

Snohomish County

Snohomish County is located between Puget Sound and the Cascade Mountains immediately north of Seattle and King County. It covers a total land area of 2,098 square miles. The eastern half is primarily uninhabited forest and mountain terrain bordered by the crest of the Cascade Range. The southern and western parts of the county is largely suburban.

Lead agencies for coordination

Snohomish County Human Services is the lead agency for activities to coordinate transportation services. Key partners include: Senior Services of Snohomish County, Stillguamish Tribe, Community Transit, Everett Transit, and several school districts.

Population and employment

Snohomish County is the third most populous county in the state with a population of more than 600,000, with a population density of 279 people per square mile, making it the 6th most densely populated county. During the 1980-90 period, Snohomish County's population grew by 37.9 percent, making it the fastest growing county in the state. Since 1990, the county's growth rate has slowed.

51% of the people live in the incorporated areas of the county, widely distributed among 20 different cities. Everett, the largest city has a population of 87,520. The smallest, Index – deep in the Cascade foothills – has 140.

Snohomish County is home to Naval Station Everett, Fluke Corporation, Eldec, Boeing, and Stillaguamish and Tulalip Tribes.

The economy is driven by high-tech manufacturing, retail trade, the Naval Station Everett, and public sector employment.

Social services

Nearly 18 percent of county residents use DSHS services at an annual cost of more than \$400 million. In almost all cases, these services do not include client transportation to access services.

According to DSHS, more than 85,000 Snohomish County residents qualify for medical and health-related services for individuals and families with low incomes and resources. Medicaid is the largest program providing medical services to Washington State's poorest people. The Medicaid program covers transportation for those who have no other way to access medical services.

More than 49,000 Snohomish County residents qualify for services provided by the Economic Services Administration including WorkFirst, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), food assistance and refugee grants.

Major providers of transportation for people with special transportation needs

Transit authority

Community Transit serves all urban areas (except Everett) and parts of suburban and rural Snohomish County, offering:

- 52 fixed routes
- demand response paratransit service – DART operated by Senior Services
- Weekday service between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.
- Saturday service between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 p. m.

In 2001, CT provided 8,293,703 passenger trips on its fixed route service and 162,035 demand response passenger trips. Operating expenses were \$51,476,942.

Everett Transit serves the City of Everett, offering:

- 10 fixed routes
- demand response paratransit services
- Weekdays between 4:45 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.
- Weekends between 6:55 a.m. and 9:25 p.m.

In 2001, Everett Transit provided 1,559,394 passenger trips on its fixed route service, and 57,399 demand response passenger trips. Operating expenses were \$8,307,739.

School districts

Thirteen school districts spend a total of \$18,193,100 on pupil transportation.

- Arlington School District
- Edmonds School District
- Everett School District

- Granite Falls School District
- Index School District
- Lake Stevens School District
- Lakewood School District
- Marysville School District
- Monroe School District
- Mukilteo School District
- Snohomish School District
- Stanwood-Camano School District
- Sultan School District

Non-profit community transportation providers

- Snohomish County is the Medicaid broker for the county, arranging for 168,710 trips yearly, at a cost of \$4,000,172.
- Catholic Community Services
- East County Senior Center
- Northwest Senior Center
- Northshore Senior Center
- South County Senior Center
- Stillaguamish Senior Center
- Transportation Assistance Program (TAP)

For-profit community transportation providers

- American Cabulance
- Blue Risin Transportation
- Checker Cab
- Green Tortoise
- Greyhound Bus Lines
- North End Taxi
- Plaza Transportation
- Sunrise Services
- Yellow Cab
- White Express Transportation

Local ACCT project focus

- Transport special needs populations
- Combine existing transportation elements

Innovative coordinated transportation approach

The Snohomish County Coalition (SNOTRAC) is building a framework of local transportation providers to increase trip efficiency and create transportation cost savings for Snohomish County. SNOTRAC is

exploring efficient uses of traditional and non-traditional transportation resources.

Local priority projects if additional funding is available

- Implement a communication and marketing plan.
- Combine multiple transportation guides into one single guide
- Recruit and train “transportation ambassadors”
- Explore the feasibility of creating a single application for eligibility
- Coordinated call centers for trip information, referral, an eventually trip scheduling
- Explore the creation of a flexible funding pool to supplement non-Medicaid trips
- Develop a system to arrange rural rides outside of providers corridors
- Identify opportunities to coordinate regionally (e.g. Smart Card)

Long-term transportation goal

Through better coordination of available transportation resources, transportation programs in Snohomish County will realize greater efficiencies and more rides will be available to people with special transportation needs. SNOTRAC has identified six primary goals to accomplish:

- Improve and increase awareness and support of transportation options and services to the public and service providers.
- Simplify the eligibility process.
- Simplify trip arrangements.
- Build transportation capacity within existing community resources.
- Increase transportation options in underserved and rural areas.
- Increase regional and cross jurisdictional transportation options.

Snohomish County ACCT Partners

- Arlington School District
- Catholic Community Services
- City of Arlington
- City of Everett
- City of Monroe
- Community Transit
- Department of Social and Health Services
- Edmonds School District

- Everett School District
- Everett Transit
- Federal Transit Administration
- Immigrant and Refugee Forum
- Lake Stevens School District
- Monroe School District
- North Shore School District
- Senior Services of Snohomish County
- Snohomish County Developmental Disabilities
- Snohomish County Human Services
- Snohomish County Long Term Care and Aging
- Snohomish County Medicaid Transportation
- Sound Transit
- Stanwood-Camano Island School District
- Stillaguamish Tribe
- The Volunteers of America
- Workforce Development Council
- WorkSource

Local coordination success story:

Creating More Efficient Transportation Options

When it comes to galvanizing community initiatives, Snohomish County boasts a legacy of collaborative spirit. The fast-growing county brings this spirit to their emerging coordinated transportation effort.

Snohomish County is largely suburban and rural. On one hand the county hosts two transit agencies and is ranked highly nationwide for per capita vanpool usage. On the other hand the county still is home to sparsely populated rural areas and small towns.

Efforts to make the most of limited transportation resources and serve a growing and changing population are underway. Leading the charge are:

- Casey Stevens, Stillaguamish Tribe
- Coey Gilleland, Senior Services of Snohomish County
- Marty Bishop, Administrator with Snohomish County Human Services
- A 25 member Executive Committee

Snohomish County Human Services provides Medicaid transportation. Senior Services of Snohomish County operates Dial-a-Ride Transportation (DART) for senior passengers who can't access regular fixed route buses. They also offer a program offering feeder routes to help people in rural areas access primary transit routes in city centers. Everett Transit and

Community Transit both offer paratransit and fixed-route transit bus service.

For seniors living in Snohomish County, transportation is especially crucial to maintaining their independence, health, and quality of life..

The fastest growing age group between 1990 and 1999 was 50-64 year olds, which increased by 58.8 percent. Snohomish County Human Services also sees increased demand from medically fragile clients in need of specialized transportation.

With support from the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation, the Snohomish County Transportation Coalition first convened in January 2000. Coalition members initially wrote a four-page memorandum of understanding. They also wrote a transportation survey tool that was sent to more than 1,400 agencies and providers to determine available transportation modes, routes, and service delivery models.

- Coalition members focused on coordinating existing transportation modes to serve the developmentally disabled, the mentally ill, children and the elderly. They built coalition membership, established common goals and objectives, and identified community special needs transportation resources.

In June of 2002, SNOTRAC hired a consultant to help develop a decision-making structure, complete the transportation inventory, develop a strategic plan, and create an implementation and evaluation plan. To date, twenty-five executives and leaders in the Snohomish County region, including Snohomish Councilmember Gary Nelson and the Director's of Everett and Community Transit, signed **SNOTRAC's** Statement of Executive Sponsorship. This signifies the county's commitment to addressing the special transportation needs of those residents who are unable to transport themselves due to a disability, their age, or income level.

This executive decision-making body has approved a completed transportation inventory and a 5-year strategic plan. Members of SNOTRAC are now steadfastly working on an implementation and evaluation plan for executive adoption in June 2003.