SOUNDTRANSIT

Federal Way Transit Extension

Plan Review for High-Capacity Transit in the Project Corridor: S. 200th Street to Federal Way City Center

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Background

Planning for light rail in the corridor between Seattle and Tacoma (the South Corridor) began in 1981, when the Puget Sound Council of Governments, now Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), conducted a regional light rail study and determined light rail was feasible in heavily used transportation corridors (Sound Transit, 2007). Planning has continued since 1981 with a number of planning efforts (Table ES-1), which led to Sound Transit's *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan* (Sound Transit, 2005a) and the subsequent package of transit investments that was approved by voters, which is known as the *Sound Transit 2 Plan* (ST2). ST2 includes funding for environmental analysis and preliminary engineering of light rail along the South Corridor.

Sound Transit is currently studying the range of reasonable alternatives for high-capacity transit (HCT) between S. 200th Street and Federal Way. This report presents the results of a review of the plans and studies relevant to that part of the South Corridor, known as the Federal Way Transit Extension.

Key Findings

This Plan Review reports the findings of regional studies that help to define the alternatives to address the regional HCT system needs. It also reviews local and sub-area-specific plans and nearby related development plans that may influence or provide recommendations affecting HCT planning between the cities of SeaTac and Federal Way. It demonstrates that, consistent with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance on Linking Planning and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and codified in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.318, the region, as represented by PSRC and Sound Transit, has conducted a thorough planning analysis to support limiting alternatives to the light rail mode for the upcoming federal and state environmental evaluation in the South Corridor between S. 200th Street in SeaTac and the Federal Way city center. Secondarily, it demonstrates how local plans have adopted land use, transportation, and specific plans around these adopted regional plans, and that the local plans anticipate and depend on light rail or equivalent investment to fulfill their planning objectives.

Twenty-nine previously prepared planning documents were consulted as part of this review (listed in Appendix A). The relevant alignment and station locations are summarized in Table ES-1 and are shown on Figure ES-1.

HCT in the project corridor has been in planning documents for more than 30 years, and therefore is included in the regional transportation planning documents. The previously identified HCT alignments in this transit corridor were generally light rail on either Interstate 5 (I-5) or State Route (SR) 99. A number of the relevant planning documents identified light rail on SR 99, with three documents also considering I-5 as a possible option. Sound Transit's 2005 *Long-Range Plan* also identified HCT in the form of light rail and bus rapid transit (BRT) in the general corridor.

TABLE ES-1
Summary of HCT Planning Efforts – Between SeaTac and Federal Way

Author	Document Name	Year Published	HCT Identified
Sound Transit	*The Regional Transit System Proposal*	1995	Light rail on SR 99 with stations at Kent-Des Moines Road; Star Lake; and S. 316th, 336th, and 348th Streets in Federal Way.
Sound Transit	*Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan (the Long-Range Vision)*	1996	Light rail extension on SR 99. High-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes along I-5.
King County Metro	*Looking to the Future: Six Year Transit Development Plan for 2002 to 2007*	2002	BRT on SR 99.
Sound Transit	*Regional Transit Long-Range Plan*	2005	Light rail extension generally along I-5. Potential for parallel arterial corridors (i.e., SR 99). Planned express bus and bus rapid transit corridor on I-5.
Sound Transit	*Issue Paper S3: HCT System Development Issues in the South Corridor*	2005	Light rail on I-5 or SR 99 that would include stations in SeaTac, Des Moines, and Federal Way.
WSDOT	*SR 99 Route Development Plan (Federal Way to Tukwila)*	2006	HCT along SR 99 primarily within the existing right-of-way.
King County Metro	*Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016*	2007	BRT (Rapid Ride) on SR 99.
City of Federal Way	*Federal Way Comprehensive Plan (City Center Chapter)*	Revised Partially in 2007	HCT alignment on SR 99. Proposed station at the Federal Way Transit Center.
Sound Transit	*Sound Transit 2 Plan*	2008	Light rail extension via SR 99 with two stations: Kent-Des Moines Station located near Highline Community College (between SR 516 and S. 240th Street); Redondo/Star Lake area station located the existing Redondo Heights Park-and-Ride lot (272nd Street).
City of Des Moines	*City of Des Moines Comprehensive Plan*	Adopted 2009	Station for HCT (either BRT or light rail) would be located in the city. Light rail alignment on SR 99 if station located at S. 216th Street, otherwise along I-5.
King County Metro	*King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2001-2021*	2011	Light rail along SR 99.
City of SeaTac	*City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan*	Updated 2011	This plan refers to Sound Transit's plans for a station at S. 200th Street and light rail continuing along SR 99.
City of Kent and City of Des Moines	*Midway Subarea Plan*	Adopted 2011	Four scenarios for light rail station and alignment in Midway area of Kent/Des Moines that show stations working with either SR 99 or I-5 or transitioning between the two.

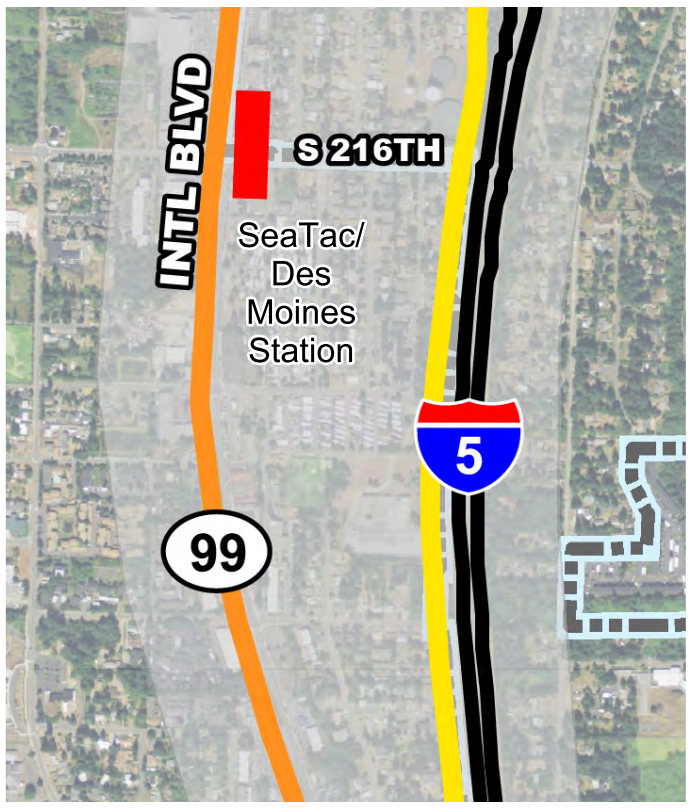
The plans for the cities within the Federal Way Transit Extension corridor each address improvements in the overall transit network and mention extending Sound Transit light rail to the south. As a brief overview, the plans of the local jurisdictions within the project corridor make the following recommendations:

- SeaTac: An alignment east of SR 99 and station at S 200th

- Des Moines: Alignments along SR 99, 30th Avenue South, or I-5, with stations at 216th Street; near Highline Community College (approximately S. 240th Street); and at S. 272nd Street
- Kent: Midway Subarea Plan shows alignments along SR 99, 30th Avenue S., or I-5, with a station near Highline Community College (approximately S. 240th Street)
- Federal Way: An alignment along SR 99 with a station in the City Center

Station locations and corresponding HCT alignments from City of Des Moines Comprehensive Transportation Plan, the Midway Subarea Plan, and the Federal Way Comprehensive Plan are shown in Exhibit ES-1.

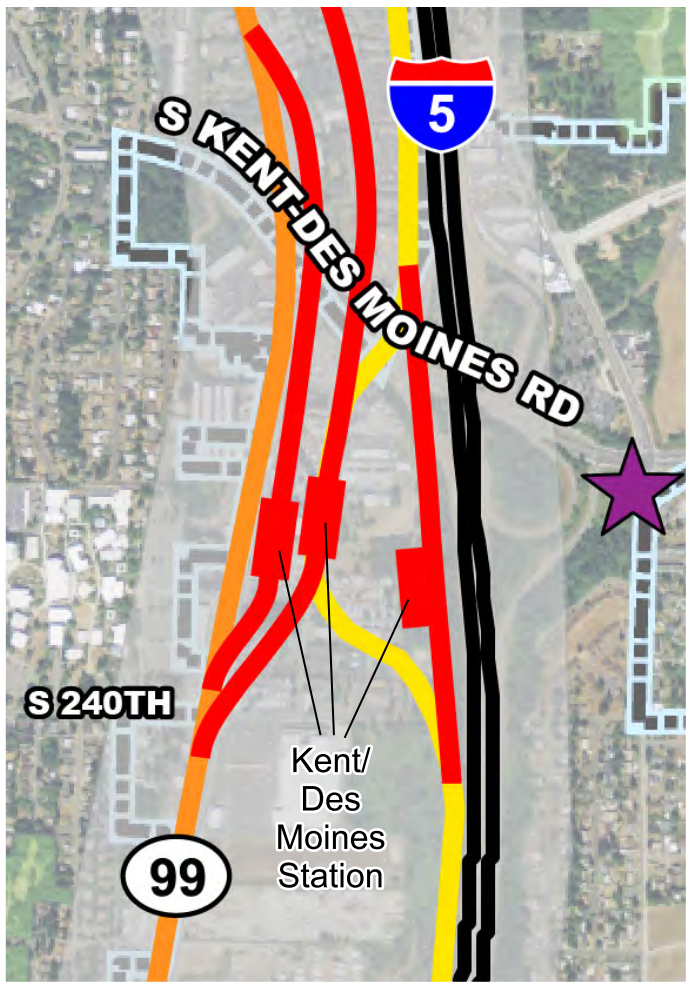
City of Des Moines Comprehensive Transportation Plan



– SR 99 alignment east of center median and elevated

– If no station at S 216th, then I-5 preferred alignment

Midway Subarea Plan Alignment/Station Scenarios



Plans that identified HCT on SR99

- SR 99 Route Development Plan *(WSDOT, 2006)*
- The Regional Transit System Proposal *(Sound Transit, 1995)*
- Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan *(Sound Transit, 1996)*
- King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2001-2021 *(King County Metro, 2011)*
- City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan *(City of SeaTac, 2011)*
- Federal Way Comprehensive Plan *(City of Federal Way, 2007)*

Plans that identified HCT on either SR 99 or I-5

- Issue Paper S3: HCT System Development Issues in the South Corridor *(Sound Transit, 2005)*
- Midway Subarea Plan *(Cities of Kent and Des Moines, 2011)*
- City of Des Moines Comprehensive Plan

Federal Way Comprehensive Plan

I-5 Proposed HCT Alignment
SR 99 Proposed HCT Alignment
Existing Park & Ride Lot
Proposed Station
Proposed Station Area HCT Alignments
Street
City

0 0.25 0.5 Mile

N

Source: King County GIS, 2011, ESRI 2011. | \\GIS\DATA\projects\wash\SoundTransit\Map_Docs\Draft\SoundTransitFederalWayTransitExtensionProjectStudyAreaWorkingDraft11x17.mxd | Last Updated: 7/16/2012

Exhibit ES-1 **HCT Planning Efforts in the Project Corridor**

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BRT	bus rapid transit
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CTP	Comprehensive Transportation Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ERP	expert review panel
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HCT	high-capacity transit
HOV	high-occupancy vehicle
I-5	Interstate 5
JRPC	Joint Regional Policy Committee
Long-Range Plan	2005 *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan*
Long-Range Vision	1996 *Regional Transit Long-Range Vision*
LRT	light rail transit
MCP	multi-corridor project
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Act
PSCOG	Puget Sound Council of Governments
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
RTA	Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority
SEPA	State Environmental Policy
SR	State Route
ST2	*Sound Transit 2 Plan*
System Plan	*Regional Transit Project System Plan*
TMP	Transportation Master Plan
TSM	Transportation Systems Management
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

1.0 Introduction

Sound Transit is studying the range of reasonable alternatives for high-capacity transit (HCT) between S. 200th Street and Federal Way City Center, which is part of a longer transit corridor that will eventually connect Seattle and Tacoma. HCT is defined as a transit system that carries a larger number of people faster and more frequently than a conventional local transit system (i.e., buses).

Sound Transit's *Regional Transit Long Range Plan* (2005) identified HCT between S. 200th Street in SeaTac and the Federal Way city center, and the voter-approved *Sound Transit 2 Plan* (ST2) included funding to plan and construct the extension from the S. 200th Street light rail station to S. 272nd Street in the city of Federal Way. This extension will be known as the Federal Way Transit Extension, but most of the previous regional studies reference this and the longer extension to Tacoma as the South Corridor.

The Federal Way Transit Extension study area (project corridor) generally follows the parallel transportation corridors of State Route (SR) 99 and Interstate 5 (I-5). SR 99, also known as the Pacific Highway, and I-5 generally follow a ridge where the city limits of SeaTac, Des Moines, Kent, and Federal Way meet. The project corridor is a mix of primarily commercial and residential land uses. At the north end, the city of SeaTac contains the region's largest international airport, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. At the south end, the Federal Way city center contains the "Commons" mall and many other commercial retail complexes. The Weyerhaeuser Company corporate headquarters is located just east of the Federal Way city center. East of SR 99, I-5 is a 10-lane highway. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) plans to include several improvements to existing ramp structures and add connections from other state routes in this portion of I-5.

HCT System Planning Legislature

Beginning in 1990, the Washington State Legislature began adopting legislation pertinent to the development of high-capacity transportation systems to be deployed in the state's major urban areas. The primary references can be found under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Chapter 81.104, also known as the High Capacity Transportation Systems Act. Under RCW 81.104.010, the purpose of the HCT legislation is defined as follows: "Increasing congestion on Washington's roadways calls for identification and implementation of high capacity transportation system alternatives." The Legislature believes that local jurisdictions should coordinate and be responsible for high-capacity transportation policy development, program planning, and implementation.

The Legislature defined a HCT system in RCW 81.104.015 (1) as: "a system of public transportation services within an urbanized region operating principally on exclusive rights of way, and the supporting services and facilities necessary to implement such a system, including interim express services and high occupancy vehicle lanes, which taken as a whole, provides a substantially higher level of passenger capacity, speed, and service frequency than traditional public transportation systems operating principally in general purpose roadways."

With the encouragement and authorization to designated local agencies to prepare plans for the development of high-capacity transit systems, the Legislature also prescribed specific components of the planning process and requirements for how that planning process was to occur (RCW 81.104.100).

The intended result of the HCT planning process in urbanized areas as detailed in RCW 81.104.100 (2) was to be a system plan to be submitted to the voters under RCW 81.104.100 (2) (d) and RCW 81.104.140. After a successful vote, a process for project planning was described in RCW 81.104.100 (3). Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and Sound Transit have conducted several studies of alternative modes to properly identify the feasibility of various modes in relation to projected growth and transportation needs for the region.

1.1 Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this report is to summarize the studies that led the region (represented by PSRC and Sound Transit) to identify light rail as the preferred HCT mode for the South Corridor, specifically for the project area between S. 200th Street and the Federal Way city center. This report demonstrates that, through the multiple studies conducted by multiple entities, a full range of modes and alignments was evaluated for a regional high-capacity transit system which included input from the public and agencies with jurisdiction. The results consistently found that an exclusive light rail transit alternative was the most favorable mode for the South Corridor to provide a cost-effective, reliable connection within the South Corridor among the planned regional growth centers. These studies have been drafted into long range transportation plans, adopted by regional authorities, and used to develop regional tax-supported transportation packages for voter approval. This study demonstrates that the local planning jurisdictions have built upon these regional commitments in developing the land use and transportation elements of their comprehensive and transportation plans.

This report summarizes the key findings that resulted from each plan and the information that led to prioritizing light rail transit. This report also records, consistent with the criteria of Integrating Planning and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), as set forth in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C and the guidance developed by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), whether the studies incorporated:

1. Involvement of interested state, local, tribal, and federal agencies;
2. Public review;
3. Reasonable opportunity to comment during the metropolitan transportation planning process and development of the corridor or subarea planning study;
4. Documentation of relevant decisions in a form that is identifiable and available for review during the NEPA scoping process and can be appended to or referenced in the NEPA document; and
5. The review of the FHWA and the FTA, as appropriate.

This study was prepared to provide context in relation to the past and current regional and local planning for the Federal Way Transit Extension, and this information provides to the Sound Transit team and the public the background and context upon which transit planning decisions have been made to date as well as influences on future HCT planning.

1.2 Early Regional HCT Development and Agency Engagement

This section discusses, in chronological order, the history of the decision to develop HCT in the project corridor and the greater Puget Sound area, which ultimately led to the formation of Sound Transit and development of their planning documents and studies in the project area. The broad regional influences that led to prioritizing HCT investments in the South Corridor are described, such as the

Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) and Puget Sound Regional Council's identification of growth centers supported by population and employment projections.

Rapid transit in King County was first studied and planned in the 1960s, but the *Forward Thrust* ballot initiatives to fund these plans failed to be approved by voters in 1968 and 1970. Planning for light rail in the South Corridor began again in 1981, when the Puget Sound Council of Governments (PSCOG), now Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), conducted a regional light rail study and determined it was feasible in heavily used transportation corridors (Sound Transit, 2007).

In the early 1990s, a Joint Regional Policy Committee (JRPC) was established through an inter-local agreement among the Pierce, King, and Snohomish County transit agencies to coordinate regional transit planning. The JRPC was responsible for preparing and adopting a regional HCT system plan and then transmitting that plan to the King, Pierce, and Snohomish County councils to consider whether to form a regional transit authority to implement the plan. The JRPC's plan was developed in the same timeframe as the region's early steps toward implementing the GMA through the adoption of *Vision 2020*, the regional growth plan developed and maintained by the Puget Sound Regional Council (1990).

The JRPC adopted the *Regional Transit Project System Plan* in 1993, which included a rail system connecting the region's population and employment centers, including the alignment first described in the 1986 *Regional Multi-Corridor Summary Report* (PSCOG and Seattle Metro, 1986). In 1993, the JRPC forwarded its *Regional Transit Project System Plan* to the Snohomish, King, and Pierce County councils for their consideration and recommended formation of a regional transit authority. In July of 1993, the three county councils voted to participate in the Regional Transit Project System Plan and create the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (RTA). RTA, which was re-named Sound Transit in 1997, was created for the purpose of planning and implementing HCT projects and services in the urbanized portions of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.

2.0 Regional Growth HCT Planning

By definition, HCT is "a system of public transportation services within an urbanized region operating principally on exclusive rights of way, and the supporting services and facilities necessary to implement such a system…" Therefore, the most applicable planning was conducted on the regional scale for the three largest contiguous and most urbanized counties, King, Pierce and Snohomish. This section provides an overview of regional planning efforts with an emphasis on the results pertinent to the Federal Way Transit Extension, which is referred to as the South Corridor in the regional plans and studies.

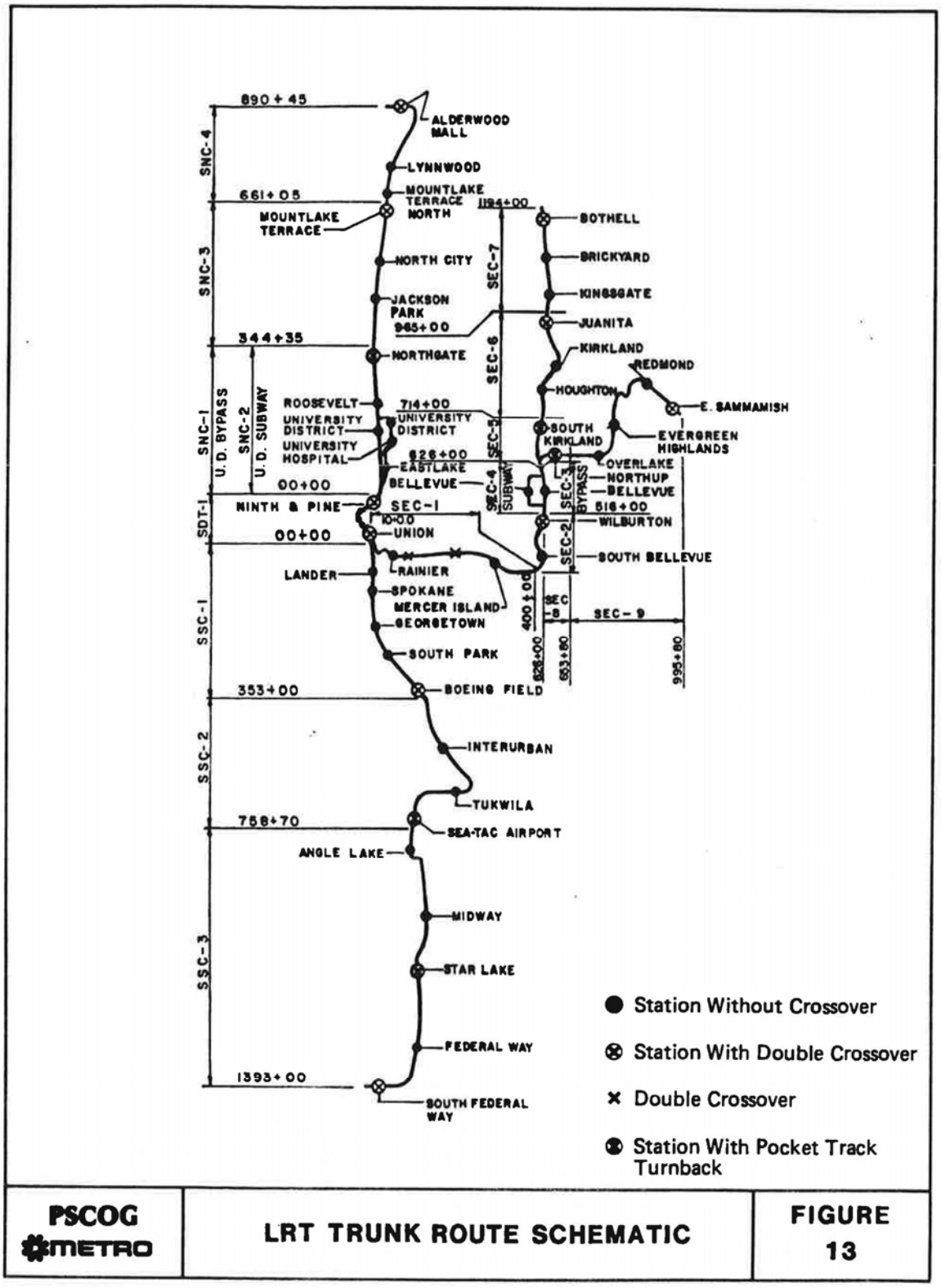
2.1 *Regional Multi-Corridor Project Summary Report* (PSCOG, 1986)

PSCOG and Seattle Metro analyzed transit alternatives in the South Corridor as part of the 1986 *Regional Multi-Corridor Project (MCP) Summary Report*. Light rail between SeaTac and Federal Way was included (Exhibit 2-1) as part of a light rail trunk route, with stops at Angle Lake (approximately S. 200th Street), Midway (approximately S. 240th Street), and Star Lake (approximately S. 272nd Street).

Early phases of this study included multiple routes within the South Corridor, with destinations including Renton, Kent, and Auburn as well as Federal Way, but the only alignment carried forward for further study was Alternative S-1: downtown Seattle/Duwamish Industrial Area/Interurban/Tukwila/ I-405/Sea-Tac Airport/Pacific Highway/I-5/South Federal Way. South of the airport, this alternative is described as "along Pacific Highway until approximately S. 200th Street, where it would proceed to right-of-way along the west side of I-5. Near the S. 348th Street interchange, the alignment would turn west and end at the South Federal Way park-and-ride lot." This alignment was divided into three segments, with the segment from Sea-Tac Airport to South Federal Way identified as Segment SSC-3.

The report concluded the following:

- Light rail has lower operating/maintenance costs, but does have higher capital costs.
- None of the alternatives stood out as being superior to the other in terms of environmental impacts.
- Light rail has slightly higher daily transit ridership.
- Light rail has a greater share of work trips.
- Only light rail has sufficient capacity to meet future demand.
- Light rail has more effective lane capacity (within exclusive right-of-way).
- Light rail has better opportunities for residential concentrations near stations.
- Light rail has schedule reliability.



Source: PSCOG and Seattle Metro, 1986.

EXHIBIT 2-1
Regional Multi-Corridor Summary Report, LRT Trunk Route Map

- During public forums most people in attendance preferred light rail and stated that light rail best meets the objectives of the project.

Involvement in the project included numerous members of the local agencies who formed the steering committee as well as at least one member of WSDOT. The PSCOG conducted environmental analysis as a State Environmental Policy (SEPA) Act Non-Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). No NEPA documentation was completed, although the United States Department of Transportation did provide funding for the project. Public review of the Non-Project EIS is not identified, but the project did include a public involvement program that included a number of group presentations, community forums, and surveys which allowed the public to ask questions and provide comments on the project.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The 1986 *Regional Multi-Corridor Project Summary Report* identified the following HCT in the project corridor and possibly a combination or phased approach for the following:

- Light rail along portions of SR 99 and I-5
- Express bus along I-5

2.2 *Final EIS Regional Transit System Plan* (JRPC, 1993b)

The *Final EIS Regional Transit System Plan* provided a programmatic analysis for the year 2020 of three developed alternatives to make decisions on the *Regional Transit Project System Plan (*System Plan). The System Plan would address transportation problems in part of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties, which are divided into three corridors (North, East, and South). The alternatives evaluated in the EIS for the three corridors included Transportation Systems Management (TSM), Transitway/TSM, Rail/TSM, and a No Build Alternative. The definition of the transitway was similar to buses traveling in an exclusive corridor, whereas the rail was defined as an exclusive right-of-way light rail. However, the study did critique a proposal by the Puget Sound Light Rail Society, who suggested an in-street running light rail along SR 99. This alternative was not carried forward due to lack of reliability and travel time disadvantages.

The purpose of the System Plan is to implement an effective rapid transit alternative and establish rapid transit feasibility using the criteria of cost-effectiveness, right-of-way requirements, environmental benefits, and transportation demand. Although the EIS did not include any conclusion on mode or alignment, the South Corridor was identified as being feasible and cost-effective for HCT.

The analysis found rail (within exclusive right-of-way) to provide the following advantages:

- More cost-effective than freeway investment, per rider.
- Higher capacity alternative that requires less right-of-way then increasing freeway capacity.
- Less energy usage with electrically powered buses and rail vehicles.
- Rapid transit facilities promote more concentrated employment and residential development than freeways and arterials.

Agency involvement in the project included transit agencies within the three corridors as well as WSDOT. Within the South Corridor, local jurisdictions involved included the cities of SeaTac, Kent, and Federal Way. A SEPA Non-Project EIS was completed for the project and no NEPA documentation was completed. The public had an opportunity to review and provide comments on the EIS. The JPRC held a number of group presentations, community forums, and surveys which allowed the public to ask questions and provide comments on the project. The study acknowledges that prior to moving forward with the planning process, the System Plan needed to be approved by the FTA.

An expert review panel was appointed in 1989 by the Governor, the Legislative Transportation Committee, and the Secretary of Transportation to review the numerous technical documents prepared by agencies as well as citizen-generated proposals and to provide an independent technical review on the HCT planning and any system plan that was wholly or partially funded by any voter-approved funding source. Over a period of about 7 years, the panel held a number of meetings to technically review the work prepared by Metro, JRPC, and RTA (Sound Transit) as well as other materials provided by the PSRC and citizen-generated proposals. The panel concluded that the System Plan meets the requirements of state law and that a reasonable range of alternatives had been selected for study. The panel also noted that lower-cost alternatives were not reasonable HCT investments.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

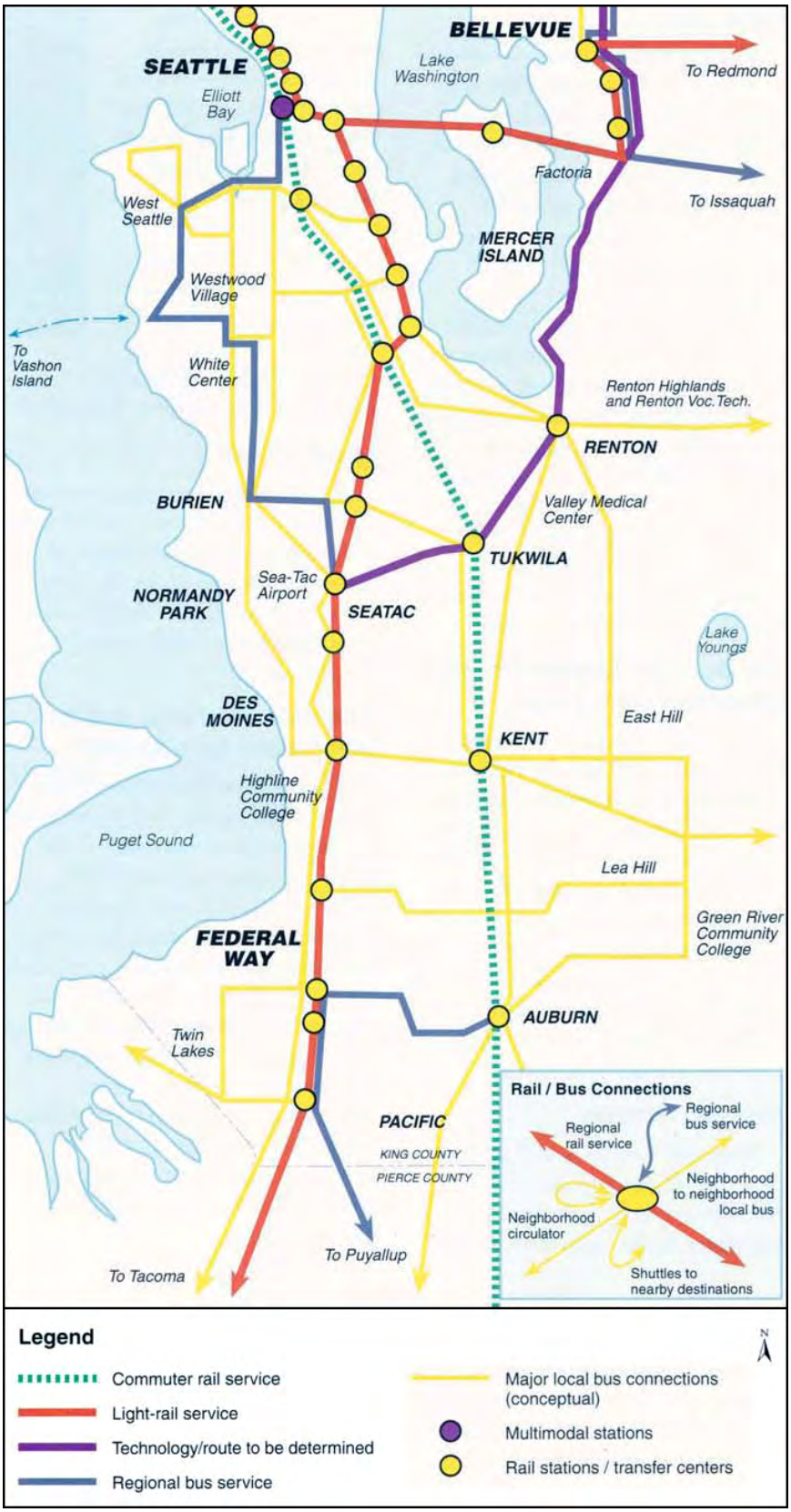
The 1993 *Final EIS Regional Transit System Plan* identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail following the I-5/SR 99 corridor
- Express bus/BRT along I-5

2.3 1995 Regional Transit Service Proposal (Sound Transit, 1995)

In 1995, a new Regional Transit Authority was formed through state legislation. The RTA developed a ballot proposal based on the 1993 JRPC-recommended *Regional Transit Project System Plan*. The proposal included development of regional light rail, commuter rail, and express bus systems. The regional proposal was broken into five subareas for funding and budgeting purposes: Snohomish County, North King County, East King County, South King County, and Pierce County. The proposal was to implement the first phase of a new regional rail and express bus network over 16 years, with an estimated cost of $6.7 billion (1995 dollars).

The Federal Way Transit Extension corridor is within the South King County Subarea. The proposal for the South King County Subarea envisioned light rail development along SR 99 with stations at Kent-Des Moines Road, Star Lake, and S. 316th, 336th, and 348th Streets in Federal Way (Exhibit 2-2). Regional bus service between SeaTac and Federal Way was not planned for in this document. Construction of the light rail line was anticipated to occur during the first phase of implementation, contingent on voter approval. In March of 1995, voters rejected the transit service proposal. However, this original planning effort was used to inform the next, scaled-down version, known as *Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan*, that went to voters in 1996.



Source: Sound Transit, 1995.

EXHIBIT 2-2
1995 South King County Subarea Proposal

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The 1995 *Regional Transit Service Proposal* identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail along SR 99

2.4 *The Regional Transit Long-Range Vision and Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan* (Sound Transit, 1996)

Following the defeat of its 1995 proposal, the RTA Board developed *Sound Move*, which represented a substantially downsized version of the 1995 proposal. As the proposal prepared for voters evolved into a progressively smaller proposal, the Board adopted the Regional Transit Long-Range Vision (the Long-Range Vision) concurrent with the adoption of Sound Move in order to keep the ultimate system plan in the public's eye. The Long-Range Vision represents the conceptual blueprint for reaching the region's long-term high-capacity transit goals in the three-county area. *Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan* was a program to implement the first phase of the *Long-Range Vision*. In May of 1996, the RTA Board approved both *Sound Move* and the *Long-Range Vision*. In order to implement *Sound Move*, voters needed to approve an increase in local taxes to fund the proposed transit system. In November of 1996, voters in all three of the counties in the RTA's District (King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties) approved *Sound Move*. RTA was re-named Sound Transit in 1997.

The 1996 *Long-Range Vision* included a mix of transportation improvements such as high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) expressway, regional express bus routes, commuter rail, and light rail. The plan included a potential rail extension from SeaTac to Tacoma and HOV lanes along I-5 in this area. *Sound Move* included a 25-mile regional light rail system, a commuter rail system, and an express bus system. *Sound Move* included a light rail line that extended as far south as SeaTac, to approximately S. 200th Street. Plans for the rail extension between SeaTac and Federal Way as envisioned in the *Long-Range Vision* were not included in *Sound Move*, but were anticipated to be funded in a future phase of implementation of the *Long-Range Vision*. The *Long-Range Vision* indicated that electric light rail is a cost-effective way to serve the regional system where transit ridership is the highest.

As noted above, *Sound Move* was voter-approved. It required public accountability prior to moving forward. Since the voters approved financing for *Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan* in 1996, Sound Transit has been engaged in delivering the first phase of light rail, commuter rail, and express bus investments. Each of these projects has been subjected to an environmental review, which included involvement of interested agencies, public review, comment review periods, and applicable documentation. Depending on funding sources, the documentation required reviews by FHWA and/or FTA.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

Sound Move identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail along SR 99 to approximately S. 200th Street in SeaTac
- HOV facilities and regional express bus service along I-5 to Tacoma

The Long-Range Vision identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Potential rail extension from SeaTac to Tacoma
- HOV facilities and regional express bus service along I-5 to Tacoma

2.5 *Destination 2030* (PSRC, 2001)

Sound Transit's planning efforts were developed in coordination with the regional planning efforts conducted by PSRC, the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization. *Destination 2030* is a long-range plan for transportation in the central Puget Sound region. *Destination 2030* also functions as the detailed transportation element of *Vision 2020*, the region's growth management, economic, and transportation strategy. A key part of the overall work on *Destination 2030* was to provide more specificity on the linkage of land use and transportation planning contained in *Vision 2020*, as well as to add clarification and detail to existing growth management policies and provisions. The growth strategy is built around the concept that additional transportation infrastructure and services will be provided to areas that are accepting an increased share of the region's growth.

In the preparation of *Destination 2030*, PSRC conducted an analysis of potential growth in transit markets to estimate demand for transit service increases in the future. The analysis was based on the philosophy that future service increases should be focused in locations that will best support productive routes and optimize local service delivery. The results of this analysis were incorporated into PSRC's policy direction and recommendations in *Destination 2030,* which included a potential future HCT extension in the project corridor. *Destination 2030* discusses long-range investments in the 2011 to 2030 timeframe, including future Sound Transit HCT investments in the corridor.

Destination 2030 included involvement of numerous local, state, tribal, and federal agencies and was subject to both NEPA and SEPA environmental processes. The environmental review included a number of opportunities for commenting as well as public review opportunities, primarily during the SEPA process.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

Destination 2030 identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail along SR 99 from SeaTac to Tacoma Dome
- Express bus/BRT along I-5

2.6 *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan* (Sound Transit, 2005a)

In 2004, work began in earnest to update the 1996 *Regional Transit Long-Range Vision*. Sound Transit conducted several studies and worked collaboratively with the PSRC to develop the *Central Puget Sound HCT Corridor Assessment* (PSRC, 2004). Also, Sound Transit's Board of Directors requested the preparation of a series of issue papers to provide them with information they needed to make long-range decisions about the future of the regional mass transit system. In March of 2005, Sound Transit published *Issue Paper S3: HCT System Development Issues in the South Corridor* (Sound Transit, 2005b),

which focused on the issues and considerations that may need to be addressed as HCT services are implemented in phases in the South Corridor. Both of these efforts and findings are summarized below, followed by an overview of the *Long-Range Plan* adopted by the Sound Transit Board in July 2005.

2.6.1 *Central Puget Sound HCT Corridor Assessment* (PSRC, 2004)

The *Central Puget Sound HCT Corridor Assessment* was developed as a workbook to analyze land use, demographic, and travel pattern data to identify corridors and markets supportive of HCT extensions in both the near and long term as well as an assessment of the identified HCT modes in the study corridors. The PSRC prepared this workbook as part of Sound Transit's effort to update the 1996 *Long-Range Vision*. Four corridors were analyzed including the South Corridor, identified as extending from SeaTac to Tacoma with a spur to Dupont via Lakewood. The primary focus of the workbook was to determine the corridors (or a segment within a particular corridor) that support HCT services and the transit mode most appropriate for further evaluation. The transit modes evaluated included Enhanced Bus, BRT, light rail transit (LRT), Monorail, Skytrain, Diesel Multiple Units, Commuter Rail, Heavy Rail, Mag Lev and High-Speed Rail Systems, People Movers, and Personal Rapid Transit. The workbook evaluated each of these modes based upon nine criteria (Capacity, Operating Speeds, Station Spacing, Typical Headways, System Integration, Land Use, Implementation Risk, Schedule Reliability, and Right-of-Way) for each corridor.

The workbook did not provide any conclusions on the modes that should be implemented. However, the workbook identified light rail in the South Corridor as meeting all the needs identified in the criteria and the other modes did not meet all of the criteria. The study concludes that the light rail mode for the South Corridor has "higher capacity, speed, flexibility in frequency, and the permanence of light rail stations [that] would support the long-range land use plans and projected growth in Tacoma, Federal Way, and SeaTac. Additional investments could support travel demand beyond the horizon year." Comparatively, Enhanced Bus was determined to not support long-range land use plans, whereas the BRT was stated as already existing to some degree but it could be converted to a higher capacity system in the future. Skytrain and Diesel Multiple Units were discounted for requiring an investment in new rail facilities. Commuter Rail was found to be suited more as an inter-city service and not as a regional service. The monorail came the closest to meeting the criteria equal to light rail, but the study also identified challenges of integrating with existing monorail lines and other transit systems.

There were no comments on the workbook outside of Sound Transit's. FHWA and/or FTA were not involved in the development of the workbook and no environmental analysis or public review was sought for this document.

HCT Evaluated in the Project Corridor

The *Central Puget Sound HCT Corridor Assessment* evaluated 11 modes of HCT in the project corridor, but did not identify any specific routes for the modes. The modes included the following:

- Enhanced Bus, BRT, Light Rail, Monorail, Skytrain, Diesel Multiple Units, Commuter Rail, Heavy Rail, Mag Lev and High-Speed Rail, People Movers, and Personal Rapid Transit

2.6.2 *Issue Paper S3: HCT System Development Issues in the South Corridor* (Sound Transit, 2005)

Issue Paper S3 anticipated a future north-south light rail alignment generally within the limits of I-5 or SR 99 that would include stations in SeaTac, Des Moines, and Federal Way. Regional bus service was expected to operate on freeway and arterial HOV lanes where appropriate. Key findings were that:

- The role of express buses may shift depending on light rail service, and
- As the HCT system develops over time, some corridors may need to be served by more than one transit mode.

This issue paper was not subject to any environmental review or public review, and was not distributed for agency involvement or review by the FHWA and/or FTA.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

Issue Paper S3: HCT System Development Issues in the South Corridor identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail on SR 99 and/or I-5

2.6.3 Overview of the Long-Range Plan

Based on the studies above and a SEPA environmental evaluation, the Sound Transit Board adopted an updated long-range plan in July of 2005. The 2005 *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan* was partially consistent with the 1996 *Long-Range Vision*, as it included a light rail extension along SR 99 between SeaTac and Federal Way and regional express bus service in the I-5 corridor. However, the 2005 *Long-Range Plan* changed the I-5 corridor from a planned HOV expressway to a planned BRT corridor. Just as the 1996 *Long-Range Vision* corresponds with a list of Phase I improvements known as *Sound Move*, the 2005 *Long-Range Plan* corresponds with the list of Phase II improvements known as the *Sound Transit 2 Plan* (ST2). The 2005 *Long-Range Plan* and ST2 are current planning documents under which the Federal Way Transit Extension is being developed.

The purpose of the 2005 *Long-Range Plan* was to make the 1996 plan consistent with updated local and regional land use and transportation plans, and to identify projects and establish Sound Transit's priorities for the next phase of HCT improvements. The *Long-Range Plan* represents Sound Transit's goals, policies, and strategies to guide the long-term development of the HCT system. It is intended to guide how the Sound Transit system can best address the region's mobility needs and support growth management objectives, and is intended to be implemented in a series of phases.

Relevant goals from the *Long-Range Plan* include:

- Provide a public transportation system that helps ensure long-term mobility, connectivity, and convenience for the citizens of the Puget Sound region for generations to come.
    - Provide reliable, convenient, and safe public transportation services between regional growth centers and create an integrated system of transit services and fares.

- Preserve communities and open space.
  - Support communities' ability to develop — consistent with state and regional laws and growth management policies — in ways that keep our neighborhoods livable and protect our natural resources and open space.
- Contribute to the region's economic vitality.
  - Increase access to jobs, education, and other community resources; enhance the region's ability to move goods and services.
- Preserve our environment.
  - Conserve land and energy resources, and control air pollution.

Relevant objectives from the *Long-Range Plan* include:

- Keep the region moving.
  - Increase the percentage of people using public transportation throughout the region for all trips, not just trips to work.
  - Increase the percentage of people using transit for their trips to work and the percentage using transit to reach major regional employment centers.
  - Increase public transportation ridership at a rate faster than the population is growing.
  - Reduce the average time it takes to make a trip by transit.
  - Increase transit speeds and improve the reliability of transit service.
  - Make it easier to use transit to reach jobs, schools, medical facilities, recreation, and shopping throughout the region.
  - Support ridesharing, vanpooling, and other commute trip reduction programs that complement the regional transit system.
- Offer cost-effective and efficient transportation solutions.
- Offer the most efficient and effective services and facilities possible within available resources.
- Create a regional transit system that provides community, social, economic and environmental benefits.
  - Help limit urban sprawl, maintain open space, and protect natural resources.
  - Support creation of communities that are easy to reach and use on foot, by bicycle, on transit and by people with disabilities.
  - Increase transportation options that use less energy, consume less land resources, and produce less pollution.

As shown in Exhibit 2-3, this plan envisions light rail in the South Corridor. Consistent with the Long-Range Vision, the plan does identify a potential rail extension from SeaTac to Tacoma. The plan states that economic impacts on the development of PSRC-designated Urban Centers, future community and employment centers, and local activity centers shall be added to the criteria for determining the routing for future light rail.

The Long-Range Plan update included preparation of a Supplemental EIS to the 1993 Regional Transit System Plan Final EIS. The Supplemental EIS process included the involvement of local, state, tribal, and federal agencies, including FHWA and FTA. Local jurisdictions were also involved, including the cities of SeaTac, Des Moines, Kent, and Federal Way. The EIS addressed SEPA requirements and included public scoping, a public hearing, and the opportunity for the public to comment on the EIS.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The 2005 *Long-Range Plan* and Final Supplemental EIS identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail along I-5 or parallel arterials such as SR 99
- Express bus/BRT along I-5

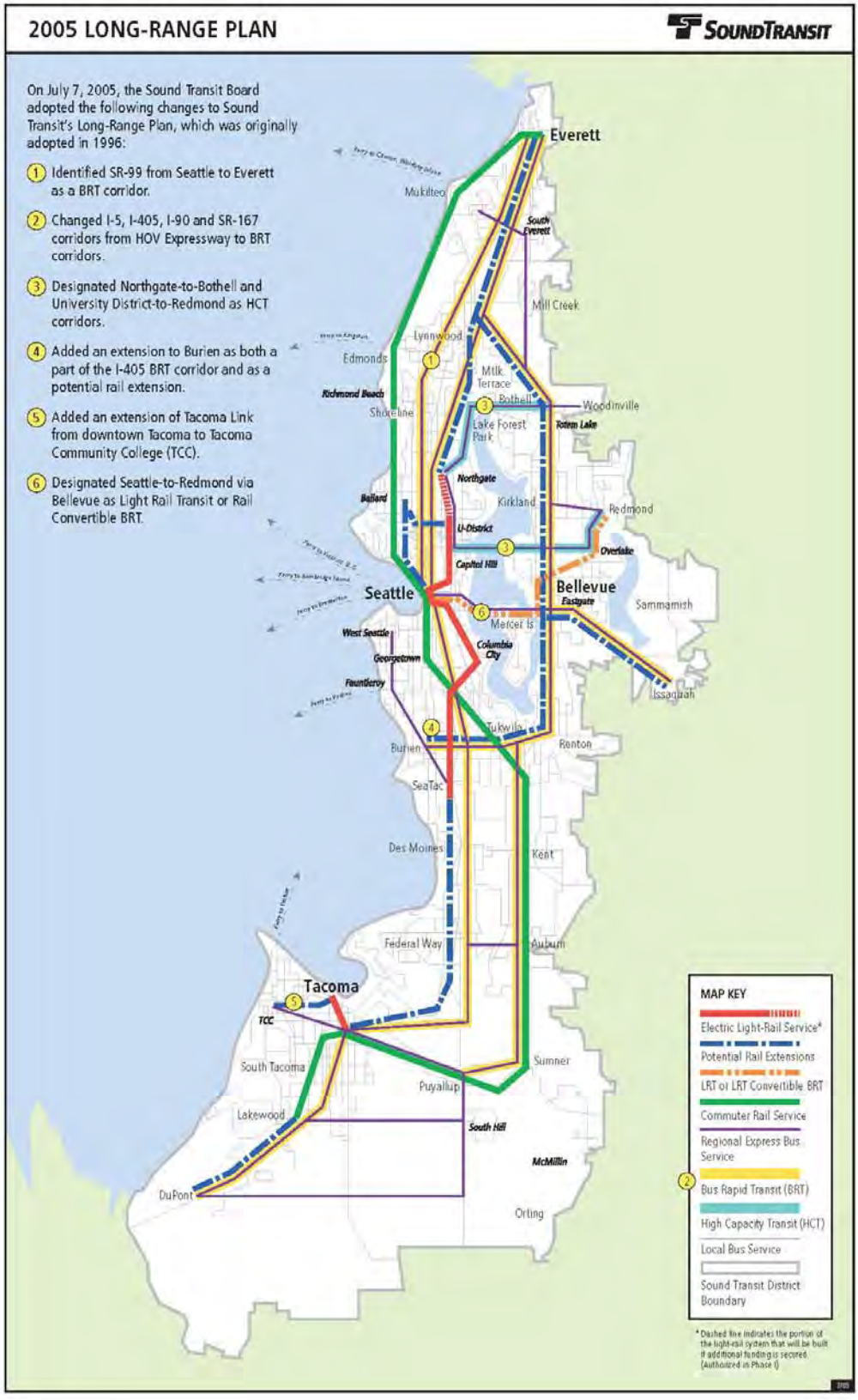
2.7 *Sound Transit 2 Plan* (Sound Transit, 2008)

The 2005 *Long-Range Plan* corresponds with a list of Phase II improvements known as the *Sound Transit 2 Plan* (ST2). The purpose of ST2 was to build upon the facilities and services of *Sound Move* and extend the regional transit network into more communities. Implementation of ST2 was anticipated to cost an estimated $17.8 billion (year of expenditure dollars, including inflation) and would add Regional Express bus and Sounder commuter rail services while building 36 additional miles of light rail to form a 55-mile regional system. The extension of the light rail from SeaTac to Federal Way (S. 272nd Street) was included in ST2, which was approved by voters in November 2008.

Appendix A of the ST2 Plan, Detailed Description of Facilities and Estimated Costs, includes a Link light rail extension from SeaTac/Airport Station to Redondo/Star Lake with stations at S. 200th, Highline Community College, and Redondo/Star Lake (Sound Transit, 2008).

ST2 did not include separate environmental review as part of the development of ST2 because it was based on the 2005 *Long-Range Plan*, which had undergone environmental review. However, ST2 did consider social, economic, and environmental factors. ST2 included an extensive public involvement process that included distribution of materials to the public, public meetings, a Sound Transit web page, community outreach, and inter-agency coordination. The other agencies included the cities of SeaTac, Des Moines, Kent, and Federal Way.

An expert review panel (ERP) was assembled to provide an independent and expert technical review for the update to the *Long-Range Plan* and development of the ST2 Plan by Sound Transit, consistent with Chapter 81.104.110 Revised Code of Washington, Independent System Plan Oversight.



Source: Sound Transit, 2005a.

EXHIBIT 2-3
Sound Transit's 2005 Long-Range Plan Map

Panel members were appointed by the Governor, Legislative Transportation Committee, and the Secretary of Transportation.

The ERP held meetings to discuss the plan and provide comments to Sound Transit prior to any Sound Transit Board decisions. The ERP met eight times between February 2005 and June 2007, and issued a final opinion letter in September for the ST2 plan that ultimately did not receive voter approval in November 2007. The ERP met an additional three times between March and October 2008, reviewed the revisions to the ST2 proposal, and issued their final letter of comment in October 2008 prior to the November 2008 ballot measure. Topics in the final letter included analysis and assumptions Sound Transit used for estimating costs and developing the financial plan; greenhouse gas analysis; the new bus service hours to be added in 2009; the phasing of investments and construction; light rail on the I-90 bridge; and compliance with state law. In the final letter, the ERP concluded that ST2 met each of the requirements, which included:

- Organization and management requirements
- Development of options
- Development of methodologies, detailing assumptions and methods used for ST2 plan development
- Requirements for the regional elements of a HCT system plan, with the note that no HOV improvements are included in ST2

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The ST2 project list, generated for planning purposes and to generate cost estimates, identified the following HCT facilities in the project corridor:

- ST2 project #S28 suggests Link Extension from S. 200th to Kent-Des Moines Road via SR 99
- ST2 project #S29A suggests Link Extension from Kent-Des Moines to S. 272nd via SR 99
- Stations at S. 200th, Highline Community College, and Redondo/Star Lake

2.8 *Transportation 2040* (PSRC, 2010b)

Vision 2020 (PSRC, 1990) was replaced with a new, updated land use plan in 2010 known as *Vision 2040* (PSRC, 2010a). *Vision 2040* rededicates the region's commitment, as stated in *Vision 2020,* to enable residents to live near jobs and other urban activities, to help strengthen existing communities, and to promote bicycling, walking, and transit use. These focus areas are identified as "urban centers." In response to the GMA, PSRC's metropolitan transportation plan, *Transportation 2040* (PSRC, 2010b), establishes policies that prioritize new transportation services in areas that accept an increased share of growth.

Vision 2040 and *Transportation 2040* recognize the cities of SeaTac and Federal Way as regional growth centers. These plans depend on HCT to connect growth centers.

An EIS was prepared for *Transportation 2040* and the process included the involvement of local, state, tribal, and federal agencies, including FHWA and FTA. Local jurisdictions were also involved, including the cities of SeaTac, Des Moines, Kent, and Federal Way, which are member agencies of PSRC. The EIS addressed both NEPA and SEPA requirements and also included numerous opportunities for public involvement, including during public scoping, a public hearing, and the opportunity for the public to comment on the EIS.

As a follow-up to *Transportation 2040*, PSRC is conducting a regional corridor study referred to as the Growing Transit Communities Partnership. This study is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Transportation, FTA, FHWA, and WSDOT. The study recognizes the value of urban rapid transit in the growth and economic development around station areas. The objective is to identify potential areas for Equitable Transit Communities. Equitable Transit Communities are mixed-use, transit-served neighborhoods that provide housing and transportation choices and greater social and economic opportunity for current and future residents. Although defined by a half-mile walking distance around high-capacity transit stations, these communities exist within the context of larger neighborhoods with existing residents and businesses.

PSRC has partnered with other public, private, and non-profit organizations to form the Growing Transit Communities Partnership to engage residents and stakeholders in approximately 20 jurisdictions to develop: 1) a report on existing conditions; 2) an action plan for corridors and station areas and other transit nodes within them; and 3) implementation agreements with local and regional jurisdictions and other parties to adopt policies, regulations, tools, and investment priorities that promote equitable transit communities. The South Corridor includes 25 study areas from the Stadium Link Station in Seattle to the Theatre District Link Station in Tacoma. The study is not complete and therefore no results are reported at this time.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The 2010 *Transportation 2040* identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail along SR 99
- BRT along SR 99

3.0 Review of Plans Pertinent to the Federal Way Transit Extension

As previously discussed, the purpose of this study is to provide to Sound Transit and the public some background and context upon which transit planning decisions have been made to date as well as influences on future HCT planning. Regional plans were discussed in Chapter 2.0. WSDOT, King County, King County Metro, and local jurisdiction plans are summarized in this chapter according to their relevance to the Federal Way Transit Extension, and the results are presented in this chapter.

The following plans did not discuss a light rail extension between SeaTac and Federal Way and therefore are not summarized below; however, they are included in the full list of documents reviewed in Appendix A:

- SR 509: Corridor Completion/I-5/South Access Road Final EIS and Section 4(f) Evaluation (2003)
- Pierce Transit Draft Transit Development Plan, 2011-2016
- Highline Community College 2006 Strategic Plan
- Des Moines Creek Business Park Conceptual Master Plan and EIS (2006)

Planning documents are relevant to the Federal Way Transit Extension if they contained information related to HCT in the project corridor (the general north/south corridor between S. 200th Street in SeaTac and the Federal Way City Center). Current relevant WSDOT, King County, and King County Metro plans are summarized in Section 3.1, and local jurisdiction plans are summarized in Section 3.2. Both of these sections include the following information for each relevant plan: the vision or goals of each plan, the plan's relationship to HCT in the project corridor, and the relevant actions/outcomes of the plan. Additionally, a bulleted list of any specific HCT alignment and/or station references is provided.

3.1 State, County, and King County Metro Regional Plans

This section provides information on the pertinent state and regional plans prepared by WSDOT and King County.

3.1.1 *SR 99 Route Development Plan (Federal Way to Tukwila)* (WSDOT, 2006)

The *SR 99 Route Development Plan* was prepared by WSDOT in order to accommodate current and forecasted growth trends to the year 2010 and covered the area along SR 99 from the Pierce/King County line to SR 599. The plan reviewed improvements to SR 99 to increase capacity, including the addition of a rail transit treatment. The Plan recommended improvement of this section to a six/seven-lane design with two alternatives for the median section. As congestion grows, it will become increasingly important to shift more of the trips to transit. The best use of the sixth and seventh lanes will probably be for transit only.

A multi-corridor project (MCP) was considered in order to analyze a number of alternatives where rail transit could be located, with the primary alternatives including an alignment on I-5 and two alignments on SR 99 starting in different areas to the north, but with both alignments traveling to Federal Way. The MCP chose the alternative that goes to I-5 after heading south of SeaTac. The alternatives along SR 99 were eliminated because the alignments would need to be elevated to meet the desired operating characteristics. It should be noted that all of the alternatives were selected for comparison of modes only, and no alignments were officially adopted. The *SR 99 Route Development Plan* states that the SR 99 corridor was much more compatible with rail development than I-5 because of the land use opportunities in the corridor, and should be included in the analysis when a route is selected because what was considered obtrusive to traffic in the MCP may be considered an opportunity in the future. The plan did not include any public review or comment.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The *SR 99 Route Development Plan* identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- Light rail along SR 99 or I-5

3.1.2 *Looking to the Future: Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 2002 to 2007* (King County Metro, 2002)

King County Metro's *Looking to the Future: Six-Year Transit Development Plan* was adopted in September 2002 and updated in November 2004. This strategic plan constitutes King County Metro's 6-year transit development and financial program in compliance with state law (Revised Code of Washington 35.58.2795). The plan sets forth objectives and strategies for transit, paratransit, rideshare services, and supporting capital facilities in King County, and establishes the policy basis on which annual operating and capital program decisions are made. This plan is relevant to the project as it identified transit corridors in the project area and identified the need for BRT in the project corridor along SR 99. Relevant objectives in the 6-year plan included:

> Objective 2. Provide higher bus service levels to established urban and manufacturing/industrial activity centers in King County. Develop service improvements within urban areas along key freeway and Regional Arterial Network (RAN) corridors.
>
> Objective 6. Design and provide efficient service to major destinations and along corridors through an integrated network of service provided by King County Metro, Sound Transit, Community Transit, Pierce Transit, and the Washington State Ferry System.

To implement objectives identified in this plan, 29 plan strategies provided the direction for service and system development. Two strategies in the 6-year plan are relevant to HCT in the project corridor. The first strategy is related to the urban centers in King County. In 1994, King County designated the Urban Growth Area in coordination with the cities and established urban and manufacturing/industrial centers within this boundary. The cities of SeaTac and Federal Way were both identified as urban centers, which are areas of concentrated employment and housing. These urban centers relate to Strategy S-3 from King County Metro's 6-year plan:

> Strategy S-3: Improve service levels on existing routes and create new routes serving established urban and manufacturing/industrial centers and urban areas where, because of population or employment clusters, ridership and transit use is projected to be the highest. Improve frequencies to support existing demand and attract more riders on a core network of key connections as listed in Table 4-2 and shown in Figure 4-1.

The six-year plan identified SR 99 and I-5 as core service connections, and SR 99 between Federal Way and SeaTac as core service priority investment corridor. Exhibit 3-1 shows the core service connections as they were identified in the 6-year plan.

The second relevant strategy, Strategy S-5, relates to the development of a BRT:

> Strategy S-5: Coordinate with the appropriate jurisdictions and agencies to define the project elements and costs associated with the development of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system identified in Figure 4-4. Utilizing West Subarea new and existing service hours, move towards full implementation of BRT service in the Aurora Avenue North Corridor and develop strategies for implementation of a future BRT system.

The strategy relates to the project as King County Metro solicited proposals from the cities of SeaTac, Des Moines, Kent, and Federal Way as well as WSDOT in development of potential BRT corridors. Figure 4-4 mentioned in Strategy S-5 is shown as Exhibit 3-2. Exhibit 3-2 illustrates the three corridors that King County Metro identified for the implementation of a starter BRT line, which included SR 99 (also known as Pacific Highway South) and S. 154th Street, connecting Federal Way, Midway, SeaTac, and Southcenter.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

King County Metro's Plan, *Looking to the Future: Six Year Transit Development Plan for 2002 to 2007,* identified the following HCT in the project corridor:

- BRT along SR 99

3.1.3 *Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016* (King County, 2007)

King County Metro's *Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016* was adopted in November 2007 and updated in 2009. This plan replaced and updated the previous plan, *Looking to the Future: Six Year Transit Development Plan for 2002 to 2007*. The strategic plan describes how King County Metro will implement the goals, objectives, and policies in the plan over the 10-year planning period. The strategic plan sets forth strategies for transit, paratransit, and rideshare services and supporting capital facilities in King County, and guides annual operating and capital program decisions that define Metro services.

Although previous planning identified the need for BRT in the project corridor, funding for this effort was not provided until King County voters approved the Transit Now ballot measure in 2006. Transit Now provided funding for transit projects through an increase in the sales tax. The 2007-2016 strategic plan continued the strategies from the six-year plan and incorporated the initiatives from Transit Now. The BRT initiative was referred to as RapidRide in the 2007-2016 strategic plan.

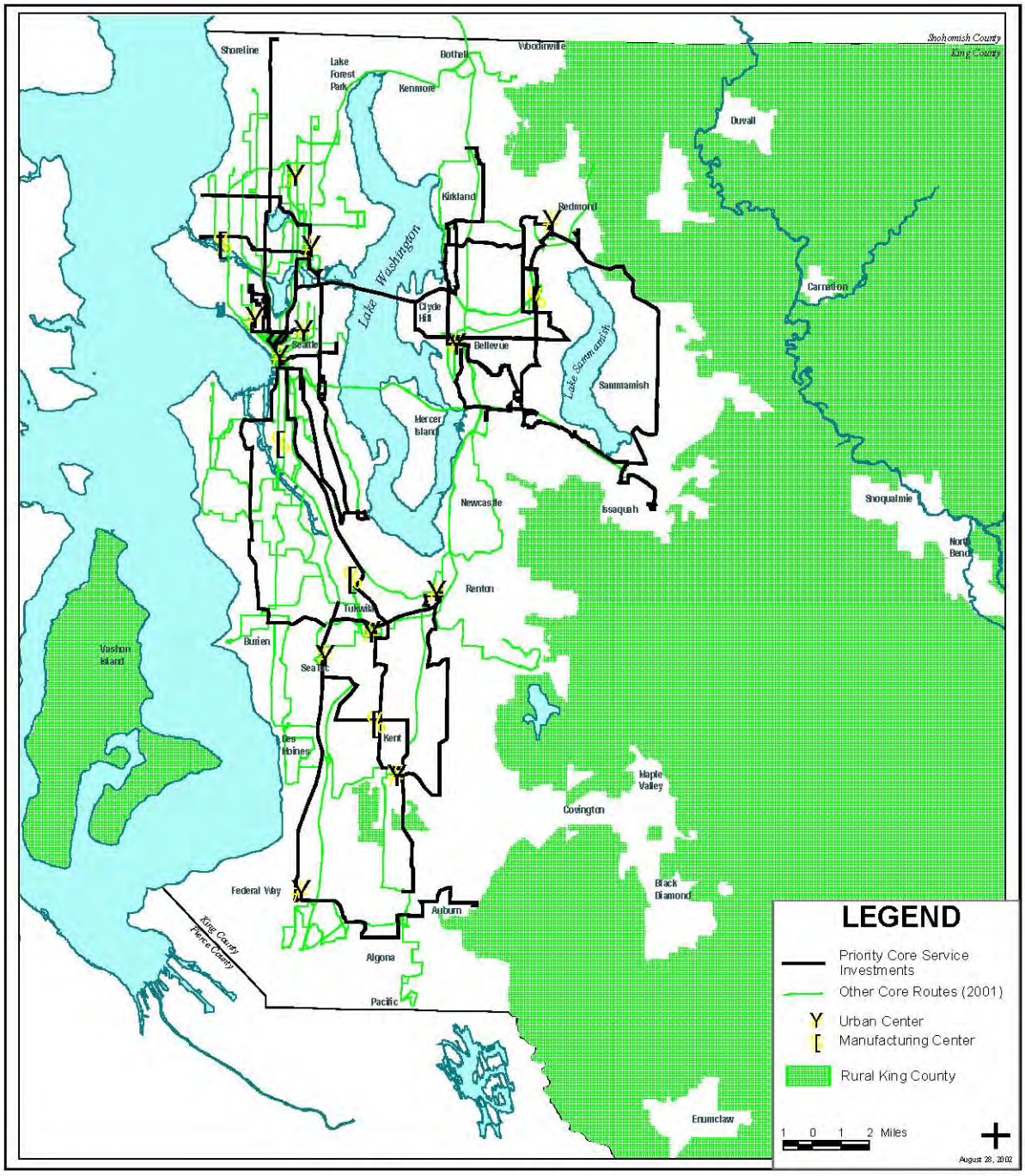


Figure 4-1: Core Service Priority Investment Corridors

Source: King County Metro, 2002.

EXHIBIT 3-1
Core Service Priority Investment Corridors Identified in
King County Metro's Six-Year Transit Development Plan

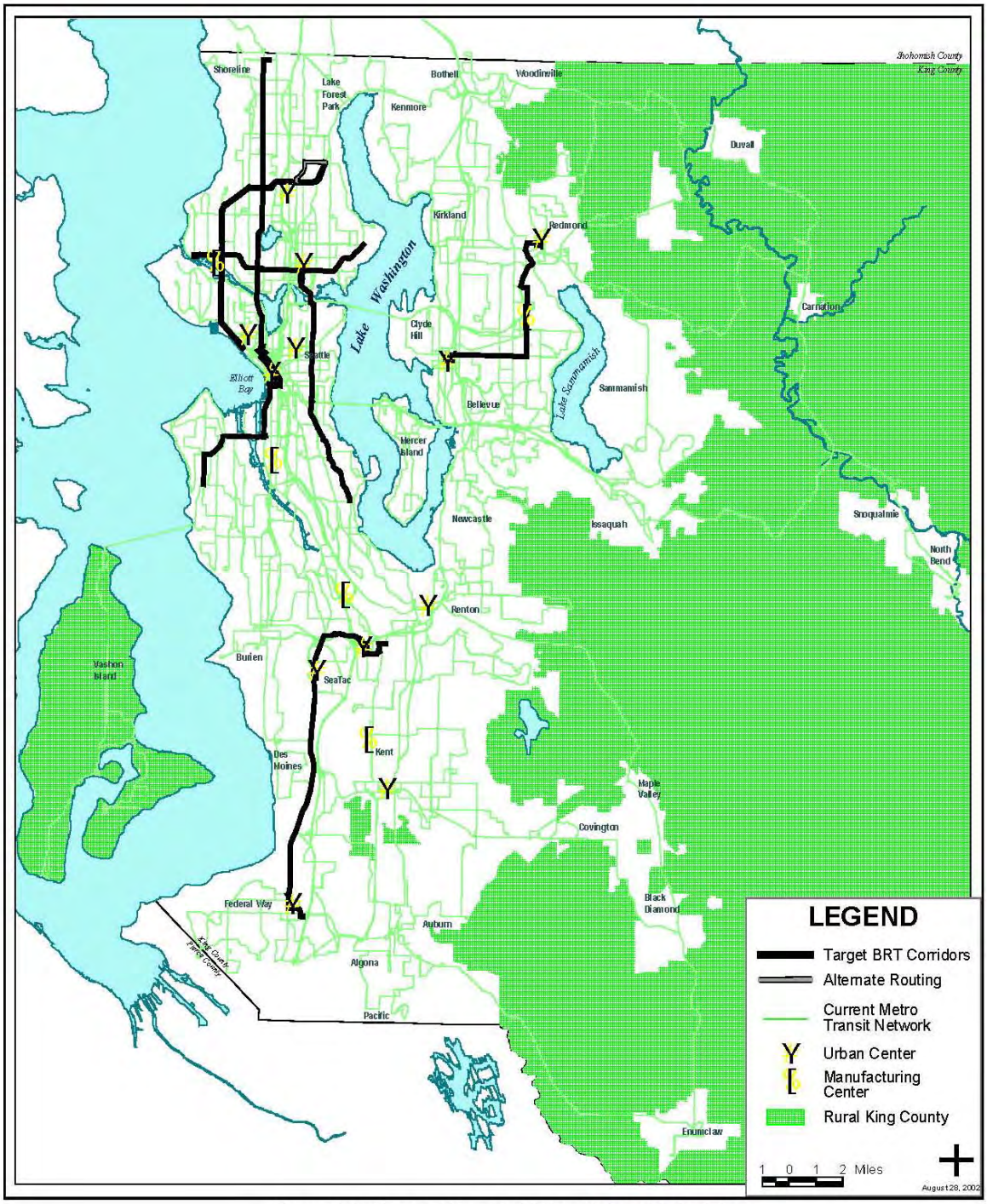


Figure 4-4: Targeted Bus Rapid Transit Arterial Corridors

Source: King County Metro, 2002.

EXHIBIT 3-2
Targeted Bus Rapid Transit Arterial Corridors Identified in King County Metro's Six-Year Transit Development Plan

The Transit Now ballot measure provided funding to implement the RapidRide bus rapid transit service in five corridors. These are described in Strategy S-5 "Bus Rapid Transit" and shown on the map referred to in this strategy (Exhibit 3-3):

> Strategy S-5: Bus Rapid Transit. Design, develop and implement RapidRide, a Bus Rapid Transit system identified in Exhibit 4-6. Pursue grant funds and work with local jurisdictions to leverage additional funds to enhance the service frequency, speed, reliability, amenity and identity of RapidRide services funding by the Transit Now program.

Another implementation strategy is also relevant to BRT in the project corridor, Strategy IM-1:

> Strategy IM-1: Service Program: A King County Metro priority is to implement the Transit Now program passed by voters in 2006 and shown in Exhibit 6-1, which includes service and capital support for these initiatives:
>
> - RapidRide BRT. Use a target of 100,000 annual service hours between 2007 and 2016 to implement RapidRide BRT service in five corridors, consistent with service strategy S-5. The RapidRide corridors are:
>   - Shoreline/Downtown Seattle via Aurora Avenue North
>   - West Seattle/Downtown Seattle via West Seattle Bridge
>   - Ballard/Seattle Center/south downtown stadium area via 15th Ave Northwest and West Mercer Street with service or frequent connections to Ballard High School and the Ballard business district.
>   - Federal Way/Tukwila via Pacific Highway S.
>   - Bellevue/Redmond via Crossroads and Overlake

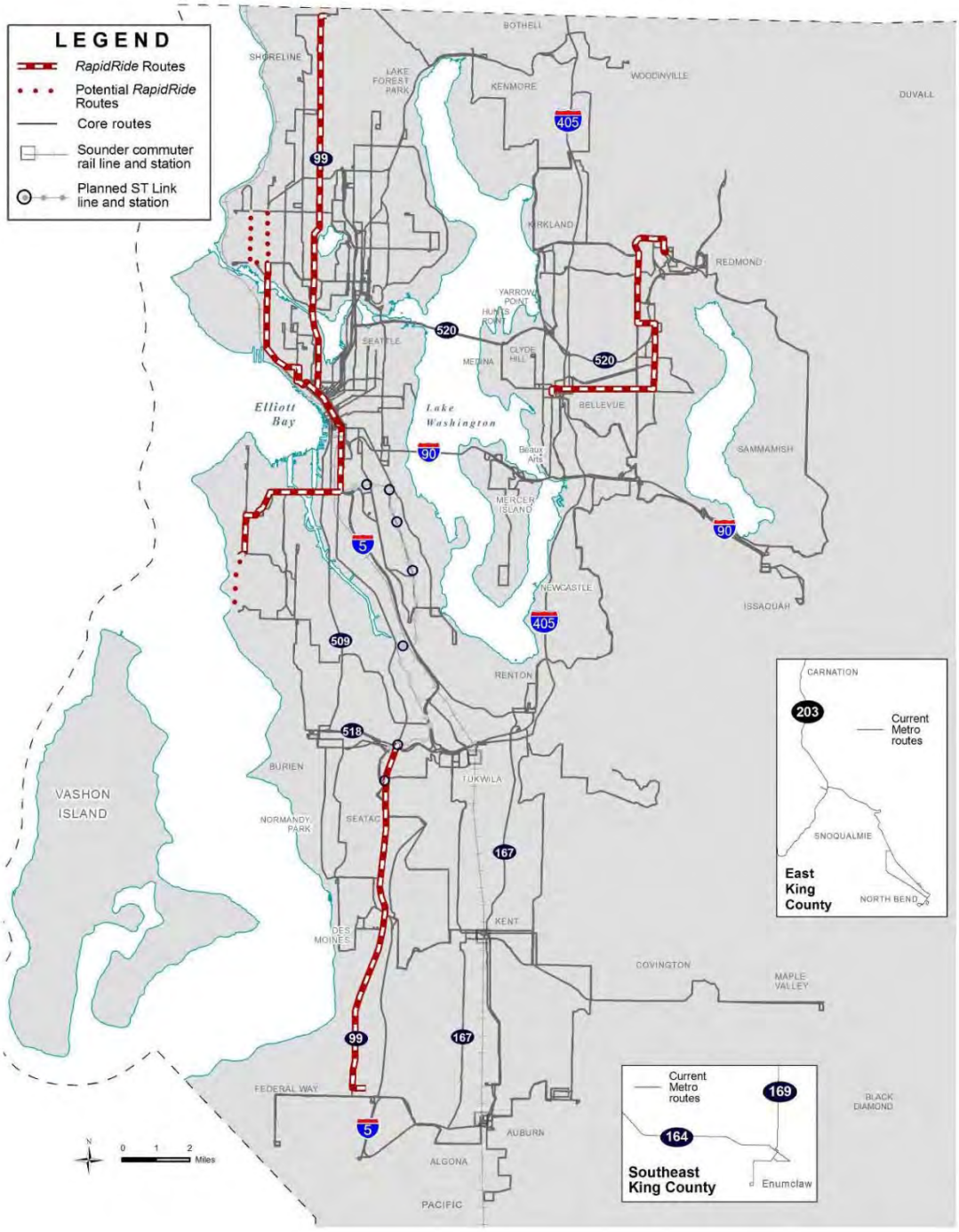
The first scheduled RapidRide was identified in the strategic plan as the route along SR 99 in the project corridor. This line is known as the "RapidRide A Line" and has been operational since October 2010.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

King County's *Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016* was consistent with the previous plan because it identified the need for the following HCT improvement in the project corridor:

- BRT (RapidRide) along SR 99

Exhibit 4-6
RapidRide Corridors



Source: King County Metro, 2007.

EXHIBIT 3-3
Rapid Ride Corridors

3.1.4 *King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011 to 2021* (King County Metro, 2011)

The updated *Strategic Plan for Public Transportation* was adopted in July 2011. This plan describes a vision for the future of King County's public transportation system and sets objectives, goals, and strategies for getting there. The mission of the plan is to provide the best possible public transportation services and improve regional mobility and quality of life in King County. Although this plan does not identify major improvements in the project corridor, it does identify the following strategy, which is relevant to the Federal Way Transit Extension:

> Strategy 3.2.2: Coordinate and develop services and facilities with other providers to create an integrated and efficient regional transportation system.

The strategic plan continues in this strategy to describe that when Sound Transit introduces new services, Metro can free up resources to invest in routes with greater demand and unmet service needs. Where parallel services exist, Metro can restructure routes to create service that is more frequent, productive, and reliable.

The 2011-2021 strategic plan briefly mentions that Sound Transit plans to extend light rail south along SR 99. It states that the growth of the light rail system offers opportunities for Metro to provide better connections for riders to and from this HCT service, improving the overall efficiency of the region's transportation system.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011 to 2021 refers to Sound Transit's plans to expand HCT in the following manner in the project corridor:

- Light rail expansion along SR 99

3.2 Current Local Plans

Washington cities are required by the GMA to develop and update a comprehensive plan. The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to direct the planned growth within each city over a 20-year period and allow the cities to plan for future growth. Washington State law requires cities to update their comprehensive plans every 7 years and cities may choose to amend comprehensive plans more frequently. Some of the cities have also prepared and adopted transportation plans as an element of the comprehensive plans; these provide the blueprints of the long-range transportation system in each of the cities. The transportation elements of the cities need to be consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan, either *Destination 2030* or *Transportation 2040* depending on when the transportation element was last updated or amended. As discussed in Section 2.0, both *Destination 2030* and *Transportation 2040* identified HCT in the form of light rail along the SR 99 corridor, and the cities within the South Corridor need to ensure their planning process will be able to accommodate HCT and plan for future land uses. In addition, specific plans have been developed by some of the cities for certain subareas within the cities.

During development or update of these plans, per Washington Administrative Code 365-196-610 (2) (a) jurisdictions are recommended to establish a public participation program for the review of updates of comprehensive plans and development regulations.

The following subsections provide information from the applicable comprehensive plans, transportation plans, and specific plans for the cities in the South Corridor (SeaTac, Des Moines, Kent, and Federal Way) that is related to improvements in transit within the South Corridor, especially any improvements in HCT and specifically light rail.

3.2.1 City of SeaTac

The *City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan* was adopted in 1994 with the most recent updates to the plan made in November 2011. The transportation element of the comprehensive plan provides information on light rail, but the focus of the plan's information and any related goals and policies is on the future station at S. 200th Street and the stations and alignment to the north of S. 200th Street and outside of the project area. The preferred alignment from the *City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan* is shown on Exhibit 3-4.

The land use element of the plan identifies the City's preferred alignment south of the S. 200th Street Station as being along SR 99 on the west side of the roadway. There are no goals and policies in the various elements of the comprehensive plan that relate to the area or the alignment south of S. 200th Street.

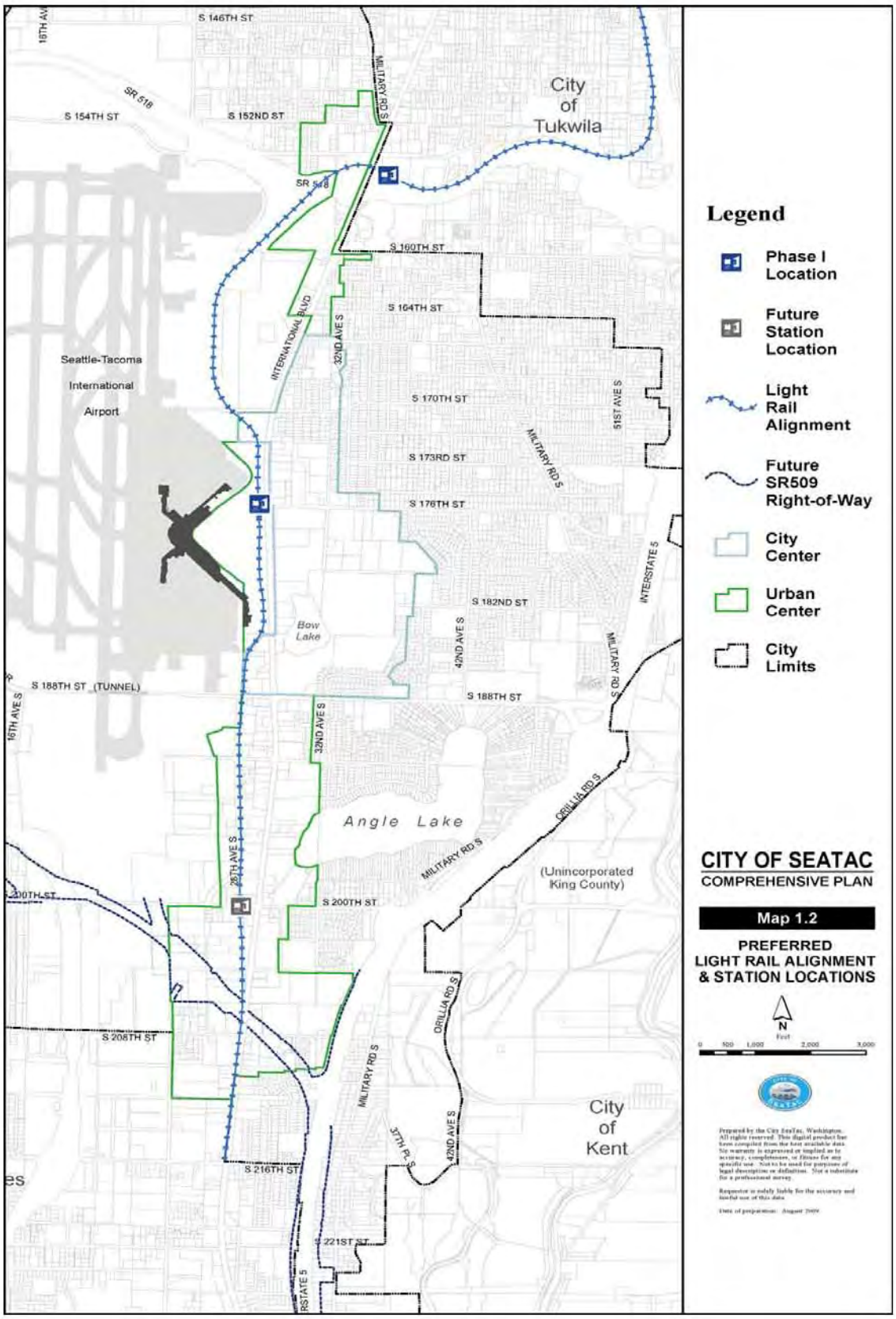
HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The City of SeaTac Comprehensive identified the following HCT facilities in the project corridor:

- Light rail west of SR 99 with a station at S. 200th Street

3.2.2 City of Des Moines

The City of Des Moines has an adopted Comprehensive Plan (2009a) and Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) (2009b). The goals and policies developed for the CTP are the basis for the information in the transportation element of the comprehensive plan. Within the comprehensive plan, the land use, transportation, and Pacific Ridge elements include goals and policies related to transit. The CTP also discusses the need to be consistent with other planning agencies including Sound Transit and the planned extension of light rail through the city.



Source: City of SeaTac, 2011.

EXHIBIT 3-4
City of SeaTac Preferred Alignment

3.2.2.1 Land Use

The land use element of the comprehensive plan includes the following policy to promote a healthy community:

> Encourage mixed-use, pedestrian, and transit-oriented development along major transit corridors and near transit nodes to enable residents to be physically active through daily activity, such as walking to school, work, and shopping.

3.2.2.2 Transportation

The CTP provides the goals, policies, and strategies for the next 20 years in the city for all modes of transportation including transit (Exhibit 3-5). The plan discusses King County RapidRide along Pacific Highway, and the transit vision in the plan includes Sound Transit Link Light Rail stations near Highline Community College and S. 272nd Street and Star Lake. The CTP also references Envision Midway, which led to the development of the *Midway Subarea Plan* discussed in detail under the City of Kent below.

The CTP includes the following information, even though an alignment for light rail has not been determined; however, the Des Moines City Council endorses the following considerations:

- LRT alignment must be east of center median of SR 99.
- Any alignment must be grade separated over Kent-Des Moines Road.
- An SR 99 alignment would be elevated.
- 30th Avenue S. at-grade alignment would be acceptable with LRT stop at S. 216th Street in Pacific Ridge.
- If there is no LRT stop at S. 216th Street, then preferred alignment is along I-5.

The goals and policies related to transit identified in the plan include:

> TR 4.6: Support regional plans for high capacity transit (HCT) and opportunities that extend the regional transit system (including BRT and light rail) to provide convenient connections to Des Moines.
>
> TR 4.8: Support Sound Transit light rail (LRT) station(s) in Pacific Ridge, Midway, and Redondo areas on Pacific Highway S.
>
> TR 4.9: Support frequent local service linking Downtown, Des Moines businesses and Highline Community College with HCT on Pacific Highway S.
>
> TR 4.10: Work with Sound Transit to establish a light rail transit stop at S. 216th Street.
>
> TR 4.11. Work with Sound Transit on station area planning for Midway and S. 272nd Street stations.

The transportation element in the comprehensive plan references the goals and policies identified in the CTP and does not include any additional information on transit beyond what is discussed in the CTP.

Source: City of Des Moines, 2009.

EXHIBIT 3-5
City of Des Moines Future Transit Network

3.2.2.3 Pacific Ridge

The Pacific Ridge element of the comprehensive plan relates to the Pacific Ridge neighborhood within the city of Des Moines. The neighborhood is generally centered on Pacific Highway S. from S. 212th Street in the north to Kent-Des Moines Road in the south.

The goals and policies related to transit include:

> 11-03-10 Encourage use of alternative modes of transportation, including walking, bicycling, carpooling, and mass transit. Coordinate City-sponsored transportation improvements via the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the Capital Improvement Program.
>
> 11-03-11 Coordinate with Sound Transit and the Cities of Kent, SeaTac, and Federal Way on the extension of light rail through Des Moines.
>
> 11-04-06 Encourage transit service to Pacific Ridge, such as nearby park-and-ride lots, direct bus service to light and heavy rail transit stops, bicycle corridors, to and from transit nodes, etc.
>
> 11-04-07 Support a light rail alignment on or east of the SR 99 center median, or along 30th Avenue S., provided a light rail stop is added in the vicinity of S. 216th Street; or designate the west margin of Interstate 5 as the light rail corridor through Pacific Ridge. Work with Sound Transit to establish a light rail stop in the vicinity of S. 216th Street.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The *City of Des Moines Comprehensive Plan* identified the following HCT facilities in the project corridor:

- Light rail east of center median of SR 99 (elevated alignment)
- An at-grade alignment along 30th Avenue S. only if a light rail station at S. 216th Street; if no station at S. 216th Street, then light rail along I-5
- If light rail along SR 99, additional stations at Midway (S. 240th Street) and Redondo (S. 272nd Street)

3.2.3 City of Kent

The City of Kent has adopted a Comprehensive Plan (City of Kent, 2008a) and a Transportation Master Plan (City of Kent, 2008b). The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is integrated into the Comprehensive Plan and provides the blueprint for the long-range transportation planning in the city.

3.2.3.1 Land Use

The *City of Kent Comprehensive Plan*'s overall goal is to encourage future growth and development patterns that implement the Community's vision, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and enhance the quality of life of all Kent residents. The goals and policies within the comprehensive plan do not specifically identify HCT but do provide information on designating and developing Activity Centers that will include a mixture of land uses and be able to support public transit.

3.2.3.2 Transportation

The Kent TMP only mentions the Sound Transit extension of light rail and does not provide any goals and polices related to HCT. The primary focus of the transportation element in the comprehensive plan and the TMP is on the area east of I-5.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The City of Kent plans did not identify any HCT facilities in the project corridor (however, see Midway Plan below).

3.2.4 *Midway Subarea Plan* (City of Kent and City of Des Moines, 2011)

The prospect of high-capacity light rail transit prompted the cities of Kent and Des Moines to undertake and adopt a major planning effort called Envision Midway. The mission and goals of Envision Midway were established collaboratively by the city councils of the two cities and included extensive public involvement. The outcomes from the visioning efforts of Envision Midway guided the development of the *Midway Subarea Plan*. The plan provides a look at the present and the future of the Midway area and includes goals and policies to meet the future vision of the area.

The Midway Subarea Plan is focused on the development of the area for future high-capacity light rail transit. The plan provides information on four concepts for light rail stations in the area, including information on the pros and cons of each concept. The Midway Subarea Plan map is shown in Exhibit 3-6.

The prospect of high-capacity light rail transit prompted the cities of Kent and Des Moines to undertake a major planning effort called Envision Midway. The mission and goals of Envision Midway were established collaboratively by the city councils of the two cities and included extensive public involvement. Public involvement included a series of meetings, workshops, and design charrettes as well as a visioning process with an online poll related to the land use scenario. The outcomes from the visioning efforts of Envision Midway guided the development of the Midway Subarea Plan. The plan provides a look at the present and the future of the Midway area and includes goals and policies to meet the future vision of the area.

The overall goal of the plan is as follows:

- Create a dense, pedestrian-friendly, sustainable community that provides jobs, housing, services and public open space around nodes of high capacity mass transit while maintaining auto-oriented uses between the transit oriented nodes.

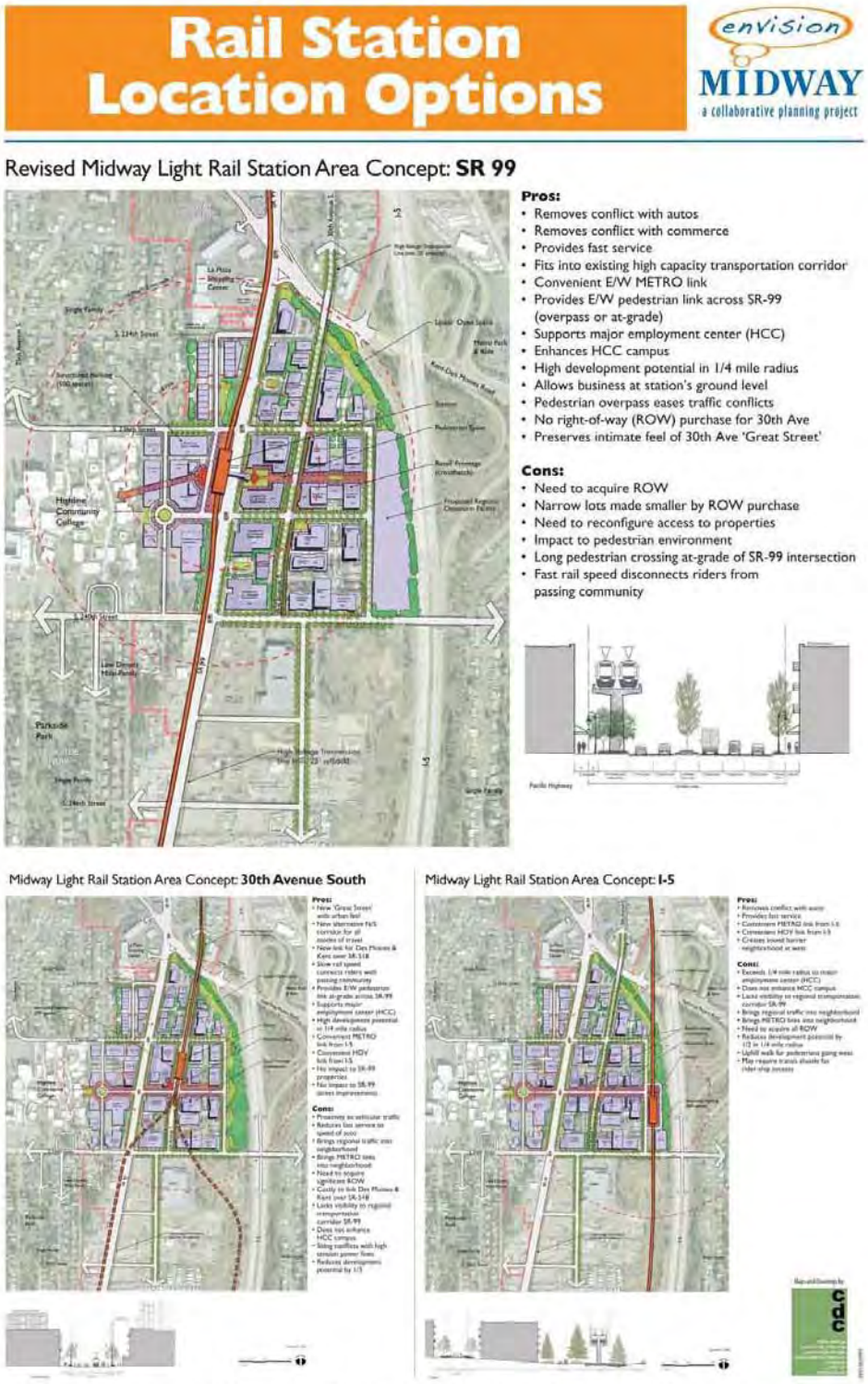


Figure 3: Envision Midway - Three Light Rail Station Concepts.

Source: City of Kent and City of Des Moines, 2011.

EXHIBIT 3-6
Midway Subarea Plan Map (Page 1)

Figure 4: East SR-99 Light Rail Station Option.

Source: City of Kent and City of Des Moines, 2011.

EXHIBIT 3-6
Midway Subarea Plan Map (Page 2)

Specific goals and policies identified in the subarea plan include:

> Goal MLU-1: Increase employment opportunities and housing choices in support of rapid light rail and mass transit options within areas designated Transit Oriented Community.
>
> Goal MLU-3: Establish a multimodal circulation network within areas designated Transit Oriented Community that is safe, interesting and encourages walking, bicycling and transit use, and connects to surrounding neighborhoods.
>
> Goal MUD-4: Support transit use and the pedestrian environment through parking management, design, and standards within areas designated Transit Oriented Community.
>
> Policy MUD-4.1: Establish methods to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation, including maximum parking standards and shared parking agreements.
>
> Goal MT-1: Establish a connected street system that encourages walking and bicycling; supports transportation investments, including existing and future mass transit; and connects surrounding single-family neighborhoods to Midway while protecting them from the impacts of spillover traffic.
>
> Goal MT-3: Integrate high capacity light rail transit service and associated station locations into the urban design and functionality of the street systems.
>
> Policy MT-3.1: Work with Sound Transit during all phases of planning for the extension of light rail into Midway to ensure Kent's preferred rail alignment and station location are realized.
>
> Goal MIC-2: Continue coordination with regional and state transportation agencies on matters of transportation investments, planning and construction.
>
> Policy MIC-2.1: Coordinate with Sound Transit, King County METRO, Washington State Department of Transportation, and Puget Sound Regional Council to ensure facilities and services are provided over time.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The Midway Subarea Plan identified the following HCT facilities in the project corridor:

- Light rail with station along either SR 99 or I-5, 30th Avenue S. through Midway area

3.2.5 City of Federal Way

The City of Federal Way Comprehensive Plan was first adopted in 1996 with the Land Use and City Center chapters updated in 2010 and the Transportation and Economic Development chapters updated in 2007. The plan identifies the need for concentrated development in the city center area of Federal Way and the need for HCT to support the planned growth and density in this area.

3.2.5.1 Land Use

The Land Use chapter includes goals and policies related to transforming Pacific Highway (SR 99) into a mixed-use corridor. The concept identified in Federal Way is to concentrate new development in the

SR 99 and I-5 corridor, develop infrastructure to support corridor development, and develop the city center into a mixed use core of the city.

3.2.5.2 Transportation

The Transportation chapter of the comprehensive plan establishes the framework and the actions needed to create and manage the transportation infrastructure and services within the city. Major needs identified in the chapter related to HCT include:

- Provide alternatives to SOVs [single-occupancy vehicles] to reduce their use, relieve congestion on streets (especially in peak hours), and provide more rapid movement of people, goods, and services on streets. This may include helicopter, rail, increased transit, park-and-ride lots, car- and vanpools, telecommuting, and information highway products.
- Provide cooperative transportation solutions that are inter-jurisdictionally coordinated to meet local and regional needs.

Goals and policies to meet the major needs and related to HCT identified in the chapter include:

> TG1. Maintain mobility for residents and businesses through a balanced, integrated system of transportation alternatives that:
>
> - Meets local and regional needs through inter-jurisdictionally coordinated and integrated systems.
> - Reduces auto dependency, especially SOV use.
> - Supports the land use vision and plan.
>
> TP1. Integrate land use and transportation plan decisions to support the land use vision and plan.

The Street and Roadway subsection of the chapter discusses the extension of light rail to Federal Way and the integration of the road system for vehicles and buses with HCT. Goals and policies related to transportation facility improvements and HCT include the following:

> TP30. Identify and plan for multi-modal freeway, arterial, and collector street improvements which ensure more efficient use of existing roads and enhancement of HOV, transit, and related non-motorized operations.
>
> TP31. Integrate the traffic circulation network with high capacity transit, HOV, bicycle, and pedestrian networks with consideration to regional system needs, including air and port facilities.
>
> TP32. Structure the City's improvement program to strategically place increments of public and private investment that complement the multi-modal vision of the plan. This should include "matching" improvements to supplement the efforts by other agencies to provide HOV and transit facilities.

TP33. Acquire rights-of-way for high capacity transit whenever possible in advance of their need, and make accommodations for any improvements, whether public or private, to provide for future high capacity transit needs without major redevelopment.

The Local and Regional Transit subsection of the chapter identifies the need to expand the regional transit and HOV systems to ensure Federal Way's vision of its city center can be achieved. The section states that the existing park-and-ride lots will be transformed to transit centers. The section also indicates that the primary area supporting HCT should be concentrated along Pacific Highway (SR 99). Goals and policies related to local and regional transit and HCT include the following:

TG6.

- Prepare and provide for an enhanced, high capacity transit system, maintaining area residents' mobility and travel options.
- Foster phased improvements that expand transit services in time to meet the demand for these services.

TP67. Promote the creation and use of a regional transit system that provides a cost effective alternative mode of travel to the single occupant auto, and assists the region in attaining air quality standards. This system should be extended to the City on a timely basis and be preceded by phased implementation of increased levels of local and regional bus and HOV services which maximize accessibility to regional jobs and maintains Federal Way as a regional activity center.

TP71. The City will continue to cooperate with regional and local transit providers to develop facilities that make transit a more attractive option (e.g., bus shelters, rapid intermodal connections, frequent all day service, safe and attractive facilities).

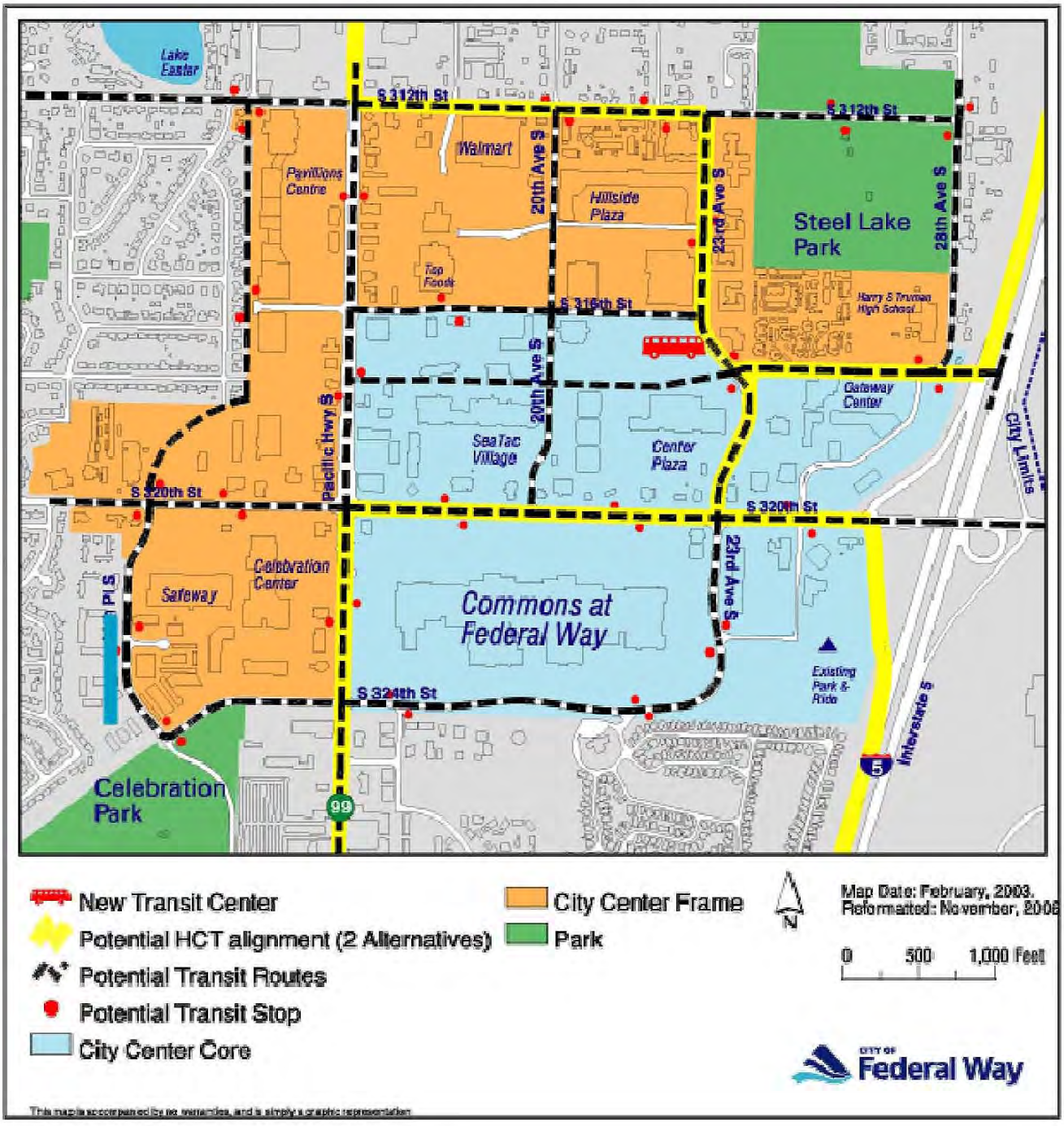
3.2.5.3 Economic Development

The Economic Development chapter of the *Federal Way Comprehensive Plan* envisions the need for a Sound Transit station in the city center to encourage economic development. The chapter also states that HCT stations provide opportunity for downtown development and transform the city center of Federal Way into a regional destination and major transit hub.

3.2.5.4 City Center

The City Center chapter identifies the need for a HCT station for planned increases in jobs and residences in the area. The chapter envisions regional bus service changing to a fixed-guideway system in the future, linking the city center to other regional and local destinations. The chapter identifies an HCT station in the city center area in the next 20 to 25 years. Exhibit 3-7 is the map from the City Center chapter, which shows potential HCT alignment and a station location in the city center area.

Map VII-7
Potential Transit Alignments and Stops



Source: City of Federal Way, 2010.

EXHIBIT 3-7
Federal Way City Center

Specific goals and polices related to HCT identified in the chapter include:

> CCG3. Connect the City Center to a convenient regional transit system. Provide service between centers and nearby areas by an efficient, transit-oriented, and multi-modal transportation system.
>
> CCG8. Develop land use patterns that will encourage less dependency on the single occupant automobile.
>
> CCG15. Provide a balanced transportation network that accommodates public transportation, high occupancy vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, and integrated parking.
>
> CCP15. Reduce congestion by supporting the Commute Trip Reduction Act. Develop commuting alternatives to single occupancy vehicles, including transit, walking, and bicycling.
>
> CCG18. Work with the transit providers to develop a detailed transit plan for the City Center. Identify facilities, services, and implementation measures needed to make transit a viable and attractive travel mode. Tailor the plan to meet local needs through rapid transit, express buses, community service, and/or demand responsive service.
>
> CCP28. Participate actively in regional efforts to develop an HCT system to serve the City Center.
>
> CCP29. Establish the most intensive levels of transit service to the City Center area.
>
> CCP30. Integrate any transit system with existing or new road right-of-way.
>
> CCP31. Integrate the high capacity transit system with other transportation modes serving Federal Way and the region.

HCT Identified in the Project Corridor

The Federal Way Comprehensive Plan identified the following HCT facilities in the project corridor:

- HCT along SR 99 or I-5 with station in City Center

4.0 Findings

This report summarizes regional, local, and sub-area-specific plans as well as nearby related development plans and previous studies that may influence or provide recommendations affecting HCT between the cities of SeaTac and Federal Way. Twenty-nine previously prepared planning documents were consulted as part of this review, the full list of which can be found in Appendix A. The relevant alignment and station locations are summarized in Table ES-1 and are shown Exhibit ES-1.

A number of the relevant planning documents identified light rail on SR 99, with three documents also considering I-5 as a possible option.

The summaries in this report demonstrate that beginning in 1981, considerable public engagement, inter-agency coordination, and consideration of stakeholder concerns has taken place in the alternatives analyses for the Federal Way Transit Extension study area. The studies and reports document performance, cost, and reliability measures that indicate that this area and the regional connectivity goals for supporting planned urban growth centers would be best served with a light rail mode. The regional studies considered both SR 99 and I-5, with more frequent mention of SR 99. This history of regional transportation planning satisfies the criteria found in 23 CFR 450.318 (b), commonly referred to as Integrating Planning and NEPA.

The plans for the cities within the Federal Way Transit Extension corridor each address improvements in the overall transit network and mention extending Sound Transit HCT or specifically light rail. The City of Kent has developed and adopted the Midway Subarea Plan, which discusses the expansion of light rail and a light rail station in the Midway area of Kent. Station locations and corresponding HCT alignments from City of Des Moines Comprehensive Transportation Plan, the Midway Subarea Plan, and the Federal Way Comprehensive Plan are shown in Exhibit ES-1.

5.0 References

City of Des Moines. 2009a. *City of Des Moines Comprehensive Plan*. June 2009.

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Joint Regional Policy Committee (JRPC). 1993a. *Regional Transit Project System Plan*.

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Sound Transit. 2005b. *Issue Paper S3: HCT System Development Issues in the South Corridor*. March.

Sound Transit. 1996. *Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan (the Long-Range Vision)*.

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Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). 2006. *SR 99 Route Development Plan (Federal Way to Tukwila)*.

Appendix A
List of Plans Consulted

Table A-1 below provides a comprehensive list of the studies that were reviewed in the preparation of this document. The list is organized by state planning entities, then regional planning entities starting with Sound Transit, followed by studies from other transit agencies, and finally local jurisdictions.

TABLE A-1
List of Plans Consulted

Author	Document Name	Year Published
PSCOG & Metro	*Multi-Corridor Project Summary Report*	1986
Metro, Pierce Transit, Community Transit, Everett Transit, SNO-TRAN, WSDOT	*Regional Transit Project Final EIS*	1993
Sound Transit	*The Regional Transit Service Proposal*	1995
Sound Transit	*Sound Move – the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan* (*the Long-Range Vision*)	1996
PSRC	*PSRC Destination 2030*	2001 (with updates through 2007)
King County Metro	*Looking to the Future: Six Year Transit Development Plan for 2002 to 2007*	2002
FHWA, WSDOT, Port of Seattle, King County, City of SeaTac, City of Des Moines	*SR 509: Corridor Completion/I-5/South Access Road Final EIS and Section 4(f) Evaluation*	2003
PSRC	*Central Puget Sound HCT Corridor Assessment*	2004
City of Kent	*Kent Comprehensive Plan-Land Use Element*	2004
City of SeaTac	*City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan - Transportation Element*	Revised in 2004
Sound Transit	*Regional Transit Long-Range Plan*	2005
Sound Transit	Issue Paper S3: HCT System Development Issues in the South Corridor	2005
Sound Transit	*Final Supplemental EIS on the Long-Range Plan*	2005
WSDOT	*SR 99 Route Development Plan (Federal Way to Tukwila)*	2006
Highline Community College	*2006 Strategic Plan*	2006
King County Metro	*Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016*	2007
Port of Seattle and City of Des Moines	*Des Moines Creek Business Park Conceptual Master Plan and EIS*	2006
City of Federal Way	*Federal Way Comprehensive Plan-Land Use,* Transportation, Economic Development and City Center chapters	Transportation and Economic Development revised in 2007 Land Use and City Center revised in 2010
Sound Transit	*LRT Design Report: SR 99 and I-5 Alignment Scenarios (S. 200th Street to Tacoma Dome Station), Tacoma Link Extension to West Tacoma*	2008

Author	Document Name	Year Published
Sound Transit	*Sound Transit 2 Plan (*ST2)	2008
City of Kent	*Kent Transportation Master Plan*	2008
City of Des Moines	*City of Des Moines Comprehensive Transportation Plan*	2009
City of Des Moines	*City of Des Moines Comprehensive Plan - Land Use and Pacific Ridge Elements*	2009
PSRC	*PSRC Vision 2040*	2009
PSRC	*Transportation 2040: Toward a Sustainable Transportation System*	2010
King County Metro	*King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2001-2021*	2011
Pierce Transit	*Pierce Transit Draft Transit Development Plan 2011-2016*	2011
City of Kent and City of Des Moines	*Midway Subarea Plan*	2011
PSRC	*Draft Existing Conditions Report: Growing Transit Communities Partnership*	2012