

12 Transportation

12.1 Introduction

Gig Harbor, named so by Captain Charles Wilkes, is steeped in maritime history with roots in boat-building, lumber, and fishing. Over the past century, Gig Harbor has continued to grow, aided by the completion of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. Though the city has seen unprecedented growth in the last 10 years, it remains dedicated to preserving its rich history for all to enjoy.

This Element provides a 20-year vision for Gig Harbor's transportation system, which respects the community's history and character, supports anticipated growth in the region, and builds on Gig Harbor's momentum as an attractive community in which to live, work, and play by supporting safe and comfortable travel by all modes through 2044.

This Transportation Element provides a framework for developing a safe, balanced, and efficient multi-modal transportation system that aligns with the City's overall vision and serves anticipated growth. Guidance from City staff, the Planning Commission, stakeholders, and community members helped identify several priorities:

- Provide safe and complete connections to encourage active transportation and public health for all users;
- Plan a transportation system that efficiently accommodates growth;
- Prioritize transportation projects that connect and support strong, vibrant centers, as well as investments that connect the city to the region;
- Consider the environmental and financial sustainability of transportation investments; and
- Coordinate with a broad range of groups to ensure community understanding.

This Element outlines the policies, projects, and programs needed to achieve the City's vision for future mobility in and through Gig Harbor. As a key component of the City's 2024 Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Element informs the development of the Capital Improvement Program by identifying the types of projects the City should undertake to support future travel trends. For details, refer to the Transportation Element Technical Appendix.

12.2 Goals and Policies

Gig Harbor has established five goals to accomplish its overall vision for transportation in the future. The goals establish overarching priorities that serve the vision of this Transportation Element while policies lay out specific actions. The consolidated set of goals and policies is included in this chapter.

- ▶ **TE-1 Create a transportation system that is inviting and accessible for all community members, encouraging public health through active transportation.**
 - TE-1.1 Design, construct, and operate transportation infrastructure to serve all users safely and conveniently, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, while accommodating the movement of freight and goods, as suitable to each facility's function and location.
 - TE-1.2 Improve collector streets to provide adequate capacity for present and future projected traffic loads, pedestrian and bicyclist activities.
 - TE-1.3 Enhance walkability in the Harbor Area and Centers of Local Importance through sidewalk widening and improved sidewalk connections, beautification, and preservation.
 - TE-1.4 Update and implement the Active Transportation Plan to provide inviting connections for pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - TE-1.5 Encourage additional pedestrian, bicycle, or shared vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian connections in the city as development and redevelopment occurs to increase the ease of access and create useful and well-designed public ways.
 - TE-1.6 Require public and private transportation improvements to meet the most recently adopted Public Works Standards, which specify inclusion of non-motorized features in the construction and design of new or improved streets.
 - TE-1.7 Promote non-motorized connections to the Cushman Trail to improve connectivity between the trail and parks, schools, adjacent neighborhoods, and businesses.
 - TE-1.8 Work to increase the safety of the transportation system with appropriate design and, in the long term, support the state's "Target Zero" plan goal of zero deaths and disabling injuries.
 - TE-1.9 Implement pedestrian improvements through a combination of public and private investments by using the Priority Network, Active Transportation Plan (ATP), Complete Streets Plan, and ADA Transition Plan as guides
- ▶ **TE-2 Promote and plan for a transportation system that is smart, efficient, and achievable.**
 - TE-2.1 Continue to analyze federal functional classifications of roadways to confirm they are consistent with new traffic volumes, community needs and the City's transportation vision for the future.
 - TE-2.2 Promote transportation investments that support transit and pedestrian oriented land use patterns and provide alternatives to single-occupant automobile travel.
 - TE-2.3 Partner with Pierce Transit to advocate for improved transit connections to key destinations, including the hospital, community center, and library.
 - TE-2.4 Pursue funding and support regional actions to develop an all modes crossing of SR 16 at Hunt Street.

TE-2.5 Maintain roadway facilities to achieve the City's intersection Level of Service standard of LOS D or better, except for the following intersections identified within the Downtown Harbor Area:

- Harborview Drive & Austin Street
- N Harborview Drive & Peacock Hill Avenue
- Harborview Drive & Rosedale Street
- Harborview Drive & Pioneer Way
- Harborview Drive & Soundview Drive

The above intersections may be allowed to operate at LOS F consistent with the vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian objectives identified in the Harbor Area.

TE-2.6 Require traffic impact mitigation prior to transportation concurrency approval for any proposed development project that would degrade the LOS below the City's standards. Mitigation shall be consistent with GHMC, Chapter 19.10 - Concurrency Management.

TE-2.7 Maintain, update, and calibrate a traffic demand model to facilitate the preparation of annual capacity reports and concurrency reviews.

TE-2.8 Work toward the development of a multi-modal transportation system that achieves the following LOS metrics:

- **Pedestrian LOS** – provide a minimum of LOS Yellow within the Pedestrian Priority Network, as defined in Exhibit 13-2 in Chapter 13 – Capital Facilities.
- **Bicycle LOS** – provide a minimum of LOS Yellow within the Bicycle Priority Network, as defined in Exhibit 13-3 in Chapter 13 – Capital Facilities.
- **Transit LOS** – partner with local and regional agencies to provide a minimum of LOS Yellow, as defined in Exhibit 13-4 in Chapter 13 – Capital Facilities.

TE-2.9 Increase public awareness of the City's transportation demand management strategies, including non-motorized transportation and increased use of local transit

TE-2.10 Review and update, if necessary, right-of-way widths, pavement widths, shoulder requirements, bicycle accommodations, curb-gutter- sidewalk standards for major arterials, collectors and local streets.

TE-2.11 Establish design standards, which provide for visually distinct roadways that provide increased pedestrian accommodations while providing efficient and cost-effective engineering design.

TE-2.12 Review and update, if necessary, street construction standards, which implement the objectives of the City's Complete Streets Ordinance, the goals and policies of the City of Gig Harbor Comprehensive Plan Design Element and the City Design Guidelines.

TE-2.13 Work with Pierce County to require the design and construction of appropriate urban transportation improvements in the Urban Growth Areas adjacent to the city.

- TE-2.14 Continuously monitor and analyze individual intersection approach leg LOS to determine if a capacity-related intersection improvement project, whether completed through a private development project or City capital project, is necessary to remedy a localized deficiency at a particular intersection approach leg. If it is determined that a capacity-related project is available that will remedy failing LOS at a particular leg of an intersection and the project will improve the overall intersection LOS significantly, the City shall consider such projects when generating the 6-year TIP project list.
- TE-2.15 Proactively address the transportation needs of planned developments by prioritizing equitable access for all community members. This includes exploring the feasibility of parking management programs, shared parking strategies, and/or subsidized transit pass programs, with an emphasis on supporting low-income and historically underserved communities

► **TE-3 Provide a transportation system that is effective in connecting centers to the regional transportation system.**

- TE-3.1 Promote and implement a network of local street and trail infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, and transit use to enhance connectivity and physical activity for people of all ages and abilities.
- TE-3.2 Prioritize investments in transportation facilities and services in CoLLs that support compact, pedestrian and transit-oriented development.
- TE-3.3 Work with Pierce Transit to satisfy local travel needs, particularly between residential areas, the CoLLs, and major commercial areas along SR 16.
- TE-3.4 Work with Pierce Transit to locate Pierce Transit Park & Ride lots in areas which are accessible to transit routes and local residential collectors.
- TE-3.5 Work with the Harbor property owners to determine an effective parking plan, including the establishment of a local parking improvement district for the Harbor.
- TE-3.6 Provide connections between commercial developments for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians, when feasible.
- TE-3.7 Implement transportation programs and projects that provide equitable access to essential services and opportunities—including hospitals, nursing homes, and community centers—while preventing or mitigating negative impacts to people of color, people with low incomes, and people with special transportation needs.

► **TE-4 Promote a transportation system that is sustainable over time, both financially and environmentally.**

- TE-4.1 Re-evaluate the Land Use Element, LOS, and revenue sources when funding for projects falls short. Impact fees should be used to the extent possible under GMA to fund capacity project costs. Alternative revenue sources and/or LOS modifications should be considered before land use density changes are considered.

- TE-4.2 Give high priority to maintenance and preservation of the existing transportation infrastructure.
- TE-4.3 Implement programs and construct projects that reduce reliance on private vehicles, thereby reducing harmful vehicle emissions, avoiding or mitigating impacts to critical areas and wildlife, manage water quality, and providing a safe environment for people to live and travel in.
- TE-4.4 Implement programs that help to meet and maintain federal and state clean air requirements, in addition to regional air quality policies. Also, support programs and projects that help to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions consistent with state goals established in RCW 70.235.050 and RCW 70.235.060.
- TE-4.5 Support the development and implementation of transportation modes and technologies that are energy-efficient, improve system performance, and minimize negative impacts to human health.
- TE-4.6 Protect the transportation system against natural and manmade disasters, develop prevention and recovery strategies, and plan for coordinated responses by using transportation- related preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery strategies and procedures adopted in the emergency management plans and hazard mitigation plans of the County and as well as the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
- TE-4.7 Provide for an efficient storm drainage system in road design considering the width of road pavement needed to achieve levels of service and utilization low impact development techniques including pervious pavements and biofiltration.
- TE-4.8 Work with the Puget Sound Regional Council, Washington State Department of Transportation, Pierce Transit and neighboring jurisdictions in the development of transportation control measures and other transportation and air quality programs where warranted.
- TE-4.9 Reduce the environmental impact of the city's transportation system through expanding zero-emission vehicle infrastructure, with an emphasis on areas with high commercial activity and limited electric vehicle infrastructure.
- TE-4.10 Identify opportunities to increase electric vehicle infrastructure and active transportation options when planning transportation projects or developing new transportation programs and policies.
- **TE-5 Ensure the transportation system planning process and investment decisions are understood by the community.**
 - TE-5.1 Coordinate planning, construction, and operation of transportation facilities and programs with the State, County, neighboring cities, Puget Sound Regional Council, transit agencies, and other entities. This coordination will be achieved by:
 - Participating in the transportation- related activities of Pierce County and advisory committees;
 - Working with other jurisdictions to plan, fund, and implement multi- jurisdictional projects necessary to meet shared transportation needs; and
 - Making transportation decisions consistent with this Transportation Element and other regional plans.

- TE-5.2 Work with private property owners to improve connections for automobile and non-motorized travel.
- TE-5.3 Work with neighboring jurisdictions to ensure that new development outside of Gig Harbor does not unreasonably affect transportation systems, levels of service, and the quality of life.
- TE-5.4 Work with business leaders, private owners, and other local organizations to reach mutual transportation goals.
- TE-5.5 Continue to work with WSDOT to lobby for future state transportation monies to be used on City east/west connections that will help alleviate both SR 16 congestion as well as City interchange congested areas.
- TE-5.6 Actively engage the public, especially historically underserved populations, during all phases of the development/update/improvement of a transportation service or facility to identify and reduce negative community impacts.