

## CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM NEEDS



The Squaxin Island Tribe transportation system is *multi-modal* with tribal and non-tribal routes and elements that address a variety of special *issues*. NOTE: One measurement of congestion across all modes is level-of-service (LOS). When the system/route surpasses the LOS standard, specific actions are outlined to reduce congestion. Examples include wait time on a ferry or wait time through a road bottleneck.

## Modes

*Please reference the attachments for more details, especially the priority lists.*

### 1. Aviation

- Aviation is a vital mode of transportation to be addressed in future updates.

### 2. Freight

- Freight is a vital mode of transportation to be addressed in future updates.

### 3. Marine

- A vital mode of transportation, the following priority projects culturally and economically link the tribe to water in all its forms:

SIT NCR Building Dr - new road (0.5 mile). The capacity project provides road access to the new Natural/Cultural Resources Building and boat storage area, serving tribal members exercising their treaty fishing rights and staff providing natural resources and cultural resources protection. Partially funded.

SIT NCR Building Dr - trails and sidewalks (0.25 mile). The mobility project provides bike/pedestrian access to the new Natural/Cultural Resources Building and boat storage area, serving tribal members exercising their treaty fishing rights and staff providing natural resources and cultural resources protection. Partially funded.

SIT NCR Building Dr - facility. The economic development/community development/capacity project is for a new "green" Natural/Cultural Resources Building and boat storage area, serving tribal members who exercise their treaty fishing rights and staff who provide natural resources and cultural resources protection. Partially funded.

SIT Canoe Shed Dr - new road (0.1 mile). The economic development/capacity project provides service road access to the new Canoe Shed. Partially funded.

SIT Canoe Shed - facility. The economic development/community development project is for a new canoe carving facility for tribal members and guests, associated with the Squaxin Museum, Library, and Research Center. Partially funded.

SIT NCR Building Dr - boat storage and workshop. The economic development/mobility project provides a boat storage area and workshop for tribal members exercising their treaty fishing rights and staff providing natural resources and cultural resources protection. Partially funded.

SIT Arcadia Boat Ramp phase 1 - replacement, widening. The economic development/preservation project provides needed repairs to the boat ramp and expansion to allow for greater use. NOTE: A federal funding application is in process that would fund right-of-way and construction after preliminary design is complete. Partially funded.

SIT Arcadia Boat Ramp phase 2 - parking, restrooms. The economic development/mobility project provides needed parking improvements and restrooms to allow for greater use. Unfunded.

SIT Arcadia Boat Ramp phase 3 – facilities. The economic development/mobility project provides facilities to service boat ramp users and area visitors, and provide jobs. Unfunded.

SIT Squaxin Island dock - pier removal. The natural resources protection project removes old piers that are polluting the water. Unfunded.

TC Boston Harbor ramp improvements. The economic development/preservation project provides needed repairs to the *Thurston County-owned* boat ramp and expansion to allow for greater use Squaxin tribal members and enterprises are frequent users due to its proximity to tribal fishing grounds. Unfunded.

- Improve access to Squaxin Island for elders, tribal members, and others with the required access permit.

#### 4. Motorized

##### Roads

- Update the BIA IRR inventory to optimize updates the of the BIA IRR inventory (used to calculate tribal shares for transportation planning, construction, and maintenance), tribes need to gain security clearance and update the inventory. The security clearance process needs to be a priority.
- Fund priority projects within the BIA IRR program after the inventory is updated, secure at least partial BIA IRR funds and include the projects below in the BIA IRR TIP for further funding and development. BIA IRR priority projects are noted with an \* below.
- Fund priority projects within state/federal programs the Squaxin transportation system roads that are eligible for many kinds of federal, state, regional, and local funding they must be included in the RTIP, and when fully funded, the STIP.
- Designate official road names for all routes for record keeping and familiarity, utilizing a transportation advisory committee for Tribal Council recommendations.

WA SR108 turn lane. The economic impact/safety project provides access improvements to *state-owned* SR108 (i.e. left-turn lane) into the Little Creek Casino Resort area. Fully funded.

\* SIT Klah-Che-Min Dr improvements (curb, gutter, bike lane, sidewalk, resurface, from MP 0.0 to 0.45). The safety/mobility project is for *tribal* road improvements in the first road section similar to the second road section. The first section is narrower with homes closer to the road, so only one sidewalk and bike/pedestrian lane will be included. Partially funded.

\* SIT safety/minor construction - trails, lighting, striping, signage, etc. The safety/mobility project provides improved reservation-wide traffic safety and transportation options, including Squaxin Lane, a *tribal* road that provides access to the Squaxin Education Center where many safety improvements are needed. Partially funded.

SIT maintenance - patches, traffic safety, cleaning, etc. The preservation project provides reservation-wide maintenance within the *tribal* transportation system. Partially funded.

MC Simmons Rd - new road, SR101/Lynch Rd intersection. The safety project provides improvements to the dangerous intersection of *state-owned* SR101 and *Mason County-owned* Lynch Rd (MP 0.0 to 1.06) by

developing a new access road (a new section of Simmons Rd) between Lynch Road and *Mason County-owned* Simmons Rd. This has been a priority project for many years (see Squaxin's 1990 LRTP and draft 1998 LRTP). Tribal members travel through this intersection to access fishing grounds, using the boat ramp in Arcadia at the end of Lynch Rd. Federal and state funding applications are in process that would fund the balance of construction. Partially funded.

SIT NCR Building Dr - new road (0.5 mile). *See Marine*. Partially funded.

SIT Canoe Shed Dr - new road (0.1 mile). *See Marine*. Partially funded.

SIT Slocum Ridge 3 - new housing, cemetery roads (1.25 mile). The capacity project provides new *tribal* road access for a new mixed-income housing development and new cemetery located off Klah-Che-Min Dr between Slocum Ridge 1 & 2 housing area and Bloomfield Rd. Partially funded.

SIT Salish Cliffs - new roads (2 miles). The economic development/capacity project provides new *tribal* road access to the area south of SR108 and southwest of the Little Creek Casino Resort, in support of tribal enterprises. Partially funded.

MC Lynch Rd - spur to Arcadia Boat Ramp (0.8 mile). The safety/mobility/preservation project maintains the *Mason County-owned* road spur and provides safer access to *tribal-owned* Arcadia boat ramp. Unfunded.

MC OOH/Simmons Rd intersection. The economic impact/safety project provides *Mason County-owned* road improvements related to future economic development. Unfunded.

SIT Salish Highlands - new roads (3 miles). The economic impact/capacity project provides new *tribal* road access to the area north of SR108 and north-northwest of the Little Creek Casino Resort, in support of tribal enterprises. Unfunded.

\* means a BIA IRR priority.

### *Bridges*

- Update the BIA IRR and National Bridge Inventory System (NBIS) inventories used to calculate tribal shares for planning, construction, and maintenance.
- Fund priority projects within the BIA IRR program after the bridge inventory is updated and secure at least partial BIA IRR funds and include the projects below in the BIA IRR TIP for further funding and development.
- Fund priority projects within state/federal programs the Squaxin bridge projects eligible for many kinds of federal, state, regional, and local funding. The projects must be included in the RTIP when partially funded and the STIP when fully funded.
- Develop and implement a bridge inspection program for tribal bridges.

SIT Salish Highlands - new bridge. An economic development and capacity *tribal* bridge project for access and development of tribal land north of SR108 in the commercial area. Unfunded.

SIT Slocum Ridge 3 - new bridge. A community development and capacity *tribal* bridge project for access and development of tribal land in the new housing area. Unfunded.

SIT Slocum Ridge 3 - new bridge/culvert. A community development and capacity *tribal* bridge project for access and development of tribal land in the new housing area. Unfunded.

### *ORV trails*

- Inventory existing formal and informal ORV trails and assess the need for ORV trail development.

## **5. Non-Motorized**

*Pedestrian amenities*

- Use low environmental impact lighting, if possible, to increase visibility.
- Inventory signs at each intersection (street signs, stop signs, other).
- Install and maintain signs (including fluorescent yellow-green signs) at pedestrian-bicycle crossings and in school zones.
- Develop a plan that includes emergency communications equipment (integrated, interoperable), operational activities, and related traffic enforcement.
- Assess traffic safety related accidents and take actions to reduce injuries and accidents.

*Non-Motorized transit*

- Conduct an accessibility audit of the Squaxin transportation system and take actions to improve mobility.

SIT NCR Building Dr - trails and sidewalks (0.25 mile). *See Marine*. Partially funded.

SIT safety/minor construction - trails, lighting, striping, signage, etc. *See Motorized*. Partially funded.

SIT Klah-Che-Min Dr improvements (curb, gutter, bike lane, sidewalk, resurface, from MP 0.0 to 0.45). *See Motorized*. Partially funded.

**6. Rail**

- Rail is a vital mode of passenger and freight transportation to be addressed in future updates.

SIT rail spur. The economic development project provides rail access for freight movement around the industrial area. Squaxin has an agreement between Island Enterprises, Inc. and a private partner to develop a business that will utilize rail transportation. Fully funded.

**7. Transit**

- Maintain levels of service current being provided by Squaxin Transit and other service area transit providers.
- Improve coordination of all resources within the Squaxin Transit service area.
- Develop resources to cover current non-service hours and days.
- Establish a one-stop call number that will have all the information people would need to get from one area to another, directing people to correct resources.
- Develop Volunteer Driver (recruit, train, and reimburse a volunteer pool), Transit Promotions (trip planning, transit riding campaigns), Special Events (arranging transportation for government and enterprises), Patient Navigator (for special transports) programs.
- Replace the two Squaxin Transit vehicles (minibuses) with newer, larger capacity vehicles.
- Replace the current dispatch system (cell phones and land line) with one designed for larger capacity transit operations. Determine the type of system in the comprehensive transit planning process.
- Enhance drug-alcohol testing for transit drivers and related staff per state and federal requirements (currently an unfunded mandate) and seek funding to cover the costs.
- **Conduct a more comprehensive transit plan.** In 2007-2008 Squaxin received two planning grants from FTA Tribal Transit and CTAA tribal technical assistance to develop a comprehensive transit plan for 2009 completion. The plan will assess tribal-wide public transportation and make recommendations for further development. The planning process will utilize staff, a consultant, and an advisory committee.

SIT Squaxin Transit mini-bus replacement. The safety/preservation project replaces the second Squaxin Transit mini-bus. Unfunded.

SIT Elders bus replacement. The safety/preservation project replaces the Elders bus. Unfunded.



Canoe Shed



Natural/Cultural Resources Building

## Issues

Please reference the attachments for more details, especially the priority lists.

### 1. Capacity (administrative)

- Enhance administrative capacity building to adequately address tribal priorities.
- Advocate tribal interests in key transportation policy processes, including federal SAFETEA-LU issues (i.e. legislation, funding, distribution).
- Create/maintain a communication network and services that keeps Squaxin updated on transportation issues.
- Support tribal transportation organizations such as the TTPO, ITA, ATNI-Transportation Committee. ITA has an annual membership. TTPO is reorganizing and may require an annual membership. The ATNI-Transportation Committee has no additional membership, but if used for tribal transportation planning, planner participation (with related funding) in ATNI meetings would be essential to full participation.
- Support regional transportation organizations such as PRTPO and TRPC. TRPC has an annual membership.
- Raise awareness of mobility, safety, and transportation system opportunities.
- Continue partnership building and coordination at the planning/technical and policy levels with tribal, national, state, region (MPO/RTPO participation), city, and county agencies.
- Strengthen coordination with transportation organizations that promote Squaxin priorities, in particular and the state and regional levels.

### 2. Capacity (funding)

- The key to funding is collaboration, collaboration, and more collaboration.
- Maximize *tribal* funding (prioritize and leverage) including general tribal revenue including fuel tax revenue (for transportation related uses), motel/hotel tax revenue, and bonds. Tribal funds are best used as leverage for matching funds. Regarding fuel tax, in 2004 Squaxin estimates based on enrollment and gallons of motor fuel consumed at 33 cents/gallon was \$110,975. Per the new fuel tax compact, estimates would be based on sales at 36 cents/gallon, total gallons sold, and 75% rate for each tribe to be spent on transportation related priorities. As of March 2008 there were eight tribes with new fuel tax compacts (Squaxin is not in that group).
- Maximize *federal* funding including FTA (Tribal Transit, 5311, 5309), National Scenic Byway, FEMA, BIA-IRR (May 1 traffic safety grant, maintenance, roads and bridges construction, planning), USDA, IHS, BLM (trail building), USFS, HUD. Help streamline federal distribution of tribal money through involvement with related transportation organizations.
- Maximize *state* funding including WSDOT (STP, TE, state and federal pass-through funds), WSHS (Capitol Projects Fund), CTED, DSHS, Ecology, RCO (11 grant programs).
- Maximize *local* funding including county and city matching funds for safety, capacity, enhancement, transit priorities.
- Maximize *other* funding including private, public, and non-profit organizations, individual funding sources such as CTAA's Tribal Passenger Transportation Technical Assistance Program. \* Explore fee-based goods and services, private-public partnerships, and mitigation (i.e. Manke is funding the Squaxin cemetery to

mitigate their impact on an old cemetery). \* Explore out-of-the-box alternatives such as a new transportation tax. Currently most of the cost of owning and operating an automobile is paid up front. A new transportation tax based on how much people drive would create a system that rewards people for driving less.

### **3. Capacity (system)**

- Prioritize and support capacity building projects that accommodate growth at an adequate level of service.

### **4. Climate change and sustainability**

- Address climate change and sustainability in future transportation planning. Considerations include: Think out seven generations, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, review governmental assets, develop and implement a commute trip reduction program, build more pedestrian pathways, mitigate gas costs, enhance transit service, identify strategic investments in rail, and encourage transit oriented development.

NOTE: State proposals include promotion of energy conservation through expanded use of public transportation and promotion of rail development, including high speed rail for public transportation, with goals established to reduce energy consumption and reliance on foreign oil, as well as decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Federal proposals include expansion of transit, reduced fares, federal employee transit pass benefit program, alternative and/or clean fuel use incentives, mass transit facility incentives, and a two-year pilot program to allow the amount expended by private vanpool providers for the acquisition of vans to be used as the non-federal share for matching federal transit funds.

### **5. Community vitality**

- Address transportation needs for Medicaid/Medicare clients and others who have transportation needs.
- Build a health-centered community that includes viable transportation options that increase active lifestyles.
- 40% of Washington State's population does not have a license to drive, yet 1) most transportation infrastructure is designed around motor vehicle level of service (the number of motor vehicle passing through a section of roadway in a given time), 2) we all pay for transportation infrastructure we may or may not use, a disconnect that leads to irrational behavior.

### **6. Economic development, tourism, workforce development**

- Coordinate transportation development with economic, tourism, and workforce development. Strive for transit-oriented development.
- Coordinate development of the First Nations Trail and the Pacific Coast Scenic Byway (SR101) focused on enhancing eco-tourism and cultural tourism, targeting the 2010 Olympics visitors. [www.vancouver2010.com](http://www.vancouver2010.com)

### **7. Elders**

- Improve the quality of life and delivery of related elder support services by assessing the current programming and providing high-quality services while maintaining the elders' cultural values and enhancing self-perception, worth, and dignity. Provide accessible, comfortable transportation that meets their needs, including transit to group events and activities.

### **8. Emergency management**

- Develop a Route Evacuation Plan and provide more detail plans for personal mobility and freight service in the event of a major disruption to the transportation system or in case of catastrophic events.

### **9. Maintenance/preservation**

- Develop a plan to improve preservation of the transportation system. For example, chip sealing should be part of the plan, on a 7-8 year cycle for all tribal roads.

### **10. Mobility**

- Develop a plan to improve multimodal connectivity and public transportation.

### **11. Natural/cultural resource protection**

- Continue coordination and development throughout system development.

**12. Special needs/accessibility**

- Coordinate and address special needs/accessibility in all aspects of transportation system development. Include a representative on the Transportation Commission.

**13. Traffic Safety**

- Develop a traffic safety plan to accommodate growth and community vitality. Considerations include new traffic safety oriented partnerships, and promotion of safe routes to school.

**14. Youth**

- Address youth-related mobility and traffic safety concerns in neighborhoods, around playgrounds, and around the Education Center.

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# Strategies

*Please reference the attachments for more details.*

According to the WSDOT Tribal Transportation Database Project of 2005, the transportation needs of tribes are significant. The most frequently cited transportation need on reservations is for road and bridge improvements – widening, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, preservation. These needs are acute. There are not enough federal or tribal funds nor is there adequate planning and engineering capacity to perform this work. Moreover, it is difficult for rural tribal projects to compete for state funding against urban projects.

Transportation enhancements – sidewalks, lighting, striping, markers and reflectors, safety signage – as well as speed limit enforcement, adequate maps, and an adequate traffic counting program are other often-cited needs.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motor vehicle injuries are the leading cause of death for Native Americans ages 1-43, and the third leading cause overall for Native Americans.

According to estimates by the National Safety Council, the economic cost in 2005 for each fatality in terms of lost wages, medical expenses, administrative expenses, motor vehicle and property damage, and employer costs exceeded \$1.14 million for each life lost and over \$50,000 for each person injured.

76% of Indian and Alaska Native fatalities were not seat belt or child safety seat restrained, compared to 68% nationally.

Since 1982, 65% of fatal crashes occurring on Indian reservations were alcohol related, compared to 47% nationally.

Following is a general list of strategies to address LRTP needs (modes and issues).

1. Optimize administrative capacity.
2. Optimize transportation planning document updates.
3. Optimize coordination.
4. Optimize project/program development for top priorities.
5. Form a transportation advisory committee to assist with transportation development.
6. Increase funding for transportation development to address chronic unmet needs and to keep up with inflation.
7. Create an interdepartmental transportation safety program.
8. Address the road and bridge maintenance backlog.
9. Enhance the public transportation program.
10. Continue to advocate for equitable tribal transportation funding at all levels of government.

###