PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL

At the regional level, PSRC develops a strategy that coordinates six public transit agencies in an integrated approach to land use planning, growth, economic development, housing and transportation. According to PSRC data, central Puget Sound has the fastest-growing transit ridership in the U.S., with 185 million boardings recorded in 2015. Boardings compared to five years ago.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Bus ridership increased 27% in the second quarter of 2016 compared to the same period in 2015. Boardings have climbed steadily, from 109.1 million in 2010 to 121.2 million in 2015. Nearly 70% of downtown Seattle commuters take transit, walk, carpool or bike.

KING COUNTY METRO

At the agency level, King County Metro operates Metro buses, sea ports and waterways, as well as Link light rail and Sounder trains within King County. King County Metro’s buses and seaports transported more than 7 million riders in 2015. Bus ridership has climbed steadily, from 18.1 million in 2010 to 22.6 million in 2015.

KING COUNTY METRO

Bus boardings remain highest as focus turns to growing light rail.

SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

On the municipal level, SDOT is focused on the Levy to Move Seattle, which will allocate $10 billion over nine years to the safety, maintenance and improvement of city transit corridors. The SDOT approach is focused on increasing the use of public transit at intersections. Seattle will continue developing bus lanes, bicycle lanes, pedestrian lanes and embankments downtown as more people find alternatives to getting around.

AN EXPERT

Asking questions about traffic data has never been easier. Smart City Challenge: Seattle contest funds trailblazing transportation idea

The SmartCity Challenge, a partnership between Paul Allen’s Vulcan Inc. in Seattle and the U.S. Department of Transportation, invited cities across the country to submit ideas to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create innovative and practical climate change solutions. Columbus, Ohio, was selected from 79 cities that applied. Columbus will receive up to $40 million from U.S. DOT and up to $10 million from Paul G. Allen’s Vulcan Inc. to supplement the $10 million that the city has already raised from other private partners to repurpose its transportation system by using data, technology and creativity to reimagined how people and goods move throughout the city. For more information, visit http://smart-city.news/.

New technologies and ideas to improve mobility

Crowdsourcing your commute

Waze, Google’s free, community-based traffic navigation app, uses real-time traffic and road info submitted by other drivers in your area to save time and outsmart traffic. The company says it’s “like a personal heads-up from a few million of your friends on the road.”

MOVING FORWARD

What’s the best way to fight traffic in heavily congested areas or during construction projects that require lane closures?

Zipper merging is a useful tool to fight traffic congestion, especially during major road construction with lane closures. To be effective, drivers need to use lane configurations that leave enough room for merging and take turns. It’s a simple concept of “you go, I go, you go, I go.” Traffic moves more steadily and it reduces chokepoints that occur when drivers try to force their way in or prevent others from merging in front of them.

ASK AN EXPERT

Mike Swires, WSDOT

Traffic engineer for the King County area

The Seattle Times is planning a unique public service journalism project, Traffic Lab. The upcoming multi-year project will examine aspects of our region’s traffic, with solutions and recommendations to improve our mobility and reduce the most people and traffic in the most cost-effective manner. In advance of the kickoff, we’ve created this Traffic page to help readers learn the basic facts. Let us know what you would like to see at trafficsolutions@seattletimes.com.