

Transportation Element

Introduction

The Transportation Element is an integrated part of the overall Skykomish Comprehensive Plan that establishes a plan for transportation infrastructure and facilities to accommodate the community's anticipated level of growth.

Regulatory Setting

The Transportation Element is required to comply with the Growth Management Act, King County Countywide Planning Policies, multi-county planning policies, and other elements of the Skykomish Comprehensive Plan. These regulatory influences on the transportation element are discussed below.

Growth Management

Under the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070), the transportation element is required to assess the needs of a community and determine how to provide appropriate transportation facilities for current and future residents. The element must contain an inventory of existing facilities, an assessment of future facility needs, and a plan for financing proposed transportation improvements. Additionally, the element must include a reassessment strategy to address how the plan will respond to potential funding shortfalls.

Clean Air Conformity Act

The transportation element is also subject to the Washington State Clean Air Conformity Act that implements the directives of the federal Clean Air Act. Because air quality is a regionwide issue, the Town of Skykomish's Comprehensive Plan must support the efforts of state, regional, and local agencies as guided by WAC 173-420-080.

Countywide Planning Policies

The Countywide Planning Policies (CWPPs) for King County require that local jurisdictions develop a balanced transportation plan that is consistent with Vision 2020 and proposed regional mobility. The CWPPs promote High Capacity Transit, non-motorized transportation, high-occupancy vehicle travel, mode split goals, preservation and maintenance of existing transportation facilities, and development of financing strategies to meet future needs.

Multi-County Planning Policies

The multi-county planning policies in VISION 2020 provide guidance for

regional growth management and transportation decision making. VISION 2020 calls for containing the majority of the region's future growth within designated urban growth areas, focusing the growth in compact communities. The multi-county planning policies contained in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan are used to certify local transportation elements for conformity with the requirements of the Growth Management Act.

Goals

- T-G1 Provide a safe and effective transportation system that includes streets, sidewalks, and trails, that supports the Land Use Element, and meets the needs of residents traveling by automobile, transit, bicycle, or pedestrian means.
- T-G2 Preserve and enhance the small town and rural-residential character of the community through street beautification, including trees, benches, and other amenities that promote a sense of community.
- T-G3 Provide transportation facilities and services in a manner that protects and enhances the environment.
- T-G4 Communicate and coordinate the transportation needs and interests of Skykomish with adjacent communities and applicable agencies.
- T-G5 Investigate and promote alternative forms of transportation, including ridesharing, transit, train travel, and other viable options that reduce single occupant vehicle travel.

Policies

- **Transportation System**

- T-P1 The Town of Skykomish shall maintain a system of transportation facilities and services that adequately serves the access and circulation needs of Town residents and visitors, and seek to improve transportation facilities to recognize the community's needs.
- T-P2 The Town of Skykomish shall periodically review the condition of transportation facilities and levels of service.
- T-P3 The Town of Skykomish shall use future land use designations in planning for adequate roadway, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit services to meet travel needs.

- **Street Network**

T-P4 The Town of Skykomish shall encourage the connection of streets when considering the development of new streets or street improvements, while minimizing the use of cul-de-sacs, dead-ends streets and other design features that reduce circulation and limit emergency access.

T-P5 Streets shall be designed to support anticipated future development on adjacent undeveloped or underdeveloped properties.

▪ **Street Classification**

T-P6 Skykomish streets shall be classified according adopted street standards that are consistent with federal, state, and regional guidelines.

T-P7 The Town of Skykomish shall apply appropriate standards for street development that recognize the functional hierarchy of streets and the small town character of the community.

▪ **Implementation**

T-P8 The Town of Skykomish shall seek to acquire funding to bring existing streets up to the Town's standards for new streets.

T-P9 The Town shall adopt King County street standards and construction specifications to remain in effect for a period not to exceed three years. During the three-year period, the Town will seek professional engineering or transportation planning advice to help identify and adopt the urban street standards and construction specifications appropriate for Skykomish.

T-P10 Street improvements should be coordinated with anticipated clean up and restoration activities of the Burlington Northern properties, when feasible.

T-P11 The Town of Skykomish shall seek funding opportunities to develop and maintain a road maintenance program, including consideration of a local improvement district (LID), to prevent the deterioration of public streets.

T-P12 The Town of Skykomish requires property owners to maintain the appearance of the public right-of-way adjacent to their property.

T-P13 Coordinate with major truck haulers entering the Town regarding opportunities for lessening impacts on the community, including recommending possible routes through Town.

T-P14 Coordinate with the Washington Department of Transportation and State Highway Patrol to identify alternatives and mitigations to the rerouting of SR2 traffic through Skykomish in the event of accidents along SR2.

▪ **State Route 2**

- T-P15 The Town of Skykomish recognizes State Route 2 (SR2) as a highway of statewide significance connecting eastern and western Washington. SR2 has a state-adopted level of service of "C."
- T-P16 The Town of Skykomish shall work with WSDOT, and King and Snohomish Counties, to develop a design plan for SR2 that enhances the aesthetics of the highway, and so that improvements to SR2 are consistent with the character of the Town and the highway's designation as a "greenway."
- T-P17 The Town of Skykomish shall coordinate with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to manage land development and local street access along State Route 2 to protect the functional viability of the highway and to support economic development.

▪ **Street Design**

- T-P18 The Town of Skykomish recognizes the important role that public facilities such as sidewalks, trails, and streetlights play in providing a safe and pleasant environment within the community. The Town shall encourage public and private development to create attractive pedestrian spaces through the implementation of design standards.
- T-P19 The design of street and right-of-way improvements, including sidewalks, should be consistent with the historic character of the Town and with historic designations.
- T-P20 The Town of Skykomish shall encourage safety and beautification projects for roads in the Town.
- T-P21 The Town of Skykomish shall require new streets and streets that are substantially improved to include landscaping strips and street trees at the time of development if sufficient right-of-way is available. When sufficient right-of-way is not available, the Town shall encourage the landscaping adjacent to the right-of-way.
- T-P22 Transportation facilities and services should be sited, designed, and buffered (through screening and/or landscaping) to fit in harmoniously with their surroundings. When sited within or adjacent to residential areas, special attention should be given to minimizing noise, light, and glare impacts.

▪ **Transportation Safety**

- T-P23 The Town shall work with local public safety officials to identify and evaluate unsafe traffic conditions, and work to improve traffic safety through installation of appropriate street improvements.
- T-P24 The Town of Skykomish shall seek to provide for the safe integration of bicycle, pedestrian, rail, and motorized transportation networks.
- T-P25 The Town shall encourage buffering between motorized and pedestrian modes of travel by physical space, landscape strips or other methods.
- T-P26 The Town shall require all new streets and transportation facilities, and substantial improvements to streets and transportation facilities, to be built in accordance with adopted standards.
- T-P27 Adequate illumination should be provided on all streets to provide safe pedestrian environments while not intruding on residences.
- T-P28 The Town shall work with the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railroad and county and state transportation officials to monitor and improve railroad-crossing safety.

▪ **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

- T-P29 The Town of Skykomish shall seek funding opportunities to plan and develop a system of interconnected walkways and bicycle ways that provide safe passage between residential areas, schools, and commercial and recreational areas. Areas prioritized for improvements include:
- Cascade Highway
 - Access to Town Park
 - Connections to the school
 - Connection to and throughout the commercial area
 - Railroad crossings
- T-P30 The Town shall explore the possibility of constructing a pedestrian bridge to increase access to the Town Park.
- T-P31 The Town shall encourage designation of regional bicycle routes throughout the Skykomish Valley, and seek improvements, including signage, to area roads to facilitate bicycle use.
- T-P32 The Town shall encourage the use of Old Cascade Highway as a designated regional bicycle route, and shall seek improvements, in

conjunction with King County, Snohomish County, and WSDOT to support bicycle use.

- T-P33 The Town shall require the construction of sidewalks or pedestrian paths on all streets that serve, or are planned to serve, more than four residences, in all new developments, and on sites that are substantially redeveloped.
- T-P34 The Town shall require new developments to provide pedestrian connections to adjacent developments so as to establish a comprehensive pedestrian network.
- T-P35 The Town shall encourage the location of bicycle racks at appropriate destination points, such as Town Hall, commercial establishments, parks, schools, and employment centers.
- T-P36 Arterials and collectors should be designed with sufficient shoulders to allow for safe bicycle use.
- T-P37 Sidewalks should be designed and constructed to allow for disabled access in compliance with federal law.
- T-P38 The Town shall coordinate with the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad to enhance and better identify the pedestrian crossing at the rail tracks on Fifth Street

▪ **Environmental Protection**

- T-P39 New transportation facilities shall be designed to minimize impacts on environmentally sensitive areas, including natural drainage patterns. The Town should avoid locating new transportation facilities in, or adjacent to, environmentally sensitive areas.
- T-P40 Appropriate mitigating measures shall be implemented where impacts from transportation systems are identified and unavoidable.
- T-P41 The Town shall use and require the use of Best Management Practices to minimize the impact of work within the right-of-way and environmentally sensitive areas.
- T-P42 The Town shall evaluate all land use permit applications for biofiltration, storm drainage, and improvements (such as, curbs and gutters) to minimize the impacts of polluted stormwater runoff.
- T-P43 The Town shall evaluate, and revise as needed, street and parking design standards to minimize the creation of new impervious surface areas, to the extent practical.

- T-P44 The Town shall promote the use and development of routes and methods of alternative modes of transportation, such as transit, bicycling, and walking. The use of these modes will help reduce air and surface water pollution.
- T-P45 The Town shall take an active role in securing and retaining public transportation for Skykomish residents, including advocating for the provision of transit and train service to the Town.

▪ **Concurrency**

- T-P46 The Town shall develop a concurrency management system to monitor the expected transportation impact of proposed development on the available capacity of the street system. New development shall be allowed only when and where all transportation facilities are adequate at the time of development, or when a financial commitment is in place to complete the necessary improvements or strategies that will accommodate the impacts within six years.
- T-P47 The Town shall not issue development permits when projects require transportation improvements that exceed the Town's ability to provide them in accordance with the acceptable level of service (LOS) standards. Developers may provide needed improvements in transportation facilities and/or services that may be financed individually through developer contributions or jointly through local improvement districts (LIDs). Developers may propose other strategies to mitigate impacts of their projects so long as these strategies are consistent with the Town's goals and policies.
- T-P48 The Town shall require developers to construct new streets directly serving new development, and pay a fair-share costs for specific off-site improvements needed to mitigate development impacts. The Town shall also explore ways that developers can encourage pedestrian activity, the use of public transit, and other alternatives to reduce single occupant vehicle travel.
- T-P49 The Town shall adopt a concurrency exemption for the development of critical public facilities, such as schools, libraries, emergency services, and municipal facilities. Such exemptions do not relieve the developments from required transportation fees and improvements.
- T-P50 Improvements to Skykomish's transportation system should accommodate not only existing conditions, but also projected growth based on a realistic evaluation of the impact of state, regional, and local planning policies.
- T-P51 The efficient and safe use of existing streets and roadways shall be encouraged as a priority over the creation of new roads, wherever such use is consistent with other objectives.

- **Level of Service**

- T-P52 Skykomish adopts a roadway segment level of service (LOS) standard of "C" for roadways within the Town (not including SR2).
- T-P53 For determining concurrency, the LOS should be based on measures of actual traffic patterns from new development on roadway capacities rather than generalized methods utilizing Average Daily Traffic (ADT).
- T-P54 The Town shall actively solicit action by the state and county to plan for and construct improvements to State Route 2 that are needed to maintain highway functioning at the state-adopted level of service.
- T-P55 The Town shall periodically update its Capital Facilities Element to maintain a realistic funding strategy for transportation improvements.
- T-P56 The Town shall develop a reassessment strategy to review land use and transportation assumptions if the level of service standards cannot be maintained due to funding shortfalls.

- **Transportation Demand Management**

- T-P57 The Town shall promote the use of alternatives to the single-occupant automobile as a means of reducing the demand for construction of new streets and arterials.
- T-P58 The Town shall work with county (King and Snohomish), state, and federal agencies, and rail corporations to encourage the use of rail for transportation, tourism, and recreation.
- T-P59 The Town shall work with local transit providers to seek effective, accessible, and convenient transit services to Skykomish residents, including the elderly, youth, low-income, and disabled. Transit facilities (stations, park-and-ride lots, shelters, etc.) should be easily accessible to pedestrians, including those with disabilities, and convenient to local access points and services.
- T-P60 The Town shall work with local transit to provide shuttle service to Gold Bar, Sultan, Monroe, and other communities and facilities to the west of Skykomish.

- **Regional Transportation Facilities and Strategies**

- T-P61 The Town of Skykomish shall communicate and coordinate with the surrounding jurisdictions and WSDOT in order to keep State Route 2 operating in an orderly and efficient manner while minimizing impacts to the residents of the Town.

T-P62 The Town shall encourage WSDOT to monitor and develop transportation solutions that alleviate weekend traffic impacts, and impacts resulting from accidents occurring on SR2.

▪ **Parking**

T-P63 The Town shall seek to provide or require visitor parking areas to encourage tourist activity in commercial areas, including directional signage.

T-P64 The Town shall seek the conversion of the burn dump into a park-and-ride lot to support tourism and recreation.

T-P65 The Town shall encourage transit providers to provide a shuttle service to Stevens Pass, the Iron Goat Trailhead, and other recreation opportunities.

T-P66 The Town shall maintain guidelines for requiring adequate off-street parking for all land uses as part of the development review process.

T-P67 The Town shall encourage an adequate number of handicapped parking spaces at public facilities and commercial and multi-family uses.

T-P68 The Town shall encourage parking to be located at the side and rear portions of sites and limit the overall width of parking areas, consistent with Skykomish's small town character.

T-P69 The Town shall periodically evaluate parking needs by identifying parking supply and demand at commercial areas and other areas; determining peak demand conditions; and identifying needed improvements.

T-P70 The Town shall encourage the use of joint-use parking opportunities for churches, public buildings, recreation destinations, and commercial areas.