VI. CURRENT & FUTURE NEEDS

At the heart of the Growth Management Act (GMA) Transportation Planning requirements is the determination by the planning jurisdiction of its transportation "needs". RCW 36. 70A070(6)(b) states that the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is to include a sub-element which discusses *"Facilities and service needs, including. ..Specific actions and requirements for bringing into compliance any facilities and services that are below the established level of service standards* (and the) *Identification of system expansion needs and transportation system management needs to meet current and future demands".* In this 20 year Systems Plan, the improvement needs are separated into current needs (those facilities which have needs today) and future needs (those facilities anticipated to have improvement needs over the 20 year planning horizon).

There are several types of transportation modes that can be evaluated for improvement needs. In this section, the evaluation focuses primarily on needs in the road system along road segments. Since the road system can also have improvement needs at signalized road intersections, a brief intersection analysis is provided.

RCW's require the County Engineer to consider the "Priority Array" and LOS standards in the annual development of the County Transportation Improvement Program. The priority array is an analysis of physical deficiencies in roadways that are not directly related to traffic level and traffic congestion. In Skagit County, traffic volumes on County roads are low and maintenance of the existing County road system takes precedence over road construction. Because of this, road improvements rely more on the priority array than on level of service deficiencies.

A. PHYSICAL DEFICIENCIES OF ROADS

There are two primary factors, which determine whether a roadway is physically adequate or physically deficient. One is the pavement condition (the amount of cracking, rutting, and other deterioration), which is affected by such things as surface treatment age and type, the quality of the road base, and traffic. The other is road geometrics, including the horizontal alignment (curves in the road) and the vertical alignment (hills and valleys). Combining all these physical considerations and factoring in accident history can give a good indication of physical improvements that may be needed for a given roadway.

In Chapter II, details on the pavement condition of the various roads in the County were presented. It was concluded that the County road system is in a very good state with respect to pavement condition. Over time, pavement tends to deteriorate requiring ongoing maintenance and/or improvements. Depending on the improvement need, there are various levels of improvements that may be appropriate. Frequently, improvement projects are referred to as 2R, 3R or 4R projects depending on improvement level. These four Rs refer to: 1) resurfacing; 2) restoration; 3) rehabilitation; and, 4) reconstruction. The definitions of each are as follows:

1. Resurfacing: This is the addition of a layer or layers of paving material to provide additional structural integrity or improved serviceability and rideability.

2. Restoration: Restoration includes work performed on pavement or bridge decks to render them suitable for an additional stage of construction. This may include supplementing the existing roadway by increasing surfacing and paving courses to provide structural capability, widening up to a total of 10 ft. (3m) and installing localized safety improvements. The improvements can be done to provide structural capability, moderate widening, or localized safety improvements. Restoration is generally performed within existing right of way.

3. Rehabilitation: Rehabilitation is similar to 'restoration' except the work may include but is not limited to the following:

   - Reworking or strengthening the base/subbase;
   - Recycling or reworking existing materials to improve their structural integrity;
   - Adding underdrains;
   - Replacing or restoring malfunctioning joints;
   - Substantial pavement under-sealing when essential for stabilization;
   - Pavement grinding to restore smoothness, providing adequate structural thickness remains;
   - Removing or replacing deteriorated material;
   - Crack and joint sealing but only when the required shape factor is established by routing or sawing; and
   - Improving or widening shoulders.

4. Reconstruction: A reconstruction project involves major construction activity in excess of 3-R activity. Reconstruction includes significant changes in cross-section and/or shifts in vertical or horizontal aluignment. If 50 per cent or more of the projects requires significant horizontal or vertical changes, the project will be considered reconstruction. Reconstruction may require acquisition of additional right of way, and may include all items or work usually associated with new construction.

If no road base or geometric realignment work is needed, the deterioration can often be alleviated through maintenance activities, often by applying bituminous surface treatment (BST) or chip seal (through the County's oiling program). This would be considered a simple resurfacing job. A sizeable portion of the revenues from the County Road Fund is allocated to this and other County road maintenance programs.

If major improvements are needed (realignment, road base work, and/or widening) the appropriate fix may require a full reconstruction or 4R project. The RAP program of CRAB (discussed in Chapter IX) provides funding primarily for reconstruction projects. Traditionally, the County's Priority Array has been used to help prioritize such projects. This prioritization method factors in most of the physical characteristics mentioned above, but does not directly factor in traffic congestion. (See Chapter V for a discussion of the Priority Array.)

Intermediate level improvement needs are often accommodated by 2R (resurfacing and restoration) or 3R (add rehabilitation) projects. Examples of 2R/3R projects can be found in the county's asphalt overlay program funded by CAPP funds (discussed in Chapter IX).

B. ROAD IMPROVEMENT NEEDS BASED ON LEVEL OF SERVICE

As discussed in Chapter V, a major focus of the GMA transportation planning requirements is on the determination of level of service deficiencies and on funding transportation projects to address them. In essence, the GMA places congestion reduction as the primary goal for the long-range road improvement plan. GMA also has set up a system to ensure that the plan is implemented through the concurrency requirement in conjunction with level of service standards. In Skagit County the level of service methodology is based on the Highway Capacity Manual.

The Skagit County Public Works Traffic Engineering Unit has selected an LOS study volume unit threshold of 7,000 AADT. This threshold is an indicator that a road segment may be approaching the LOS C/D threshold and should be studied in depth. This conservative AADT threshold was determined through study of the LOS methods in the Highway Capacity Manual using accepted industry defaults, and knowledge of the transportation system of Skagit County. Traffic Engineering projects that a small number of roads may exceed this threshold over the course of the planning period, 2003-2017. Table 6-1 lists road segments that are expected to approach the study threshold and specifies the year that each segment is expected to reach 7,000 AADT, indicating a need for further study.

1. Current Needs

From Table 6-1 it can be seen that there are 22 different County road segments representing 3 different roads that currently exceed the 7,000 AADT LOS C/D threshold in the rural area. None of these roads are functionally classified as Local Access (09) and all are designated as Freight and Goods Transportation System (FGTS) routes. LOS D is a more appropriate standard for these roads to operate at according to Skagit County policy.

2. Future Needs

Based on the proposed LOS standards, 54 different County road segments representing 11 different roads are projected to trip the threshold from LOS C to LOS D during the 2003-2017 planning period. These road segments represent 20.01 miles of classified roadways in Skagit County. Table 6-1 lists the specific year that each road segment is projected to exceed 7,000 AADT. None of these roads are functionally classified as Local Access (09) and all are designated as Freight and Goods Transportation System (FGTS) routes. It is anticipated that LOS D will be a more appropriate standard for these roads to operate at according to Skagit County policy.

The current transportation model forecasts indicate that by the year 2017, only Cook Road, between Sedro-Woolley and Interstate 5, is expected to reach LOS D. The results of the model are summarized in Table 6-1 and are represented visually in Map 5A.

The results given in Tables 6-1 show that during the planning period, the only significant need on the County Road system will be Cook Road since it is the only road expected to reach LOS D. When the transportation model is used in conjunction with the statistical analysis model represented by Table 6-1, an easy to use system is created which allows the County Engineer to annually monitor the condition and LOS of county roads based upon current traffic count data. By using such a methodology, upcoming project needs can be predicted, planned for, and funded.

TABLE 6-1 Roads Expected to Exceed 7,000 AADT, 2002 – 2017.

Roads Expected to Exceed 7,000 AADT by 2017																			
Page 1 10:44:45 09 JAN 2003				2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Road Name	FFC	Frm MP	To MP	Exsisting Vol															
COOK ROAD	7	1.86	1.89	12276	12644	13024	13414	13817	14231	14658	15098	15551	16017	16498	16993	17503	18028	18569	19126
COOK ROAD	7	1.57	1.75	10200	10506	10821	11146	11480	11825	12179	12545	12921	13309	13708	14119	14543	14979	15428	15891
COOK ROAD	7	1.97	3.08	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	3.08	3.36	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	3.36	3.82	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	3.82	4.1	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	4.1	4.32	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	4.32	4.6	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	4.6	4.88	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	4.88	5	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	5	5.08	9911	10208	10515	10830	11155	11490	11834	12189	12555	12932	13320	13719	14131	14555	14991	15441
COOK ROAD	7	1.89	1.95	9871	10167	10472	10786	11110	11443	11786	12140	12504	12879	13266	13664	14074	14496	14931	15379
FIR ISLAND ROAD	7	0	0.41	9006	9276	9554	9841	10136	10440	10754	11076	11409	11751	12103	12466	12840	13226	13622	14031
COOK ROAD	7	5.62	6.14	8480	8734	8996	9266	9544	9831	10126	10429	10742	11064	11396	11738	12090	12453	12827	13212
COOK ROAD	7	1.95	1.97	8370	8621	8880	9146	9421	9703	9994	10294	10603	10921	11249	11586	11934	12292	12660	13040
COOK ROAD	7	5.08	5.32	8130	8374	8625	8884	9150	9425	9708	9999	10299	10608	10926	11254	11591	11939	12297	12666
COOK ROAD	7	5.32	5.39	8100	8343	8593	8851	9117	9390	9672	9962	10261	10569	10886	11212	11549	11895	12252	12620
COOK ROAD	7	5.39	5.51	8100	8343	8593	8851	9117	9390	9672	9962	10261	10569	10886	11212	11549	11895	12252	12620
COOK ROAD	7	5.51	5.62	8100	8343	8593	8851	9117	9390	9672	9962	10261	10569	10886	11212	11549	11895	12252	12620
PIONEER HIGHWAY	7	1.74	3.16	8043	8284	8533	8789	9052	9324	9604	9892	10189	10494	10809	11133	11467	11811	12166	12531
PIONEER HIGHWAY	7	0	1.41	7791	8025	8265	8513	8769	9032	9303	9582	9869	10165	10470	10785	11108	11441	11785	12138
PIONEER HIGHWAY	7	1.41	1.74	7791	8025	8265	8513	8769	9032	9303	9582	9869	10165	10470	10785	11108	11441	11785	12138
PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0	0.02	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139
PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0.22	0.37	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139
PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0.37	0.52	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139
PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0.52	0.63	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139

PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0.63	0.85	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139
PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0.85	0.86	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139
PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0.86	0.97	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139
PIONEER PARKWAY	7	0.97	1.53	5224	5381	5542	5708	5880	6056	6238	6425	6618	6816	7021	7231	7448	7672	7902	8139
LACONNER WHITNEY ROAD	7	0.04	0.98	5092	5245	5402	5564	5731	5903	6080	6263	6450	6644	6843	7049	7260	7478	7702	7933
LACONNER WHITNEY ROAD	7	0.98	2.19	5092	5245	5402	5564	5731	5903	6080	6263	6450	6644	6843	7049	7260	7478	7702	7933
FIR ISLAND ROAD	7	0.73	3.6	4913	5060	5212	5369	5530	5696	5866	6042	6224	6410	6603	6801	7005	7215	7431	7654
FIR ISLAND ROAD	7	3.6	3.79	4913	5060	5212	5369	5530	5696	5866	6042	6224	6410	6603	6801	7005	7215	7431	7654
FIR ISLAND ROAD	7	3.79	3.85	4913	5060	5212	5369	5530	5696	5866	6042	6224	6410	6603	6801	7005	7215	7431	7654
PETERSON ROAD	16	0.39	0.71	4893	5040	5191	5347	5507	5672	5842	6018	6198	6384	6576	6773	6976	7186	7401	7623
MCLEAN ROAD	7	0.91	2.05	4875	5021	5172	5327	5487	5651	5821	5996	6176	6361	6552	6748	6951	7159	7374	7595
LAKE SAMISH ROAD	7	0.72	0.8	4866	5012	5162	5317	5477	5641	5810	5985	6164	6349	6539	6736	6938	7146	7360	7581
LAKE SAMISH ROAD	8	0.8	0.86	4866	5012	5162	5317	5477	5641	5810	5985	6164	6349	6539	6736	6938	7146	7360	7581
LAKE SAMISH ROAD	8	0.86	0.89	4866	5012	5162	5317	5477	5641	5810	5985	6164	6349	6539	6736	6938	7146	7360	7581
LACONNER WHITNEY ROAD	7	0	0.04	4847	4992	5142	5296	5455	5619	5788	5961	6140	6324	6514	6709	6911	7118	7332	7551
MCLEAN ROAD	7	2.05	2.33	4757	4900	5047	5198	5354	5515	5680	5851	6026	6207	6393	6585	6782	6986	7195	7411
MCLEAN ROAD	7	2.33	2.54	4757	4900	5047	5198	5354	5515	5680	5851	6026	6207	6393	6585	6782	6986	7195	7411
OLD HWY 99 NORTH	7	1.69	1.87	4555	4692	4832	4977	5127	5280	5439	5602	5770	5943	6122	6305	6494	6689	6890	7097
OLD HWY 99 NORTH	7	1.87	2.1	4555	4692	4832	4977	5127	5280	5439	5602	5770	5943	6122	6305	6494	6689	6890	7097
OLD HWY 99 NORTH	7	2.095	2.68	4555	4692	4832	4977	5127	5280	5439	5602	5770	5943	6122	6305	6494	6689	6890	7097
OLD HWY 99 NORTH	7	2.68	3.28	4555	4692	4832	4977	5127	5280	5439	5602	5770	5943	6122	6305	6494	6689	6890	7097
ANDERSON ROAD	7	0	0.12	4515	4650	4790	4934	5082	5234	5391	5553	5719	5891	6068	6250	6437	6630	6829	7034
ANDERSON ROAD	7	0.12	0.34	4515	4650	4790	4934	5082	5234	5391	5553	5719	5891	6068	6250	6437	6630	6829	7034
BEST ROAD	7	5.078	5.39	4502	4637	4776	4919	5067	5219	5376	5537	5703	5874	6050	6232	6419	6611	6810	7014
BEST ROAD	7	5.392	5.77	4502	4637	4776	4919	5067	5219	5376	5537	5703	5874	6050	6232	6419	6611	6810	7014
BEST ROAD	7	5.773	6.11	4502	4637	4776	4919	5067	5219	5376	5537	5703	5874	6050	6232	6419	6611	6810	7014
BEST ROAD	7	6.108	6.25	4502	4637	4776	4919	5067	5219	5376	5537	5703	5874	6050	6232	6419	6611	6810	7014
BEST ROAD	7	6.247	6.37	4502	4637	4776	4919	5067	5219	5376	5537	5703	5874	6050	6232	6419	6611	6810	7014

	Located within a UGA
	Requires Advanced Study (using 0.17 "k" factor to determine Peak Ho

C. OTHER TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

1. Intersections

Intersections take far more analysis than road segments. Intersection analysis requires side street traffic volumes and turning movement volumes in addition to main street traffic volumes. With a two-way stop control the intersection level of service (LOS) cannot be determined because the road without stop signs does not experience any delay due to side street traffic. Instead, the major delay may be experienced by traffic at the Stop signs as they are unable to enter the traffic flow.

Skagit County Public Works performs intersection analysis as part of their traffic monitoring program. Intersections that may be approaching traffic signal warrants as described in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Signalization is considered as a possible solution to poor side street LOS, however, there have been many other considerations before concluding a traffic signal is required. Overall intersection safety is a major consideration and often results in alternatives to traffic signals such as route changes, additional lanes or new connections. When signalization occurs at an intersection the LOS can be determined as the average control delay to vehicles approaching the intersection.

a. Intersections Between County Roads

The location of future traffic signals cannot be determined many years in advance. This is because of the shifting nature of traffic. As one intersection begins to experience delay, motorists may shift their routes to an alternative route that seems quicker or easier. If alternative routes are not available new connections may be a better long-term solution than signalization. Also, additional lanes at an intersection can often reduce delay without signalization.

Public Works staff will evaluate the LOS of all signalized locations on County Roads. They will also monitor traffic volumes on potential signalized locations to evaluate traffic signal warrants. This procedure will identify side street delay so capital projects may be identified and scoped. If signalization occurs routes will be added to the list of intersection being monitored for LOS.

All existing traffic signalized intersections on County roads are operating at acceptable LOS.

b. County Roads Intersecting State Highways

High traffic volumes on state routes can cause delay on intersecting county roads. Much like the intersections of county roads, the intersection LOS

cannot be determined if some of the approaches are uncontrolled. The traffic volumes need to be monitored for potential signalization. Excessive delay on a Stop controlled approach will result in traffic accidents as motorists take greater risks to enter the intersection. Safety programs by WSDOT require that intersections with high side street traffic be monitored for traffic signal warrants.

Both WSDOT and Skagit County have traffic count programs to monitor traffic on their respective roads. Also, both agencies are required by law to meet the requirements of the MUTCD as adopted by the State of Washington. This commonality usually results in agreement to solutions on intersecting roadways. Normally WSDOT takes the lead for projects on State Routes but may require financial participation by other jurisdictions through aggreements. This participation is often a percentage based on traffic volumes from the respective agencies.

The coordination required by the GMA and the traffic growth projections on State routes required by HB 1487 will assure the State has the data to evaluate existing and future signalization for their LOS requirements. Signalization at county roads can be designed to provide acceptable LOS far into the future.

c. Cost Estimates

The County will bear the costs for signalizing intersections on County roads. At this time, there are two signalized intersections in Skagit County, both of which are functioning at acceptable LOS. The County will share the costs for signalization of intersections where County roads meet state highways. It is difficult to determine if additional signalization will occur in the future, but for the purposes of this plan, new signalization is not anticipated and cost estimates have not been developed.

Caution should be taken in interpreting the results of this intersection needs analysis, particularly with respect to intersections with state routes. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has included a number of short and long term intersection improvement concepts in the State Transportation Systems plan. WSDOT staff has admitted that more work is needed to determine specific projects. In addition, County staff are not completely satisfied that the results of the intersection needs analysis in this Chapter accurately reflect the true intersection needs along SR-20. Additional coordination is needed with the State Transportation Systems Plan, and corridor studies will have to be undertaken in the near future along SR-20 in order to properly plan for the short and long term intersection improvmement needs in this area.

2. Bridge

The Skagit County bridges are in reasonably good condition. There are some problems on a few bridges in the County in handling heavy loads. While a number of the bridges are considered functionally obsolete by state and federal standards for bridge reconstruction, none are functionally obsolete. Level of service problems based on vehicle traffic congestion measures generally do not exist on the County's bridges.

A detailed analysis of each bridge in the County has not been made for this plan. However, the Engineering Division of Public Works estimates that 4 or 5 bridge structures will need to be replaced over the next 20 years to accommodate future freight loads.

3. Non-motorized Transportation

Chapter X of this document identifies needs for bicyclists and pedestrians in several contexts. The plan identifies deficiencies in conditions for bicycling based on a level of service analysis that takes into consideration the width of the roadway, presence of shoulders, volume and speed of local traffic and consistency with a proposed network of key streets for bicycling.

The policy background for this needs analysis is summarized in Chapter X.

4. Guemes Ferry

A *Guemes Island Ferry Capital Facilities Plan* was produced in 1991 to meet the ongoing RCW requirement to produce a 14-year long-range capital improvement plan. A major update to the 14-year long-range plan was conducted in 2000 and several sections of this document contain the most current information available regarding the Guemes Island Ferry system.

The forecasts done for the Guemes Island Ferry system in Chapter III indicate that significant growth in vehicle traffic will occur between 2001 and 2015. In chapter VI, it was shown that this forecasted growth can be accommodated with the current vessel through an infilling of the current ferry schedule.

An additional opportunity for the future relates to the system's capacity to accommodate much more wa1k-on passenger growth than vehicle traffic growth. Thus, a switch to more walk-on traffic in the future could help alleviate the potential for vehicle congestion and facility improvement needs on the system. Skagit County Public Works is currently in the design phase for a 70-stall parking facility near the Anacortes ferry terminal to facilitate this opportunity.

The need for a new ferry vessel is not anticipated within the planning period. If additional vehicle capacity becomes a pressing need and cannot be addressed through a low-cost measure, an option to lengthen the ferry exists. Significant capital expenditures for the Guemes Island Ferry are eligible for substantial state or federal financial assistance.

5. Transit

Skagit transit has never developed level of service standards nor has it used traditional LOS concepts in evaluating the local transit needs. In its recent expanding environment, the focus has been on whether the potential ridership in an area is great enough to justify basic service. The other factor has been whether revenues are available from the two dedicated revenue sources (sales tax and motor vehicle excise tax) to fund the basic service. Initiative 695 eliminated the funding available through the motor vehicle excise tax. In an environment of fixed revenues, the basic trade off is between funding higher levels of service within the highest ridership areas and funding basic service to the more dispersed low ridership areas. Fortunately for the unincorporated areas within the Public Transit benefit Area, the recent emphasis has been on expanding the areas receiving basic service.

As mentioned in a previous chapter, SKAT has done a six year Transit Development Plan for 1999 through 2005. This plan lays out various equipment purchases and other planned expenditures over the six-year period. In addition, there are some service improvement goals, which are listed in the Plan. As mentioned previously, substantial increases in ridership are expected over the next six years. While these are not broken out for the unincorporated or rural County, the expectation is that both the service and the ridership in the unincorporated area will grow sizably in this time period.

D. CITY AND STATE NEEDS

The Transportation Systems Plan is primarily focused on "needs" for County roads and for the Guemes Island Ferry. But from a countywide perspective there are some important street and highway needs that will affect the functioning of the overall transportation system in the County. A complete list of all the 6-year and 20 year "needs" for the cities, the County, and for the State is shown in the Regional Transportation Plan. Here, we will point out several major projects, which have countywide and/ or statewide importance.

One of the sub-regional (countywide) issues which was identified in the early stages of RTPO program was to accommodate the increasing north/south traffic crossing the Skagit River in the Mount Vernon/Burlington area. The city project to rebuild

the Skagit River Bridge along Riverside Drive/Burlington Boulevard to four lanes is critical for accomplishing this. Fortunately nearly all the needed funding for this project has already been secured by the co-sponsoring agencies, the cities of Burlington and Mount Vernon.

Over the next 20 years, the traffic level on the parallel I-5 Skagit River bridge is forecast to reach unacceptable LOS at the current 4 -lane configuration. Extending the six lanes traffic configuration for I-5 through the entire Mount Vernon/Burlington area is a WSDOT project, which may solve the problem. Since this will be an expensive project, funding will be difficult to secure without significantly increasing the state or federal revenues dedicated to transportation.

The most pressing current state highway need in Skagit County may be to improve SR-20 from 2 lanes to four lanes between I-5 and Fredonia (where the Memorial Highway merges with SR-20). Included in this proposed WSDOT project are major improvements to the SR-20/I-5 interchange at Burlington which already functions at poor levels of service in peak hours. Funding for this project could come relatively soon if a substantial gas tax increase is approved by the State legislature.

In the longer term, access between the I-5 corridor and Whidbey Island will become an increasingly important regional transportation issue. The Deception Pass bridge is already close to capacity, and the SR-20 segment between Sharpes Corner and the bridge is projected to reach serious congestion levels within the 20 year planning horizon. Because of the difficulty of expanding the bridge capacity, several alternatives for increasing Whidbey Island access will be considered and studied over the next several years. No specific project has yet been developed to deal with this long-term problem.

There are several other important short to long-term needs in Skagit County related to SR-20. One is increasing capacity through Anacortes to the ferry terminal. Others relate to increasing capacity between and through Burlington and Sedro-Woolley. Finally, improvements need to be made to SR-20 upriver to help alleviate the increasing congestion.