

# **CITY OF MONROE Commute Trip Reduction Four-Year Plan Update: 2025– 2029**

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November 6, 2024



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Comprehensive Plan Policies that Support CTR

# Abbreviations

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ACS	American Community Survey
Census	U.S. Census Bureau
City	City of Monroe
Comprehensive Plan	City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2044
County	Snohomish County
CTR	Commute Trip Reduction
ETC	Employee Transportation Coordinator
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organizations
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

# Summary

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The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Plan for the City of Monroe outlines policies and strategies to improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion through employer-based transportation programs that encourage the use of alternatives to single-occupant vehicle trips for commute purposes. This plan as well as previous CTR plans and ordinances have been developed to meet the requirements of the Washington State Commute Trip Reduction Act (RCW 70.94) initially adopted in 1991. In 2015, the Washington State Legislature updated the program to allow greater flexibility at the jurisdiction level to apply transportation demand management (TDM) strategies that better address local conditions. This plan has been prepared in accordance with those revisions.

The City of Monroe CTR Plan also aims to be consistent with PSRC's Regional Transportation (RTP) TDM priorities and VISION 2050. Monroe's CTR Plan incorporates the following RTP TDM priorities:

- Improving TDM Integration in Planning
- Evaluating and Addressing Equity in TDM

This plan applies to "affected major employers" in Monroe who employ 100 or more full-time employees at a single worksite and who are scheduled to begin their workday on weekdays between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. The plan also applies to "voluntary employers" who choose to participate in the program even though they do not meet the criteria to be affected.

Building upon the accomplishments of the existing commute trip reduction program, as well as other successful TDM strategies, the plan outlines strategies Monroe, along with other agencies, will implement to assist employers in meeting the goals of the plan.

# Benefits of CTR

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## 1. Local Land Use and Transportation Context and Objectives

### a. Setting In Monroe as it is Today or Will Be in the Near Future

Nestled in the Skykomish River Valley at the foothills of the Cascade Range, Monroe sits at the junction of US2, SR 522, and SR 203 and serves as a major gateway to the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and Eastern Washington. Given this strategic location, transportation conditions in the City are influenced by pass-through traffic connecting between the heavily urbanized communities in western Snohomish and King Counties and communities and recreation areas along US2 to the east. The City must coordinate its transportation planning with a variety of jurisdictions, including Snohomish County, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and the State of Washington.

### b. Features of Land Use and Transportation Facilities and Services that Affect Commuters

#### Land Use Features that Affect Commuters

Monroe's development patterns have been influenced by its transportation system and natural features. While Monroe continues to grow and change these features continue to influence development in the City.

The Monroe Urban Growth Area (UGA) includes both the City Limits, and a few areas of unincorporated Snohomish County are projected to accommodate a total of 26,276 residents by 2044, supported by approximately 2,400 new housing units. Employment opportunities are also projected to grow, with approximately 2,400 new jobs by 2044.

#### Transportation Facilities and Services that Affect Commuters

Monroe's street system carries a variety of transportation modes that move people and freight throughout the City and broader region. While driving a car is the primary way that people get around in Monroe, the City's street network accommodates many modes of travel, including walking, bicycling, public transit, and driving. Three highways, SR 522, US 2, and SR 203, provide the backbone of the City's transportation grid and shape how residents and visitors experience Monroe. The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) runs along the south side US 2, creating railroad crossings near major roadway intersections. SR 522 runs through the southwest of Monroe and culminates with a connection to US 2. SR 203 runs south from US 2 on the eastside of downtown, over the Skykomish River to points south

**c. Whether and How Commuting Patterns Have Changed in the Past Few Years**

The COVID-19 pandemic stimulated remote work, resulting in broad changes in commuters' choice of transportation mode. The City has adapted and now offers remote work as an incentive for employment.

**d. The Most Important Land Use and Transportation Objectives from Plans that Commute Trip Reduction Most Directly Affects**

Coordinate with transit providers to establish public transit service in areas of higher density land use and mixed use development.

**e. Critical Aspects of Land Use and Transportation that Should Be Sustained and Key Changes that Should Be Considered to Improve Commute Trip Reduction's Contribution to the Land Use and Transportation Objectives Referenced**

**Critical Aspects of Land Use and Transportation that Should Be Sustained**

Promote alternative modes of transportation.

**Key Changes that Should Be Considered**

The policy needs to be rewritten to ensure equitable access to a full range of transportation options.

**2. How the CTR Program Will Help Achieve Monroe's Land Use and Transportation Objectives**

**a. How and to What Extent the CTR Program Will Help Monroe Achieve the Land Use and Transportation Objectives Referenced in Question 1**

**Avoiding the costs of Roadway Expansion** – The cost of expanding roadways is increasing. In many cases it is more cost effective to manage demand than to continue expanding supply.

**Meeting the needs of increased urbanization** – Most of the growth will go to the areas already urbanized. These are also areas where traffic problems are significant and alternative modes can be effective.

**Consumer preferences and market trends** – CTR is addressing current consumer preferences to line in multi-modal communities where it is possible to walk and bicycle safely, use neighborhood services, and have access to quality public transportation.

### **3. How the CTR Program Will Help Achieve Monroe’s Environmental Objectives**

#### **a. How the CTR Program Will Support Monroe’s Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Efforts**

In Snohomish County 62% of greenhouse gas emissions are attributable to transportation. By working to reduce vehicle miles traveled, CTR supports both the Governor's and County executive orders on climate change and reduction of GHG.

#### **b. How the CTR Program Will Support Monroe’s Environmental Objectives in Addition to Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions**

CTR helps to address concerns over air pollution, depletion of natural areas, and other environmental impacts by reducing the demand for automobiles. For each car that is taken off the road, there is a significant benefit to the environment.

### **4. How the CTR Program Will Help Achieve Regional and State Objectives**

#### **a. The Local, Regional, and State Benefits that Would Be Gained If Monroe Achieves the CTR Targets**

##### **Local Benefits**

- Equitable transit access
- Ability to live and work in Monroe

##### **Regional Benefits**

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Improving safety for all users
- Expanding transit and travel choices

##### **State Benefits**

- Reduce traffic congestion
- Improve quality of life
- Protect the environment

#### **b. Adjacent CTR-Affected Cities and Counties.**

Snohomish County



**c. The Top Few Cross-Border and Regional Transportation Issues that Affect Monroe.**

Limited transit options.

**d. The Strategies Monroe, Adjacent Cities and Counties, and the Region Have Agreed to Use to Address the Top Issues Described in Section 4c**

Expand light rail to Monroe.

# Performance Targets

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## 5. CTR Performance Targets

### a. Performance Targets that Reflect Only CTR-Affected Worksites

Option 2. Weighted average DAR of 15.5 percent below, or less, of the jurisdiction's census performance in 2019 for CTR-affected worksites at the jurisdictional level. WSDOT has selected a measure of DAR and a statewide target of 60 percent. The City of Monroe's DAR performance target is 66 percent.

### b. Additional Performance Targets

None

## 6. Base Values for Each Performance Target

### a. The Baseline Number

Performance targets will be tied to the CTR survey. We will establish a base value during the 2023-2025 survey cycle and measure progress using 2025-2027 survey results.

## 7. Method Used to Determine the Base Value for Each Target

### a. The Source for Each Base Value Listed

Performance targets will be tied to the CTR survey. We will establish a base value during the 2023-2025 survey cycle and measure progress using 2025-2027 survey results.

## 8. How Monroe Will Measure Progress Toward Each Target

### a. The Method Used to Measure Progress for Each Target

Performance targets will be tied to the CTR survey. We will establish a base value during the 2023-2025 survey cycle and measure progress using 2025-2027 survey results.

## 9. CTR-Affected Worksites in Monroe

### a. List of CTR-Affected Worksites

- City of Monroe
- Monroe Correctional Complex
- Natural Factors
- Canyon Creek Cabinet Company

## **10. Performance Targets for Each CTR-Affected Worksite**

### **a. Performance Targets Established during the 2023–2025 Survey Cycle**

Performance targets will be tied to the CTR survey. We will establish a base value during the 2023-2025 survey cycle and measure progress using 2025-2027 survey results.

## **11. List the Base Value for Each Site**

### **a. Base Values Established during the 2023–2025 Survey Cycle**

A base value will be established during the 2023-2025 survey cycle.

# **Services and Strategies**

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## **12. Services and Strategies Monroe Will Use to Achieve CTR Targets**

To help achieve the goals and targets of the CTR plan, Monroe will revise the CTR ordinance to require affected employers to implement additional measures designed to increase the percentage of employees using some or all of the following modes: transit; vanpool; carpool; bicycle or walking; telework, compressed work week, or flexible work schedule; and other non-single occupant vehicle modes. The revised ordinance will require affected employers to choose at least five of the following measures including one from each category. Alternative measures may be submitted by the employer to Community Transit for review and approval.

### **Commuting Support and Incentives**

- Subsidized or free transit passes for employees.
- Pre-tax payroll deductions for transit or vanpool expenses.
- Provision of subsidies for carpooling or vanpooling.
- Incentives rewarding avoidance of single-occupancy commuting such as gift cards or a parking cash-out program.
- Guaranteed ride home programs for emergencies.
- Shuttle services from transit stations to the workplace.
- Employer telework program.
- Flexible or compressed workweek schedules.
- Options for working at alternative sites closer to employees' homes.
- Incentives for walking or biking, such as gift cards or discounts on outdoor gear.
- Rideshare matching events for vanpools and carpools.

## **Information and Education**

- Commute options information and orientation for new hires.
- Communication plan for sharing print and digital information on the employer's CTR program.
- Information on commute options and resources displayed in common areas at the workplace and/or available online or by mobile app.
- Educational campaigns on the benefits of alternative commuting.
- Outreach campaigns to promote walking or biking, such as a "bike to work" month.
- Workshops or fairs promoting sustainable transportation options.
- Personalized travel planning assistance for employees, which could include guidance on transportation benefits, planning routes, or finding rideshare partners.
- Real-time transit information display at the workplace or in a centrally accessible location.

## **Amenities and Infrastructure\***

\*Worksites located next to other employers may wish to partner to provide shared commuting amenities and distribute costs and benefits more broadly.

- Preferential parking for carpoolers and vanpoolers.
- Amenities for bike commuters including secure bike storage, showers, or bike repair stations.
- Onsite amenities like a cafeteria, fitness center, micro-market, or daycare to reduce off-site trips.
- Provision and maintenance of electric vehicle charging stations.
- Parking space for carshare vehicles or company-owned cars for employee use.

## **13. How Monroe's Services and Strategies Will Support CTR-Affected Employers**

### **Community Transit Services and Strategies**

Through agreements with Monroe and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Community Transit is responsible for employer outreach, education and training, technical assistance, marketing incentives, program review, and administration of the employer data collection process. Community Transit acts as the liaison between Monroe and major affected employers and assists with preparation of CTR notification documentation and enforcement recommendations.

Community Transit also manages and implements complimentary and mutually reinforcing transportation demand management programs, including partnerships with multifamily communities, youth focused partnerships with schools and youth-serving organizations, and field marketing at neighborhood events.

Through long-term agreements with each CTR-affected jurisdiction and WSDOT, Community Transit works with CTR-affected and voluntary employers to develop and successfully implement CTR programs. This assistance includes:

- Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) Development and Support - The ETC is an integral part of the trip reduction program. Their job duties should include coordination of annual fairs, conducting promotions, distributing information, notifying the City of Monroe about program changes, and the collection and reporting of data. Community Transit provides training courses, networking meetings, and other assistance to the ETC designed to help meet the requirements of the program and increase the success of this key person.
- Program and Strategy Development – Community Transit provides consultation with employers to help worksites design and develop appropriate trip reduction strategies. Strategies may include carpool and vanpool programs, parking management, incentives programs, bicycling and walking programs, alternative work schedules, and telework programs.
- Promotions – Community Transit works with employers to design and conduct promotions, on-site transportation fairs, and other special events to increase awareness and use of commute alternatives. Assistance includes design and provision of materials, promotional items, staffing information booths and on-site ride matching.
- Incentives – Community Transit provides incentives to employees at affected worksite, such as the quarterly Smart Commuter Rewards program, to encourage the use of non-drive alone commute modes.
- Guaranteed Ride Home – Through an agreement with the employer, Community Transit offers emergency transportation to employees who choose an alternative to driving alone.
- Transit Pass Programs – Community Transit can work with employers to help identify appropriate ORCA Business Account programs for worksites.
- Affordable Transportation Alternatives – Community Transit provides affordable transportation alternatives to single occupancy vehicle commuting.
- Vanpool Services – Community Transit operates one of the largest vanpool programs in the nation. Vans are provided to groups of 5-15 commuters who pay a monthly fare based on travel distance and number of passengers.
- Transit Services – Community Transit, Everett Transit and Sound Transit provide bus and commuter rail service within Snohomish County. Community Transit staff assists ETCs with identifying potential riders, planning individual trips and marketing specific routes. Transit schedules and on-site transit pass programs are also available.

#### **City of Monroe Services and Strategies**

- Key steps to reduce commute trips for CTR-affected employers include promoting more transit oriented development for affordable housing, improving infrastructure around transit locations, and marketing around the time saving benefits of transit. Jurisdictions and their transit service providers should also coordinate with major employers to promote a shared understanding and coordination around CTR planning and service times.

## 14. Barriers Monroe Must Address to Achieve CTR Targets

### a. How Monroe Will Address the Barriers

Add policies related to CTR in the 2044 Comprehensive Plan.

**Transit service:** While about half of the affected employment sites in Monroe are located near transit service, some of the employment sites have little or no transit service.

**How addressing:** Work with CT to provide a transportation hub, more routes, and better bus shelters.

**Non-motorized access incomplete:** Many of the CTR affected work sites, including in the regional growth center, have limited access for non-motorized modes due to gaps in the non-motorized infrastructure networks (sidewalks, trails, bikeways, safe crossings.)

**How addressing:** Add policies in the Comprehensive Plan to address this.

### Lack of Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) Support:

**Employer and ETC Investment:** The ETC is the backbone of any CTR program but at many sites the ETC is not given the opportunity to succeed because of training or lack of time and resources. ETC success is often dependent on the support that the ETC is getting from the management of the company. An employer program where the ETC is not getting the training and support necessary from within the company will not succeed.

**How addressing:** Obtain management support for everything CTR and provide incentives to employees.

## 15. The Transportation Demand Management Technologies Monroe Plans to Use to Deliver CTR Services and Strategies

**Rideshare Online:** Employee transportation coordinators use the Rideshareonline.com platform to join and form carpools and vanpools, and for trip logging in support of non-drive alone incentives.

## 16. Monroe's Local CTR Ordinance

Monroe Municipal Code (MMC) Chapter 22.88 Commute Trip Reduction (CTR), Ordinance No. 005/2019.

## 17. Monroe's Financial Plan

### a. The Estimated Average Annual Costs

**Table: Estimated Average Annual Costs**

Activity	Estimated Average Annual Cost
Employer engagement*	\$7,043
Commute Trip Reduction 4-year plan	\$2,348

Activity	Estimated Average Annual Cost
Performance reporting**	\$1,565
Administration***	\$4,695

\* Includes identifying worksites and employee transportation coordinators, conducting training, providing technical assistance, and reviewing employer CTR plans.

\*\* Includes worksite surveys, program reports, and periodic request for information from WSDOT, jurisdictions, and stakeholders.

\*\*\* Includes financial and program management; jurisdiction coordination with Community Transit, involvement in interagency implementation meetings, WSDOT coordination, TDM Technical Committee coordination, and transit service planning.

## b. Likely Funding Sources, Public and Private, to Implement the Plan

**Table: Estimated Average Annual Revenue**

Source of Revenue	Estimated Average Annual Revenue
Monroe	\$0
WSDOT	\$15,650
CMAQ	\$0

## 18. Monroe’s Implementation Structure

### a. Who Will Conduct the Activities Listed in the Plan

The City of Monroe has contracted with Community Transit to administer and implement this plan.

### b. Who Will Monitor Progress on the Plan

Job Title	Name	Department
Senior Planner	Anita Marrero	Community Development

Anita Marrero is the CTR program coordinator for the City of Monroe. She will coordinate with Community Transit routinely on behalf of the City.

## 19. Monroe’s Implementation Schedule

### a. Timeline for Anticipated Projects and Actions

Project Name	Start	End
Comprehensive Plan Update	January 2022	December 2024
Update CTR Code	June 2024	June 2025

## **20. CTR Plan for City of Monroe Employees**

### **a. Services, Programs, Information, and Other Actions Monroe Put in Place to Help Employees Reduce Their Drive Alone Commute Trips**

- Transportation Fair
- CTR Brochure given to all new employees
- CTR Information located in lunch/break rooms

## **21. How the CTR Plan for Monroe Employees Contributes to the Success of the Overall Plan**

### **a. How the Plan for Monroe Employees Reinforces the Success of the Jurisdiction Plan**

- Informing employees of the requirements and benefits of CTR

# **Alignment with Plans**

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## **22. Transit Agencies That Provide Service in Monroe**

### **Transit Agencies:**

- Community Transit
- Homage Senior Services of Snohomish County
- Snoqualmie Valley Transportation
- Microsoft Connector

## **23. Transit Plans Reviewed While Developing this Plan**

### **Information Sources:**

- Community Transit 2023-2028 Transit Development Plan
- Journey 2050 Community Transit Long Range Plan
- Transit Changes in 2024 & Beyond (Community Transit)
- Homage 2022 Annual Report
- Sound Transit Development Plan 2023-2028
- Sound Transit's System Performance Tracker



## 24. How This CTR Plan Supports the Transit Plan(s)

The current and updated City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan includes many policies that support CTR, pedestrian and bicycle use, and multi-modal strategies. The City is continuing to implement these policies which promote non-single occupant vehicle (SOV) travel through transit supportive land uses with higher densities, mixed use development and transit oriented development, reducing parking requirements, providing pedestrian access to transit facilities, and incorporating transit facilities into roadway improvement projects.

The Transportation Element addresses transit and the City's Transportation Demand Management Program (TDM). The TDM strategy is multi-pronged and will reduce both local and regional vehicle trips. Projects recently or currently underway in the City include:

- **New Active Transportation Facilities.** The buildout of the City's active transportation facilities will provide Monroe residents and visitors with the increased ability to travel safely on foot, by bicycle, or by bus. Build out of the active transportation network will reduce vehicle demand on roadways within the city.
- **Transit.** Transit service in Monroe is provided by Community Transit, which provides three routes in Monroe. Improvements planned by 2026 include a new route with increased frequency to  
  
Link light rail stations. Snoqualmie Valley Transportation also provides door-to-door services and may soon be re-opening a shuttle service between Duvall and Monroe.
- **Park & Ride Facilities.** Park & ride facilities provide regional benefits as commuters can transfer to public transit or carpool from this location to destinations further west or south along SR 522 and US 2. Monroe currently has one park & ride facility located at 17433 Highway 2.

## 25. Comprehensive Plan Updates Needed and When They Will Be Made

The 2044 Comprehensive Plan will be updated in December 2024 and policies related to CTR and TDM will be incorporated into the Transportation Element.

# Engagement

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## 26. Describe stakeholder engagement.

Community Transit along with local jurisdictions organized a series of stakeholder engagement activities on CTR topics throughout the development of this CTR Plan. Monroe collaborated with Community Transit by promoting and participating in stakeholder engagement activities. CTR engagement activities included:

Online open house and surveys for two public comment periods:

CTR concepts public comment period (April 18 to May 18, 2024)

Draft CTR Plan public comment period (July 1 to July 31, 2024)

Tabling events

Community-based organization interviews

Transit agency interviews

CTR-affected employer workshops

Notifications and other digital distribution

Comprehensive Plan Update Community Engagement Events

### a. Who did you talk to?

#### Community Members

Community Transit and Snohomish County-area jurisdictions reached out to community members through a two-phase online open house engagement period. The first phase conveyed information about commute trip reduction, the CTR plan update process, and invited visitors to participate in a survey. The second phase of the online open house sought feedback on jurisdiction's draft CTR plans and allowed the visitor to select which plan they commented on based on the jurisdictions in which they live and/or work.

During the first phase of the online open house, 2,137 people visited the open house website, and 144 responded to the survey. Monroe had 5 residents, and 8 workers responded to the survey. During the second phase of the open house, 908 visitors to the website reviewed draft CTR plans and 20 submitted comments.

Community Transit attended six community events around Snohomish County to discuss transit services and upcoming services changes, CTR initiatives, and to provide attendees an opportunity to comment on the jurisdictional draft CTR Plans. Tabling events included the following:

- Arlington Farmers Market (engaged with 90 people)
- Everett Public Library Drop-In (engaged with 43 people)
- Marysville Farmers Market (engaged with 107 people)

- Everett Farmers Market (engaged with 165 people)
- Marysville Public Library Drop-In (engaged with 32 people)
- Latino Educational Training Institute (LETI) Expo (160 people)

**Community-based organizations**

Community Transit interviewed representatives from a variety of community-based organizations in Snohomish County. Each community-based organization also received an engagement toolkit including social media posts and newsletter copy allowing them to easily engage community members in their networks with the CTR Plan update project. The community organizations interviewed as part of the CTR Plan update project include the following:

- Hopelink
- Community Health Centers
- Snohomish County Transportation Coalition (Snotrac)
- Homage
- North Sound Bicycle Advocacy Group
- BIKES Club / Sharing Wheels Community Bike Shop

**CTR-affected employers**

Community Transit hosted a virtual workshop May 14, 2024, for ETCs and management staff from CTR-affected businesses in Snohomish County to discuss the draft CTR plans, provide feedback on increasing local CTR ordinance requirements for employers, and to make suggestions for improving CTR programs. Community Transit also provided CTR-affected employers with information about the CTR online open house and survey in the CTR newsletter and provided related outreach materials for ETCs to share with their employees.

Thirty-eight individuals representing 30 Snohomish county-area, CTR-affected employers attended a virtual workshop. Employers represented in the virtual workshop are listed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Employer Workshop Participation**

Employer Name	Worksite Location
City of Arlington	Arlington
Skagit Regional Health/Cascade Valley Hospital	Arlington
DSHS	Arlington/ Unincorporated Snohomish County
City of Bothell	Bothell
Nelson Nygaard (Transportation Consultant)	Bothell
AGC Biologics	Bothell
AT&T (and Move Redmond)	Bothell
GE Digital / Vernova	Bothell
Leviton Network Solutions / Wellington Hills Bothell Park	Bothell

Pfizer	Bothell
T-Mobile	Bothell
University of Washington Bothell/Cascadia College	Bothell
City of Edmonds	Edmonds
Edmonds College	Edmonds
City of Lynnwood	Lynnwood
City of Marysville	Marysville
The Everett Clinic	Marysville
City of Monroe	Monroe
Canyon Creek Cabinet Company	Monroe
Natural Factors	Monroe
City of Mountlake Terrace	Mountlake Terrace
Premera Blue Cross Mountlake Terrace	Mountlake Terrace
City of Mukilteo	Mukilteo
Novanta	Mukilteo
Snohomish County	Snohomish County
Boeing	Unincorporated Snohomish County
Korry Electronics	Unincorporated Snohomish County
Partner Therapeutics	Unincorporated Snohomish County
Reid Middleton	Unincorporated Snohomish County

### **Transit Agency Interviews**

Community Transit and MFA interviewed transit agencies to help inform the CTR plans and invite feedback on the drafts. The interview questions related to the Alignment with Plans section of the CTR Plan (#22-25) and #1c, “whether and how commuting patterns have changed in the past few years.” Transit agencies also received email invitations to comment on the draft CTR plans. The transit agencies interviewed include the following:

- Snow Goose Transit
- Community Transit
- Everett Transit
- Homage
- King County Metro
- Sound Transit

#### **b. When did you talk to them?**

##### **Community members engagement activities**

- Online open house and survey: April 18-May 18, 2024

- Online open house and draft plan public comment period: July 1-31, 2024.

#### **Community events**

- Arlington Farmers Market: July 13, 2024
- Everett Public Library Drop-In: July 15, 2024
- Marysville Farmers Market: July 19, 2024
- Everett Farmers Market: July 21, 2024
- Marysville Public Library Drop-In: July 24, 2024
- LETI Expo: July 27, 2024

#### **City of Monroe Events**

- Open House: June 5, 2024
- Monroe PRIDE: June 11, 2023, June 9, 2024
- Juneteenth: June 17, 2023, June 15, 2024
- Farmers Market: June 7, 2023, July 17, 2024, August 7, 2024
- Monroe Senior Center: July 25, 2024
- National Night Out: August 6, 2024
- Belonging: September 9, 2023, September 7, 2024
- Block Party June 23, 2023, June 22, 2024

#### **Community-based organization interviews**

- Hopelink: April 23, 2024
- Community Health Centers: April 25, 2024
- Snotrac: May 1, 2024
- Homage: May 8, 2024
- North Sound Bicycle Advocacy Group: May 14, 2024
- BIKES Club and Sharing Wheels Community Bike Shop: May 14, 2024

#### **CTR-affected employer workshops**

- Employer workshop: May 14, 2024

Additionally, Community Transit reached out to CTR-affected employers to provide information and outreach materials:

- CTR newsletter article (April Issue) about Phase 1 of the online open house and survey: April 2, 2024

- Email with outreach materials reminding ETCs to share the Phase 1 online open house and survey: April 24, 2024
- CTR newsletter article (July Issue) about Phase 2 of the online open house and survey: July 2, 2024
- Email with outreach materials encouraging ETS to share Phase 2 of the online open house and draft CTR plans: July 11 and July 19, 2024
- CTR newsletter article (July Issue) about Phase 2 of the online open house and survey: July 2, 2024
- Email with outreach materials encouraging ETS to share Phase 2 of the online open house and draft CTR plans: July 11 and July 19, 2024

### **Transit agencies interviews**

- Email and phone interviews: April 2024
- Invitation to provide draft plan comments: July 2024

### **c. What did they have to say?**

#### **Community Members**

Visitors to the online open house who completed surveys, noted the following:

- **Transportation Modes/Work from Home:** By far, the most common transportation mode mentioned is driving alone in a car, followed by riding the bus, and working from home. A few respondents mentioned bicycling or walking, carpooling/vanpooling, or working a compressed schedule.
- **Commute patterns:** Nearly every respondent mentioned that increased traffic, especially on area highways, was a noticeable change. A few mentioned that shifts in jobs and lack of employer support for work-from-home options required them to change their commute.
- **Convenience of single-occupancy vehicle trips:** Nearly every survey participant affirmed that it would be difficult to get around without a personal vehicle because of long commute times, transit stops that are not convenient to their home or workplace, transit routes that require too many transfers, and transit commute times that are up to three times longer than single-occupancy vehicle commutes.
- **Safety Concerns:** Most cited safety concerns as reasons they do not choose to take transit or other alternative transportation modes. Respondents noted high vehicle speeds, and the lack of sidewalks and bike lanes deter them from walking or biking as part of their commute. Some respondents fear crime where transit stops lack amenities like lighting.
- **Benefits of CTR:** Respondents commonly recognized that CTR programs have the potential to reduce traffic congestion, improve road safety, reduce traffic noise, and improve air quality.
- **Suggestions:** Many respondents indicated a desire for more frequent transit services, more convenient transit stop locations, infrastructure improvements for biking and walking safety, and flexible work schedules that allow employees the option to work from home.

Visitors to the second phase of the online open house had an opportunity to review the draft CTR plans. Comments received on Monroe's draft CTR plan include the following:

- Widen 522 and Highway 2 so people aren't sitting in backups spewing exhaust into the "air".
- Focus should be on transportation instead of CTR plans.
- Not really sure how this plan will affect the bus service.

Visitors to community events (listed in #26a above) engaged with Community Transit staff about CTR and other public transit-related topics. The feedback received relating to CTR falls under three major themes: service area, service times, and barriers. Key feedback includes the following:

- **Service Area**

- Several visitors asked when the light rail would reach Everett.
- Several visitors expressed their enthusiasm for the opening of a new light rail line.
- A visitor requested bus routes near the Hibulb Cultural Center and casinos in Everett.
- A visitor asked for bus service in Marysville on 67th Street.
- A visitor said they would love to see frequent commuter times and routes that connect to Arlington Business Center.
- A visitor asked about nearby bus routes that pass by the Everett Farmers Market.
- A visitor commented they were excited about Route 106 having weekend service so DART would be back in that area.
- A couple visitors did not know the light rail would have a stop in Shoreline.
- A visitor requested bus service from 67th to 100th street to connect to Cascade High School.
- A visitor identified a need for bus stops near Arlington High School.
- A visitor asked if buses can go directly to the new Everett Stadium in the future.
- A visitor mentioned how they would like bus service at an additional exit in Arlington to Island Crossing and downtown Arlington.

- **Service Times**

- A visitor shared they don't ride transit from Marysville through Everett to Lynnwood in the morning as the buses don't pass frequently enough.
- A few visitors commented that they look forward to increased service frequency in Snohomish County after service changes will be implemented in September 2024.

- **Barriers to Commute Trip Reduction**

- A few visitors noted they don't use transit because they have a car.
- A visitor expressed concern about safety on buses and the drug usage on them.
- Several visitors needed trip planning information. Some asked how to get to certain destinations and one inquired if there are parking fees at park and rides.
- Several visitors asked about where to obtain free ORCA cards.

## Community-based organizations

Community-based organizations noted the following:

- **Limited transit service area:** Many interviewees identified the barrier of limited transit service in most of Snohomish County. Transportation service providers such as Homage and Hopelink shared that their organizations are flooded by demand and can only offer highly essential trips, such as getting to work and accessing medical services. Other commonly needed trips, such as going to the grocery store, accessing childcare, or going to the park, do not qualify for these transportation services.
- **Limited service hours:** Multiple interviewees shared that even when transit is available in their area, it may not be an option for employees with nontraditional hours, such as those working in healthcare. This could be due to gaps in service during non-peak hours or employees' feeling of safety using public transit during darker hours. Multiple people shared that offering shuttles or Dial-a-Ride Transportation (DART) were helpful measures to bridge these gaps.
- **Time and flexibility:** Saving time and the ability to make multiple stops are important considerations when choosing travel modes. Families who need to make multiple stops on their way to work for school or childcare may find ride sharing or taking transit more challenging. Multiple interviewees shared that effectively marketing the time savings of riding in the carpool lane and other perks of non-drive-alone modes could help address this. People who need to get to medical appointments are more likely to choose door-to-door service offered through DART or other services, because this provides a simpler solution, although the pickup services are not consistently on time.
- **ADA Services:** Interviewees acknowledged that ADA-compliant pickups must be offered with any fixed route and that demand for fixed-route service may not be as high in rural locations. They suggested that jurisdictions might direct more resources to organizations such as Homage or Hopelink to provide additional pickup services in areas where fixed-route public transit may not be a practical option. This could provide cost savings in addition to significant community benefits.
- **Land Use Planning:** The importance of affordable, transit-accessible housing was reiterated by many. Multiple interviewees shared that workers are commuting very long distances that are often outside the reach of transit, because it's too expensive to live closer to where they work. This creates barriers that can limit people from accessing employment if they would need a car to get to and from work or prevent them from using transit if the commute is too long. Multiple interviewees shared that affordable housing along transit corridors should be a high priority for jurisdictions, and that housing should be considered alongside transportation planning and not as two separate issues.
- **Criminal Activity:** Many cited fears of criminal activity on public transit as a deterrent to taking public transit. Even if the risk of crime is relatively low, perceptions of safety can be very negative. Installing lighting and other security measures as well as holding discussions on safety concerns can help address some of these barriers.
- **Amenities and Infrastructure:** Additional barriers to transit include the lack of safe, accessible sidewalks (particularly for riders who rely on mobility devices) and well-lit, sheltered bus stops. Many areas lack sheltered bus stops or adequate sidewalk space, particularly in more rural areas that are outside the main transit corridors. Devoting resources to increasing and improving these structures could go a long way in encouraging greater ridership.



- **Outreach and Education:** Multiple interviewees shared that enhanced education and marketing could encourage more workers to try alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles for their commute trips. Interviewees noted that employees and community members in general may have limited awareness of the programs and benefits available to them. Transit agencies and local jurisdictions could address this by working to increase awareness of transit routes, vanpool options, reduced-fare programs, and convenience of the multimodal ORCA transit card. Housing developments, shopping centers, and healthcare waiting rooms, as well as transit agencies and jurisdictions, could all promote these available options for employees and for the broader community.

### **Transit agencies interviews**

Transit agencies interviewees discussed recent changes in commute patterns and noted planned service expansions.

- **Changes in commute patterns:** Community Transit, Everett Transit, King County Metro, Sound Transit indicated that post-pandemic ridership numbers are rising but have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Everett Transit noted that they are at 82 percent of their pre-pandemic ridership levels and that peak commute hour trips are still below pre-pandemic levels. King County Metro indicated that peak-only routes (routes that only run during peak commuting hours) continue to underperform and thus, they are prioritizing increasing service on all-day and all-week routes. Sound Transit indicated that service levels have bounced back from the pandemic faster on light rail, commuter rail, and express buses.
- **Service expansions:** Sound Transit and Community Transit indicated that there is a planned light rail service extension to Lynnwood Center and bus service expansion along the light rail line. In response to recent community surveys, Community Transit is planning to increase mid-day, evening and weekend service and direct resources toward providing more local routes and enhancing access to the light rail for regional travel.

### **CTR-affected employers**

Employers noted the following:

- **Local CTR ordinances:** Employers noted that providing CTR information and worksite amenities is easier than offering transit pass subsidies and incentives, increasing vanpool and transit services, and facilitating parking management programs.
- Smaller employers noted that offering vanpool vehicles, onsite daycare, and other services is more difficult given their smaller size.
- Making information about commuting options and resources accessible and easy to find is key.
- Not everyone knows about the pre-tax CTR incentive, so it is not always offered or well marketed.
- Parking benefits have room for exploration; managing programs and monitoring parking spaces are the biggest barriers. Challenges to parking management include the sunk costs of parking spaces and employee expectations of "convenient" parking.
- Incentives and promotions are preferable to deterrents, such as charging for parking that was previously free.

- Canyon Creek Cabinet Company: This is a difficult area for implementing CTR due to work schedules and rural-residential employees.
- City of Monroe: The City of Monroe offers a variety of scheduling strategies and will have new facilities when the new City Hall is completed. These will include bicycle parking but likely not locker rooms or showers. The City does not offer any financial incentives for CTR. It was also noted that public transit is not an option for most employees.
- Natural Factors: Natural Factors offers locker rooms, showers, bike storage, and carpool parking. Because they are a smaller company, providing company vehicles for vanpooling is not feasible. Additionally, public transportation is not an option for most of their employees, due to many employers living in rural areas. With this, there are not enough options for bus routes at different times to accommodate the shifts they have. Their ETC is limited in what they can email out to employees, however they can post items on bulletin boards and in hallways and breakrooms. Flexible schedules are offered.

#### **d. How did what they said influence the plan?**

Monroe plans to revise the CTR ordinance as detailed in Section #12 above to require affected employers to implement a choice of measures to increase the percentage of employees using commuting alternatives to driving alone. The list of pre-approved implementation measures relates to feedback received from employers, community members, and community-based organizations on barriers to using commute trip options other than driving alone. Examples of this include:

- Providing free or discounted ORCA cards (suggested by community members)
- Improving outreach and education about reducing drive-alone trips (suggested by employers, community-based organizations)
- Providing bicycle storage and amenities onsite (suggested by employers)
- Encouraging pre-tax deductions for commuting options to driving alone (suggested by employers)
- Providing trip planning support for using alternative commute options (suggested by community members)

Monroe also plans to continue partnering with Community Transit to support CTR-Affected employers by providing ETC training, commute trip reduction outreach and incentives, discounted ORCA pass programs, and trip planning support as detailed in Section #13 above.

## **27. Describe vulnerable populations considered.**

As part of a concerted effort to ensure the interests of vulnerable and highly impacted communities were represented in each jurisdiction's draft CTR Plan, Community Transit engaged representatives from a variety of community-based organizations in Snohomish County that serve vulnerable populations including people who are low-income, disabled, unhoused, or speak English as a second language, as well as youth and the elderly. Additionally, several of the community events that Community Transit tabled at were held at libraries that serve vulnerable populations. Community Transit also provided an information table at the Latino Educational Training Institute (LETI) Expo at Edmonds College. In addition, these events created opportunities to meet people where they are at, removing barriers to participation.

Frontline communities: low-income, disabled, unhoused, and English as a second language

## 28. Describe engagement focused on vulnerable populations.

### a. Who did you talk to?

- **Hopelink:** serves homeless and low-income families, children, seniors, and people with disabilities in King and Snohomish counties by providing a network of critical social services through programs for housing, transportation, family development, financial assistance, employment programs, adult education, financial literacy training, and five food banks.
- **Community Health Centers:** a nonprofit provider which offers affordable primary healthcare services, including medical, medical walk-in, dental, physical therapy, and pharmacy.
- **Snohomish County Transportation Coalition (Snotrac):** advocates for improvement in transportation service and solutions for people in Snohomish County with specialized transportation needs through community engagement, coordination of resources, and strategic partnerships.
- **Homage:** The largest provider of services for older adults and people with disabilities in Snohomish County, with programs in food and nutrition, health and wellness, home repair, social services, and transportation.
- **North Sound Bicycle Advocacy Group:** works with local jurisdictions and transportation departments to raise safety awareness for cyclists and pedestrians and find workable solutions related to intermodal transportation, public safety, clean air, and quality of life for local communities.
- **Sharing Wheels Community Bike Shop:** is a nonprofit bike shop located in Everett providing refurbished, used bicycles to thousands of adults and children as well as offering programs and resources for bike repair and upkeep.
- **BIKES Club:** is a recreational club which hosts rides and events year-round, in addition to advocating and fundraising for bike-related grants.

Community Transit also provided information tables at community events held at the Marysville Library, Everett Library, and the Latino Expo (LETI) at Edmonds College.

### b. When did you talk to them?

#### Community-based organizations

- Hopelink: April 23, 2024
- Community Health Centers: April 25, 2024
- Snotrac: May 1, 2024
- Homage: May 8, 2024
- North Sound Bicycle Advocacy Group: May 14, 2024
- BIKES Club and Sharing Wheels Community Bike Shop: May 14, 2024

### Community events

- Everett Public Library Drop-In: July 15, 2024
- Marysville Public Library Drop-In: July 24, 2024
- LETI Expo: July 27, 2024

### c. What did they have to say?

#### Community-based organizations

Community-based organizations serving vulnerable populations noted the following:

- **Limited transit service area:** Many interviewees identified the barrier of limited transit service in most of Snohomish County. Transportation service providers such as Homage and Hopelink shared that their organizations are flooded by demand and can only offer highly essential trips, such as getting to work and accessing medical services. Other commonly needed trips, such as going to the grocery store, accessing childcare, or going to the park, do not qualify for these transportation services.
- **Limited service hours:** Multiple interviewees shared that even when transit is available in their area, it may not be an option for employees with nontraditional hours, such as those working in healthcare. This could be due to gaps in service during non-peak hours or employees' feeling of safety using public transit during darker hours. Multiple people shared that offering shuttles or Dial-a-Ride Transportation (DART) were helpful measures to bridge these gaps.
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- **Criminal Activity:** Many cited fears of criminal activity on public transit as a deterrent to taking public transit. Even if the risk of crime is relatively low, perceptions of safety can be very negative. Installing lighting and other security measures as well as holding discussions on safety concerns can help address some of these barriers.
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- **Service Area**
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  - Would love to see frequent commuter times and routes that connect to Arlington Business Center.
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  - A visitor commented they were excited about Route 106 having weekend service so DART would be back in that area.
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- A visitor expressed concern about safety on buses and the drug usage on them.
- Several visitors needed trip planning information. Some asked how to get to certain destinations and one inquired if there are parking fees at park and rides.
- Several visitors asked about where to obtain free ORCA cards.

**d. How did what they said influence the plan?**

The City will work collaboratively with Homage and Hopelink to create policies that will reduce barriers to transit options, address safety concerns, ADA-compliant service improvements, locate affordable housing near public transit, and microtransit options. The City will also coordinate with DART and other transit agencies to improve or add services to these groups.

Monroe plans to continue partnering with Community Transit to support CTR-Affected employers by providing ETC training, commute trip reduction outreach and incentives, discounted ORCA pass programs, and trip planning support as detailed in Section #13 above. A few examples of comments received that are incorporated into the plan are:

- Providing free or discounted ORCA cards (suggested by community members)
- Improving outreach and education about reducing drive-alone trips (suggested by community-based organizations)
- Providing trip planning support for using alternative commute options (suggested by community members)

## **29. List employers' suggestions to make CTR more effective.**

Employers made the following suggestions during the Employer Workshop:

- Make information about commuting options and resources easier to find. Use newsletters and other forms of engagement sent directly to employees along with campaign posters and bulletin board notices.
- Increase awareness about pre-tax transit passes.
- Offer resources for managing parking programs and parking benefits.
- Focus on incentives for commute trip reductions rather than deterrents like charging for parking.
- Hold yearly wellness fairs featuring commute trip reduction options.
- Provide vanpool programs for employee work trips during the day.

- Implement parking programs aimed to reduce parking tension with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Offer internal shuttles for campuses and businesses with multiple locations.
- Improve safety and reduce crime around transit stops.
- Focus on “last mile” connections where transit stops are not convenient to the business’ location.
- Provide more grant funding and incentives for employers’ CTR programs.
- Help widely promote CTR programs and options.
- Increase bus routes, service hours, and public transportation options.
- City of Monroe employees said that CTR could be improved by offering incentives, and encouragement by management could make CTR programs more effective.

### **30. Describe results of engagement focused on vulnerable populations that will be provided for use in comprehensive plan and transit plan updates.**

In addition, comments and suggestions from vulnerable populations and other groups will be considered as part of Community Transit’s future transit planning processes. Community Transit is currently implementing its Transit Changes in 2024 and Beyond service plan. Many suggestions about increased frequency and new service areas will be implemented as part of the service plan update process which will continue through 2026.

Community Transit makes changes to bus service up to four times per year. When considering changes, the Planning team considers many factors including input from the public.

# Regional Transportation Planning Organization

## CTR Plan Review

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Monroe provided the 2025-2029 CTR Plan to Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) for review in September 2024.

PSRC Comments:

### **Benefits of Commute Trip Reduction**

The draft plan outlines the broad benefits of commute trip reduction but does not mention the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or VISION 2050. The narrative could be strengthened by mentioning the Regional Transportation Plan and how the Monroe CTR plan relates to the TDM priorities in the RTP (Pages 93-98).

### **Performance Targets**

The Monroe plan adopts Option 2 from the WSDOT CTR Plan guidance, a weighted average drive-alone rate of 15.5 percent below, or less, of the jurisdiction's Census performance in 2019, to evaluate the performance of CTR-affected worksites in the jurisdiction. For greater clarity, the city should also include the number shown in the WSDOT table (66%). Like many other jurisdictions, this plan indicates the city will use 2023-2025 CTR survey data to set the baseline and 2025-2027 survey data to evaluate progress. PSRC may reach out in the future for further details to help develop a regional baseline and target for the regional plan.

### **Services and Strategies**

PSRC reviewed the services and strategies described in this section and did not identify anything inconsistent with regional transportation goals.

### **Alignment with Plans**

The draft plan accurately identifies all transit agencies providing service within and to Monroe and indicates the transit development plans have been reviewed as part of the development of this draft CTR plan. The plan could be strengthened by more information in Question 24 on how the CTR plan ties into specific elements of these Transit Development Plans (TDPs).

### **Engagement**

The RTP identifies a need to better address equity in TDM, and understanding the transportation needs of underserved and historically marginalized populations is critical to achieving that goal. Monroe's draft CTR plan indicated the city collaborated with Community Transit, Hopelink, Homage, and others in engaging with vulnerable populations. PSRC encourages the city to continue engaging with people of limited English Proficiency (LEP) as well as people of color, people with low incomes, older adults, youth, and people with disabilities in all planning processes.





# Appendixes

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# Appendix A

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## CTR Ordinance

## Appendix B

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### Comprehensive Plan Polices that Support CTR

3.3.1		Integrate parking facilities in the Downtown area with pedestrian, bicycle, and transit circulation.
3.3.2		Promote land use patterns, such as compact urban development, which facilitates linked trips where someone can park once and access multiple services, businesses, and residential uses without multiple trips by single-occupancy vehicles.
3.3.3		Direct new development to those areas where adequate transportation facilities exist or will be provided as defined in the City-adopted transportation plan. Future development locations should also consider areas where transportation services have not been provided but could benefit historically under-invested neighborhoods and areas.
3.3.4		Require commute trip reduction program for new development for employers of over 100 employees. Smaller employers should be encouraged to voluntarily participate.

4.1.1		Coordinate active transportation and transit connections in areas of higher density land use and mixed-use development.
4.1.4		Encourage and promote new and redeveloped land uses that include mixed uses and higher density infill housing near retail, health-care services, parks, and transportation routes, which facilitates multipurpose trips and reduces the quantity and length of trips by single-occupancy vehicles.
4.2.1		Encourage new development and redevelopment in neighborhood centers, downtown, and along Main Street, including related investment in streetscape improvements, transportation infrastructure and public, civic, and cultural facilities to promote them as a regional draw/destination.
4.2.2		Direct new development to those areas where adequate multimodal transportation facilities exist or will be provided as defined in City-adopted facilities plans.
4.2.4		Identify and promote multimodal accessibility to support development of neighborhood commercial and mixed-use centers, such as Main Street between Kelsey and 179th Avenue.
4.2.6		Stimulate continued development of a health services district and commercial node along 179th Avenue with improved multimodal connectivity.
4.2.7		<p>Promote alternative modes of transportation by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. sidewalks</li> <li>b. walking and biking paths</li> <li>c. interconnected street networks</li> <li>d. improved transit systems</li> <li>e. safer crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists where need has been identified.</li> </ul>

4.2.10		Develop compatible land use strategies that require new development to include site and building features that support alternative modes of transportation including walking, bicycle, carpool and transit, promote alternative modes of transportation. Develop public education programs that encourage public transportation use in cooperation with surrounding communities.
4.3.1		Include racial and social equity, as well as environmental justice, as key criteria in the planning, funding, and construction of transportation system improvements, programs, and services.
4.6.3		Multimodal LOS standards are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian: Annual degree of completeness of the planned pedestrian network</li> <li>• Bicycle: Annual degree of completeness of the planned bicycle network</li> <li>• Transit: Partner with Community Transit and other transit operators to provide transit stop amenities and safe access to transit at major transit stops and park-and-ride facilities.</li> </ul>
4.6.4		Maintain multimodal level of service standards for highway, non-highway, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit transportation facilities in Monroe.
4.6.5		Work with PSRC and Snohomish County to coordinate travel demand forecasting to identify state, regional, and local transportation system improvements deemed necessary to meet future demand as well as improve health and safety for users of all ages and abilities.

