Chapter Six
Transportation

Whatcom County Planning Commission recommended text amendments on 6-12-25 and 6-26-25, as well as Transpo staff edits to the inclusive meaning of "multimodal" and collaboration with WTA staff on 7-2-25 for policies regarding transit service and MMLOS.

Introduction

Purpose

Whatcom County plans and maintains the County-owned portion of the region's transportation system. This chapter sets goals and priorities for Whatcom County's transportation facilities over the next 20 years. It inventories current facilities, projects future needs, and guides the planning and implementation of projects and programs to meet those needs. Its overall purpose is to ensure that Whatcom County's transportation system continues to allow for the movement of people and goods throughout the county in a way that is safe, efficient, environmentally responsible, accessible to all users, and cost effective.

Countywide Planning Policies

This chapter supports Countywide Planning Policies by encouraging alternative modes of transportation through goals and policies. It includes policies on demand management strategies and considers intercounty and international transportation links.

GMA Requirements

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires county comprehensive plans to contain "a transportation element that implements, and is consistent with the land use element." This chapter, together with the Capital Facilities Plan in Appendix E, provides that transportation element, incorporating the sub-elements also required by GMA, including inventory of facilities; multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards for highways, locally owned arterials, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit ~~routes~~; estimated traffic impacts to state-owned transportation facilities; land use assumptions; financing; intergovernmental coordination efforts; demand-management strategies; and a pedestrian and bicycle component. (RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a))

The GMA also has a concurrency provision that requires counties to "adopt and enforce ordinances which prohibit development approval if the development causes the level of service on a locally owned transportation facility to decline below the standards adopted in the transportation element of the comprehensive plan, unless transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development are made concurrent with the development." (RCW 36.70A.070(6)(b)) Whatcom County's concurrency management program is codified in Whatcom County Code Chapter 20.78, based on levels of service established in below in Policy 6A-1.

Inventory

Map 6-1 shows the existing countywide ~~transportation system~~roadway network. Whatcom County owns and maintains 943 miles of public roads. The county uses the federal function classification system to classify those roads, as depicted on Map 6-3.~~;~~ In 2024, approximately 3 percent of county roads are classified as arterials, 18 percent are major collectors, 17 percent are minor collectors, while 62 percent are local access roads. In 2024, a~~A~~bout 23 miles of county arterial roads include bike lanes or are designated as bike routes. In 2024, ~~There are~~ the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) manages about 217 miles of state highways~~;~~ in Whatcom County, 119 miles of which are H~~h~~ighways of S~~s~~tatewide S~~s~~ignificance (HSS) and 98 miles are H~~h~~ighways of R~~r~~egional S~~s~~ignificance (HRS).

The Port of Bellingham owns and operates three seaport facilities within the city of Bellingham, (Bellingham Shipping Terminal, Squalicum Harbor, and Bellingham Cruise Terminal) and one in the city of Blaine (Blaine Harbor). The Bellingham Cruise Terminal acts as the southern terminus of the Alaska State Ferry system and host to private cruise vendors. Adjacent to the Port's Bellingham Cruise Terminal is the Port's Fairhaven Transportation Station, Whatcom County's only passenger rail station and a terminal for the private Greyhound bus line. Whatcom County owns and operates a vehicle and passenger ferry on the 0.9-mile run between Gooseberry Point and Lummi Island, and the City of Blaine owns a passenger-only ferry between Blaine Harbor and the Semiahmoo resort within the Blaine city limits. There are no Washington State-owned ferry facilities in Whatcom County. Three privately-owned shipping terminals serve major industries in the Cherry Point Major Port Industrial UGA and small privately-owned recreational marinas exist in several rural communities, including Point Roberts, Semiahmoo, Sandy Point, and Sudden Valley, as well as Birch Bay Village, which is part of the Birch Bay UGA.

Commented [CC1]: 6-26-25 PC request to add to the inventory

The Port of Bellingham owns and operates Bellingham International Airport in the unincorporated UGA of Bellingham. The City of Lynden owns and operates the Lynden Municipal Airport located inside the Lynden city limits. Privately owned and operated airports exist in Whatcom County, including Point Roberts (Point Roberts Airpark), on Lake Whatcom (Floathaven Seaplane Base), near Custer (Meadow Mist), and Eliza Island.

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway owns a north-south rail line that runs through Bellingham, Ferndale, and Blaine, and a parallel line that runs through Acme, Deming, Nooksack, and Sumas. Both lines are used to transport freight, and have industrial spurs that serve industries in the Cherry Point Urban Growth Area, and Lynden, respectively. The line though Bellingham also accommodates passenger service, the Amtrak Cascades between Seattle and Vancouver, BC.

Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) operates the public transit system in Whatcom County, including fixed-route, paratransit, ~~–~~and ~~dial-a-~~rideshare service. The system serves all seven of Whatcom County's incorporated cities, the County's non-city UGA's, Birch Bay and Columbia Valley, and rural areas in between. The transit system includes transit stations in Bellingham, Ferndale, and Lynden, three of which include park and ride lots. ~~There are currently a total of nine park and ride lots in Whatcom County.~~

Commented [CC2]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions

Goals and Policies

As stated above, under GMA Requirements, Whatcom County is required to adopt multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards for all locally owned arterials, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and transit. Historically, the term "level of service" was used primarily in reference to vehicle capacity on roadways or at intersections, but the term "multimodal level of service" is inclusive of all transportation modes. To comply with GMA, and as detailed below, Whatcom County uses Highway Capacity Manual methodology for roadway capacity to measure MMLOS for motor vehicles, an Active Transportation Network measured annually for degree of completeness for MMLOS for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and annual measures of ADA accessibility and connectivity to pedestrian facilities at WTA bus stops in the County right-of-way as MMLOS for transit.

Commented [CC3]: 6-26-25 PC motion 3 approved to amend TE to include over-arching statement clarifying inclusive intent of MMLOS for all transportation modes.

Multimodal Level of Service – Motor Vehicles

GMA requires counties to adopt multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards for County roads classified as arterials. For purposes of concurrency management, Whatcom County adopts multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards for motor vehicle travel on county-owned arterials and major collectors, per GMA requirements. In addition, it is appropriate to include concurrency for the county-owned ferry service (see Policy 6A-1 and Map 6-3). MMLOS ~~Levels of service~~standards for other facilities, which are used for planning purposes but not for concurrency management, are established in subsequent policies.

The Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) sets MMLOS standards for state highways of regional significance (SR 11, 542, 544, 547, and 548). WSDOT, in consultation with local governments, sets MMLOS standards for highways of statewide significance (I-5, SR 9, SR 20, SR 539, SR 543, and SR 546). MMLOS ~~Level of service~~ standards for state-owned facilities are included in this plan to help the state monitor the performance of the system, to evaluate improvement strategies, and to facilitate coordination between the county's or city's six-year street, road, or transit program and the department of transportation's ten-year investment program. Whatcom County does not use MMLOS standards on state-owned facilities for concurrency evaluation purposes.

For roadway segments (between but not including intersections) MMLOS ~~level of service~~ is expressed as letters A-F, which correspond to the ratio of volume to capacity for a roadway segment (see Table 6-1). That ratio is determined by dividing the projected weekday afternoon peak hour traffic volume of a roadway segment by the calculated per-hour capacity of that segment. Adopted MMLOS for all County and State-owned facilities are shown on Map 6-3. Whatcom County's concurrency management system is established in Whatcom County Code Chapter 20.78, and is based on roadway segment volume to capacity ratios.

For intersections, the MMLOS is determined by the time delay (seconds per vehicle) of the stopped approach vehicle, per the current Highway Capacity Manual. Congestion at intersections due to capacity and delay issues are identified and

mitigated through the SEPA process. Intersection MMLOS is not used for concurrency evaluation purposes.

Table 6-1 County Roadway Volume/Capacity Range by LOS Designation

LOS Designation	V/C Range
A	0-0.59
B	0.60-0.69
C	0.70-0.79
D	0.80-0.89
E	0.90-0.99
F	>1.00

Multimodal Level of Service – ~~Other Modes~~Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit

GMA also requires counties to include ~~multimodal a level of service (~~MMLOS~~)~~ standards for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit ~~routes~~ modes in the transportation element. Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA)~~,~~ is the only public transit agency in the County.~~, establishes its levels of service in its Strategic Plan document; this chapter references those adopted standards. For modes of transportation other than motor vehicles~~ For pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and ferry, Whatcom County does not establish ~~levels of service~~MMLOS standards based on volumes or facility capacity, but instead focuses on progress towards completion of the planned networks ~~*quality of service through planning and design*~~ (see Goals 6D and 6E below).

Ferry service to Lummi Island ~~does not comprise an arterial or transit route; therefore it~~ is not subject to concurrency under GMA. It is, however, the only point of access for Lummi Island. For the purposes of future infrastructure planning, a MMLOS standard for the Lummi Island ferry is established in Policy 6A-1.

Goal 6A: **Provide for the long-term safe and efficient movement of people and goods, taking into consideration mitigation of climate impacts and natural hazards, by establishing and maintaining multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards ~~levels of service~~ for motor vehicle traffic volumes compared to roadway capacity (Maps 6-5, 6-6, and 6-10) and for Active Transportation Network (ATN) completeness (Maps 6-2, 6-7, and 6-8).**

Policy 6A-1: Establish the following ~~levels of service (LOS)~~ MMLOS standards for purposes of maintaining transportation concurrency:

- The ~~Level of Service (~~MMLOS~~)~~ standard for county arterials and major collectors located outside of urban growth areas during weekday p.m.-peak hours is C or better, except for specified primary routes as shown on Map 6-3, which shall have a LOS of D or better.
- The MMLOS standard for county arterials and major collectors within urban growth areas not associated with cities during

Commented [TG4]: HB 1181 requires MMLOS; Pedestrian, bicycle, transit

Whatcom County does not have the ability to enforce WTA transit performance standards listed in the Strategic Plan. The County LOS for transit is focused on the public road right-of-way that the County does have control over and the ADA accessibility that the County and WTA are required to provide for users at bus stops, sidewalks, and intersections.

Commented [KG5]: Galloway - Scrivener

Commented [KG6]: Galloway – proposed amendment (CIAC)

Commented [CC7]: Vehicle LOS map references

Commented [CC8]: Active transportation LOS map references

weekday p.m. peak hours is D or better, which may be reduced for concurrency evaluation purposes in accordance with Policy 6A-4.

- The MMLOS standard for county arterials and major collectors within city urban growth areas during weekday ~~during~~ p.m. peak hours is D or better, which may be reduced for concurrency evaluation purposes in accordance with Policy 6A-4.
- Coordinate with Whatcom Transportation Authority to ~~ensure adequate~~ consider opportunities to jointly fund ADA upgrades in County right-of-way using WTA's ADA bus stop improvement program investments~~transit service, in accordance with the level of service standards established in its current strategic plan~~.
- Public Works shall establish a performance metric to monitor service performance of the Lummi Island ferry system. This will include a week-long count at least every quarter in both sailing directions. This count will include percent capacity, on-time performance, and the number of vehicles left in the queue. The count shall be compared to the desired level of service of no more than two sailing waits during average weekday peak periods.

Policy 6A-2: Establish the following ~~levels of service~~MMLOS standards for county facilities other than arterials, major collectors, and transit routes (facilities not subject to concurrency requirements):

- The ~~Level of Service (LOS)~~ MMLOS standard for county collectors located outside of urban growth areas during weekday p.m. peak is C or better.
- The MMLOS for county collectors within urban growth areas not associated with cities during weekday p.m. peak hours is D or better.
- The MMLOS for county collectors within city urban growth areas during weekday p.m. peak hours is D or better.
- The MMLOS for all county intersections is LOS D.

Policy 6A-3: List the following level of service standards for state highways, as established by WSDOT and WCOG:

- The MMLOS for state highways in urban growth areas is D or better.
- The MMLOS for state highways in rural areas is C or better.

Policy 6A-4: For proposed developments in urban growth areas, increase the roadway volume-to-capacity ratio standard for impacted transportation facilities by 0.05 if at least one of the following

Commented [CC9]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

amenities exists or is committed to being provided as part of the development:

- WTA transit service and an ADA-compliant bus stop is within one quarter mile walking distance accessible from the development using ~~nonmotorized~~walking or biking facilities that meet or are functionally equivalent to Whatcom County Road Standards.
- Active transportation ~~Nonmotorized~~ facilities that meet or are functionally equivalent to Whatcom County Road Standards along the impacted facility.

Policy 6A-5: Encourage extension of city vehicle MMLOS standards, concurrency review authority, and associated transportation impact fees ~~LOS standards~~ into their respective UGAs to provide for greater consistency in concurrency review for urban areas.

Policy 6A-6: Identify and mitigate safety and other impacts to transportation facilities caused by development during SEPA review, using standards adopted for intersections and other minimum standards established by WCC Development Standards.

Policy 6A-7: Pedestrian MMLOS Standards on the countywide Active Transportation Network (Maps 6-2, 6-7, and 6-8) are listed below, subject to funding availability:

a) Incorporated UGA: Urban standard sidewalks both sides or shared two-way multiuse pathway one side.
b) Unincorporated UGA: Urban standard sidewalk ~~one~~both sides or shared two-way multiuse pathway one side.
c) Rural County: 5-foot-wide shoulder on roadway

Green = Complete Network Link, meets County standards

Yellow = Incomplete Network, doesn't meet County standards

Red = Missing Network Link, doesn't meet County standards

Policy 6A-8: Bicycle MMLOS Standards on the countywide Active Transportation Network (Map 6-2, 6-7, and 6-8) are listed below, subject to funding availability:

a) Incorporated UGA: Urban standard marked bike lanes both sides or shared two-way multiuse pathway one side.
b) Unincorporated UGA: Urban standard marked bike lanes both sides or shared two-way multiuse pathway one side.
c) Rural County: 5-foot-wide shoulder on roadway

Green = Complete Network Link, meets County standards

Yellow = Incomplete Network, doesn't meet County standards

Red = Missing Network Link, doesn't meet County standards

Commented [CC10]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Commented [CC11]: 6-12-25 PC motion approved to amend Policy 6A-5

Commented [KG12]: Galloway – Should incorporated and unincorporated UGAs have the same standards? (They already are for Policy 6A-8)

Commented [MP13]: Add Map Reference

Commented [CC14R13]: See reference to Map 6-2 in policy 6A-7 text above

Commented [TG15]: Required by GMA (HB 1181) for MMLOS standards. MMLOS standards are registered to UGA and rural land use contexts, as well as the reality of Whatcom County transportation funding limitations.

Commented [CC16R15]: See reference to Map 6-2 in policy 6A-8 text above

Policy 6A-9: The Transit MMLOS Standard is based on site readiness for installation of stop amenities and ADA accessibility of WTA transit bus stops within the public road right-of-way. The prioritization and completion of ADA upgrades at all WTA bus stops provides mutual benefit to Whatcom County and WTA.

Gold = ADA Compliant Pedestrian Connection to Transit Stop and a landing pad sufficient to support a transit shelter

Green = ADA Compliant Transit Stop and ADA-compliant Pedestrian Connection to Transit Stop or a landing pad sufficient to support a transit shelter

~~Yellow~~Orange = Non ADA-compliant Transit Stop and Substandard Pedestrian Connection to Transit Stop ——and a landing pad sufficient to support a transit shelter

Red = ~~Missing~~Non-compliant Transit Stop and No Pedestrian Connection to Transit Stop

Commented [CC17]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Commented [CC18]: 6-26-25 PC motion 13 approved for multiple amendments to Policy 6A-9

Commented [MP19]: Add Map Reference

Commented [CC20R19]: Because bus stops are provided and maintained by WTA, this map will be included in the Annual Concurrency Report, but not in the Transportation Element. We can provide a map for this, as included in the DEIS Transportation chapter if the County wishes us to. Please advise.

Current and Projected Multimodal Levels of Service

Map 6-~~4~~5 shows the 20~~1~~23 daily motor vehicle traffic volumes in Whatcom County. Map 6-~~5~~6 shows the 20~~1~~23 volume-to-capacity data for County-owned arterials, based on the traffic volumes in Map 6-~~4~~5 (adjusted to represent afternoon peak hour volume) and 20~~1~~23 data on hourly roadway capacity for each road segment. When compared with the ~~level of service~~MMLOS standards adopted in Policy 6A and shown on Map 6-~~3~~6, it is evident that there was only one road segment where roadway capacities were ~~deficient in~~approaching deficiency in 20~~1~~23 (where current volume-to-capacity ratios are approaching~~exceed~~ the adopted ~~level of service~~MMLOS standards for those county-owned arterials): Lakeway Drive between ~~the~~ Bellingham City limits and ~~Lowe~~ Terrace Avenue North.

Commented [CC21]: Map reference

Commented [CC22]: Map reference

Commented [CC23]: Map reference

Commented [CC24]: Map reference

WCOG has developed a motorized travel demand model and has projected future vehicle travel demands based on assumptions of planned development patterns established in Chapter Two Land Use. Comparing the projected demand for peak hour trips with the hourly vehicular carrying capacity of County roadways shows how well the roadways are predicted to function (predicted ~~level of service~~MMLOS) in future years.

Map 6-~~6~~9 shows projected daily traffic volumes on County-owned arterials and state highways in 2045~~36~~, based on the WCOG model, and Map 6-~~7~~10 shows projected volume-to-capacity ratios for that year. For the roadways classified as arterials, the GMA requires the County to prohibit development approval—or assure needed improvements concurrent with development—if the development causes the ~~level of service~~MMLOS to fall below adopted standards.

Commented [CC25]: Map reference

Commented [CC26]: Map reference

Map 6-~~7~~10 highlights segments where the projected ratio exceeds the adopted ~~levels of service~~MMLOS established under Policy 6A-1 above. The segments where County-owned roadways classified as arterials fall below the adopted MMLOS standards in 2045~~36~~ are ~~Hannegan Road between Van Wyck Road and Kelly Road (1.01 mile),~~

Commented [CC27]: Map reference

~~and~~ Lakeway Drive between the Bellingham City Limits and Terrace Avenue North (0.63 mile).

Planning and Design of Transportation Improvements

The Capital Facilities Plan (Appendix E, Chapter ~~9~~6 Transportation) includes a list of multimodal transportation improvement projects planned for implementation over the next 20 years. This list was developed in response to safety, ~~and~~ capacity, active transportation, ADA, and transit needs identified by Public Works, WTA, and through various citizen planning efforts such as the Whatcom County Pedestrian Bicycle Plan and the Birch Bay Community Plan. This list would also include any projects needed to bring into compliance any facilities that are currently below the established ~~level of service~~MMLOS standard for active transportation (Map 6-2 and 6-7), or are projected to fall below those standards within the 20-year planning period.

Each year the County adopts a six-year Transportation Improvement Program, which selects projects from the list of planned projects and assigns funding amounts to them, programming their construction over the next six years. Due to limited funding, not all the recommended projects can be programmed for construction.

Accordingly, in deciding how best to use its finite resources, the County must prioritize among many competing items, including new projects as well as preservation, operation, and maintenance of existing facilities. Multimodal safety ~~I~~improvements that are needed to reduce the risk of personal injury and property damage must be the County's top consideration. The next priority is preservation of current facilities, which not only supports the first priority of safety (preventing possible hazards from developing over time), but also addresses the need to maintain and operate the transportation system in a cost-effective manner, minimizing the need for costly reconstruction projects in the future.

The next priorities for implementation, after multimodal safety and roadway preservation, are maintaining or improving level of service for vehicles, buses, bikes, and pedestrians, followed by active transportation network projects aimed at providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities to help reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and vehicle traffic congestion (Map 6-8). ~~The last priority is increasing vehicle capacity on roadways and keeping facilities operating at acceptable levels of service. Policy adjustments and Pprojects that address deficiencies on County-owned arterials should be the highest priority in this category.~~

Goal 6B: **Create a cost-effective transportation system that prioritizes multimodal safety, roadway preservation, active transportation, and concurrency.**

Policy 6B-1: Programming of transportation programs and improvements should prioritize upgrading of unsafe and/or structurally deficient facilities and preservation and maintenance of the existing transportation system over new capital improvements. Exception to this policy should be allowed when a feasibility study ~~cost/benefit analysis~~ indicates that the public interest is better served by new capital expenditures over preservation of existing

Commented [KG28]: Galloway – Scrivener – Should it be Chapter 6 Transportation?

Commented [MP29]: Funding capability analysis still in process for proposed multimodal transportation projects and will be included in Appendix E of the Capital Facilities Plan when completed prior to final Planning Commission consideration and hearing on the overall Comprehensive Plan later this year.

Commented [CC30]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Commented [CC31]: Map reference

Commented [CC32]: 6-26-25 PC motion 7 approved to amend TE priorities

Commented [CC33]: Map reference

Commented [TG34]: Formal benefit/cost analysis (BCA) takes significant time and can be very expensive

infrastructure, or when capacity- or connectivity-increasing improvements are necessary to correct level of service deficiencies on County-owned transportation facilities ~~roads and ferries~~ to meet GMA concurrency requirements.

Policy 6B-2: Use a fair and equitable formula to assess development for transportation improvements, including but not limited to transit, pedestrian facilities, bikeways, ferry, and roadways that are considered reasonably necessary as a direct result of proposed developments in Whatcom County.

Policy 6B-3: Increase the resilience of the transportation system against climate impacts, natural hazards, and disaster, develop prevention and recovery strategies, and plan for coordinated responses with relevant federal, state, regional, ~~and~~ local, and tribal agencies.

Policy 6B-4: Evaluate whether potential improvements to ~~a~~ local internal road networks would~~to~~ increase local circulation at the rural service centers/areas of rural commercial development/LAMIRDs level.

Arterial and Collector Improvements

Whatcom County's program of arterial and collector improvements addresses the following elements: uncongested traffic flow; sound engineering and construction; safety; mobility; facilities for public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians; access to air, rail, ferry, and other forms of transportation; and cost effectiveness.

GOAL 6C: Ensure an efficient regional multimodal transportation system ~~of arterials and collectors~~ that is functional, safe, and consistent with regional priorities and city and county comprehensive plans.

Policy 6C-1: For road classifications higher than local access roads, develop access control plans which may include joint driveways, and require new developments to minimize the number of access points.

Policy 6C-2: Where new arterials or collectors are necessary, such routes should follow topographic or land use patterns which minimize disruption to residential neighborhoods and the environment.

~~Policy 6C-3: Identify a regional system of all-weather roads and develop emergency maintenance plans for adverse weather conditions.~~

~~Policy 6C-4: Maximize the amount of county-designated arterials and rural major collectors that are all-weather roads.~~

Policy 6C-3: Identify a regional system of county-designated arterials and major collectors as all-weather roads and develop emergency maintenance plans for adverse weather conditions.

Commented [TG35]: Transportation resiliency is becoming increasingly important with climate change impacts, such as sea level rise.

Commented [KG36]: Galloway – proposed amendment: add federal and tribal agencies and CIAC amendments

Commented [TG37]: Safety and efficiency are not limited to arterials and collectors

Commented [TG38]: Combined Policies 6C-3 and 6C-4

Policy 6C-~~5~~4: Provide for commercial vehicle access from I-5 to major commercial and industrial land uses via all-weather roads that have adequate turning radii and signage.

Policy6C-~~6~~5: Set appropriate speed limits on County roadways based on current best practices for transportation planning and engineering, including but not limited to land use context, collision data, speed studies, road geometry, and vehicle types.

Policy 6C-~~7~~6: Minimize delay at intersections for all users by timely provision of warranted traffic controls and other improvements.

Policy 6C-~~8~~7: Recognize the critical role that movement of freight and people plays in Whatcom County and s~~S~~tudy ways to improve east-west connectivity for commercial and passenger vehicle traffic between Interstate 5 and areas to the east.

Policy 6C-~~9~~8: Work with WSDOT to improve highway problems caused by truck traffic on county and state roads by adding this issue to the Council of Governments work plan, lobby WSDOT officials, and considering lower speed limits and improvements during discussions in the county six-year road program.

Coordination with Land Use

The way land is developed affects the need for transportation facilities; conversely, the availability of transportation can influence development. This two-way relationship needs to be taken into account in both land use and transportation planning. The Growth Management Act requires Whatcom County to link the two processes.

Goal 6D: Support land use planning efforts in Whatcom County ~~which~~ that include land use types and densities that promote walking, biking, and transit and reduces reliance on single-occupant vehicles and vehicle miles traveled.

Policy 6D-1: Allow densities and mixed uses in urban areas to reduce the number and length of vehicle trips, increase opportunity to use public transportation, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle trips.

Policy 6D-2: Promote land use strategies and transportation investments that reduce single occupant vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled while discouraging ~~Discourage~~ transportation investments~~improvements~~ that would trigger development that is premature or not consistent with applicable comprehensive plans, policies, or zoning.

Policy 6D-3: Support continual education of the public regarding the relationship between transportation and land use issues and ways

Commented [TG39]: This engineering practice is rapidly changing due to the spike in serious injuries and fatalities for people walking, biking, and rolling throughout the U.S. Minimizing vehicle delay, maximizing vehicle throughput, and 85th Percentile are no longer the primary criteria for setting speed limits.

Commented [TG40]: Mobility barriers, such as I-5, railroads, the Nooksack River, lakes, and steep slopes constrain movement for all users

Commented [KG41]: Galloway – Would there be any need to add reference to federal transportation agencies?

Commented [TG42]: Links land use with active transportation and GMA requirements for VMT reduction, which is most effective accomplished with compact higher-density land use.

Commented [KG43]: Galloway – proposed amendment (CIAC)

to support walking, biking, and transit to help reduce traffic congestion.

Policy 6D-4: Direct transportation planners to evaluate positive and negative impacts to the productivity of resource-based industries when planning transportation corridors. Transportation improvements in areas designated "Resource Lands" should be constructed to facilitate the operations of those affected areas and industries.

Policy 6D-5: Ensure that new developments provide safe and efficient infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Policy 6D-6: Prioritize transportation investments and ~~Encourage~~ new housing developments to be located in urban growth areas to help provide a sense of community and safe, active ~~nonmotorized~~ transportation to community facilities and public transit nodes.

Locate new housing developments in urban growth areas to foster a sense of community, and provide safe, efficient transportation to community facilities and public transit nodes.

Policy 6D-7: Encourage use of existing and new public roads to maximize internal circulation within Whatcom County and promote economic development and community connectivity. Focus on making it attractive to build higher density development in UGAs by:

- Maximizing the density to a level that supports frequent public transit options
- Provide clear regulatory requirements
- Reducing regulatory constraints and uncertainty
- Reducing regulatory processing times

Policy 6D-8: Support compatible land uses on the multimodal regional transportation system, including state highways subject to state Complete Streets requirements, to address all user needs.

Policy 6D-9: Consider establishing predictable, reliable sources of funding developers can access (and repay) such as Utility Local Improvement District assessments, to finance the considerable expense of bringing UGA's up to city standards including:

- transportation infrastructure (roads, curbs, bike lanes, roundabouts, sidewalks)
- utilities (sewer, potable water, stormwater, fire flow)
- other (new fire/Ems stations, greenspace, etc.)
- mitigation (critical area mitigation etc.)

Multimodal Approach

Whatcom County's transportation facilities must accommodate a variety of transportation modes including automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, buses, ferries, emergency vehicles, commercial vehicles, and agricultural equipment. In the

Commented [KG44]: Galloway – delete and replace with policy below

Commented [CC45]: 6-26-25 PC motions 10 & 11 approved to amend/reword Policy 6D-7

Commented [CC46]: 6-26-25 PC motion 12 approved to create new Policy 6D-9

Commented [KG47]: Galloway – Do we need to add reference to air travel in intro paragraph? Given public and private airports? (Airplanes are also later referenced in policy 6E-1)

planning, design, and construction of these facilities, the County must balance the needs of all users in all modes, and make the improvements appropriate to the context of the area, as well as the amount of funding available.

GOAL 6E	**Balance the needs of all users of all modes of transportation when planning and designing transportation facilities.**
Policy 6E-1:	Adopt and use design standards that follow current best practices for balancing the needs of all modes of transportation, including motorized modes (automobile, commercial trucks, agricultural equipment, emergency vehicles, buses, airplanes, boats, trains, and ferries) and ~~nonmotorized~~active modes (bicyclists of all ages and skill levels, and pedestrians with or without disabilities). While not all modes can be accommodated fully in all areas, the County will work to achieve the best balance possible, given the context of the area and budgetary constraints.
Policy 6E-2:	Ensure mobility choices for people with special needs, including people with disabilities, the elderly, the young, and low-income populations ~~Use~~ in multimodal design ~~in~~ for all new transportation facility improvement projects as well as roadway preservation and maintenance projects, unless physically or financially impracticable. An example would be employing new striping designs following resurfacing to better accommodate all modes.
Policy 6E-3:	Multimodal design and implementation of that design shall consider the appropriate context established by land uses in the area. Urban pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks are appropriate in portions of urban growth areas and areas of more intensive rural development, but not in rural areas, where wide shoulders can suffice.
Policy 6E-4:	Incorporate racial and social equity in planning for transportation improvements, programs, and services in historically underserved areas and vulnerable populations.
Policy 6E-5:	Identify gaps in the transportation network to promote a more efficient multimodal transportation network.
Policy 6E-6:	Implement the ADA Transition Plan.

Commented [TG48]: Supports the need to provide safe and reliable transportation options for vulnerable users, transit-dependent people, and those who do not drive (Kids, Seniors, Mobility-Challenged) in low-income areas.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

A countywide Active Transportation Network (ATN) (Map 6-2) ~~system of facilities for nonmotorized travel~~ enhances community access and promotes healthy lifestyles. ATN ~~These~~ facilities can be adjacent to roadways or separated from them.

Commented [CC49]: Map reference

Policies 6A-7, 6A-8, and 6A-9 establish multimodal ~~l~~level of service (MMLOS) standards for pedestrians, ~~and~~ bicyclists, and transit riders ~~involves~~that measure different characteristics than capacity and speed used for vehicle MMLOS. ~~Design should maximize the quality of the service rather than quantifiable measures of~~

~~usage.~~ Walkways serve pedestrians well when they provide a safe, accessible, and connected ~~convenient~~ route. Pedestrians and transit riders are well served by ADA-compliant ~~adequate~~ walkways, sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops or transit shelters. Bicyclists may be well served by a low speed and traffic shared local roadway lane in an urban location but may benefit from a wide (= or > 5') shoulder or a separated multiuse pathway on a rural higher speed road.

GOAL 6F: **Develop a countywide Active Transportation Network (Map 6-2) ~~system~~ of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that encourages enhanced community access and promotes healthy lifestyles and supports both the transportation and recreational segments of our economy.**

Policy 6F-1: Planning and design shall emphasize connectivity to the greatest extent possible, creating regional networks of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Regional networks include both an on-road bicycle facility and walkway network and a regional multi-use path network. These networks should be interconnected; for example, walkways connect seamlessly with pedestrian paths and bike lanes connect to shared-roadway bike routes. The networks should also be coordinated with public transportation hubs and activity centers to enable multimodal trips of longer distances.

Policy 6F-2: Provide safe pedestrian facilities in all new construction and reconstruction transportation projects where there is the potential for significant use, unless physically or financially impracticable. An example of such a location would be in a traffic corridor within one mile of a school or community center that links residents to such facilities. Traditional curb/gutter/sidewalk designs may not ~~always~~ be the ~~ideal~~standard approach ~~for projects~~in these areas since they are expensive, require large impervious surfaces, and may detract from the rural atmosphere. Other separated walkway designs should be considered that provide ~~a~~ physical separation or a barrier from motorized traffic.

Policy 6F-3: An effective bicycle and pedestrian system for Whatcom County will require facilities for both regional connectivity and local access. Regional connectivity can be defined as transportation routes connecting major activity centers, towns, and cities within the region. A good example of a regional facility would be the proposed Nooksack Loop Trail or the existing bike route along Hannegan Road.

Policy 6F-4: Coordinate design and implementation of multimodal transportation system improvements with cities, WTA, local community organizations, associations, or other governing structures ~~in designing and implementing improvements, such as safety improvements and infrastructure~~. Collect and use the best available data to ~~i~~Identify, analyze, and prioritize multimodal

Commented [CC50]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Commented [CC51]: Map reference

Commented [CC52]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Commented [CC53]: 6-12-25 PC motion approved to amend Policy 6F-4

transportation ~~pedestrian and bicycle~~ projects based on the following criteria:

- safety improvements are needed
- serves a residential or relatively high density rural or urban population area
- serves a location frequently traveled by seniors, children, or people with disabilities
- leads to a school or is part of a school route
- provides access to a recreational facility or park
- functions as a key network link for the regional active transportation ~~nonmotorized~~ network
- offers economic development potential for an underserved area
- ease of implementation due to low cost, public ownership, or other feature
- increases public safety and resilience to climate impacts and natural hazards

Policy 6F-5: Update the existing (2011) Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to be included in the Active Transportation Network (Map 6-2) ~~nonmotorized~~ improvement planning that identifies and prioritizes future pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Give priority to construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities on streets within and between urban growth areas and rural communities where practical, and not at risk from climate impacts or natural hazards, and give priority to walkways and crosswalks along roadways within a one-mile radius of schools.

Policy 6F-6: For commercial and residential developments within urban growth areas and rural communities, developers shall fund on-street walkways, paths, crosswalks, consideration of regional trail segments, and other pedestrian accommodations, along with internal walkways or paths for onsite circulation that are necessary to provide pedestrian access from public streets to building entrances and within and between buildings.

Policy 6F-7: In cases where environmental factors would limit or prohibit the construction of a uniform facility for the entire length of a roadway segment, a modified facility may be provided for a portion of the segment as an interim solution.

Policy 6F-8: Publish an Annual Concurrency Report documenting the status of the countywide multimodal transportation system to inform investment in transportation facilities in the Whatcom County six-year transportation improvement program (TIP).

Commented [KG54]: Galloway – proposed amendment (CIAC). Add reference to climate impacts and natural hazards

Commented [CC55]: Map reference

Commented [KG56]: Galloway – proposed amendment (CIAC)

Commented [TG57]: This supports the Active Transportation Network, MMLOS standards, and the 6-Year TIP process.

Commercial Transportation

In addition to the commercial traffic that serves Whatcom County industries and residents, the county's transportation system carries heavy cross border truck traffic between the United States and Canada. Freight vehicles' access to industrial and commercial areas, safety on roads shared with private vehicles, efficient long-distance movement of goods, and coordination of commercial transportation with rural land uses are all issues for Whatcom County. Trucks make up the bulk of the commercial traffic, but rail, air, and ship transportation are involved as well.

Goal 6G: **Support the Whatcom County economy by providing ~~Provide for~~ safe~~,~~ and efficient access and movement of commercial vehicles.**

Policy 6G-1 Support economic development goals by providing adequate air, rail and surface freight movement routes on the County road system.

Policy 6G-2 Freight and Goods Transport System (See Map 6-XX) – Invest in all-weather road improvements for the countywide Freight and Goods Transportation System (FGTS). Coordinate with WSDOT to designate portions of the County road system as truck routes.

Policy 6G-3 Provide roads structurally adequate to handle anticipated commercial traffic demand, particularly on the FGTS.

Policy 6G-4 Encourage the enhancement and expansion of freight rail service to and from economic activity centers.

Policy 6G-5 Encourage improvements to air and marine transportation facilities provided by the Port of Bellingham, as well as road and transit linkages to airport facilities.

Intergovernmental Coordination and Implementation

Transportation planning is done in a regional context, involving many agencies and jurisdictions at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. The Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG), the region's Regional Transportation Planning Organization, publishes the Whatcom Transportation Plan. That plan is a combined Metropolitan and Regional Plan required by federal and state law, and was most recently adopted by the WCOG Whatcom Transportation Policy Board in 20~~1~~22. It is a multimodal plan setting general policies and establishing a regional Transportation Improvement Program, while referencing the transportation plans of local jurisdictions. The seven incorporated cities of Whatcom County, as well as the Lummi Nation, each have transportation elements in their comprehensive plans. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) owns, plans, and maintains state highways. The Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) and Port of Bellingham are also public entities that adopt plans influencing transportation in the region. Whatcom County Council Members are part of the WCOG's Whatcom

Commented [CC58]: 6-26-25 PC motion 8 approved to amend Commercial Transportation section with policies supporting designated truck routes (and a map)

Commented [CC59R58]: These policies are based on similar Skagit County Comp Plan TE policies adopted in June 2025

Commented [KG60]: Galloway – How can we ensure designation of truck routes is considering nearby land uses?

Commented [KG61]: Galloway – Should we consider truck size and weight?

Commented [KG62]: Galloway – Should we add reference to Whatcom County Public Works? Any reference needed to Federal agencies?

Transportation Policy Board and the WTA Board of Directors. The Whatcom County Health and Community Services and Parks and Recreation Departments are also a participant in transportation planning, as transportation issues affect the health and safety of the community.

Goal 6H: **Coordinate with other governmental agencies in planning the County's transportation system.**

Policy 6H-1: Support the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) to coordinate transportation planning that affects Whatcom County.

Policy 6H-2: Participate in the ~~Whatcom Council of Governments (~~WCOG~~)~~ Transportation Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) as a mechanism to coordinate with the cities of Whatcom County, the Whatcom Transportation Authority, as well as other jurisdictions.

Policy 6H-3: Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to identify, design, and strategically implement needed system improvements in locations where jurisdictional interests overlap. Such locations include unincorporated urban growth areas adjacent to cities, and non-urban areas where existing or proposed facilities serve regional interests. Improvements should be designed to standards appropriate to the planned land uses served by the facilities. In unincorporated urban growth areas adjacent to cities, design should meet the appropriate city design standards.

Policy 6H-4: In cooperation with the WCOG ~~Whatcom Council of Governments~~, identify a regional transportation network that includes state highways as well as County-owned routes.

Policy 6H-5: Coordinate with WSDOT for access management on all state highways in the county, to minimize the number of access points and maximize public safety and highway capacity.

Policy 6H-6: Coordinate with the Whatcom County Health and Community Services Department regarding transportation's role in promoting safe and healthy communities.

Policy 6H-6A: Coordinate with the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Department regarding transportation's role in community connectivity in support of the active transportation network (Map 6-2).

Commented [CC63]: Map reference

Policy 6H-7: Support state and federal agencies that regulate rail safety, in order to maximize safety of people and property along railroad corridors.

Policy 6H-8: Coordinate with the Port of Bellingham to facilitate convenient access to ports, airports, and other intermodal freight facilities.

Policy 6H-9: Work with Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism, and the cities to develop and implement a common Countywide Way-Finding system that encourages people traveling on the I-5 corridor to detour and easily find the many tourist attractions that Whatcom County has to offer.

Policy 6H-10: Coordinate with state and local agencies to implement a "safe systems approach" using best practices to advance transportation safety for all users of the transportation system, including transit, bike and pedestrian activities.

Policy 6H-10: Inform and coordinate early and often with WSDOT to:

a. Identify and plan for projects on or across state facilities.
b. Identify and plan for projects[1] to support multimodal use along and across the regional transportation network including state highways consistent with RCW 47.04.035 Complete Streets Principles.
c. Identify and plan for projects to support multimodal use along and across the regional transportation network including state highways consistent with the WSDOT Active Transportation Plan.
d. Pursue support and funding for recommended projects identified in the 6-year Transportation Improvement Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan.
e. Support maintenance in state rights of way or state facilities based on maintenance agreements.
f. Review development projects near or adjacent to state facilities to coordinate local access and address transportation needs for all users.
g. Minimize private access to state highways to enhance safety and mitigate chances of vehicle collisions.
~~h. Coordinate with WSDOT to ensure that development does not degrade WSDOT or County level of service standards.~~ Coordinate with WSDOT to ensure that improvements meet the need of development and maintain MMLOS standards.
i. Establish that proposed improvements on state facilities are consistent with the WSDOT Design Manual.
j. Coordinate alterations to landscaping in WSDOT right-of-way are consistent with WSDOT removal and replacement policies, in coordination with maintenance agreements.

Commented [CC64]: Safe System Approach is a USDOT and WSDOT-approved process for analyzing systemic safety issues and reducing injuries and deaths. Web site = What Is a Safe System Approach? | US Department of Transportation

Commented [CC65]: 6-26-25 PC motion 9 approved to amend/reword 6H-10H

[1] Specific design considerations like appropriate shoulder width, bicycle lane treatments, sidewalks, buffers, street lighting, and so on, will be determined as a project develops.

k. To determine shared priorities related to international border crossings.

Environmental Practices

Transportation facilities can potentially create adverse environmental impacts. Effective design and construction practices can reduce or eliminate impacts on wildlife, water quality, and nearby residents.

Goal 6J: ~~**Construction and operation of transportation systems, should avoid adverse environmental impacts, including impacts to wildlife, water quality, and to adjacent residential areas.**~~

Construction and operation of transportation systems, should ~~seek to~~ avoid, or mitigate against, adverse environmental impacts, including impacts to wildlife, water quality, and to adjacent residential areas while also balancing the need ~~acknowledging unavoidable (but mitigatable) impacts will likely occur in order~~ to provide an appropriate level of service.

Commented [CC66]: 6-26-25 PC motion 14 approved to amend / reword Goal 6J

Commented [KG67]: Galloway – proposed amendment

Policy 6J-1: Maintain and restore fish passage when constructing new transportation systems. Where existing transportation systems have fragmented habitat, such as where culverts prevent fish from migrating upstream, strive to restore fish passage at every opportunity. For County transportation projects, the County Council will determine when such restoration is financially feasible through adoption of the six-year transportation improvement program, the annual road construction program, and the County budget.

Policy 6J-2: When constructing new transportation systems, ensure that stormwater generated by the transportation system is treated prior to discharge to waterways used by salmonid fish populations or which flow directly into such waterways. Provide for regular, systematic maintenance of transportation system related stormwater control and treatment facilities.

Policy 6J-3: Avoid or mitigate future wetland impacts from transportation system construction and maintenance.

Policy 6J-4: When constructing new or maintaining existing transportation systems, retain or restore native riparian vegetation along streams and rivers to the greatest extent possible.

Policy 6J-5: Avoid or mitigate future impacts to feeder bluffs, accretion shoreforms, driftways, eelgrass, kelp beds and other elements of marine shoreline habitat when constructing or maintaining transportation systems.

Policy 6J-6: Allow natural stream processes to continue by minimizing bank hardening and streambed disturbances to the greatest extent possible, while meeting transportation objectives.

Policy 6J-7: Implement best management practices for erosion control to prevent sedimentation during transportation system construction or maintenance. Maintain such erosion control devices until no longer necessary to protect water quality.

Policy 6J-8: Promote designs to preserve mature trees, unique wildlife habitats, water quality, and other elements of the natural environment, including environmentally sensitive areas and shorelines, during the design and construction of road improvement projects.

Policy 6J-9: Support the use of natural noise reduction techniques and visual screens between high-volume transportation routes and other facilities adjacent to residential uses, wherever possible.

Policy 6J-10: Minimize the amount of impervious surface whenever practicable by using natural engineering design methods such as the use of open, shallow, grassed street swales instead of curbs and gutters and, where feasible, encouraging alternate surfacing options.

Policy 6J-11: Engineer, construct, and maintain road improvements to control pollutants affecting water quality and reduce runoff entering surface or groundwater consistent with water quality standards.

Policy 6J-12: Determine emergency access needs and traffic flow to support rapid evacuation (from natural disasters, etc.).

Policy 6J-13: Consider establishing County wetlands mitigation banks adequate to support twice the minimum anticipated mitigation requirements for the County six year rolling Transportation Improvement Projects and Capital Facilities lists.

Commented [CC68]: 6-26-25 PC motion 15 approved to add new policy 6J-13

Congestion and Emissions Reduction

Transportation provides mobility benefits to people and the economy, but also creates physical, hydrological, atmospheric, and societal impacts from infrastructure, runoff, emissions, traffic congestion, and public health.

Goal 6K: **Reduce the need for costly capacity-increasing roadway construction projects, and minimize emissions from combustion of fossil fuels, through completion of the Active Transportation Network (Map 6-2), ~~the use of~~ motor vehicle travel demand reduction programs, promoting transit, and the use of intelligent transportation technology.**

Commented [CC69]: Map reference

Policy 6K-1: Develop programs that reduce single-occupant vehicle use and vehicle miles traveled, minimizing trip length and reducing travel

during peak periods, in order to minimize fuel consumption and the emission of greenhouse gases. These programs include, but are not limited to, trip reduction programs in coordination with major employers, other jurisdictions, and the Whatcom Transportation Authority.

Policy 6K-2: Support a regional public transit system that connects with various modes of transportation including auto, bicycle, and pedestrian travel and with the intercity bus, rail, ferries and airline facilities.

Policy 6K-3: Coordinate with Whatcom Transportation Authority to establish rural transit service in unincorporated areas, including Rural Communities and Rural areas, consistent with county land use plans, based on cost effectiveness, location of major trip generators, distance between generators, and the needs of transit-dependent individuals.

Policy 6K-4: Coordinate with Whatcom Transportation Authority and Washington State Department of Transportation to ~~provide~~consider redevelopment of existing under-utilized park-and-ride lots along major corridors ~~and provide necessary and adequate services~~ as Transit-Oriented Development opportunities to encourage ~~their~~infill development and transit use.

Commented [CC70]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Policy 6K-5: Support multimodal use by encouraging, for example, ~~provision of~~ secure bicycle storage facilities at park-and-ride lots and other transit facilities, and ~~allowing~~providing for ~~the transporting~~ transportation of bicycles on public transit vehicles.

Commented [KG71]: Galloway – proposed amendment (CIAC)

Policy 6K-6: Consider, where needed, bus pull-outs on street/road improvements.

Policy 6K-7: Consider implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technology to increase safety, reduce traffic congestion, decrease delays, expedite commercial vehicle travel, and provide appropriate traveler information.

Policy 6K-8: Work with Whatcom County and the Sudden Valley Association to provide appropriate level of~~Explore enhanced bus~~transit service to Sudden Valley to reduce traffic in the Lake Whatcom watershed.

Commented [CC72]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Policy 6K-9: Encourage the development and installation of a comprehensive electric vehicle ~~rapid~~ charging network, including the following opportunities:

- Allow ~~rapid~~ charging stations in commercial parking lots and other convenient locations;
- Provide a streamlined and expedited permitting process for ~~rapid~~ charging stations;

Commented [KG73]: Galloway – Does rapid charging include Level 2 and Level 3? All EVs allow L2, only some allow L3. So, we may want to consider language that ensures both L2 and L3 charging is allowed.

- Provide incentives to developers, employers, and organizations that provide ~~rapid~~ charging stations;
- Consider requirements to include infrastructure for ~~rapid~~ charging stations in multifamily and commercial developments; and
- Pursue partnerships with Puget Sound Energy to consider voluntary development of ~~rapid~~ charging stations to reduce costs.

Funding of Transportation Improvements

GMA requires an analysis of funding capability to judge needs against probable funding resources, and a multiyear financing plan based on the needs identified in the plan. The Capital Facilities Plan, Appendix E of this plan contains the funding analysis and the current 20-year list of transportation projects. The County also has a six-year Transportation Improvement Program, which is updated annually, and programs funding for specific projects over the next six years.

In addition, GMA authorizes counties to impose impact fees that fund a proportionate share of transportation system improvements made necessary by planned growth. In the event that Whatcom County enacts a transportation impact fee system, it would need to identify future system improvements eligible for impact fee funding (projects that are reasonably related to and reasonably benefit the planned growth).

Goal 6L: **Provide for adequate funding to keep Whatcom County's transportation facilities in good condition and current in terms of capacity.**

Policy 6L-1: Identify and pursue funding sources for activities and improvements which encourage the use of transportation modes other than the single-occupant vehicle.

Policy 6L-2: In the event expected revenues and available funding fall short of the amount needed to meet identified needs the County shall work to resolve the shortfall during the annual review of the comprehensive plan. Such resolution could result in a reassessment and revision of land use plans and regulations (including uses and densities), level of service standards, or revenue sources (through revised impact or mitigation fees, or additional grant funding).

Policy 6L-3 ~~Adopt~~Consider a transportation ~~Consider establishing~~ impact fees ordinance requiring new development to fund a proportionate share of the costs of multimodal transportation system improvements that benefit and are reasonably related to new development.

Policy 6L-4 The Capital Facilities Plan establishes the 20-year finance plan that balances transportation improvement needs, costs, and

Commented [KG74]: Galloway – There has been concern that bike/ped infrastructure improvements are contingent on funding availability (e.g. "subject to funding availability" referenced in 6A policies), yet there is nothing that dedicates any percentage of the TIP to those projects. Should we set a goal for a minimum % of TIP to fund bike/ped? How can we set multimodal/MMLOS as a priority and not adequately fund projects that help us achieve it?

Commented [CC75]: 6-12-25 PC motion approved to reinstate "consider" instead of "adopt" in Policy 6L-3

Commented [KG76]: Galloway – Retain language as recommended by staff:

"*Adopt* a transportation impact fee ordinance requiring new development to fund a proportionate share of the costs of multimodal transportation system improvements that benefit and are reasonably related to new development."

revenues available to assist with the annual adoption of the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Policy 6L-5 Identify and pursue joint funding opportunities (WTA Transit Access Fund, WTA ADA Bus Stop Improvement Program, other grants) to promote safe, ~~and~~ equitable, and ADA-compliant transportation access and mobility needs, especially at intersections and near public facilities such as schools, parks, WTA bus stops, and other community facilities.

Policy 6L-6 Pursue mitigation, such as requiring a Transportation Impact Analysis, from developers to reduce the impact to local and state transportation agencies.

Commented [CC77]: 6-26-25 PC motion 4 approved for WTA recommended revisions; Transpo met and discussed with WTA on 7-2-25

Commented [KG78]: Galloway –

Can we further discuss the strategy for building out the active transportation network and connecting county communities? How can we plan for low-stress active transportation corridors between population centers, small cities, and urban centers (as recommended by BPAC) rather than high-stress alternatives? Should we consider high-stress as complete?

Can we review the changes to and public concern over the trail corridors?

Should we add a policy for prioritizing projects that can use Public ROWs for developing active transportation connections?