Freight and Goods Movement Policy Brief and Data Summary

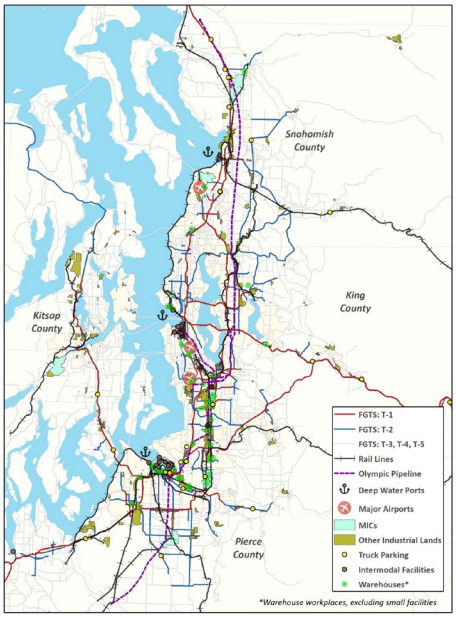
In 2019, PSRC staff developed a freight briefing paper as part of the development of VISION 2050. The intent was to provide context to decision makers on the importance of the freight system in the region, describe recent trends in freight movement, draw attention to key freight considerations relevant to ongoing policy discussions, and raise awareness on the potential impacts of growth and land use decisions on goods movement and vice versa.

The paper is viewed as a resource for local jurisdictions and is part of a broader effort to effectively integrate freight into planning and decision-making processes. These efforts continue with the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Regional Freight Inventory

PSRC staff has worked in coordination with the Freight Advisory Committee to develop a Regional Freight Inventory describing the freight transportation system and other significant assets related to goods movement in the region. The inventory is now included in the existing conditions visualization tool for the Regional Transportation Plan.

The regional freight and goods transportation system is a multimodal network of roadways, railways, airports, marine ports, rivers, and pipelines. The system includes approximately 3,800 centerline miles of roadways, 450 miles of railway, and 143 miles of waterways designated for moving freight in and out of the region. It also includes other related infrastructure such as deep-water ports, airports, intermodal terminals, warehouses, distribution centers and processing facilities. In addition, the freight system is supported by over 71,000 gross acres of industrial zoned lands in the region, including designated manufacturing/industrial centers (MICs).



The inventory was developed to provide a better understanding of this system and the associated assets in terms of their unique characteristics and

interdependencies. In addition, the inventory describes the connections between the freight system and the broader community and emphasizes the critical role freight and goods movement plays in supporting the region's economy and maintaining overall quality of life.

Highlights from the Regional Freight Inventory include:

- The Ports of Seattle and Tacoma (Northwest Seaport Alliance) together rank among the top ten busiest ports in the US and the fourth largest container gateway in North America.
- The Port of Everett specializes in high value, over-dimensional cargo such as airplane and aerospace parts and ranks as the **fifth largest port** on the west coast in terms of value of goods exported.
- The region is home to two Class I railroads (BNSF and UP) handling products such as cereal grains, agricultural products, and automobiles.
- Two of the airports in the region, Sea-Tac and Boeing Field, account for **85%** of the air cargo market in the state, handling high-value, time-sensitive and perishable products
- The region's designated manufacturing/industrial centers support a range of industries such as food & beverage processing, manufacturing, aerospace, etc., which account for **57%** of the state total gross business income.

Data Collection and Analysis

Additional data related to truck traffic travel and distribution patterns has also been pursued. For example, preliminary analysis of heavy truck movements shows that over a third of heavy truck trips in the region's industrial lands are in the Kent Valley, corresponding to the high concentration of manufacturing and warehousing in that area. Overall, the industrial areas with the highest truck volumes are the Kent Valley, Puyallup Valley / Tacoma, and Duwamish / North Tukwila.

Key findings thus far from the existing conditions visualization tool related to freight and goods movement include:

- **72%** of T1 and T2 freight route lane miles are congested in the p.m. peak hour.
- **67%** of the signals along these routes are coordinated.
- **2.2%** of bridges along these routes are in poor condition.