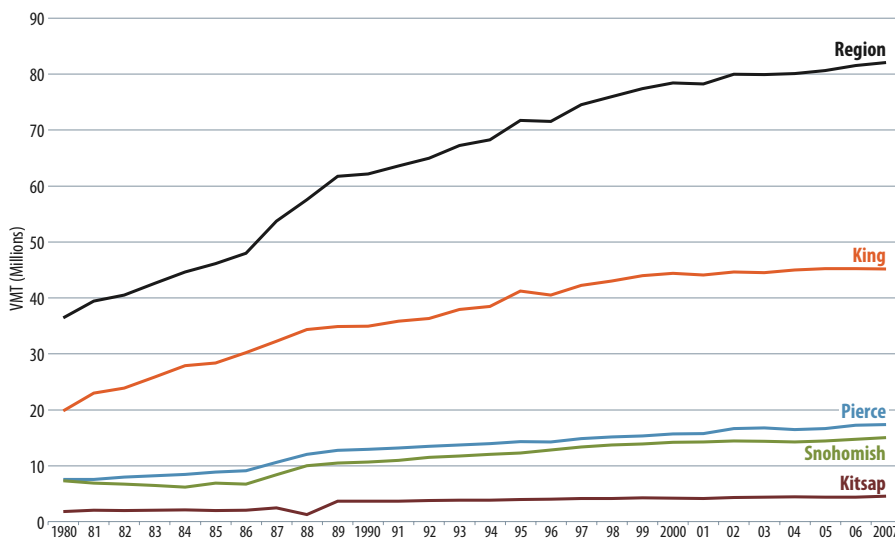


## Trends in Vehicle Miles Traveled

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has been estimated by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), in addition to many other data items, since 1980 as part of the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS). In 2007, VMT for the Puget Sound region increased by 0.6 percent over 2006, continuing an almost 30-year trend. Annual VMT has decreased only three times since 1980 when the first estimates became available (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Daily VMT by County



Of the region’s average daily VMT (82 million in 2007), 55.0 percent occurs on King County roads, 21.2 percent in Pierce County, 18.3 percent in Snohomish County and 5.5 percent in Kitsap County. Figure 1 shows the county-level VMT by year since 1980. It’s important to note that the VMT values correspond to vehicles traveling on each county’s roads regardless of origin or destination rather than the vehicle miles generated by each county’s residents.

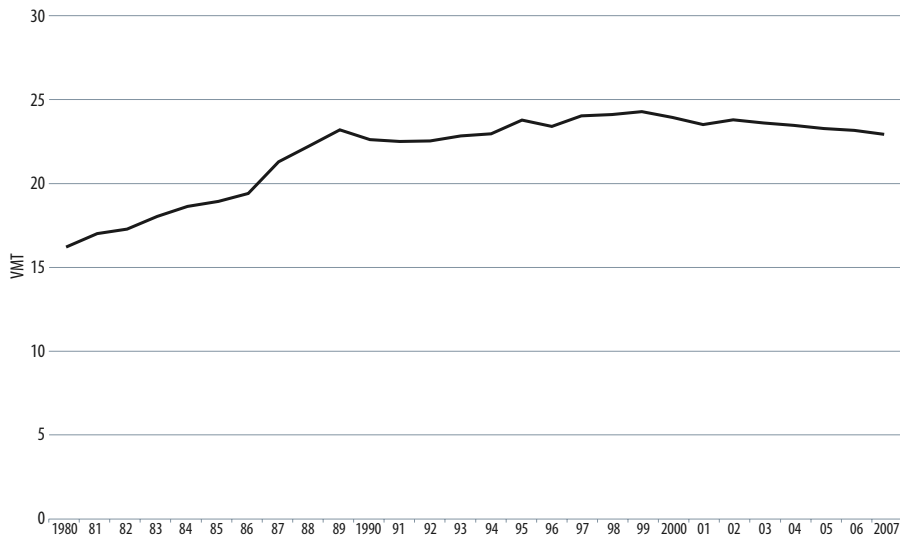
As expected, freeways account for a large part of our region’s VMT. In the Seattle-Everett urbanized area, 43 percent of VMT occurs on freeways and expressways. Arterials account for about 38 percent while local roads produce 19 percent (see Table 1).

Table 1. 2007 VMT by Facility Type, Seattle-Everett Urbanized Area

	Miles	Percent	VMT (1,000s)	Percent
Fwy/Express	323	2.7%	30,670	43.0%
Arterial	1,937	16.2%	27,442	38.4%
Collector/Local	9,723	81.1%	13,267	18.6%
Total	11,983	100.0%	71,379	100.0%

While total vehicle miles traveled increased in 2007, VMT per capita decreased over 2006 levels from 23.1 to 22.9 vehicle miles per capita per day. Figure 2 shows VMT per capita in the Puget Sound region since 1980. VMT per capita increased substantially during the 1980s, rising from 16.3 vehicle miles per capita in 1980 to 23.2 in 1989 due to increased vehicle ownership and two-worker households. VMT per capita generally leveled off or increased minimally during the 1990s and has been declining slightly since 1999 when it peaked at 24.2 VMT per capita. The recent decrease can be attributed to several factors including increased transit usage (regional transit ridership was up 19.6 percent from 1999 to 2007 — but only up 6.4 percent per capita) and rising fuel prices during this period (close to 300 percent increase from 6/99 to 6/07). These per capita numbers don't account for VMT in the region stemming from persons living outside the four-county area.

Figure 2. Daily VMT per Capita



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