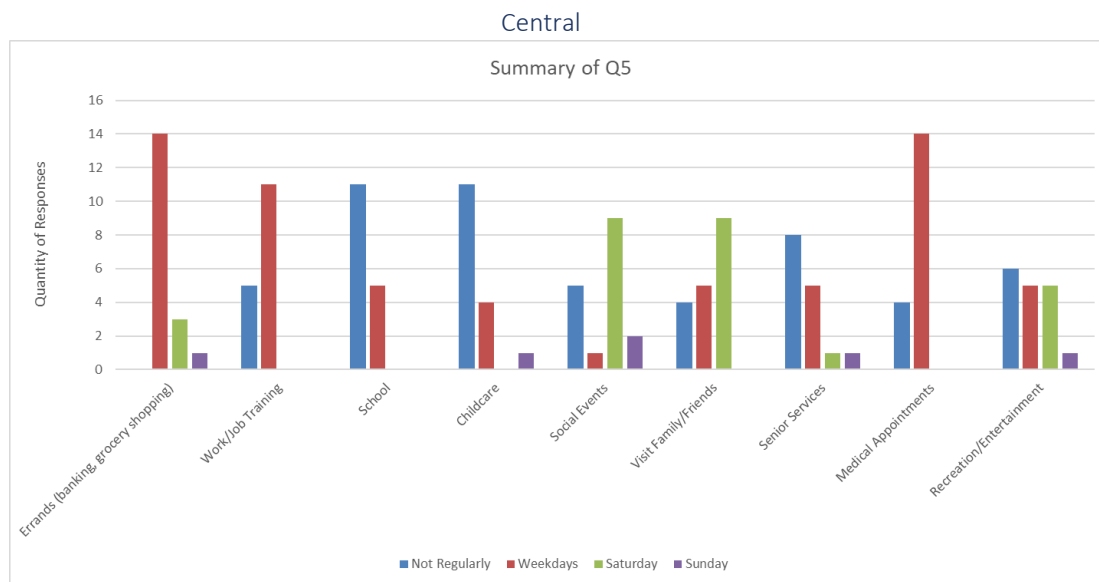
I do not need assistance	Help reserving rides	Help into and out of vehicles	Help getting to pick-up locations
4	1	0	3

Question 5 - Where do you (or those you help) need to go during a typical week and when do you need to go to these locations?

West

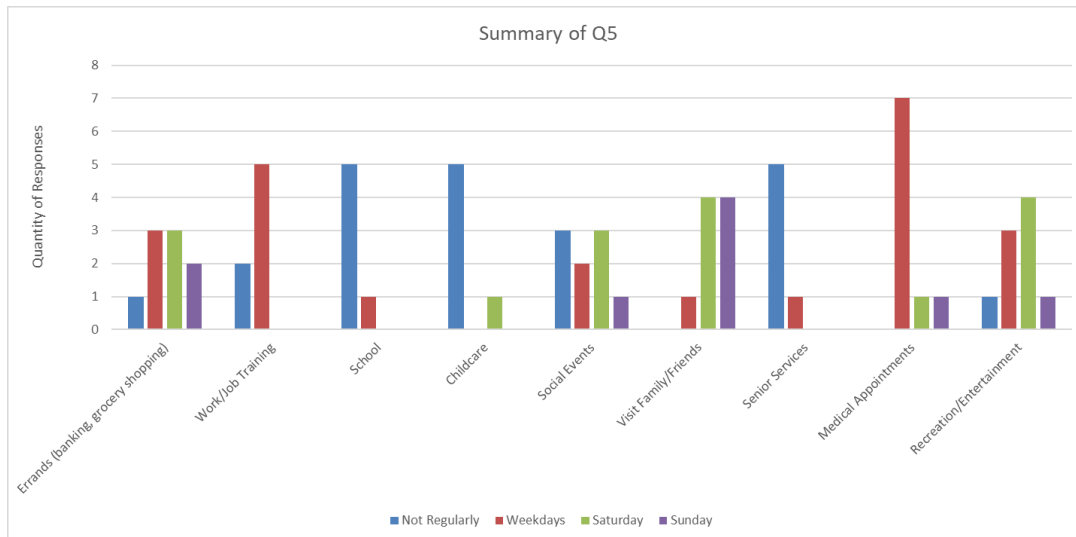


	Not Regularly	Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
Errands (banking, grocery shopping)	6	68	2	0
Work/Job Training	48	21	0	1
School	58	7	0	0
Childcare	61	4	0	0
Social Events	19	25	23	3
Visit Family/Friends	15	31	17	8
Senior Services	49	17	0	0
Medical Appointments	24	49	0	1
Recreation/Entertainment	13	33	24	3



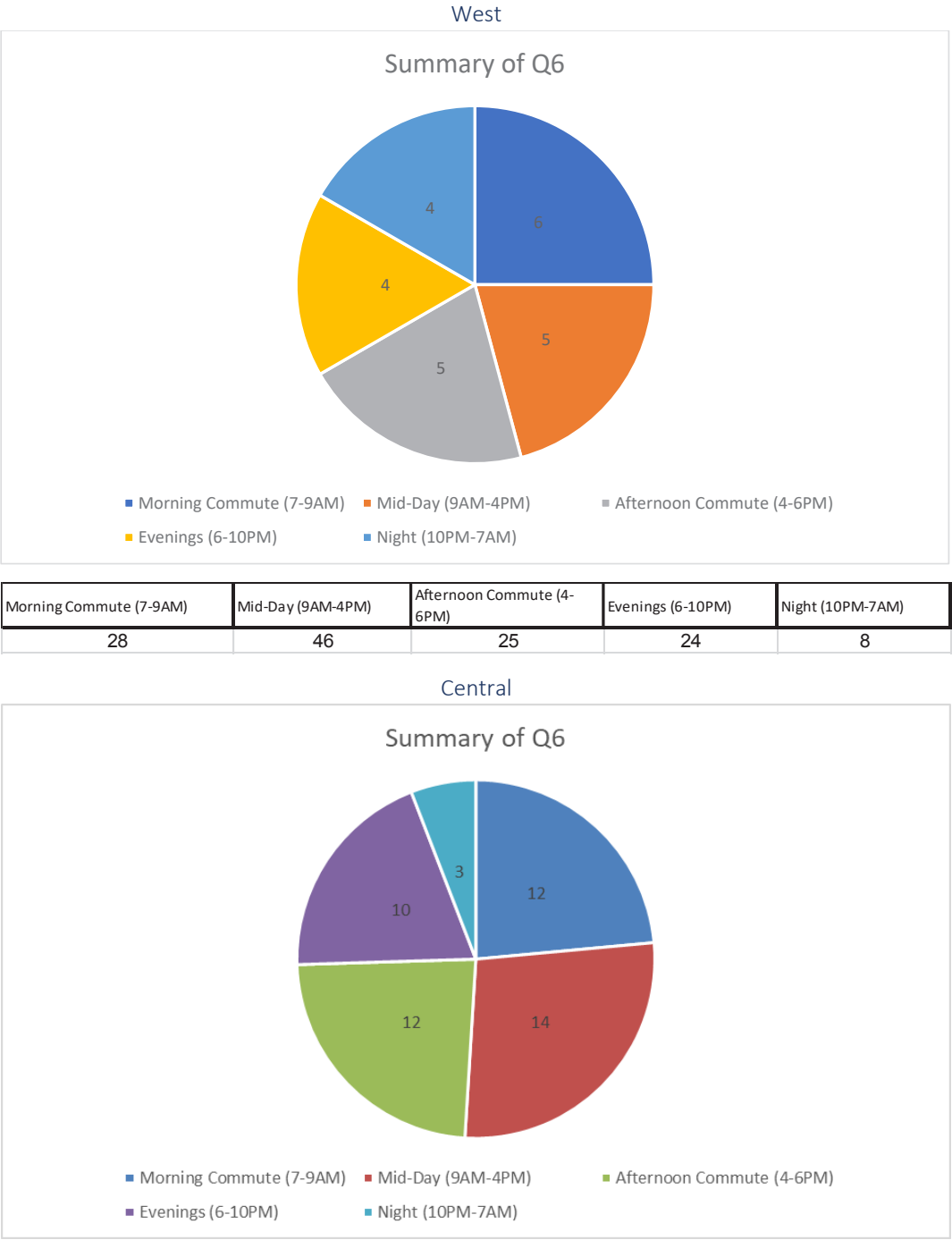
	Not Regularly	Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
Errands (banking, grocery shopping)	0	14	3	1
Work/Job Training	5	11	0	0
School	11	5	0	0
Childcare	11	4	0	1
Social Events	5	1	9	2
Visit Family/Friends	4	5	9	0
Senior Services	8	5	1	1
Medical Appointments	4	14	0	0
Recreation/Entertainment	6	5	5	1

East



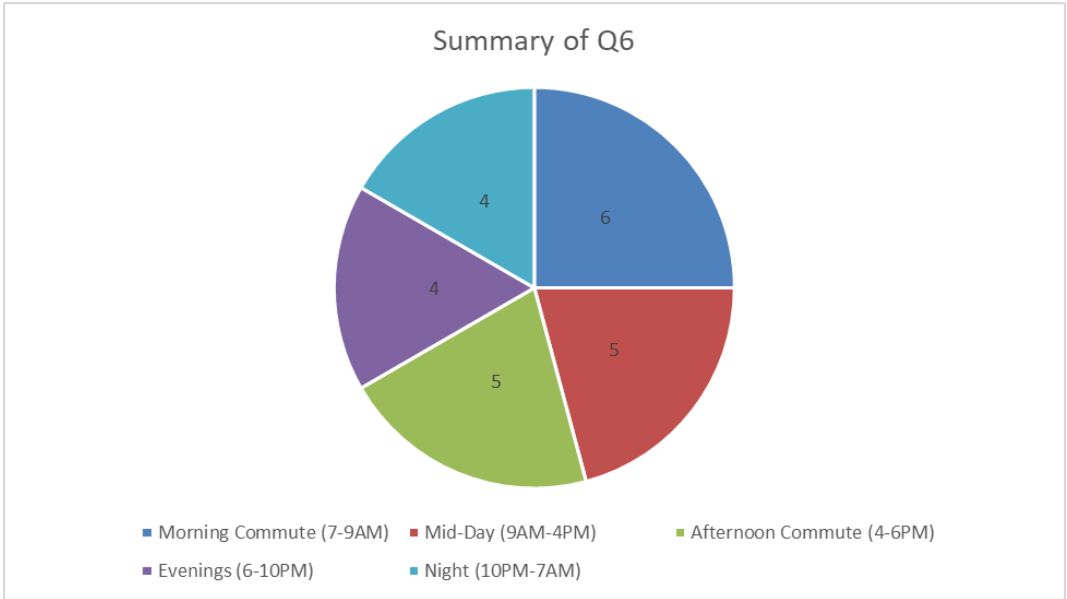
	Not Regularly	Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
Errands (banking, grocery shopping)	1	3	3	2
Work/Job Training	2	5	0	0
School	5	1	0	0
Childcare	5	0	1	0
Social Events	3	2	3	1
Visit Family/Friends	0	1	4	4
Senior Services	5	1	0	0
Medical Appointments	0	7	1	1
Recreation/Entertainment	1	3	4	1

Question 6 - Which time of the day do you (or those you help) need transportation services?



Morning Commute (7-9AM)	Mid-Day (9AM-4PM)	Afternoon Commute (4-6PM)	Evenings (6-10PM)	Night (10PM-7AM)
12	14	12	10	3

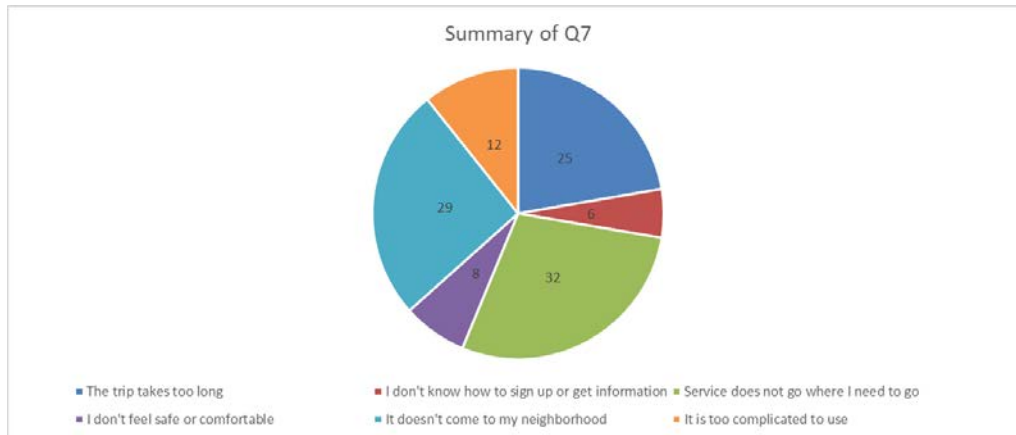
East



Morning Commute (7-9AM)	Mid-Day (9AM-4PM)	Afternoon Commute (4-6PM)	Evenings (6-10PM)	Night (10PM-7AM)
6	5	5	4	4

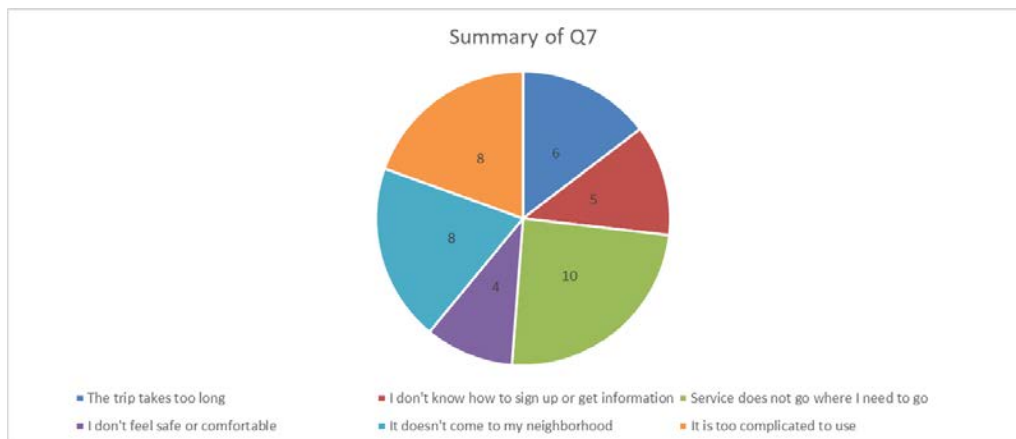
Question 7 - What makes public transit challenging for you (or those you help)?

West



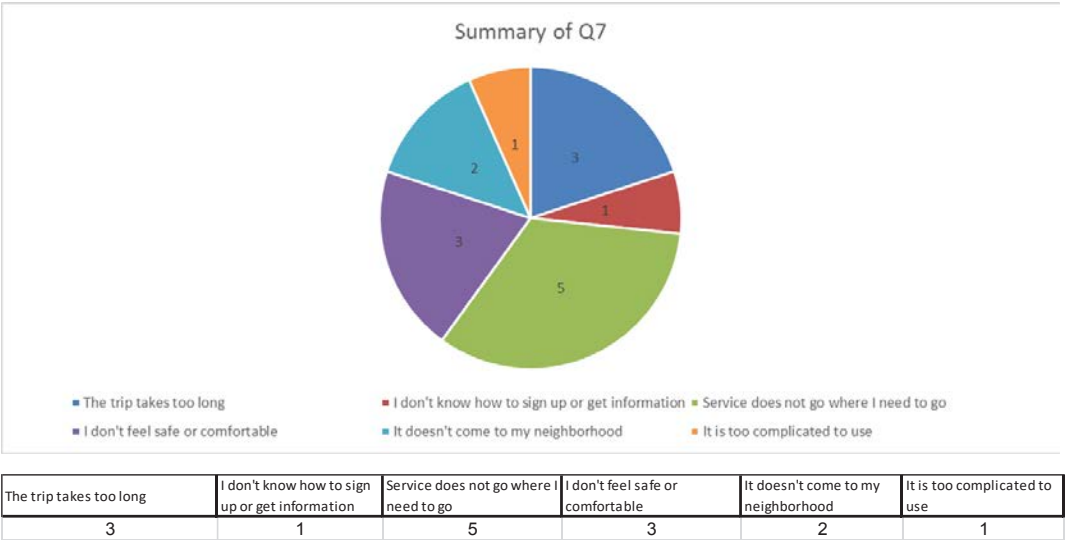
The trip takes too long	I don't know how to sign up or get information	Service does not go where I need to go	I don't feel safe or comfortable	It doesn't come to my neighborhood	It is too complicated to use
25	6	32	8	29	12

Central

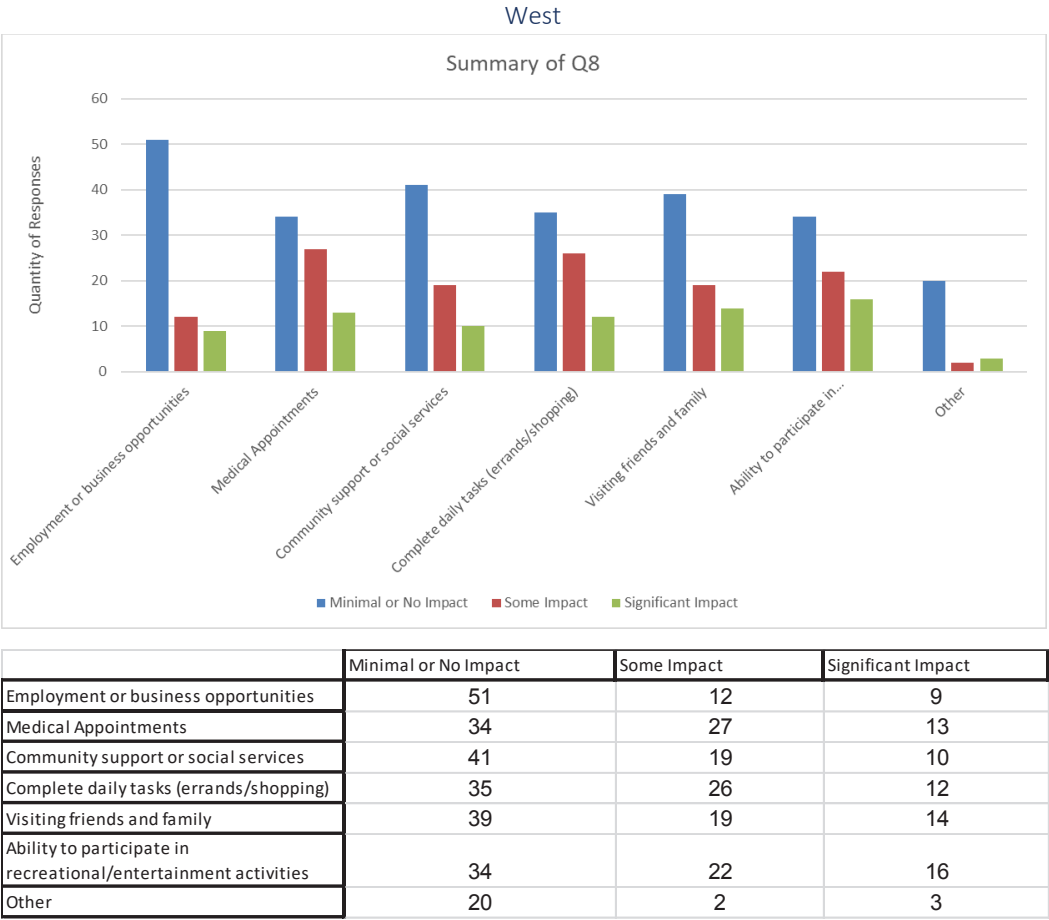


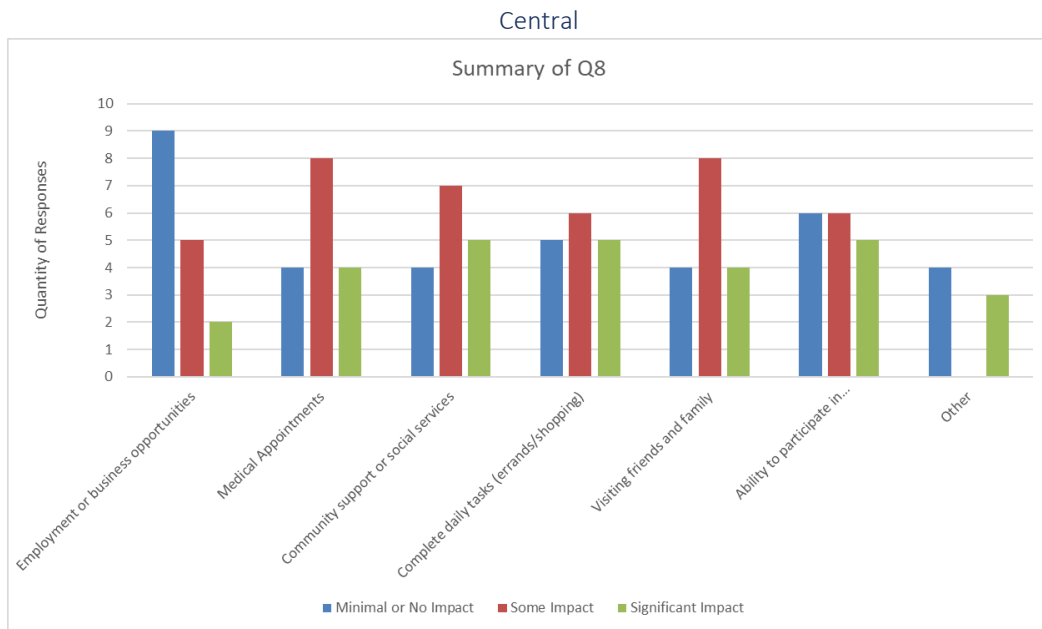
The trip takes too long	I don't know how to sign up or get information	Service does not go where I need to go	I don't feel safe or comfortable	It doesn't come to my neighborhood	It is too complicated to use
6	5	10	4	8	8

East

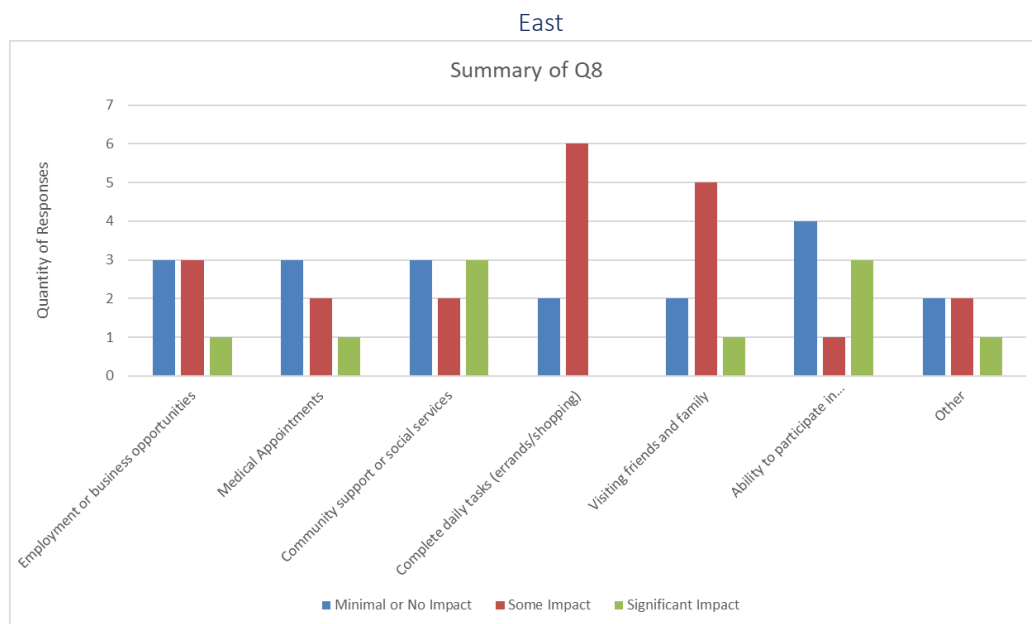


Question 8 - How do public transportation challenges impact you? How much of an impact is it?





	Minimal or No Impact	Some Impact	Significant Impact
Employment or business opportunities	9	5	2
Medical Appointments	4	8	4
Community support or social services	4	7	5
Complete daily tasks (errands/shopping)	5	6	5
Visiting friends and family	4	8	4
Ability to participate in recreational/entertainment activities	6	6	5
Other	4	0	3



	Minimal or No Impact	Some Impact	Significant Impact
Employment or business opportunities	3	3	1
Medical Appointments	3	2	1
Community support or social services	3	2	3
Complete daily tasks (errands/shopping)	2	6	0
Visiting friends and family	2	5	1
Ability to participate in recreational/entertainment activities	4	1	3
Other	2	2	1

Question 9 - Please provide an example experience where transportation was a challenge for you or those you assist. Where did your trip start, where were you going and why was this a challenge?

West

Going to MyVernon from LaConner for Dr visits.

Going to Chase Bank in MtVernon for my banking.

For my Mother in Law after her stroke, being un-able to drive locally provided public transportation was not a good option for her due to times of buses/shuttles and locations/stops.

An example: Endoscopy - no way to get it due to no allowed transport available.

I used to use public transit before I got car. I remember getting stuck on Whidbey Island on my way to Anacortes because the schedule was different and I forgot. Fortunately a local person called and payed for a taxi for my young son and I to get home. I remember it taking all day to do one appointment. I usually could not schedule more than one. Although, I was grateful for another alternative to get between cities from Anacortes is was very taxing. It was also hard to get around Anacortes on the bus system. It only went one way and not that often. Paratrasit was inefficient and it ended up not being a feasible option because I was not physically disabled. My disability is traumatic brain injury and other invisible disabilities.

I attempted to take a Skat bus from the Amtrak station in Mount Vernon. None available that time of day. It cost \$50 to take a cab!

When look at all the toxic pollution from giant EMPTY buses driving in my residential neighborhood I was felt insulted and taken advantage. Buy a smal hybrid car and use it for the transportation service in Anacortes. There is no need for giant polluting buses. I can no longer open the windows in my bedroom due to the noxious diesel exhaust from the empty buses driving by my house 12 times a day!!

I need to go to Seattle Cancer Care every 12 weeks and it is a challenge to get there from here.

My friend needed to go from home in Anacortes to do in Mount Vernon multiple times and was unable to find public transportation with the right timing. Friends took her instead and that worked out just fine.

I have medical appointments with specialists in Seattle. Too difficult to go solely on transit. Must drive.

Walking and biking on some neighborhood roads is problematic in my neighborhood. No sidewalks/bike lanes/shoulders for the most part in and around the Dewey Beach area, particularly Deception & Gibraltar roads. How about a safe bike lane around Fidalgo?

I would like to be able to get back and forth between Anacortes and Bellingham with greater ease on public transportation for arts, dining, leisure.

We do not need any transportation now. However within the next 3-6 years we will need it.

I see the busses travel through Anacortes and very few people, if any, are using the bus. Extremely inefficient use of our tax dollars.

Live in Clearidge. No active bus stops within walking distance for those that do not drive.

Guemes ferry line too long and we often miss appointments do to multiple large construction vehicles in line

Want to take train to seattle from Mt Vernon but not regular or reliable times. Kids need to get from sports to guemes ferry, times are not at all ideal.

Difficult access to Sinclair Island, especially at low tide. Commuter boat will not stop due to the lack of The Skagit County Dock .

The Guemes ferry is consistently late and has caused me to be late or completely miss appointments, make it so I don't have free time later in the day because everything gets pushed later because of the delay. The guemes ferry isn't reliable enough to want/be able to get a job in Anacortes because the delay would cause me to be late, OR because it stops at 8:30 during the week, I can't work a later schedule.

When the Guemes ferry is not running.

Guemes ferry not enough runs. In line early for a certain time and then have to sit through 1 or 2 more ferry

Guemes parking continues to be crowded on both sides of the channel--especially in the Summer--or when roadwork is in progress in the Summer.

No service, even occasional, on Guemes means we always need vehicles & ferry

Transition from ferry to bus (at top of hill) cannot walk there easily. Since bus does not coordinate with ferry it often means standing in rain snow or wind for half an hour til another does come. Not user friendly.

Guemes Island to Anacortes or Mount Vernon, having to cancel appointments because of missed ferries (due to long lines, even going two ferries early); having to take inconvenient appointments because of long breaks in ferry service

Difficult to schedule medical appointments in conjunction with Guemes Ferry schedule--getting from and to Guemes Island.

Public transportation does not serve Guemes ferry frequently enough to eliminate bringing private car to town for errands

I was scheduled for a medical appointment but missed it because a medical emergency truck holding the ferry up. In Canada islands far smaller than Guemes have a separate emergency service dock and ferry service. We should plan for the same.

We are used to dealing with the ferry and it's nuances. We are OK with that. We are not OK with our kids being late to school every day when it could easily be corrected by adjusting ferry times slightly. When the Guemes Island ferry runs stop for the evening, I need to be home and have all my errands completed. This is not a problem or a challenge at all, just a reality of life on an island, (which I enjoy!).

Missing last ferry service from Anacortes back to home on Guemes on weeknight, had to find hotel I live on Guemes Island and work in Mount Vernon. It is difficult to use public transportation between the two, and also the times of the ferry are difficult. I would love an earlier ferry, especially on Sundays, as well as a later ferry on weekdays and Sundays.

No car, trying to get from Seattle (or various other points) to Guemes ferry. Uncertain connections, walk,

The cost of the ferry is too high for the average income for most families especially on Guemes. Most days the ferry lines can take at least an hour to get over sometimes we waited 2 or 3 with all the vehicles.

I can't drive very far and there is no help to get to the VA clinic in Mt Vernon. I have given up on getting any help to the Seattle VA. I just go without needed tests.

Guemes Island to SeaTac. Cannot get home because last ferry is 8:30 pm

I don't have a way to get started. Don't know options or how to find them.

I can get from Anacortes TO Mount Vernon/Burlington for shows at the Lincoln or McIntyre Hall, but can't get home again.

No recent examples, apart from unpredictable WSF service. Historically mostly weather, traffic, or road construction delays.

I live in Anacortes and have to make transfers to get to medical appts in Mt. Vernon. This is difficult and confusing for me.

My Senior Mother and I wanted to go to Everett to connect with a Greyhound to Spokane. It was difficult as the bus from La Conner to the Skagit Station, where we would catch the bus to Everett, only ran every three hours. We had to get up very early to make it work. When we did get to Skagit Station there were so many people riding the bus to Everett we weren't allowed on with our suitcases. Had to wait an hour for a chance to ride the next one, which luckily wasn't too crowded.

When I worked in Mount Vernon, taking the bus from Anacortes (between the two largest cities in Skagit County!) would have required taking two bus services (Skagit Transit and Island Transit), at least two transfers, and more than an hour, one-way.

Trips start in Skyline and go to downtown Anacortes or Mount Vernon or Sedro Woolley medical services

Skyline to hospital and return

Skyline to downtown mid day and back with groceries

If transit was available at time and place I would use it for the environment.

Was going to an evening event that ended after the last available ride (after 10pm) did not go to event as not all vehicles can accommodate electric wheelchairs. Already aware of current program.

Central

A caregiver visiting our home was taking the 206 bus back to Skagit Station from the stop on Blackburn and 18th St. He fell while moving to get on the bus, someone else at the stop helped him get up and get on the bus.

A client of mine has had difficult time being understood due to their life experience. People with mental health and/or survivors of DV, have a hard time expressing themselves and sometimes are targeted as difficult people.

As you get older and have medical issues you have things like using the bathroom more often, need to clean your self up, mental health struggles.

Client was a Concrete senior resident trying to get down to Mt. Vernon for a medical appointment. Did not have medicaid transportation available to him, and no bus routes near him. Taxi services, and Care E Me were very much outside of their budget, and volunteer services have had less volunteers due to covid and none were available for that day/location. Had to cancel appointment.

Coming home from performances at the Lincoln Theatre, I'd like to take the bus but it doesn't run late enough. I live near Hillcrest Pk, and use route 204.

Getting from Bow into Mount Vernon.

I was at my sister's and forgot to make sure both buses I would need to ride home on would continue to run into the evening. I was able to call a friend who met me at Skagit Station because the 208 had quit for the night.

I was just trying to go to work, 4.5 miles away from the Skagit Highlands to Continental & College Way. The bus trip to work would be 1.5 hours long. Home would be 20 minutes. 20 minutes is acceptable, but 1.5 hours?! I'd prefer to take the bus, but I don't have that kind of time.

My 87 year old neighbor (also in the Skagit Highlands) just needs to be able to go to Haggen, the co-op, and some downtown medical appointments. The bus system is completely incompatible with her needs, and too complicated for her to figure out.

I was originally looking to take a bus from Mt Vernon to Anacortes but the schedules to be able to get there would make me 45 min late to work.

If I am not available to drive my children to an errand that it downtown Mt Vernon, they need to walk. The walk requires them to balance on a narrow strip of sidewalk along a hill busy with fast-moving traffic. There needs to be a safe, pleasant path that kids and adults and families can use to walk from Hillcrest neighborhood to downtown Mt Vernon. A safer path (or easy transit) to downtown from all neighborhoods will also likely help revitalize the downtown commercial area.

My teenager was trying to get to the YMCA from our home.

Start in Bow and go to any weekend or evening activities and get back, even if I start in Mt Vernon

East:

My trip started at a bus stop on hwy 20 going towards concrete, at 7 pm in Late September. I had to wait a long time for the bus right next to a busy highway and had trash thrown at me, had people slow their vehicles to stare at me, and got bit up by bugs. The bus arrived on time but it was scary and uncomfortable waiting for it. That's all there is to know about this experience.

None.

On Saturday, 70x arrives Skagit Station at even number hours but 90x departs at odd number hours. There is an hour layover at Skagit station. I tried 300 to Chuckanut P&R but it makes too many detour around Burlington and I need to take 208 to Skagit station so the overall time is even longer. I am forced to drive to Skagit station from Sedro Woolley, despite a bus stop is just in front of my home.

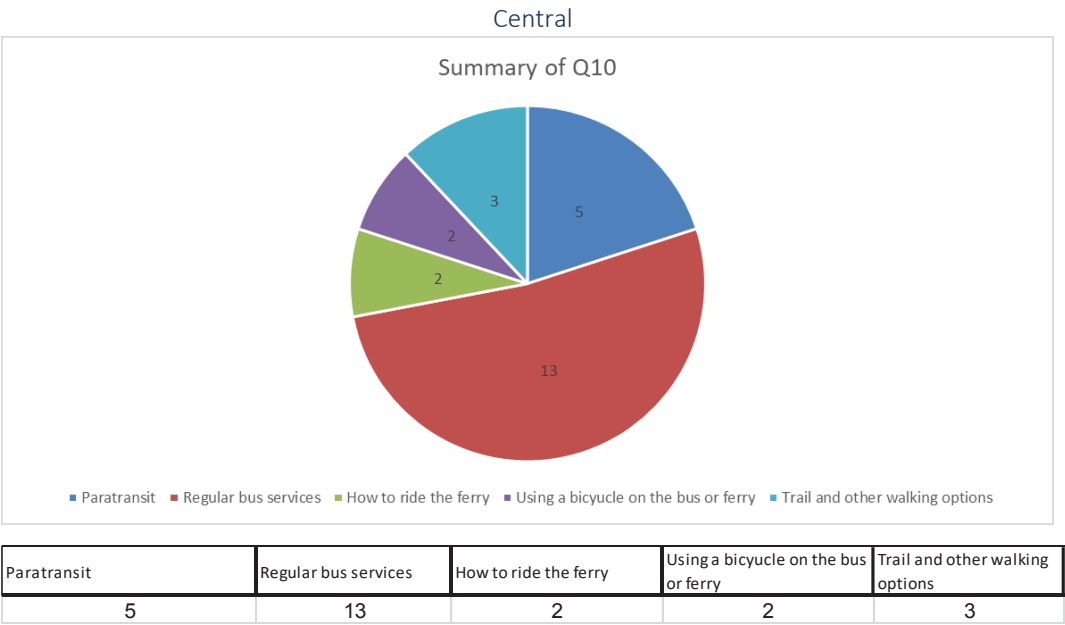
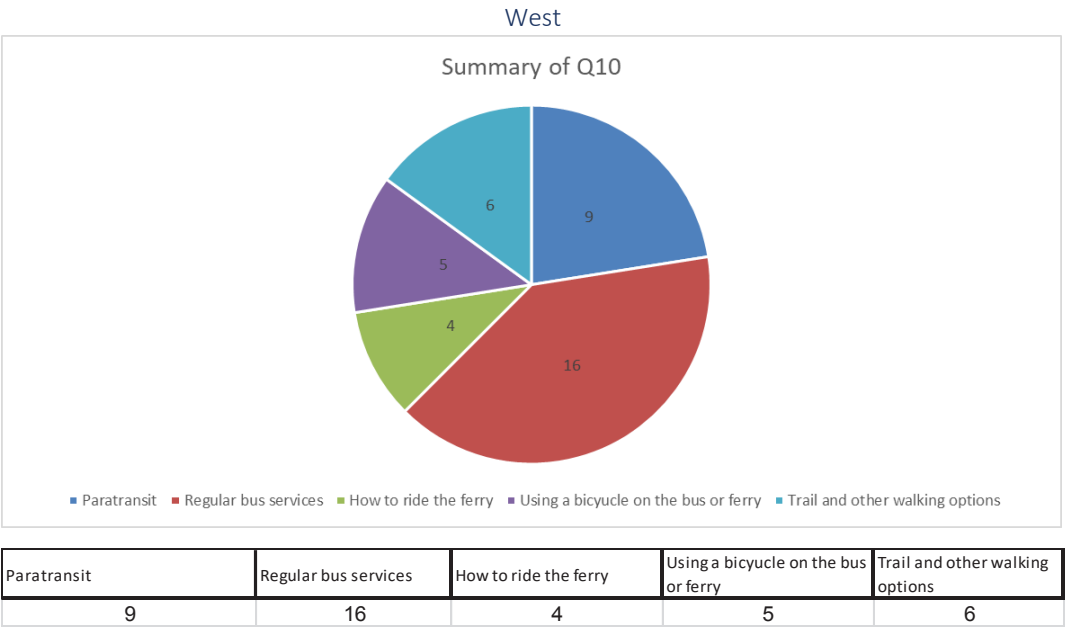
ParaTransit is great, but stops way to soon later in the day in Sedro. We need later evening service. No problems taking fixed route, but problems accessing the stop across a street with too much traffic.

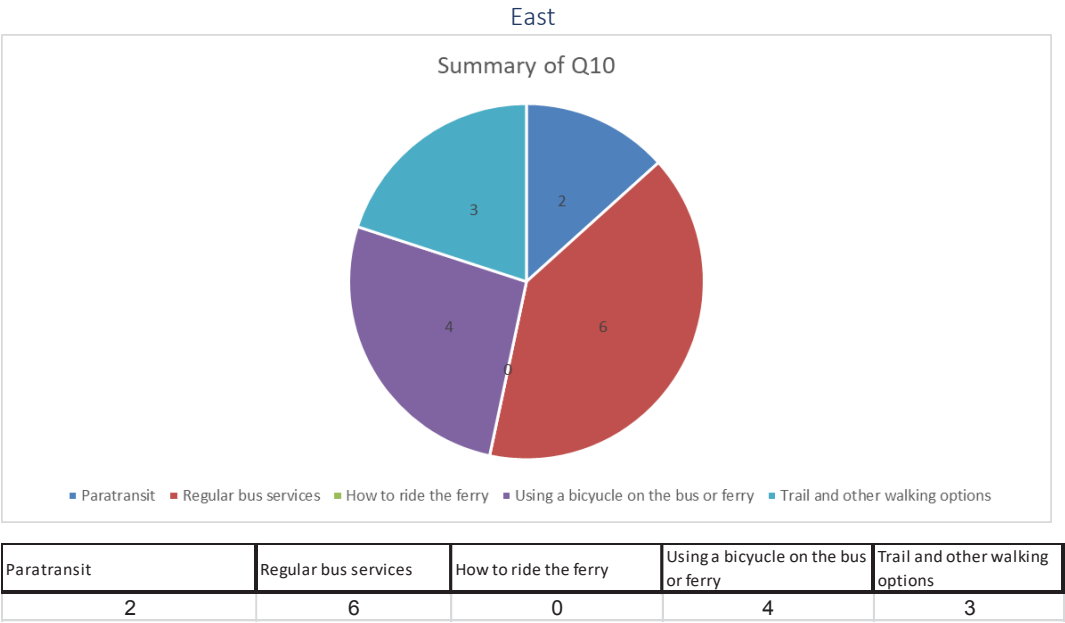
Started in Mount Vernon trying to get to walk in at 5am in Anacortes. It was a challenge because no bus runs that early

The closest fixed route is across an unfriendly pedestrian crossing, thus, the need for ParaTransit from the home. We are both blind, and too many right-on-reds that block the crosswalk when the light is green. There is no stop for the 208 North near the new Grocery Outlet location (525 E College Way, Mount Vernon). The closest stops are each a block away and make carrying groceries difficult.

Too expensive to travel with personal vehicle, bus isn't available. I might as well not work and live of government money

Question 10 - Training and support may be available to help you (or those you help) feel more comfortable using transit. Which services would you be the most interested in learning about?



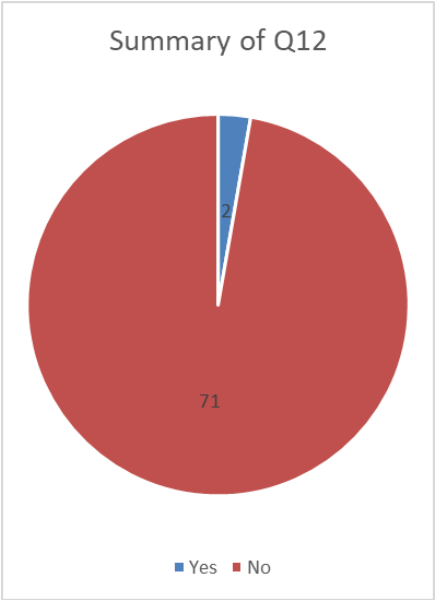


Question 11 - If you would like someone to contact you regarding learning to ride transit please provide your contact information below

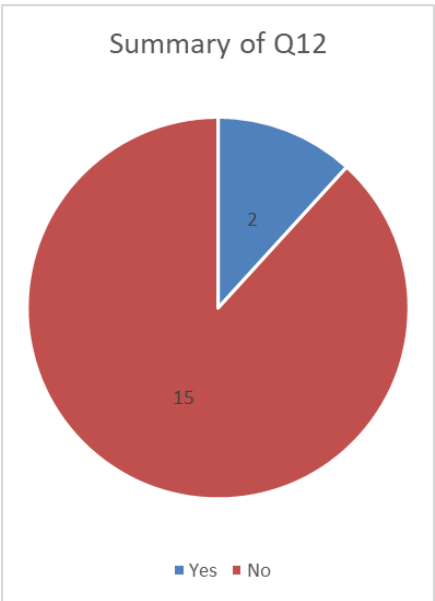
Responses not shown for privacy.

Question 12 - Are you of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin?

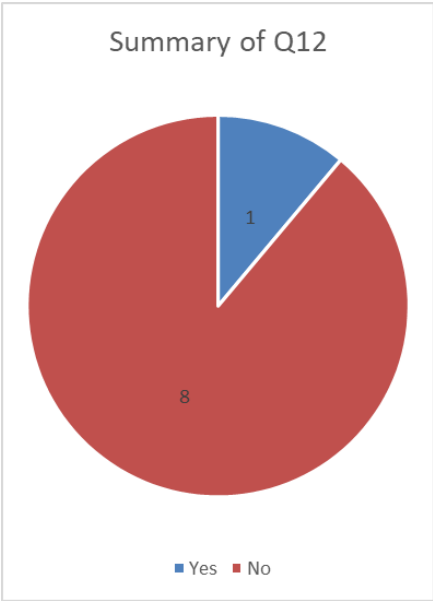
West:



Central:

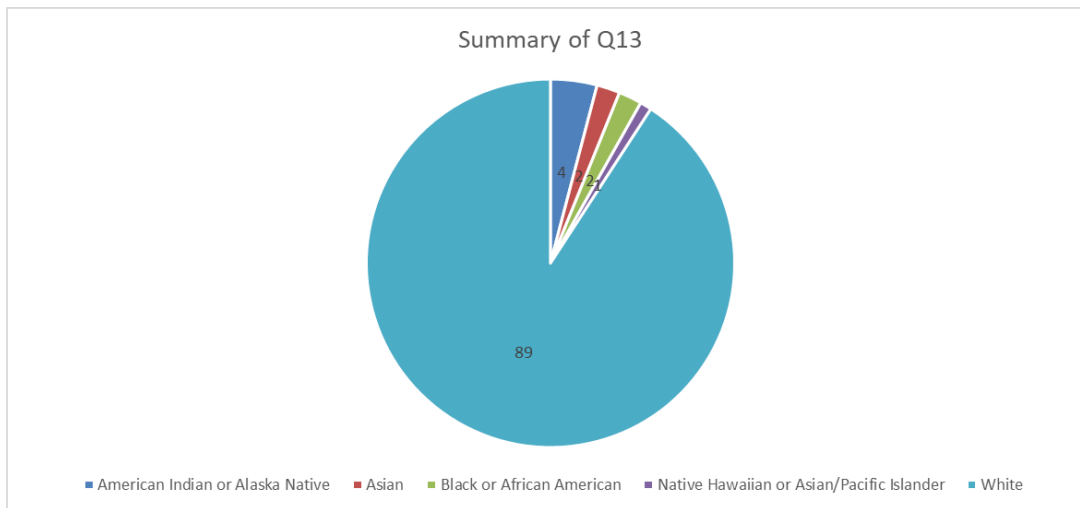


East:



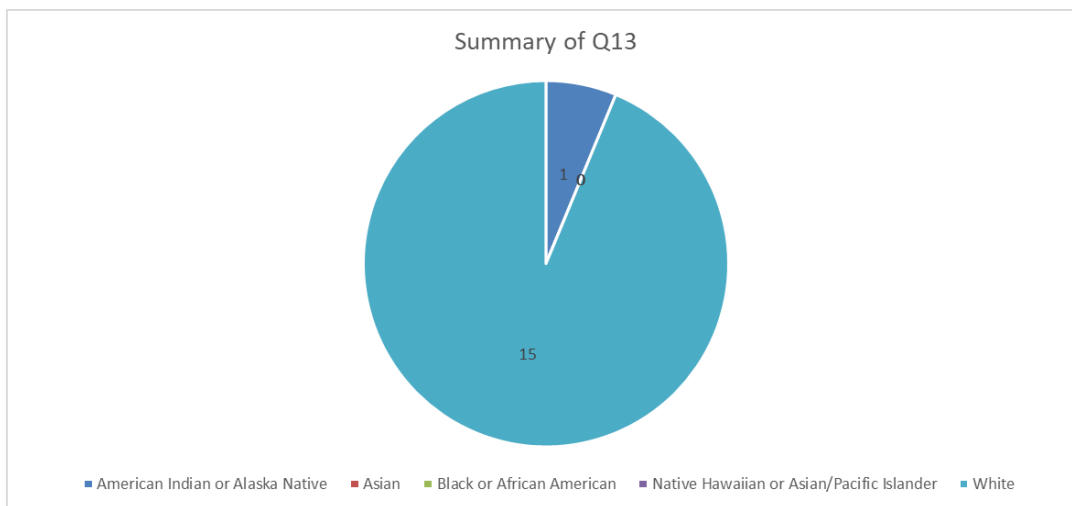
Question 13 – How would you describe your race?

West

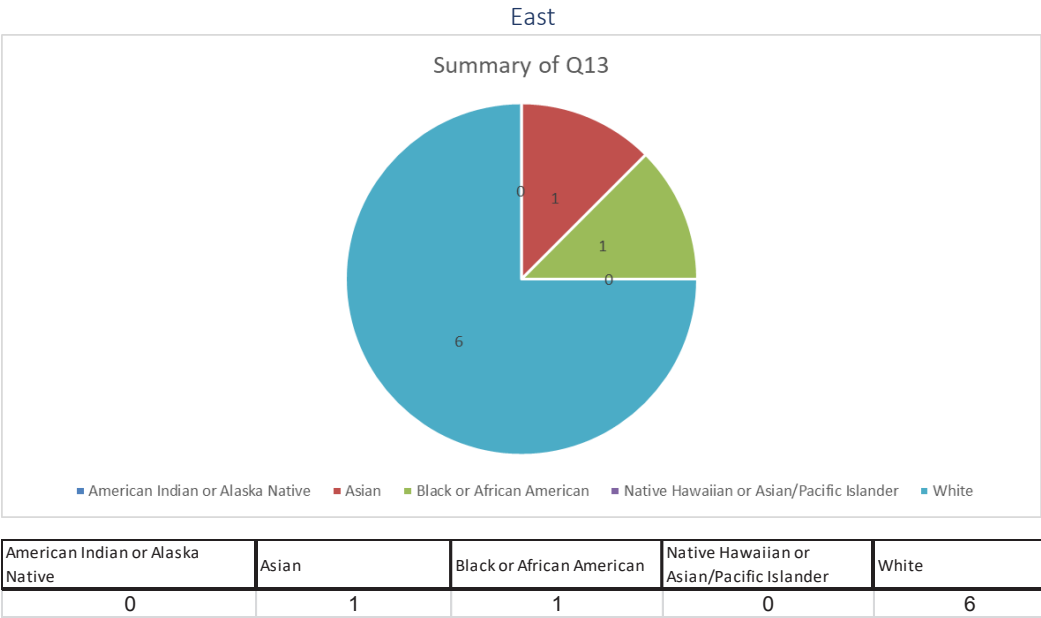


American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Asian/Pacific Islander	White
4	2	2	1	89

Central

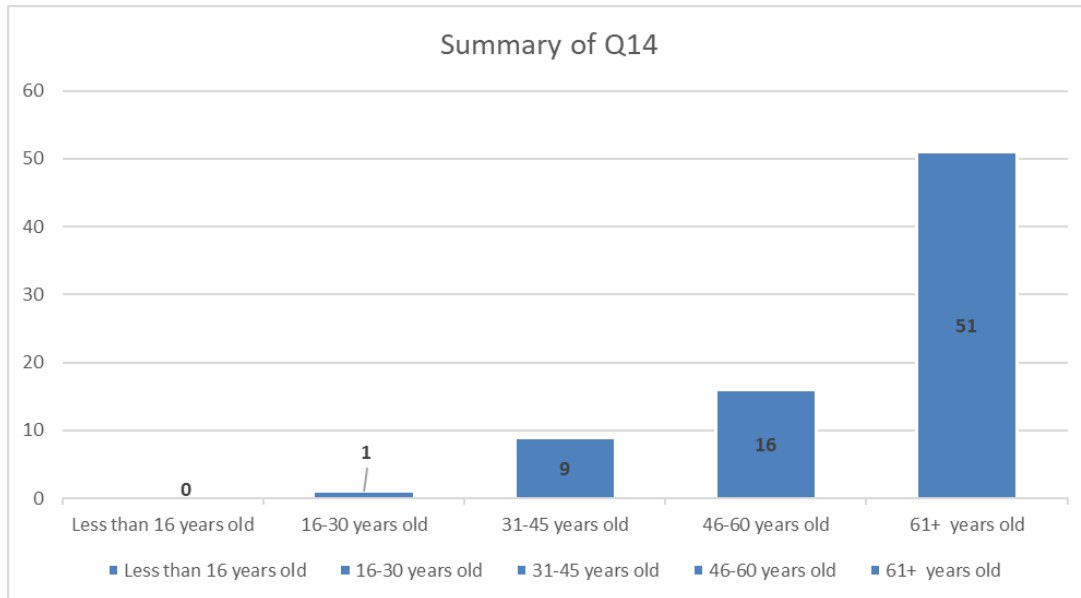


American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Asian/Pacific Islander	White
1	0	0	0	15



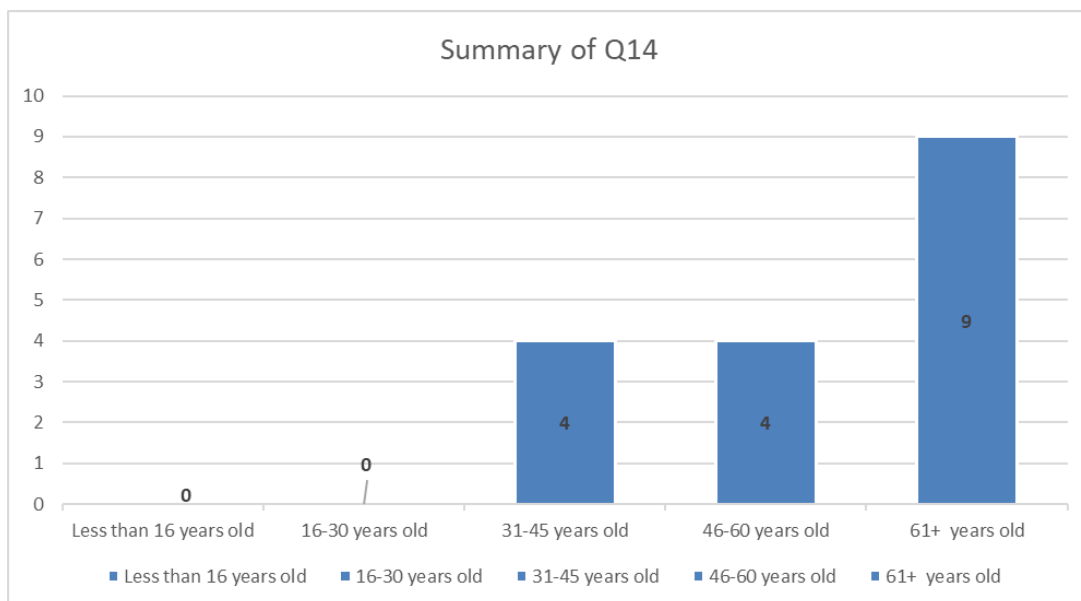
Question 14 – What is your age?

West



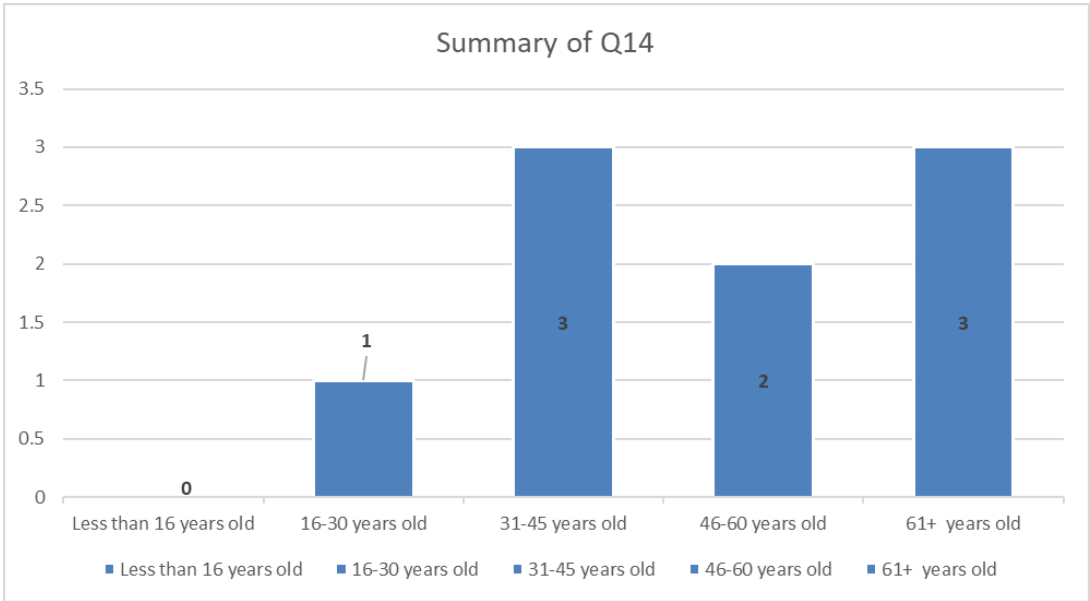
Less than 16 years old	16-30 years old	31-45 years old	46-60 years old	61+ years old
0	1	9	16	51

Central



Less than 16 years old	16-30 years old	31-45 years old	46-60 years old	61+ years old
0	0	4	4	9

East



Less than 16 years old	16-30 years old	31-45 years old	46-60 years old	61+ years old
0	1	3	2	3

Question 15 - Do you have any other comments or questions regarding transportation services in Skagit County?

West

(1) Former home in Kent, WA...provided subsidized (no cost to user) shopper shuttle service- 15-20 passenger buses circulated daily between apartment complexes, senior housing, and shopping centers. Could extend to medical facilities, other areas - worked great. (2). Read Washington policy center's research on Skagit transit- relatively positive with some areas for improvement. (3) Automobiles and trucks will continue to be principal mode of transportation for foreseeable future- there needs to be an objective study to optimize traffic flows / parking availability and work alternate mobility methods around principal modes (autos and trucks). Emotional demonization of the principal modes needs to be curtailed- it just increases the resistance- me included.

Access to Sinclair Island has been very difficult since the loss of The Skagit County Dock. Police and emergency response has been affected. The dock needs be repaired and maintained.

Add me regular routes from Mount Vernon to Bellingham and to Arlington/Marysville/Everett better connections with mainland transportation from Guemes ferry and occasional bus routes on Guemes that could be relied upon.

Forgot about the 410 Skatbus connecting to Guemes ferry until 19:42 from 10th & Q!

Guemes Ferry communication needs to be more transparent, frequent, and specific. No ferry rider should have to wait around for updates and information on why a ferry is running late, or has been cancelled.

Guemes ferry schedule is often inadequate for the volume, and overly restrictive for those who have jobs, childcare, etc for those that live on Island. The two major issues are the large midday gap in service, and the weeknight schedule where last boat is at 830p.m Of note, the Lummi Island ferry has a much more robust schedule 7 days per week, from 550am to 1210am, on weekdays despite having a comparable population.

I am a single retiree who is fortunate to be able to drive. If I permanently lost that mobility, I would need to move to at least improve my options.

When I have needed to assist elderly relatives living in senior housing and assisted living this past decade, the trips were almost entirely within Mt Vernon... medical appts, shopping, banking, toenails to be cut, hair and such. Those family members had each separately chosen that central location as they reached their mid to late 80s.

I recognize that not everyone ages in such a predictable fashion, has extended family living locally or even the modest financial ability to do what they did. Still, neither found the facility van transport services particularly attractive or adequate for even the shortest of round trips in the best of weather, let alone if they did not feel well. I do not look forward to facing those challenges myself... but perhaps, in the not too distant future, we will have something like self-driving pods to service the area within a mile or two of SVH, or even the Anacortes hospital.

I am looking for transportation service for my parents who live in Skyline area of Anacortes. They need to go to Anacortes for shopping, medical appointments and visits with friends. They need assistance getting on and off at the pickup and drop off locations.

I am very grateful for SKAT. I don't use it a lot, but I am losing my vision and I don't drive anymore. Public transit is important to me.

I know that this is probably out of your control, but I wish the Greyhound and Amtrak ran through the County going north and south more than once a day. I also know that people are working on this, but I wish more resources/people power could be designated for the Ferry service. Wish it could be more reliable, as far maintaining the regular schedule and not having to cancel sailings.

I think we should expand incentives for ride share opportunities. Also, infrastructure (roads, etc.) improvements should be done to foresee future travel needs/patterns, i.e. self-driving autos, etc.

Make the schedules mesh please.

My ethnic origin and race are none of Skagit County's business. Examining the transportation needs of citizens should not require the establishment of skin color categories.

No

only overcrowding on Guemes ferry line

Please consider adding more runs to the Guemes ferry, and more runs later in the evening. The elders/longtimers on the island think its good to cut service off early, but the island is changing. And it needs to be accepted that younger people/families are trying to make a life here and that includes kids (school activities, recreation, play dates) it means more people are trying to make a living wage while living here (not all employment happens in Anacortes proper, give people time to be able to work a full day, do errands and not have to hurry back for an 8:30 ferry. Make it more accessible for the next generation to live a life here. PLEASE.

Stop using Latin-X. There's not a single Latino or Latina that I know of that uses that phrase. It's a phrase wholly produced by white academics; it is neither used nor appreciated by those of actual Latin American descent.

Stop wasting tax payer money.

Stop wasting taxpayer money on giant diesel buses! Buy a car that would be plenty big to handle all the potential riders from Skyline to town.

Thank you for coordinating the timing of 410/40X so we can get to/from Amtrak from Anacortes. If we could just have evening service, all would be well for my needs. I am entirely car free, and can work around daytime appointments with current services. Thank you.

There need a to be bus service to the Guemes ferry terminal. It's impossible for some of us to walk up the hill to the bus stop

Transit needs to serve more areas, more frequently. There is no substitute for breadth and frequency of service.

We truly need to connect the Guemes Channel trail to the Tommy Thompson trail in order to ride your bike safely to the ferry instead of a along 12th Ave. in Anacortes. Ferry parking is outrageously expensive when if not for safety we could ride our bikes from downtown to the ferry landing.

When offering transportation to those with disabilities, the time limit does keep those with disabilities from participating in evening events, concerts, etc.

Yes---heres a few other city's/towns best practice for senior transportation.

<https://dailycaring.com/6-affordable-senior-transportation-options/>

<https://www.seniorsmatter.com/resource/transportation-for-seniors-in-the-twin-cities/>

Thank you.

Central

Carpooling for not just work, but other activities

Get rid of public transportation or make it pay to play. Don't rely on taxpayers

I understand that dealing with people that are mentally disable is a challenge, but most of the times, they are the ones that need more support and services. Instead of being assisted, they are being removed from these services.

It would be helpful if access bus could give a caregiver a ride to the person's home that he is working for, though this is not an official "appointment".

It's really sad that bus service is so poor. I'd prefer to commute by bus, but 1.5 hours to go 4.5 miles is completely unacceptable.

Public transit, needs help time available. Like today, same day transportation. Also the transit stops needs more help with the school children, during prime hours. Also para transit needs a way for same day schedule. Just improvements on a very good system.

Skagit Transit provides great service with limited resources, I'm grateful for what's available but of course more would be better!

Thank you for looking in to increasing trail connectivity and walking paths in cities within Skagit County.

It's a big "miss" that will / would add to quality of life here plus provide access to services for those without transport plus increase local commerce. Win win win.

Working with our community veterans on a daily basis and seeing and hearing why they won't use current local transportation, I think an update to our system is needed. We are using the same transportation opportunities from years ago without a significant update. Our local transportation

system is doing what they can with what they have but more outside of the box ideas need to be studied and possibly offered by trial to see if it's the right fit.

East

I am very grateful for Skagit Transit; I am able to get grocery shopping done and get to medical appointments because of the current routes and I hope none are cut. I appreciate the drivers in general. They are polite and patient. They assists me to secure my folding bike inside the compartment. Though I wish all the bus's bike rack can have a fat tire rack so I can load up the bike directly and keep the bus moving.

Also I wish the UMO app support NFC or other touch-less fare payment. The QR code takes too long to recognize. My phone is an iPhone 12 so I guess it should be powerful enough.

I also pay attention to the CAC meeting minutes. Thank you committee. We are retired, but as of now still able to drive our personal vehicles, however, this may/will probably change in the next 10-15 years and having a robust public transit system will be important. We have a crying need for better evening service!

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