

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT



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VOLUME 5

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

VISION

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan reflects the current and future needs of the Auburn community and, in doing so, seeks to:

- enhance the quality of life for all Auburn residents;
- encourage healthy community principles through nonmotorized travel;
- promote a transportation system that supports local businesses and enhances economic development opportunities;
- create a transportation system that is efficient, uncomplicated, and welcoming to visitors; and
- provide a balanced, multimodal transportation system that addresses both local and regional needs.

This chapter provides only a brief overview of the City's Transportation Element. Interested parties may access the plan in its entirety at the City's website at:

www.auburnwa.gov/compplan_transportation

in PDF format, or from the City's Comprehensive Plan web page at:

www.auburnwa.gov/compplan

The Transportation Element may also be viewed at the City's offices during regular business hours.

INTRODUCTION

The transportation system is a vital component of Auburn's social, economic, and physical structure. The primary purpose of the transportation system is to support the movement of people and goods within the City and connect the City to the broader region. Secondarily, it influences patterns of growth, development and economic activity by providing access to adjacent land uses. Planning for the development and maintenance of the transportation system is a critical activity promoting the efficient movement of people and goods, ensuring emergency access, and optimizing the role transportation plays in attaining other community objectives.

PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan is the framework for transportation planning in Auburn. It functions as the overarching guide for changes to the transportation system. The Plan evaluates the existing system by identifying key assets and improvement needs. These findings are then incorporated into a needs assessment, which guides the future of the transportation system.

This Plan is multimodal, addressing multiple forms of transportation in Auburn including the street network, nonmotorized travel, and transit. Evaluating all modes enables the City to address its future transportation needs in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

GMA REQUIREMENTS

Washington State's 1990 Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that transportation planning be directly tied to the City's land use decisions and fiscal planning. This is traditionally accomplished through the adoption of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Auburn fulfills this mandate by adopting the Comprehensive Transportation Plan as the Transportation Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

In order to be GMA compliant, the Comprehensive Transportation Plan must

- inventory the existing transportation system in order to identify existing capital facilities and travel levels as a basis for future planning;
- identify level-of-service (LOS) standards for all arterials, transit routes, and state-owned facilities as a gauge for evaluating system performance;
- specify actions and requirements for bringing into compliance locally owned transportation facilities or services that are below an established level-of-service standard;
- determine existing deficiencies of the system;
- use land use assumptions to estimate future travel, including impacts to state-owned facilities;
- identify future improvement needs from at least ten years of traffic forecasts based on the adopted land use plan;
- include a multiyear financing plan based on the identified needs;
- address intergovernmental coordination; and
- include transportation demand management strategies.

HOW THE CITY USES THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan provides policy and technical direction for development of the City’s transportation system through the year 2035. It updates and expands the *2009 Comprehensive Transportation Plan* by recognizing network changes since the last plan, evaluating current needs, and identifying standards for future development and various infrastructure improvement scenarios. The Plan underwent a major update in 2005 and a midterm update in 2009 to incorporate the Lea Hill and West Hill annexation areas into the Plan.

Needs Assessment

A system-wide, multimodal needs assessment was conducted throughout plan development to ascertain which aspects of Auburn’s existing transportation system work well and which ones need improvement. An evaluation of potential solutions and investment priorities was also conducted as part of this process. The end result is

that Auburn has a more thorough understanding of system deficiencies, how best to address these deficiencies, and direction for expanding the system in a sustainable manner.

Public Involvement

During 2014 the City held a number of community meetings through the Imagine Auburn visioning process. The meetings included discussions of capital investments in transportation infrastructure and other transportation related issues which have been incorporated into this document.

As part of the adoption process, the Plan is also reviewed by the City of Auburn Planning Commission, including a hearing where members of the public are provided the opportunity to provide input on the plan, and is then reviewed and adopted by the City Council.

Policy Development

The City creates policies to state preferences for preservation of the existing system and development of the future transportation system. Policies can be qualitative in nature, but often they are quantitative and prescribe a specific standard.

Policies are also important for communicating the City’s values and needs to neighboring jurisdictions and regional and state agencies. Having established policies in place enables the City to more effectively influence change in keeping with its needs and objectives.

Level of Service and Concurrency

The concurrency provisions of the 1990 Growth Management Act (GMA) require that local governments permit development only if adequate public facilities exist, or can be guaranteed to be available within six years, to support new development.

The GMA requires each local jurisdiction to identify facility and service needs based on level-of-service (LOS) standards. Auburn ensures that future development will not cause the system’s performance to fall below the adopted

LOS standard by doing one or a combination of the following: limiting development, requiring appropriate mitigation, or changing the adopted standard.

Capital Facilities Plan and Transportation Improvement Program

The City uses the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) to develop a financial plan for capital improvements in Auburn, thus enabling the City to fulfill the GMA requirement of having a multiyear financing plan based on the identified transportation needs.

The TIP, is a financial planning tool used to implement the list of transportation improvement projects identified in the Transportation Plan. It is a six-year plan which is reviewed and updated annually by the City Council to reflect changes to project priorities and funding circumstances. The first three years of the plan are fiscally constrained. Traffic impact fees on new

development are determined by the cost of the capacity projects included in the TIP.

The Capital Facilities Plan is also an annually adopted six-year financing plan. However, it is fiscally constrained for all six years. Unlike the TIP, the CFP is an adopted element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Regional Coordination

In addition to being influenced by factors within the City, Auburn's transportation system is influenced by what happens beyond its City limits: growth in neighboring communities, infrastructure maintenance by regional agencies, the lack of funding for road maintenance, new capacity projects, and competing demands for transit services. This Plan calls for effective interjurisdictional actions to address cross-border issues and to mitigate the impact of new development. The Plan also recognizes that other jurisdictions, particularly state agencies and transit providers, are responsible for a major share of the transportation facilities serving Auburn.

