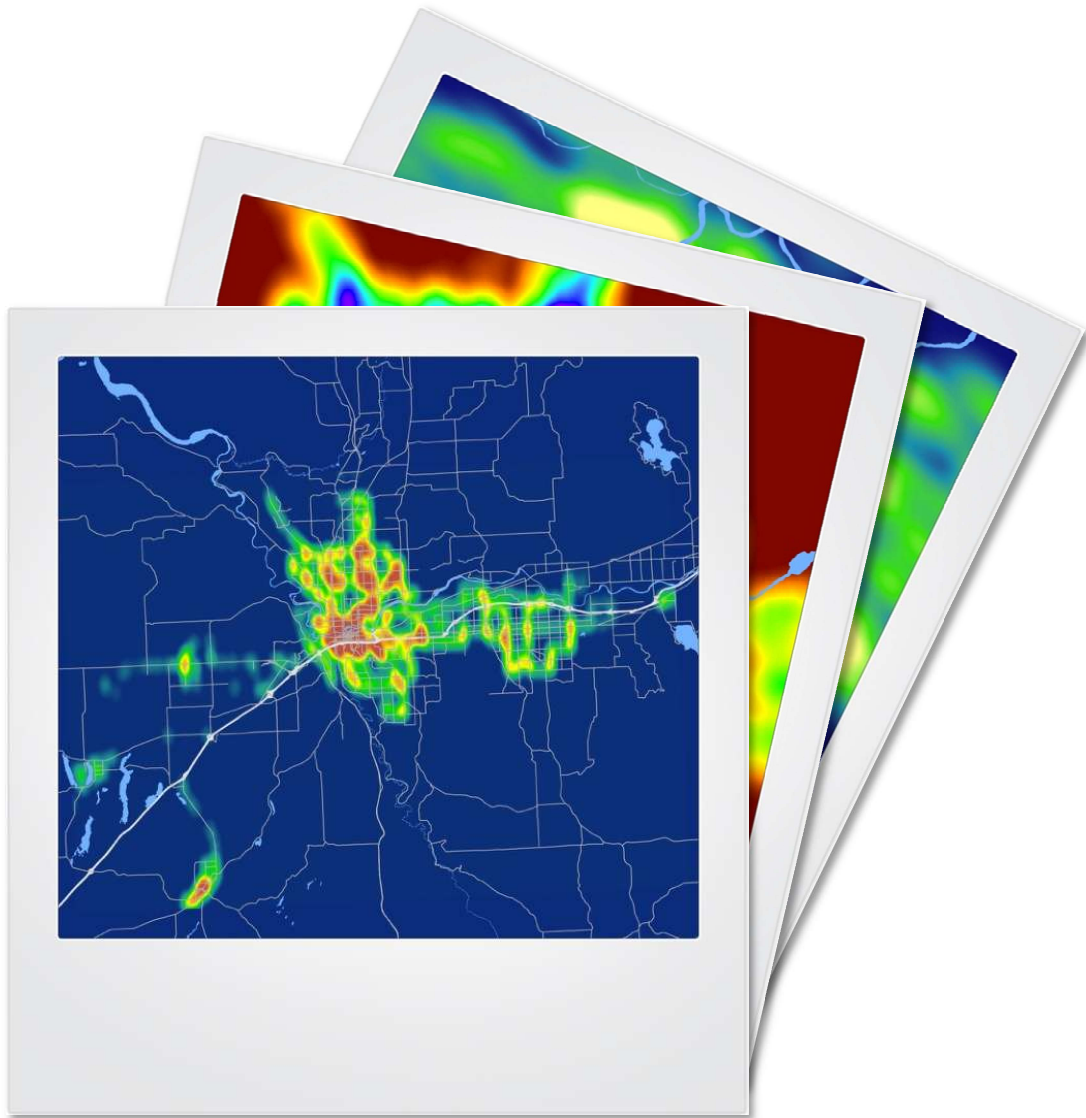


Connect Spokane

A Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation



Board of Directors Adoption Dates

Action	Date	Outcome
Public Hearing	June 16, 2010	Board received public comment.
Board Adoption	July 21, 2012	Board adopted plan (Resolution No. 665-10).
Public Hearing/Board Adoption	September 15, 2010	Board received public comment and adopted revisions to the plan (Resolution No. 669-10) to include policy SI-3.6 Pedestrian Infrastructure.
Public Hearing	December 15, 2011	Board received public comment.
Board Adoption	January 13, 2012	Board adopted the amendments to the Monitoring and Improvement and Sustainability elements of the plan.
Public Hearing	November 21, 2013	Board received public comment.
Public Hearing/Board Adoption	December 19, 2013	Board received public comment regarding amendments to the Title VI policies and adopted the revision to the plan (Resolution No. 711-13).
Public Hearing	April 17, 2014	Board received public comment regarding amendments to Fixed Route Policy 2.2.
Board Adoption	May 22, 2014	Board adopted the plan (Resolution No. 717-14).
Public Hearing	May 21, 2015	No public comment was offered to the Board at the hearing on proposed amendments.
Board Adoption	June 18, 2015	Board adopted the plan (Resolution No. 732-15).
Public Hearing	November 16, 2017	No public comment was offered to the Board at the hearing on proposed amendments.
Board Adoption	December 14, 2017	Board Adopted the plan (Resolution No. 760-17).
Public Hearing	April 18, 2019	No public comment was offered to the Board at the hearing on proposed amendments.
Board Adoption	May 16, 2019	Board adopted the plan (Resolution No. 769-19).
Public Hearing	April 21, 2022	No public comment was offered to the Board at the hearing on proposed amendments.
Board Adoption	May 19, 2022	Board adopted the plan (Resolution No. 795-22)
Public Hearing	September 19, 2024	Three oral and written comments were received as part of the public hearing
Board Adoption	October 17, 2024	Board adopted the plan (Resolution 826-24)

About the Cover

The photos shown on the cover display a representation of transit access within the Spokane Region. Using data from the transit system as it existed in the fall of 2010, we assigned an accessibility value to every point in the region based upon the number of bus trips that are within walking distance in a day and classified those values to a range of visible light.

Alternative Formats

Spokane Transit assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information, visit spokanetransit.com. All phone numbers are accessible for people who are deaf or hard of hearing through Relay 711. Upon request, alternative formats of this document will be produced for people who are disabled. Call (509) 325-6094 or email ombudsman@spokanetransit.com.

Table of Contents

PART I: Introduction	9
Introduction.....	11
Goal of the Comprehensive Plan.....	11
Elements of the Comprehensive Plan	12
How to Read the Comprehensive Plan.....	13
Washington State Comprehensive Transit Planning Requirements	13
History of Transit in the Spokane Region	15
Regional Context.....	17
Introduction	17
Population.....	17
Land Use.....	19
Economy.....	20
Travel	21
Environment.....	22
Energy	22
PART II: SERVICES.....	24
High Performance Transit.....	26
High Performance Transit Principles	26
High Performance Transit Policies	28
Fixed-Route Service.....	39
Fixed-Route Service Design Principles	40
Fixed-Route Service Design Policies	45
Paratransit	53
Paratransit Goal.....	53
Paratransit Principles.....	53
Paratransit Policies.....	54
Flexible Services.....	57
Flexible Services Goal	57
Flexible Services Principles	57
Flexible Services Policies.....	58
System Integration.....	61

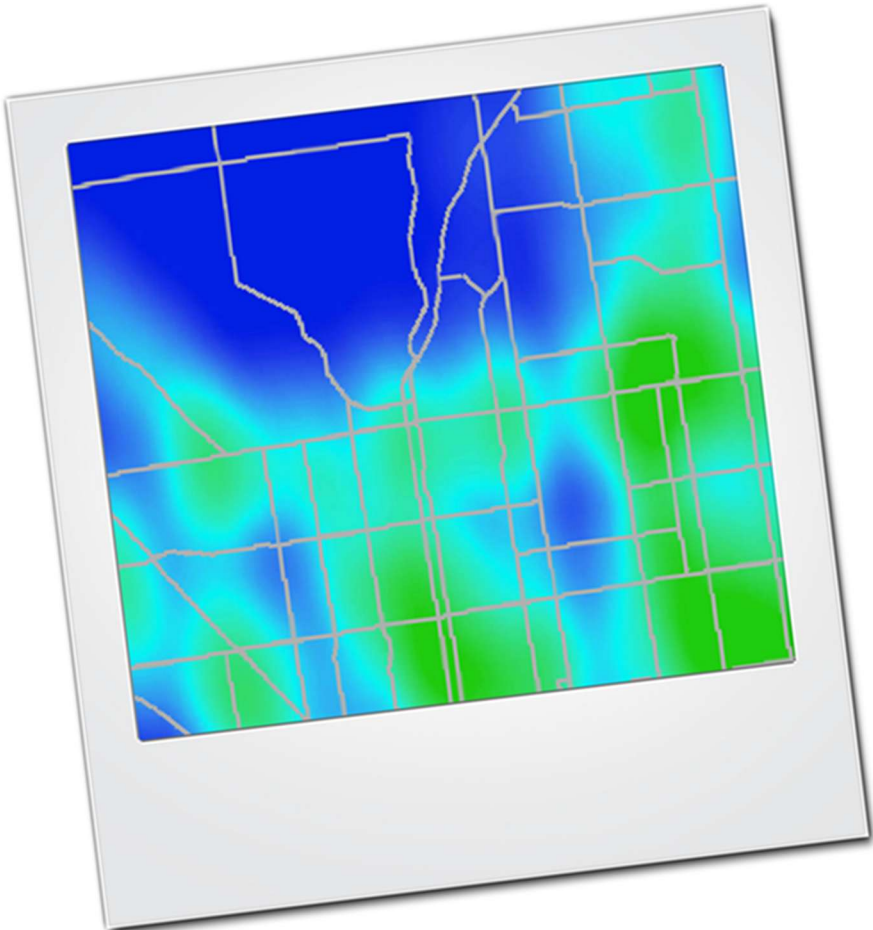
PART III: Activities and Programs	63
Transit Equity and Inclusion	65
Transit Equity and Inclusion Goal.....	66
Transit Equity and Inclusion Principles.....	66
Transit Equity and Inclusion Policies	67
System Infrastructure	70
System Infrastructure Goal	70
System Infrastructure Principles	70
System Infrastructure Policies	71
Communications and Public Input	78
Communications and Public Input Goal.....	78
Communications and Public Input Principles	79
Communications and Public Input Policies	80
Revenues and Fares	85
Revenues and Fares Goal.....	85
Revenues and Fares Principles.....	85
Revenues and Fares Policies	86
Monitoring and Improvement	90
Monitoring and Improvement Goal	90
Monitoring and Improvement Principles	90
Monitoring and Improvement Policies	91
Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development	96
Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development Goal.....	96
Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development Principles.....	96
Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development Policies	98
Sustainability	101
Sustainability Principles.....	101
Sustainability Policies	102
Safety & Security	106
Safety & Security Goal	106
Safety & Security Principles	106
Safety & Security Policies	107
Annex 1	110
Fixed-Route Performance Standards	110

Table of Figures

FIGURE 1 - FORECASTED POPULATION BY AGE, SPOKANE COUNTY	19
FIGURE 2 – FUTURE HPT NETWORK	36
FIGURE 3 - ROUTE LENGTH AND TRIP PAIRINGS	42
FIGURE 4 - SPEED VS. ACCESS	43
FIGURE 5 - ONE-WAY LOOPS VS. DIRECT ROUTES	44
FIGURE 6 - URBAN AREAS AND CLUSTERS.....	48
FIGURE 7 - GEOGRAPHIC ALLOCATION	49
FIGURE 8 – THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM	80
FIGURE 9 – THE VIRTUOUS CYCLE OF A PRO-RIDERSHIP PHILOSOPHY	87
FIGURE 10 - HIERARCHY OF STA PLANS.....	92
FIGURE 11 - “TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE” FRAMEWORK	101

This page is intentionally left blank.

PART I: Introduction



This page is intentionally left blank.

Introduction

Planning plays a role in ~~all of~~ all our lives. Whether it is career planning, travel planning, or deciding what to have for dinner, planning increases the likelihood of achieving our desired goals. Although the exact course is never known, a good plan can provide the guidance and direction needed to navigate through the unknown.

Like other large organizations, Spokane Transit Authority (STA) also benefits from the process of preparing for the future. STA's complexity requires goals to be set, principles to be acknowledged, and policies to be determined to best ensure the region's envisioned future is realized.

This document intends to serve a number of purposes. It is a guiding policy document, an educational tool, and a description of what transit may start to look like throughout the Spokane Region over the coming decades. As a course-setting document created jointly by the public, other government agencies, and STA, this plan will serve as a reference tool for future decisions related to transit, transportation and land use in the Spokane region.

Goal of the Comprehensive Plan

The goal of this plan is to set forth a vision and policy framework to guide decisions made by STA's Board of Directors, its staff, and partnering agencies that will further Spokane Transit's mission and vision for at least the next 30 years.

STA strives to encourage increased ridership while providing high quality, convenient and reasonably priced services by recognizing STA's mission and by following the goals and policies defined in this plan.

Mission

We provide safe, inclusive, convenient, and efficient public transportation services to Spokane area communities. We are leaders in transportation and a valued partner in the region's social fabric, economic infrastructure, and quality of life. ~~*We are dedicated to providing safe, accessible, convenient, and efficient public transportation services to the Spokane area neighborhoods, businesses, services, education, and activity centers. We are leaders in transportation and a valued partner in the community's social fabric, economic infrastructure, and quality of life.*~~

Vision

Connecting everyone to opportunity. ~~*We aspire to be a source of pride for the region.*~~

This comprehensive plan is entitled *Connect Spokane*, reflecting transit's powerful role and STA's sublime opportunity to connect both the people and geography of this region in a more effective, sustainable, and livable way.

Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

Element / Sub-section		Summary of Scope and Goal
Part I	Introduction and Goal of Plan	Describes overall effect of plan tied to the agency's mission and priorities
	History	Provides a concise overview of transit history in Spokane
	Regional Context	Discusses regionally significant trends in population, economics, and land use
Part II: Services	High Performance Transit Network	Frames the key service STA intends to create in the future with policies to guide mode and alignment decisions
	Fixed-Route	Provides guidance in designing routes; establishes policies for service attributes by service type
	Paratransit	Identifies compliance with ADA as primary objective with policies expressing existing practices
	Flexible Services	Defines types of Flexible services programs and structures existing practices
	System Integration	Describes how plan elements and STA's services integrate to form a system of public transportation
Part III: Activities and Programs	Transit Equity and Inclusion	Defines principles and policies for incorporating equity and inclusion into STA's services and programs
	System Infrastructure	Provides framework for prioritization of capital investments and defines the creation of a Capital Improvement Program
	Communications and Public Input	Identifies methods for communicating to the public along with public notice/outreach requirements
	Revenues and Fares	Defines policies concerning fares, grants and other revenue sources
	Monitoring and Improvement	Includes general policies that require ongoing monitoring and improvement
	Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development	Provides guidance to other jurisdictions in making land use and transportation decisions that can be effectively supported by transit; establishes policies for participation in regional decisions and metropolitan transportation plan
	Sustainability	Provides guidance for ways in which STA can aim for sustainability throughout the organization
	Safety & Security	Includes policies focused on improving the safety and security of STA's planning and operations.

How to Read the Comprehensive Plan

Each element of Sections II and III of this plan contains ~~three sections:~~ Principles **and** Policies, ~~and Connect Strategies~~. Each section serves a specific purpose in guiding and defining STA's service to the community.

Principles - What is the underlying foundation of the element?

Principles are not intended to be policies; rather, they provide necessary concepts, background information and the philosophical foundation for decision makers, customers, and others interested in transit.

Principles are:

- Broad in scope
- Shaping policies and Connect Strategies
- Unchanging

Policies - What guidelines should decision-makers follow?

An element's policies are derived from the principles associated with that element and are established through public input, market analysis, etc. Policies define more specifically the guidelines decision-makers should follow to guide the agency toward continued improvement.

Policies are:

- More specific
- Shaped by principles
- Adaptable over time

Washington State Comprehensive Transit Planning Requirements

The State of Washington requires a public transportation benefit area authority (such as STA) authorized pursuant to RCW 36.57A.050 to develop a comprehensive transit plan. The plan must include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

1. the levels of transit service that can be reasonably provided for various portions of the benefit area,
2. the funding requirements, including local tax sources, state and federal funds, necessary to provide various levels of service within the area,
3. the impact of such a transportation program on other transit systems operating within that county or adjacent counties,
4. and future enlargement of the benefit area or the consolidation of such benefit area with other transit systems.

This page is intentionally left blank.

History of Transit in the Spokane Region

Transit service for the Spokane region began in 1888 with independent transit companies operating horse-drawn trolleys. This mode of transportation was replaced with cable cars, followed by electric trolley cars soon after. Real estate developers helped shape much of the early transit network by constructing transit lines to their developments as an incentive for homebuyers. Many of these original developments remain prominent areas in the region today, including Browne's Addition, Lincoln Heights, South Perry, East Sprague, and the North and South Monroe Corridors. Ridership grew at a rapid pace during the early 20th century, peaking at over 37 million passengers in 1910 and between 20 and 30 million annual passenger trips before declining in the 1920s. In 1922, voters overwhelmingly approved changes to the Spokane's city charter that enabled the formation of a unified transit by Washington Water Power that was called the Spokane United Railway Company.



Spokane Street Railway Co. Horse-drawn streetcar, ca. 1888.

As the personal automobile grew in popularity, ridership in the Spokane region declined more than 33 percent between 1922 and 1933. Transit technology also underwent a significant change during this time as internal combustion engine buses replaced the electric trolleys. By 1936, the trolley system in Spokane had been dismantled and by 1940, the last interurban electric train discontinued service. In 1945 the Washington Water Power Company sold its interest in the transit network to Spokane City Lines, a subsidiary of the National City Lines Company.

Transit ridership in the Spokane region was particularly strong during World War II, with some sources indicating over 26 million rides during the peak of the war. Reports indicate more than 22 million annual passenger trips were taken on Spokane City Lines in 1947. A decade later, ridership had fallen to less than nine million. Around this time, city leaders asked voters' permission to issue bonds to purchase the assets of the private transit company. It was felt that the city could be more effectively operated as a local investment, and such ownership would forestall major reductions in service. The request, however, was soundly rejected, with only 38.4% of voters approving the deal. Commentary from the [time-period](#) suggested that people understood public ownership was the likely future of the system, but disagreed on the acquisition costs, since most of the bus fleet and facilities were antiquated and beyond their useful lives.

Thus began a succession of service cuts that [further that](#) further reduced the effectiveness of the bus system while reducing revenue potential. This decline coincided with growing concerns as to the future of downtown, as major department stores were lured to suburban locations featuring free parking. By 1967, ridership had declined to a new low of 3.9 million. Inflationary pressures and other forces drove bus operators to strike in early 1968. The protracted strike was only settled after community leaders endorsed and voters approved a \$1 per month household utility tax that would allow for additional operating funding. Furthermore, public ownership would make Spokane Transit System (STS), as it was called then, eligible for federal transportation funding.

One of the early actions of the transit system under the ownership of the City of Spokane was to prepare a long-range transit plan. The plan, completed in 1970, recommended a regional approach to transit and the construction of a downtown transit center. Acquiring a new fleet was another high priority of the city. While city ownership was seen as an interim measure until a regional system could be formed, ridership improved and the system served an instrumental role in Spokane's World Fair of 1974, when STS ridership peaked at 7.2 million passengers.

In 1981, a new municipal corporation, the Spokane County Public Transportation Benefit Area (a.k.a. the Spokane Transit Authority), was formed for the sole purpose of providing public transportation via independent taxing and revenue generating authority granted by RCW 36.57A. That year, voters approved a 0.3 percent sales tax that would be matched by the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET). Reversing a general downward trend, STA has seen ridership growth since its inception. In 1992, STA reported 7,040,000 fixed-route boardings, increasing to 7,485,275 boardings in 1994.



*Spokane Transit Authority
1982 Grumman 40 foot coach, ca 1985.*

Since the foundation of STA, the agency has worked to expand its capital investments by building infrastructure and purchasing right of way. One of STA's most noteworthy projects was the construction of a major transit center, The Plaza, completed in downtown Spokane in 1995. The Plaza provides a centralized transit facility, continuing to serve as the hub for [the majority of most](#) transit trips in Spokane. STA continued to add transit centers, park and rides, bus shelters, and other passenger amenities throughout the 1990s and by 1997 STA's fixed-route service provided 8,171,000 rides.

STA struggled to maintain levels of service when the MVET was rescinded in 1999 and STA's revenues were reduced by nearly 40 percent. In 2004, voters responded by approving an increase in the local sales tax to provide STA with an additional 0.3 percent sales tax for transit, resulting in a total 0.6 percent sales tax to fund STA's operations. This additional 0.3 percent sales tax was scheduled to expire in 2008 but was continued indefinitely by voters in early 2009. In 2009, STA set an agency ridership record with more than 11,150,000 annual fixed-route boardings.

In September 2010, the STA Board adopted the first edition of Connect Spokane: A Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation. The principles and policies helped to guide STA through a cumulative 10% fixed-route service reduction. In 2012 and 2013 the first two phases of a planning process called STA Moving Forward were completed. The results of the first two phases helped to inform the High Performance Transit section of this plan. The last two phases of this planning effort were completed in 2014 and 2015 and included public outreach to determine system wide improvement priorities and an implementation plan for STA Moving Forward projects. Record ridership was reached in 2014 with 11,324,434 annual fixed-route boardings. In November 2016, voters approved the STA Proposition 1, which authorized an increase in local sales and use tax of up to 0.2% to help maintain, improve and expand public transit in Spokane Transit's service area and implement STA Moving Forward.

Regional Context

Introduction

Looking to our past, understanding our present, and projecting our future can often be challenging and frustrating. Historical facts have been lost or forgotten; we do not always have the luxury of third-party analysis for present situations, nor can we accurately predict the world-changing events that will impact our lives in the future. However, that does not mean that planning for the next twenty years cannot or should not take place. Rather, it means that we ~~have to~~must think more critically about past trends, current conditions, and future opportunities to enable our citizens and transit organization to think of creative solutions to the complex problems we face.

Although this plan will be useful for potential scenarios where the population declines and the economy suffers, most of the trends addressed in this section discuss effects related to the projected population growth for our region over the next twenty years. Whether the local population is growing or contracting, finding ways to develop and nurture livable communities is always a challenge. Creating better communities requires focusing on the needs of people; and because one of those needs is transportation, STA can play an important role in the betterment of the region. Among other benefits, transit ~~is able to~~can provide affordable, reliable, and environmentally sustainable transportation. As STA prepares for the future, it must consider changes in population, land use, the economy, travel patterns, energy, and the environment to ensure that it is doing its part to support robust communities within the Spokane area.

Evidenced by significant growth in ridership, STA is becoming more important in the lives of Spokane’s citizens. While annual ridership has decreased slightly since the modern high of 2014, the total ridership growth over the long-term (since 2005) has been up 34 percent. However, 45 percent of this growth occurred between 2005 and 2008, resulting in an even higher annual growth rate over that short period of time.

This increase in transit use has been influenced by many factors, including demographics, land use, the economy, energy prices, and lifestyle choices. Trends may diverge from their projected paths, but by understanding this context, STA will be enabled to help shape the future rather than to simply react to it.

Population

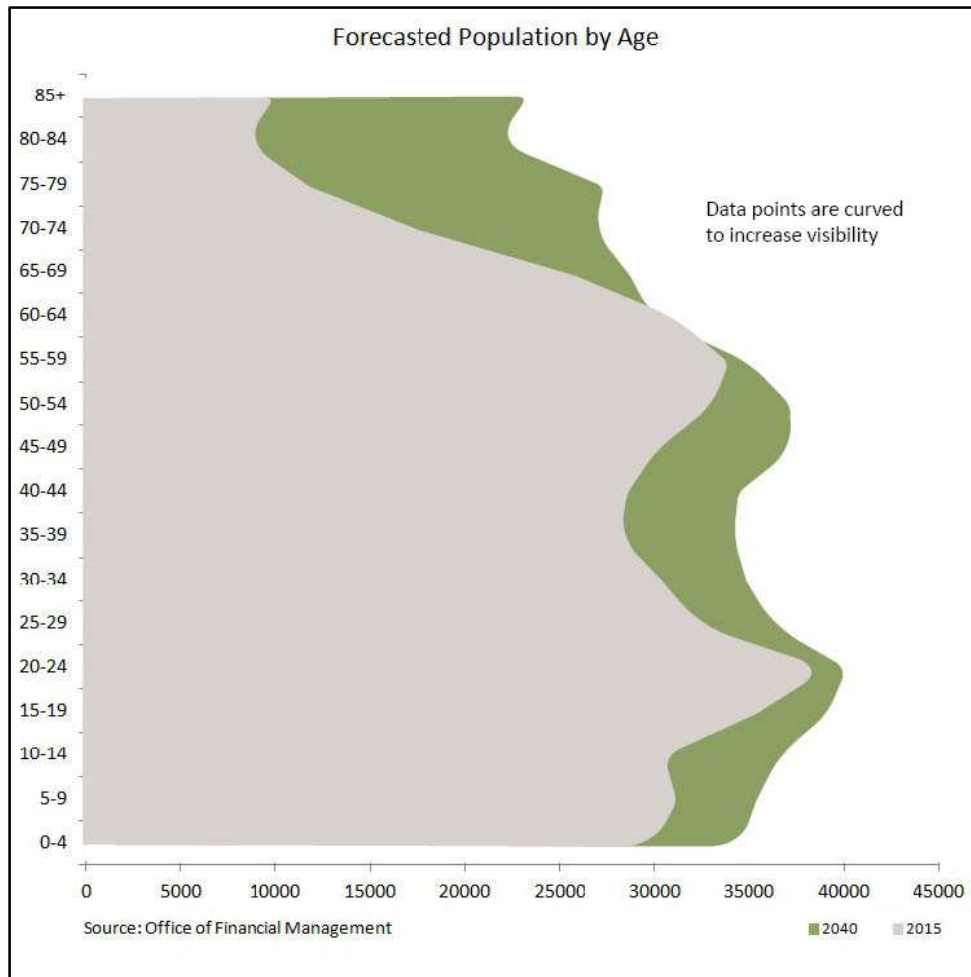
Regardless of population changes, working to ensure that people embrace positive connections with the places they inhabit is one of the most important goals of good planning. The world population continues to grow significantly, but the population of cities can fluctuate without much warning due to reductions in jobs, services, or quality of life. The various possibilities require supporting development to meet the demands of growth while simultaneously readying contingencies if needs should diminish. Whether planning for land use, transportation, and/or facility improvements, population projections are often a driver for perceived future needs. For STA, this means preparing for a certain number of riders, planning for roadway traffic, and making the system more efficient and effective.

Spokane County has experienced relatively consistent growth ~~over the last 20 years~~in the twenty years between 1996 and 2016. ~~Between 1996 and 2016~~Over that time period, Spokane County’s population grew from 408,197 to 499,072, an average annual growth rate of 1.1percent. According to medium estimate

projections from the Washington State Office of Financial Management, the 2040 population of Spokane County is expected to grow to 592,969.

To mitigate the challenges associated with such an increase in population, the anticipation of accommodating that growth through thoughtful land use and transportation planning is necessary. Encouraging developers to build for population growth at higher densities can have less of an impact on the environment by reducing the amount of land required while minimizing an individual's need to travel long distances. Since the adoption of the Washington State Growth Management Act in 1990, there has been a noticeable rise in population densities of incorporated areas of Spokane County. ~~In 1990, 46 percent of the population lived in unincorporated areas of the county, versus an estimated 29 percent in 2012. This trend was bolstered by the incorporation of two densely populated unincorporated areas: the City of Liberty Lake in 2001 and the City of Spokane Valley in 2003. In 2015, only 29 percent of the population lived in unincorporated areas of the county.~~

As Spokane County's population has increased in size, its average age has also increased. In 2015, the percentage of Spokane County's population aged 65 and over was 15.2 percent, slightly higher than the state average of 14.4 percent. Current forecasts show this figure increasing to more than 18 percent by 2030. Planning for these changing demographics will be an increasingly important part of STA's future services. As the number of elderly people increases, senior transportation services such as paratransit will need to accommodate a larger number of customers.



Source: Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) Horizon 2040 (2017)

Figure 1 - Forecasted Population by Age, Spokane County

Land Use

Land use has a significant impact on how transportation networks perform. ~~Densely populated~~ **Densely populated**, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented land uses complement public transit and vice versa. This type of development offers ~~a greater~~ **greater** potential for providing cost-effective and efficient transit service, versus transit routes that serve low-density, residential areas on the edge of cities. All the jurisdictions STA serves are required to plan under the Washington State Growth Management ~~Act, and~~ **Act and** therefore must work to encourage development within Urban Growth Areas. The City of Spokane ~~has incorporated~~ **continues to refine their existing** "Centers and Corridors" policies ~~from~~ **into** its Comprehensive Plan with the intent of promoting mixed-use growth within a number of key areas throughout the city, ~~such as the Kendall Yards development south of West Broadway and the future North Monroe Corridor improvements where construction is expected to start in 2018.~~

~~Countywide, the City of Cheney has taken similar actions in selected areas of their community such as road improvements and the development of multifamily housing around Eastern Washington University. The City of Spokane Valley is also making 5-year road improvements (2017-2022) to increase better connectivity in the region.~~

Nationally, three out of every four large metropolitan regions have seen an increase in new residential infill development. In general, most infill housing developments tend to be multifamily homes. [According to a 2012 Environmental Protection Agency report titled, “Residential Construction Trends in America’s Metropolitan Regions”, regions with higher infill development also have higher home prices. The study found that 23% of 19,889 new developments in Spokane between 2000 and 2009 were infill development.](#) Infill development has also been tied to gentrification of neighborhoods. An increase in rent cost within urban boundaries will push low socioeconomic (SE) people out into more suburban areas of the county further away from jobs, schools, and medical centers. Expanding transit makes it possible for low SE families, students, and retired people to reach employment, education, and healthcare. For the longer term, the trend toward growing urbanization will increase demand for rental and multifamily housing.

Despite the conclusions of national reports of growing urbanization, local projections conclude that single-family housing units are estimated to comprise approximately 75 percent of this total. [The US Census Bureau reported a total of 3,596 building permits in 2016 for Spokane County.](#)

[A 2015 report by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development indicated that sales of single-family homes in Spokane had increased by 8% since 2010. Areas projected to experience major future residential growth are on the eastern, western, and northern edges of the existing urbanized area. In particular, this includes the Liberty Lake area, the Airway Heights/West Plains area, and the northern portion of the North/South Corridor.](#)

Economy

STA relies on sales tax revenue generated in the Public Transportation Benefit Area to fund capital and operating expenses. In November of 2016, STA Proposition 1 won voter approval. The passing of this proposition by citizens allows for an increase of sales tax of up to 0.2% to help Spokane Transit expand the service area and help to improve and maintain the existing fleet and services.

Although historically a stable funding source, Spokane’s economy is tied to the global marketplace and is therefore subject to the same fluctuations that other areas face. Spokane County’s economy continues to be shaped by the area’s historic role as a regional center of services for the surrounding rural population of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho. Regional services include government, higher education, medical services, and finance.

Manufacturing has also been prominent in the area, largely due to the availability of inexpensive energy (hydroelectricity), the rail systems, and Interstate 90. [Another economic growth area continues to be tourism, bolstered by the creation of new sporting venues in the region that attracts national events.](#)

[A rider survey from the spring of 2017, found that 53% of bus riders worked either full or part time \(10% reported being retired, and 37% unemployed\), and 32% of all bus riders were students. The job growth rate in Spokane County between 2008 and 2012 has trended at a slightly higher annual average than the national population growth according to the most current data. Between 2005 and 2015, Spokane County’s non-farm employment grew from 172,951 jobs to 181,186, an average annual growth rate of 4.7 percent. The top two industries in Spokane between 2002 and 2012 have been Health Care/Social Services and Retail. Those industries have seen an 8.8% and 9.2% increase in employment, respectively. Food Service & Hospitality has surpassed manufacturing as the third largest industry with an employment increase of 8.3%. With the completion of EWU/WSU Health Sciences Spokane Campus in 2014, and the opening of the WSU Medical](#)

School in the Fall of 2017, there is expected to be an increase in jobs in the biotechnology, green energy and research & technology development fields.

STA's operational budget is dependent on local sales tax revenues generated within the Public Transportation Benefit Area, customer fees, federal and state grant money, and other revenue sources. Traditionally, money generated by customer fees and grant money have made up the minority of STA's operating budget. The majority of STA's revenue comes from local sales tax, creating a direct correlation between consumer spending and revenue generated for STA. This correlation means that fluctuations in the economy can have severe impacts on the operating budget of the agency.

Travel

Adequate travel opportunities are an essential piece of a healthy society and understanding general travel patterns is a key to STA's success as a transit agency. New policies to encourage shorter trips and to reduce the number of miles traveled in vehicles have been adopted by Washington State. However, even with supportive policies in place, Spokane County has seen a steady rise in the number of daily commuters since the pandemic, along with a rise in total daily miles traveled on both the freeway and arterial system. The good news is that the percentage increase for STA ridership over the same time period is higher than the overall commuter growth rate. In 2014, Governor Jay Inslee signed an executive order that outlines steps to reduce carbon emissions and increase clean energy technology in Washington State. Part of this order included doubling the use of electric state vehicles by 20%. Spokane Transit wants to follow the states goals of increasing electric vehicle usage and decreasing our carbon footprint. However, from 2011 to 2015, personal travel in Spokane County's most urbanized areas grew 3.3% percent. A number of factors fueled this increase, including increases in two-worker households and longer commute distances. According to data from the 2015 U.S. Census American Community Survey, 78.4 percent of households in Spokane County possessed two or more personal vehicles (up 21% from 2011), with 35 percent possessing three or more (up 32% from 2011). It is estimated that by 2040 the number of total daily VMT will grow by 34 percent over 2010 levels.

According to data from the 2015 U.S. Census American Community Survey, 77.9 percent of workers aged 16 years and over in Spokane County commuted to work alone in their own vehicles. This is slightly higher than the Washington State average of 72 percent. About three percent of workers in Spokane County commuted to work via public transportation in 2015. This is lower than the 2015 state average of 6 percent.

Spokane Regional Transportation Council's (SRTC) Horizon 2040 Plan indicates that while the county's population over 65 is increasing, the number of younger single people with no children is also increasing. The council's study found that younger people (18-35) drove 23% fewer miles in 2009 than they had in 2001. This is a result of this age cohort being more likely to walk, bike, rideshare, and use transit. However, the plan cites that an overall increase to the region's population as a contributor to more cars on the road in the future.

SRTC's 2005 Regional Transportation Survey provided information on travel patterns for Spokane County. It was estimated that of all the trips originating in Spokane County in 2005, 68 percent of these ended in either the City of Spokane (50 percent) or the City of Spokane Valley (18 percent). Although not all of the development within these two jurisdictions is urban in nature, transit is better suited to serve a higher percentage of trips which have origins and destinations in dense areas. In addition, almost half of all trips (45 percent) occurred outside of the AM peak (6:00 to 9:00) and PM peak (3:00 to 6:00) periods. The study also revealed the large amount of travel occurring between Spokane County and adjacent Kootenai County, Idaho. Nearly 20,000 residents of Spokane and Kootenai County's cross the state line each day for work, shopping,

medical appointments, and other activities. Approximately 58 percent of these residents originate their trips in Kootenai County, with the majority heading to destinations within the cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley.

Despite a recent downtick in ridership in 2015 and 2016, a survey conducted in spring of 2017 found that 47% of riders perceived themselves as riding more than they had the previous year, this is slightly higher than a similar survey conducted in 2015 in which 45% reported that they perceived themselves to be using the bus more. Of the 1,845 respondents of the survey, 15.3% reported having both a car and a driver's license and this group rode the bus as frequently as those who could not drive themselves.

Environment

Data suggests the planet experienced warming temperatures during the 20th century unparalleled to any time since human record keeping began. The past decade appears to have been the warmest in recorded history, and the world's preeminent climatologists have found overwhelming evidence that human activity is the cause. Scientific studies by the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group predict that allowing this warming trend to continue at present rates could result in decreased agricultural output, increased catastrophic weather events such as forest fires, drought and floods, and the displacement of entire populations due to rising sea levels.

Fossil fuel emissions associated with transportation have played a significant role in this human-induced climate change. ~~The City of Spokane's most recent Greenhouse Gas Inventory provides a local example. In the 2012 Spokane County Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report, non-public passenger transportation was found to be responsible for the generation of 1.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), or 45 percent of the community's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The large majority (74.8 percent) of these emissions were generated by travel on the City of Spokane's surface streets, while the remainder (21.6 percent) was generated by travel on Interstate 90 and State Route 195.~~

Recently enacted laws, executive orders, and pending legislation are establishing mandates to reduce GHG emissions. Many states, including Washington State, are continuing to pass legislation to reduce GHG emissions at a local and regional level. With a potential increase in gas prices, commuters will seek out other forms of transportation, including public transportation, to save money. These mandates have many implications for consumer prices, travel patterns, and living arrangements. It is likely that debates will continue into the foreseeable future; it is nearly universally accepted that transit will play a major role in environmental goals of the 21st Century.

Energy

The landscape in energy demand has changed dramatically over the past 5-10 years. 10 years ago, analysts and economists of all political persuasions were predicting the arrival of peak oil, putting an end to relatively cheap oil and switching from a buyer's to a seller's market. Now, in 2017, experts are predicting that the world may reach peak demand. The most recent edition of British Petroleum's (BP) widely scrutinized Energy Outlook has global demand for crude oil maxing out in about 30 years as a result of new technologies (including improved efficiency of the electric car), the fight against climate change, and slowing economic growth for major world economies. For economies or companies leveraged on ever increasing quantities of cheap oil, the consequences may be troubling.

As the adopted City of Spokane's Sustainability Action Plan notes:

“The global trend is clear: Regardless of geography, demographics, or politics, municipalities are questioning basic assumptions and taking initiative to improve how their communities function over the long haul. Spokane’s Sustainability Task Force addressed climate change and oil dependency simultaneously. The goals of the City’s Sustainability Action Plan include:

1. Climate Mitigation: attempt to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)
2. Climate Adaptation: adjust practices to deal with the effects of climate change
3. Energy Security: increase energy alternatives to reduce dependence on oil

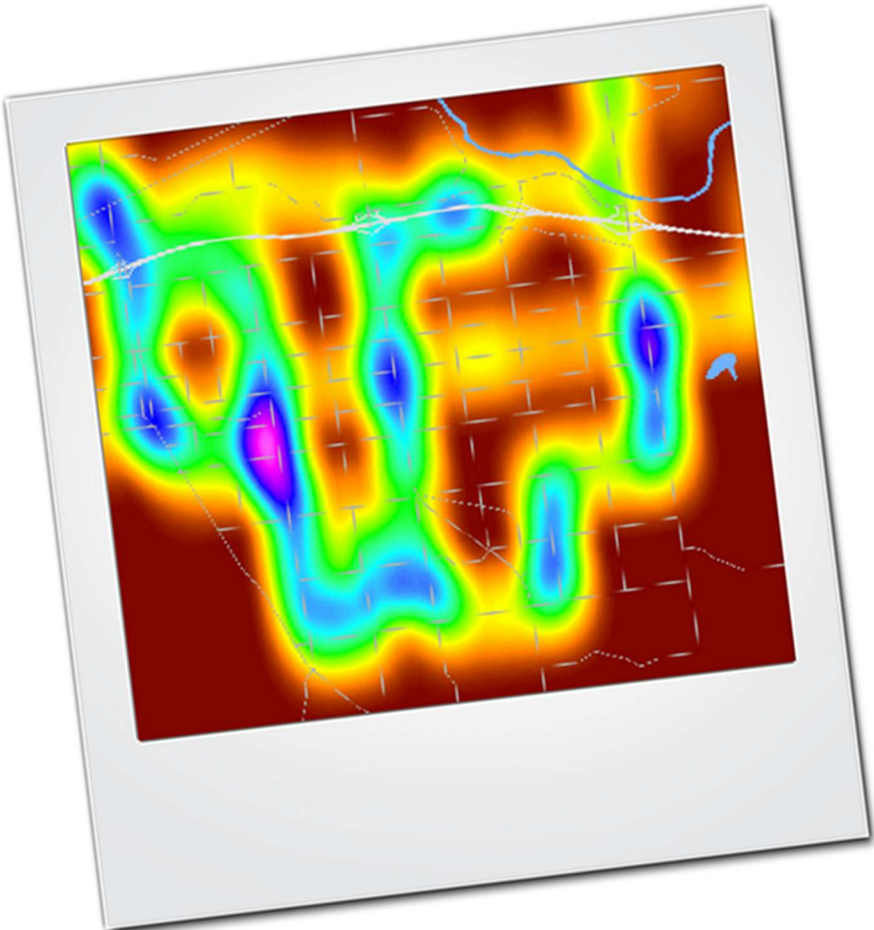
These broad goals will ultimately lay the foundation for specific actions the City will take.”

In addition, Strategy 3 within the Action Plan speaks directly towards STA’s mission, recognizing the importance of mobility to community connectivity by encouraging use of alternative fuels and expanding modes of travel for a variety of economic, health and environmental benefits.

~~In July of 2017, carmaker Volvo announced that after 2019 they will only manufacture electric and hybrid automobiles. In the same month France also announced that it would start implementing a ban on all sales of cars and trucks that use diesel and gasoline by 2040.~~

Although a complete shift from oil dependence will not happen overnight, the first steps are beginning now. STA’s fleet replacement strategy over the next 15 years is positioned to take advantage of emerging relevance of battery electric buses in the future. With ~~the new Central City line (to be completed in 2021)~~ City Line (2023) Spokane Transit ~~will be introducing~~ introduced 110 new fully electric buses to the fleet. This number may increase as STA pursues grants and other funding for electric buses on other routes, ~~including the Monroe-Regal Corridor.~~

PART II: SERVICES



This page is intentionally left blank.

High Performance Transit

High Performance Transit (HPT) is STA's term for core lines serving local and regional corridors that are all-day, two-way, frequent, and easy to use. Together, the lines represent STA's High Performance Transit Network, a focus for integrated investment in infrastructure and supporting land use.

High Performance Transit Principles

1. Pedestrian Support

More than any other service type, HPT extends the range of the pedestrian.

Most studies show that people are comfortable walking a quarter-mile for most activities. As the number of destinations within a mile increase, people are likely to increase the proportion of trips executed by walking. Beyond one-half mile to a mile, most persons will prefer other modes, especially if the trip is for purposes other than exercise. Rather than competing with short walking trips, transit can support greater mobility without dependence on the private automobile. The HPT network, with its emphasis on all-day, two-way connectivity at reasonable levels of frequency, supports the pedestrian's mobility beyond normal walking ranges. This emphasis on pedestrian mobility is a more effective way to view HPT mobility than looking at congestion relief or other less tangible societal benefits.

2. Ubiquity

HPT service should attempt to serve the greatest number of people possible and the greatest number of destinations possible.

The perceived importance of organic and inorganic properties often is proportionate to their availability and visibility. Despite the perception, ubiquity is not synonymous with importance; however, serving a broad geographic coverage and a broad array of transport needs means that HPT can be important to many people. Important things in our lives are things we share, value, and seek to take care of.

3. Activity Centers

HPT should connect the region's cities and centers of population and jobs as much as possible.

Urban studies over the last century have reinforced the intuitive notion that there are hierarchies of place and space. If there are centers, then there are peripheries. For about 50 years, gravity models have been used to express trip distribution in urban areas. Namely, that interaction between two locations declines with increasing distance (or time) between them but is positively associated with the amount of activity at each location.

Another way to say it [is is that](#) a place with more activity is more important to a greater number of places. It is for this reason that connecting activity centers, particularly those amenable to pedestrian activity, is important with HPT.

4. System Effectiveness

HPT should improve the effectiveness of the transportation system.

While often misunderstood to be simply about moving traffic, the regional transportation system is successful when it provides mobility for people and goods. All the “good ideas” about transit and transportation can be measured from the perspective of system effectiveness. When replacement costs (fiscal and environmental) and investment life cycles are not considered, it is tempting to create infrastructure that may not be founded upon the principles described within this element. Improving the effectiveness of the transportation system may be less about ensuring certain patterns of travel continue to ~~exist, but~~exist but about encouraging and facilitating only those travel patterns that can be sustained.

5. Appropriate Scale

HPT should be fiscally responsible and scaled appropriately to the region’s current and long-term needs given competing demands for scarce public resources.

Many factors beyond planning define the infrastructure realities of metropolitan areas. Try as a metropolitan area might, it has a unique politic, demography, geography and climate that make it impossible to replicate the perceived successes of other metropolitan areas. Appropriate scale of the HPT network reflects the fact that the Spokane region’s urban layout, density and fiscal capacity are unique. To be functional and achievable, design of the HPT network must respect, and even magnify this unique set of circumstances.

6. Mode Neutrality

Service quality, not mode technology, is the defining feature of HPT.

Although the vehicle type or mode is often the first topic of conversation during transit corridor discussions, the service type is the most important feature. For this reason, the aggregated service quality (relative to travel needs) and not the mode is the defining feature of HPT.

7. Permanence

HPT features permanence of investments.

Regardless of mode, HPT should express to the customer through wayfinding, tactile enhancements at stations, or alignments that it will be available in the future. This permanence and definitiveness ~~is~~are also critical in directing those developing the built environment to focus new growth around transit.

8. Integration

HPT should integrate and provide connections with other modes and transport services.

While the most critical mode with which transit should be integrated is the pedestrian (walking) mode, integration with other modes is important to expand customer base and make use of synergies that can occur by connecting to modes that connect with transit systems in other urban areas. Integration with other modes can expand the customer base to include customers who may use the system less regularly than typical customers.

9. Competitive

HPT should make desired connections better than competing modes whenever possible.

Nearly every transportation alignment in cities is no older than the city itself. Often transportation alignments define how sections of a metropolitan area relate to other sections. As a matter of geographic definition, it is easy to assume that these alignments are the only option for future transportation investments. Penetrating barriers and making new connections are features of the HPT ~~Network~~network that can enhance its competitiveness with other modes, particularly the private automobile.

High Performance Transit Policies

In addition to the policies listed below, policies addressing HPT service levels and infrastructure can be found in Fixed Route (FR) and System Infrastructure (SI), respectively.

HP 1.0 - Corridor Development Plan

To be recognized as an HPT line, a corridor development plan should first be approved by the STA Board of Directors.

The HPT lines are in major corridors where there is sufficient need to justify significant investments in passenger amenities and information. The corridor development planning process provides a method to determine the appropriate scale of investment, the service design and the implementation steps toward plan realization. It engages stakeholders including existing and future passengers, property owners and agencies in envisioning the future state of a corridor and ways to make progress, even if incremental. It also may identify the locations of stations and stops and infrastructure requirements.

HP 2.0 - Corridor Characteristics

2.1 Vehicle Type Assumption

Unless otherwise evaluated or identified in a corridor development plan, rubber-tired buses are the standard HPT vehicle.

2.2 Corridor Configuration

STA configures a corridor's service architecture in response to geographic context, reflecting ~~particular conditions~~conditions that affect speed, service, frequency, and access.

There are two general corridor configurations, Urban and Regional. Urban configurations primarily operate on arterials and are typically a single route providing end-to-end service on most if not all trips. Regional configurations operate principally on freeways and highways, with significant segments with limited or no access. While speeds are higher in Regional corridors than in Urban corridors, limited access reduces overall travel possibilities. To enhance service usefulness and effectiveness, Regional corridors may feature two or more routes that work together to provide HPT service, with operational techniques to provide greater frequency along the most traveled portions of a corridor. Regional corridors may have longer headways (less frequency) than Urban corridors and configured with service branching while maintaining all other HPT elements.

2.3 Mode Selection

When evaluating modes, STA shall consider the strengths and weaknesses of various vehicle types in relation to the demands of the corridor being served.

Modal selection can generally be classified into two categories, conventional bus and rail. Conventional bus includes a variety of buses that may be categorized by vehicle type (including double-deckers, articulated buses, 40' passenger buses, etc) propulsion (battery electric buses, diesel hybrids, etc) and service characteristics (e.g., bus rapid transit). Rail includes both commuter rail and light rail vehicles. Each mode has its own set of benefits and weaknesses. Some vehicles have the capacity to move a dozen passengers, while others carry several hundred passengers at a time. In Spokane, Of course, these different vehicle types also have significantly different costs. These costs, both up-front and operational in nature, must be considered when selecting appropriate vehicles for HPT service. Mode selection is often part of an “alternatives analysis” conducted in a way to make the corridor project eligible for federal New Starts/Small Starts funding. If such funding is not sought, it may be appropriate to scale the mode selection process to take less time while still providing for public input. This may mean limiting the number of modes to be considered in a particular corridor.

HP 3.0 - High Performance Transit (HPT) Implementation

3.1 Prioritization

STA will prioritize the implementation of HPT corridors and selection of service types based on the principles outlined in this section.

3.2 Speed and Reliability

STA will advance measures to improve the speed and reliability of HPT corridors to improve service efficiency and increase mobility and access for STA riders.

STA will actively seek to improve policies, roadway design and operating practices that influence the speed and reliability of HPT service. This includes measures such as transit signal priority, exclusive or semi-exclusive transit lanes, traffic queue jumps, and optimize stop placement. STA also seeks to reduce elements of travel time within its control by measures such as all-door boarding and stop spacing and design.

3.3 Land Use Implementation

In addition to the policies in Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development and Land Use Coordination, STA will actively pursue partnerships, policies and other measures that result in greater access to HPT.

STA will ~~promote~~ encourage and support policy changes, such as reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements, reducing regulatory burdens and upzoning that allows more housing and activity near HPT stations and stops. Additionally, STA will ~~partner with agencies and organizations to~~ seek joint development opportunities to ~~provide~~ advance more ~~urban activity~~ mixed use development, jobs, and a variety of particularly affordable and market-rate housing, near HPT stations and stops. ~~STA should~~ will work with jurisdictions to help identify and adopt TOD Emphasis Areas associated with HPT infrastructure defined as areas where future growth of development, employment and housing is concentrated over the jurisdictions' planning horizon. When possible, STA shall also develop innovative approaches to incentivize and support transit and land use integration.

3.4 HPT Standards and Guidelines

STA may develop additional standards and guidelines to support HPT implementation.

Standards and guidelines for HPT planning, implementation and operation may address the following:

- Process and contents of a corridor development plan
- Branding specifications and the criteria for when HPT corridors receiving branding elements
- Standard station elements and typical plans and specifications
- Resources for partner agencies and contractors

HP 4.0 - High Performance Transit Network Map

The HPT network map is the foundation, framework, and basis for future service improvements.

The following map depicts how the HPT network may look in 20 to 30 years. Many factors, including but not limited to, economic conditions, ridership demand, funding opportunities, and regional priorities will affect how quickly and where the network begins to take shape. Additionally, modifications to this map are likely after the development of each corridor and as land use patterns change. This map will continue to take shape incrementally as directed by the policies found within this element. Corridors are identified by operational status:

- **Existing** – Service is in place and recognized as a component of STA’s existing High Performance Transit network.
- **Planned** – Service and capital investments are programmed in adopted plans to support implementation.
- **Future** – Corridors corresponding to existing bus routes that are candidate for future HPT investments but are currently not planned or programmed.
- **Concept** – Corridors that are distinct from existing services and are identified for long-range planning purposes.

The table below has been completely updated to reflect existing conditions, planned improvements and refined future and conceptual investments in HPT corridors in the region.

This page intentionally left blank

Route	Status (202 5 4)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
1 – City Line	Existing	Browne’s Addition - SCC	Downtown Spokane, Riverpoint Campus, Cincinnati Ave., Mission Ave.	<i>Implemented July 2023, with committed service levels in place May 2024.</i> Near-term- Partner with the City of Spokane in advancing Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the corridor.
BRT-A	Planned	Downtown Spokane – Mead Transit Center	Downtown Spokane, Division Street, Newport Hwy.	Near-term- Implement Division Street BRT consistent with board-adopted Locally Preferred Alternative, including new Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes between the Division ‘Y’ and the Spokane River. Support planning for TOD in the corridor. Mid-term- Extend service to a new Mead Transit Center and expand service there. Advance TOD plans in the corridor.
BRT-B	Concept	VTC Argonne Station – Appleway Station	Sprague/ Appleway, Mullan/Argonne	Near-term- Conduct corridor development planning for future BRT in the corridor, defining terminals, station locations and service levels. <u>Construct Argonne Station.</u> Mid-term- Construct Appleway Station; improve service night and weekend service on Route 98 Greenacres/Liberty Lake. Long-term- Implement BRT.

Route	Status (2025 ⁴)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
4- Monroe /Regal	Existing	Five Mile P&R – Moran Station	Monroe St., Downtown Spokane, Grand Blvd., 29th Ave., Lincoln Heights, Regal St.	<p><i>Service implemented September 2019 with committed stop improvements in place in 2023.</i></p> <p>Near-term- Make additional stop improvements (Phase 3) with the remaining project budget.</p>
Urban-A) - Sprague	Planned <u>Existing</u>	Downtown – Valley Transit Center	Sprague	<p>Near-term- Implement Route 9 Sprague September 2024 with stop improvements phased in through 2025.</p> <p>Mid-term- Explore linkage to other HPT corridors, including future BRT (corridor BRT-B) and HPT on West Broadway</p>
Urban-B	Planned	SFCC – SCC	Wellesley, Market/Haven	<p>Near-term- Secure funding to implement HPT on the corridor with improved passenger amenities.</p> <p>Mid-term- Pursue opportunities to advance TOD in the corridor. Enhance additional stops beyond initial investment.</p>
Urban-C	Future	Indian Trail - South Hill Park & Ride	Indian Trail, Wellesley Ave, Shadle Shopping Center, Downtown, Perry St, South Hill Park & Ride	<p>Near-term- Improve frequency during nights and weekends along Route 23 Maple/Ash and Route 45 Perry District.</p> <p>Mid-term- Regular bus; add 15-minute daytime weekday frequency; construct Indian Trail Park & Ride</p> <p>Long-term- Enhanced bus; ensure frequency and span meet HPT Frequent standards; install HPT stations and stop amenities where appropriate.</p>
Urban-D	Future	Whitworth University – Airway Heights	Hawthorne Rd, Nevada St, Mission Ave,	<p>Near-term- Improve frequency during nights and weekends along Route 28 Nevada and Route 61</p>

Route	Status (2025 ⁴)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
Urban-E	Future	West Central – Argonne Station	Downtown, Sunset Blvd, Airway Heights Broadway, 5 th /8 th , Argonne	Highway 2/Fairchild.; build end of line facilities in Airway Heights. Mid-term - Regular bus; add 15-minute daytime weekday frequency. Long-term -Enhanced bus; ensure frequency and span meet HPT Frequent standards; install HPT stations and stop amenities where appropriate. Near-term – upgrade passenger amenities; Improve frequency during nights and weekends along Route 94 East Central/Millwood Mid-term - Regular bus; restructure service in the Valley, add 15-minute daytime weekday frequency; Construct Argonne Station Park & Ride Long-term - Enhanced bus; ensure frequency and span meet HPT Frequent standards, install HPT stations and stop amenities where appropriate.

Route	Status (2025 ⁴)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
6 - Cheney	Existing	WSU Health Sciences Campus Spokane – Cheney/EWU	Plaza, I-90	Near-term - Branded articulated bus or double-decker bus; ensure frequency and span between Downtown Spokane and Cheney meets HPT Express standards
R-A7 – Valley/Airport	Planned Existing	Liberty Lake – Airport	Mission Ave, Indiana Ave, Mirabeau P&R, I-90 Corridor	Near-term – Implement Route 7 between Liberty Lake and Spokane International Airport (planned September 2025); construct Argonne Station Park and Ride. Mid-term – Pursue transit speed and reliability measures along I-90.
R-B	Concept	Hastings Park & Ride – Plaza	Mead Transit Center, NSC, Trent, U-District, Plaza	Mid-term - Introduce express service on the North Spokane Corridor once completed. Long-term - Branded articulated bus or double-decker bus; ensure service to Hastings Park & Ride meets HPT Express span and frequency standards. Under consideration for merger with 6-Cheney
R-C	Concept	Post Falls, ID – Mirabeau Transit Center	I-90	Near-term – Implement pilot bus service connect to Mirabeau Transit Center (2026) Mid-term – Develop long-term funding and operating plan for cross-state service Long-term – Design and implement HPT investments, integrating with the overall I-90/Valley HPT Corridor.

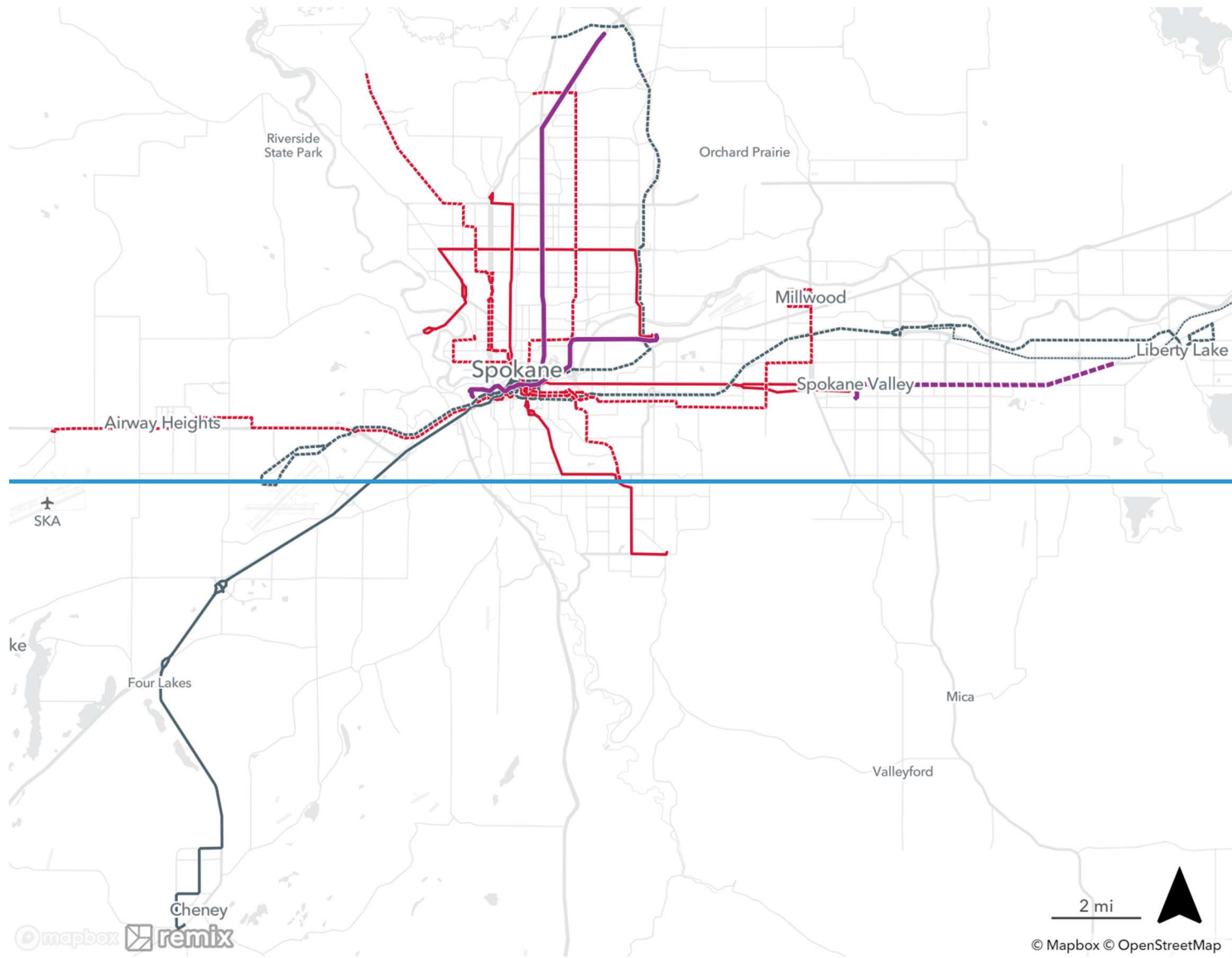
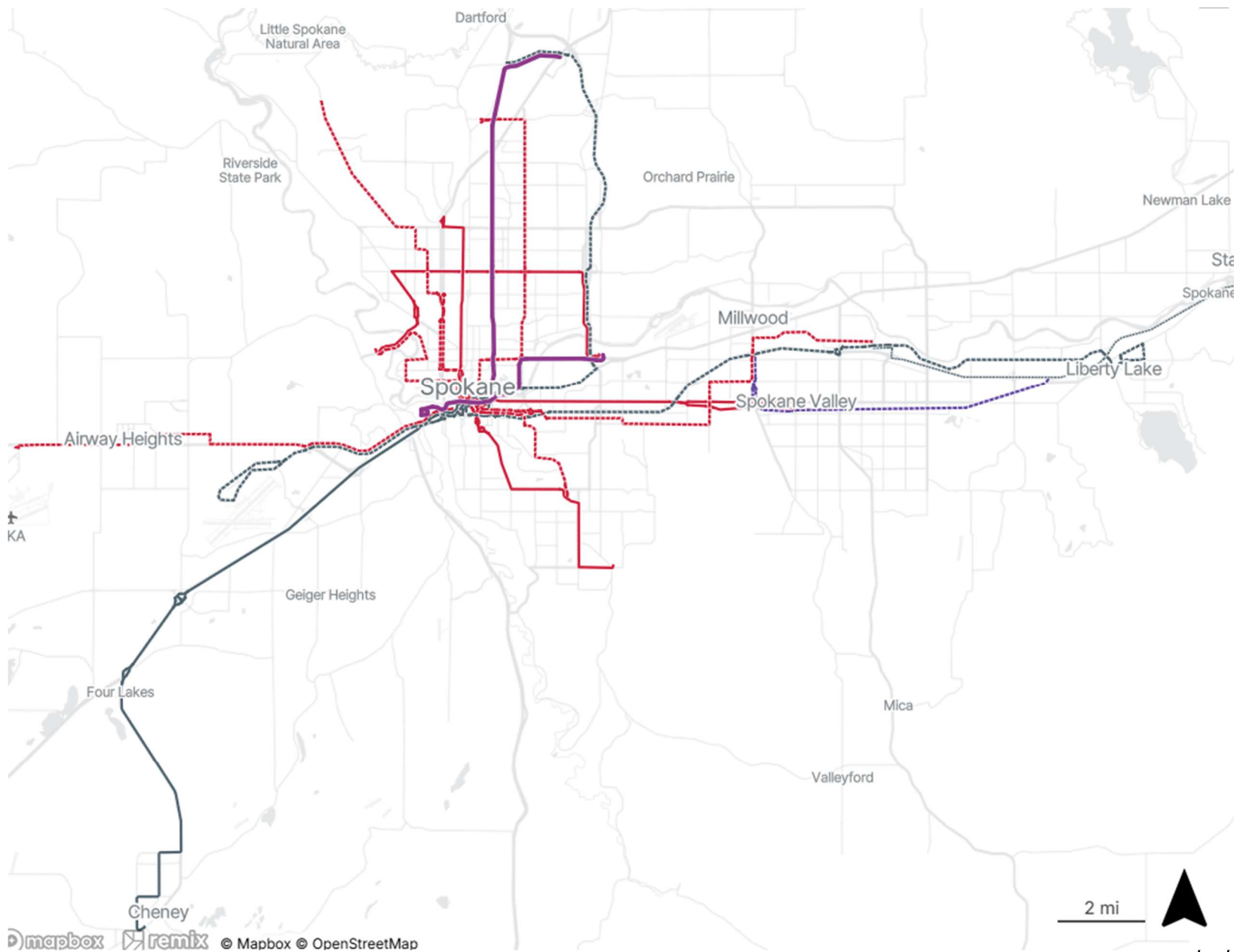


Figure 2 – Future HPT Network



Fixed-Route Service

Over a century of urban transportation system planning reveals the challenges and opportunities faced by those involved in the field. Economic efficiency, operating conflicts with the private automobile and other roadway users and serving the [general public](#) versus responding to individual needs have made the logical assessment and improvement of fixed-route transit a difficult endeavor.

To illustrate this point, in 1919 the Federal government appointed an eight-member panel to the Federal Electric Railways Commission to investigate the challenges then facing operators of streetcars in American cities. The creation of the commission was preceded by several very difficult years for private companies whose transit systems carried millions of Americans each day. Inflation in energy prices, labor shortages, deferred maintenance, and fixed fares were among the many symptoms of these difficult years. While these more notable symptoms seem unrelated to good service design, the findings of the Commission are startling in their applicability to today's planning problems. Some of the findings and recommendations for streetcar companies include reduction of stops to improve speeds; elimination of service in low-density areas; consolidation of competing lines; adjustments to fare structures to reflect cost variations that can exist between routes, and so forth.

In 1958 the National Committee on Urban Transportation assembled what was likely the first set of comprehensive standards for transit services and facilities in North America. This document recognized "that [standards, warrants, and objectives] must be directly related to the economical feasibility of providing services." Furthermore, it provided standards for routing which listed desirable routing characteristics such as: offering directness of travel with respect to origins and destinations; being free of duplication, except where routes converge; including a maximum number of turning movements; and so forth.

In 1982 Spokane Transit adopted its first Service Standards for fixed-route service. The standards included minimum frequencies, hours of service (span), loading, stop spacing and access. Service Planning Guidelines adopted by the STA Board in February 2000 made some modifications to these standards while adding additional guidance on service change procedures and service allocation.

This section of Connect Spokane draws from documents highlighted above as well as numerous samples of service guidelines and standards documents from other transit authorities. This document is intended to both express ideals and establish expectations for the design, quality and performance of Spokane Transit's fixed-route system.

The process of creating good transit service is perhaps new to most readers. However, the practice is similar to that of building a good house. For example, first builders must ask, "What makes for a good house?" Most people generally agree that a good house should be energy efficient, comfortable, aesthetically pleasing, and protect its inhabitants from adverse weather. These are the principles of building a good house. Second, they ask, "How do I build a good house?" There are many ways to build a house, but construction of good houses must meet important regulations and standards to ensure safety, utility, consistency, and proper urban form. These are the policies to follow when building a good house. Finally, builders ask, "Did I build a good house?" This can be measured by calculating energy efficiency, looking for leaks in the roof or analyzing the market value. These are the performance standards used to evaluate the need for remediation. If they didn't build a good house, builders must revisit the principles and follow the process again. This "understanding,

implementing, and evaluating” analogy illustrates the similar process used to create and maintain first-rate fixed-route transit service.

There are three questions to ask about fixed-route design:

1. Principles - What makes for good service?

This section describes basic principles that affect the design of service, its utility to the public, and ultimately the performance of the route on many different levels. It is not meant to be policy; rather, it is information prepared to communicate to decision makers, customers and other groups interested in transit service the concepts that should be considered to ensure the most benefit is derived from investment in operating fixed- route service.



2. Policies - What guidelines do we follow to create good service?

This section articulates draft policy, based on principles, that defines transit network architecture, extent and service levels for fixed-route transit service. Issues of frequency of service, span (hours of operation), public input, and geographic extent are determined in policies to ensure consistency in service modifications, enhancements, and reductions.



3. Performance Standards - Did we build good service?

(Located in Annex 1: Performance Standards)

This section contains three primary standards that when not met result in evaluating alternatives for remediation. This may include routing changes, service reductions, or adjustments to related routes. The performance standards measure route performance based on ridership productivity, farebox recovery, and vehicle loads as it relates to the energy consumed for transporting passengers.



Fixed-Route Service Design Principles

The principles listed below provide guidelines for ensuring the most benefit is derived from investment in operating fixed-route service. Adherence to these principles grows in importance as demand and service [de](#) expand. Smaller transit systems can afford, with relatively little risk, to design systems outside of the recommended principles below. Larger systems, such as STA, cannot afford the same luxury.

1. Network

Routes should be designed in the context of other routes and transit facilities.

No route is an island. Designing routes within the context of other routes and transit facilities provides for sound transit networks.

2. Independent Utility

Routes should be designed to access a mix of uses and have utility independent of transfers.

While route design should reflect network integration, each route should be developed to have utility independent of transfers. For instance, the notion of trunk and feeder suggests that feeders are dependent upon a trunk for utility and therefore taking people to a transit center or park and ride is adequate. STA's experience with such route has shown that they are suboptimal. While in most cases riders will transfer, a route that "feeds" a major line should access a mix of uses so that there are trips that could be served on the line without a transfer.

3. Generalized Service versus Specialized Service

Route design should focus more on generalized service, rather than specialized service, for greater ridership gains based upon equivalent capital investments.

Generalized service provides service for most of the day and can be folded into the travel patterns of a multitude of customers for many different purposes. Specialized service seeks to go out of its way to reach the front door of a specific employer or housing facility, is scheduled around specific work shifts, or is limited to peak travel times. In most cases, the more specialized a service, the less capital intensive it should be. In most cases, capital and operating investments in generalized service will result in greater ridership gains over comparable major capital investments in specialized service.

4. Multiple Destinations

Generalized service routes should be designed to serve multiple origins and destinations.

A generalized service route should serve multiple origins and destinations. While a downtown area will produce higher trip demand than many other destinations, ensuring a route has intermediate destinations allows for greater seat turnover and utility to riders.

5. Route Terminals

Routes should be designed with anchors in or near activity centers with healthy mixes of employment and housing.

Routes should be anchored in activity centers, ideally with a mix of jobs and housing. As much as possible, routes should not end in low density environments. Without proper anchors a route will chronically be empty at the end of the route and serve fewer people.

6. Interlining of Routes

Routes should be designed to interline with other routes, rather than terminating in a central business district (CBD).

It is common practice to radiate routes from a CBD. While it may support defining a route's destination, it provides less mobility than continuing through downtown, either after a pause and/or route number change, or as a singular route. Interlines should reflect utility to the rider; routes that are interlined and serve the same general geography or quadrant of the city (so the bus is effectively turning around downtown) are generally not useful to riders.

7. Route Length

Routes should be designed to be as long as practicable without being wasteful, unreliable, or inoperable due to the lack of recovery opportunities.

The longer a route, the more opportunities there are to match origins with destinations without requiring a transfer. This results in a higher load at any given point on a route. Ideally, no route should be less than two miles in length.

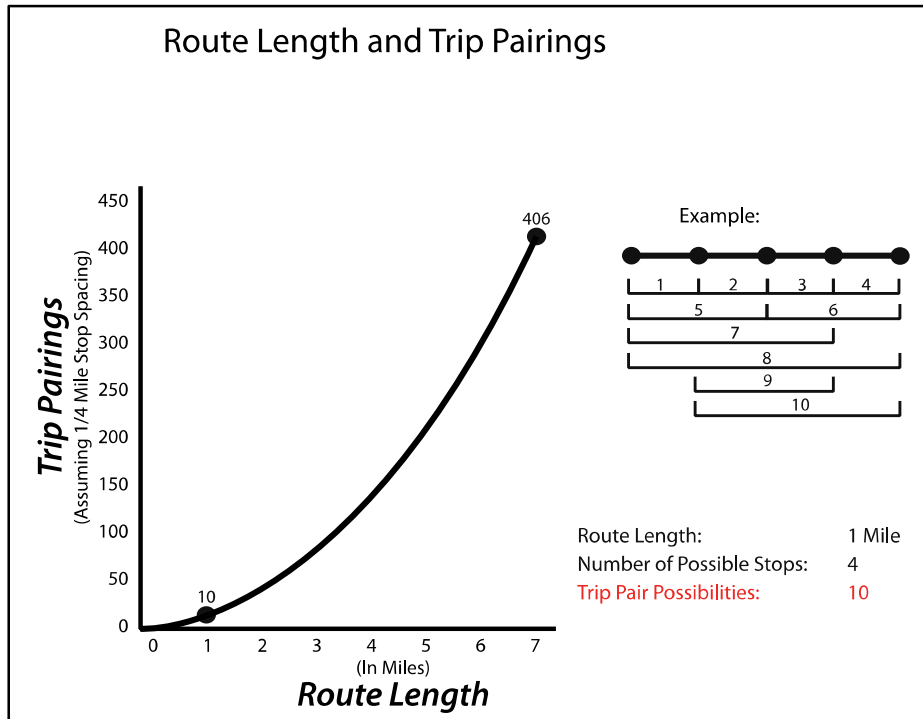


Figure 3 - Route Length and Trip Pairings

8. Arterial Travel

Under most circumstances, routes should be designed to travel on arterials.

Travel on arterials generally provides a good balance between speed and access. Appropriate exceptions include the following: to accommodate route terminals where off-arterial travel is necessary to turn around; an alternative to a segment of arterial where grades or other inherent conditions prohibit regular transit operations; or, where a non-arterial street has been designated as a special transit corridor with enhanced and/or exclusive infrastructure that is amenable to transit operations.

9. Speed versus Access

Routes should be designed *specifically* to the speed and access needs of the areas/populations they serve.

While people may prefer the fastest way between two points, point to point (non-stop) service is not available at a scale that would match the ubiquity of the automobile. Adding more access (i.e. pick-ups and drop-offs) can increase utility but can also reduce the service utility for some riders. Generally, access must decrease in order to increase speed.

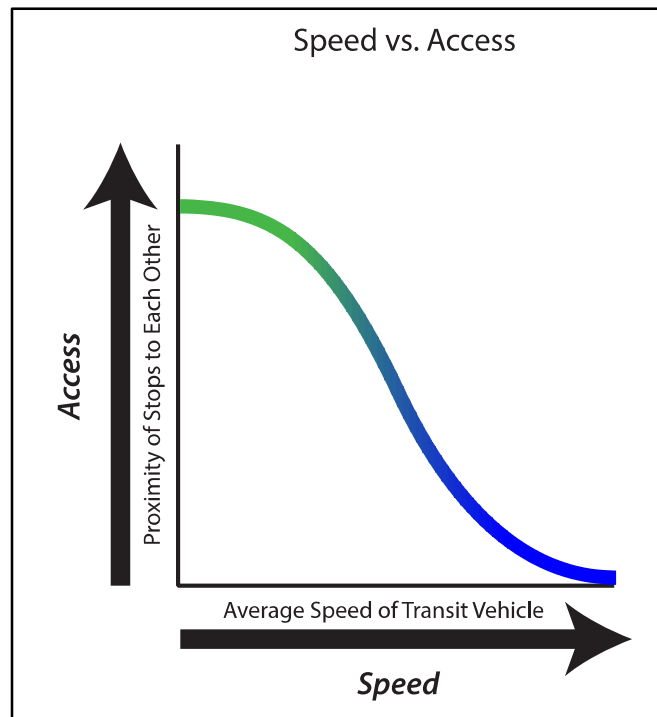


Figure 4 - Speed vs. Access

10. Convergence of Routes

Routes should be designed to converge on higher density centers and corridors to increase frequency and facilitate short, spontaneous trips.

When approaching on higher density centers and corridors, such as a CBD or university campus, it is appropriate for routes to converge such that the combined frequency increases the capacity and quality of service. Focusing service on a common pathway can allow for very high frequencies that facilitate short, spontaneous trips by people who would otherwise not opt for transit as a preferred mode.

11. Route Spacing

Parallel routes should be spaced far enough apart so that service is not duplicative.

Numerous transit studies have shown that people will walk up to $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to catch a bus or train. Therefore, spacing of a minimum of $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in most cases eliminates unnecessary duplication of service and simplifies the decision-making process for riders. It also tends to enable higher frequencies on a single corridor rather than a dilution of service over many streets.

12. Loops and Circles

Under most circumstances, routes should be designed to avoid loops and circles.

People generally prefer the most direct path between any two points.

Providing a circular path, especially in a one-way fashion, can add cost and reduce the attractiveness of service. Some small loops that operate at route terminals or very large two-way loops where the circumference is sizable so that most riders will travel in a straight line or only a medium-sized arc about the loop may be appropriate.

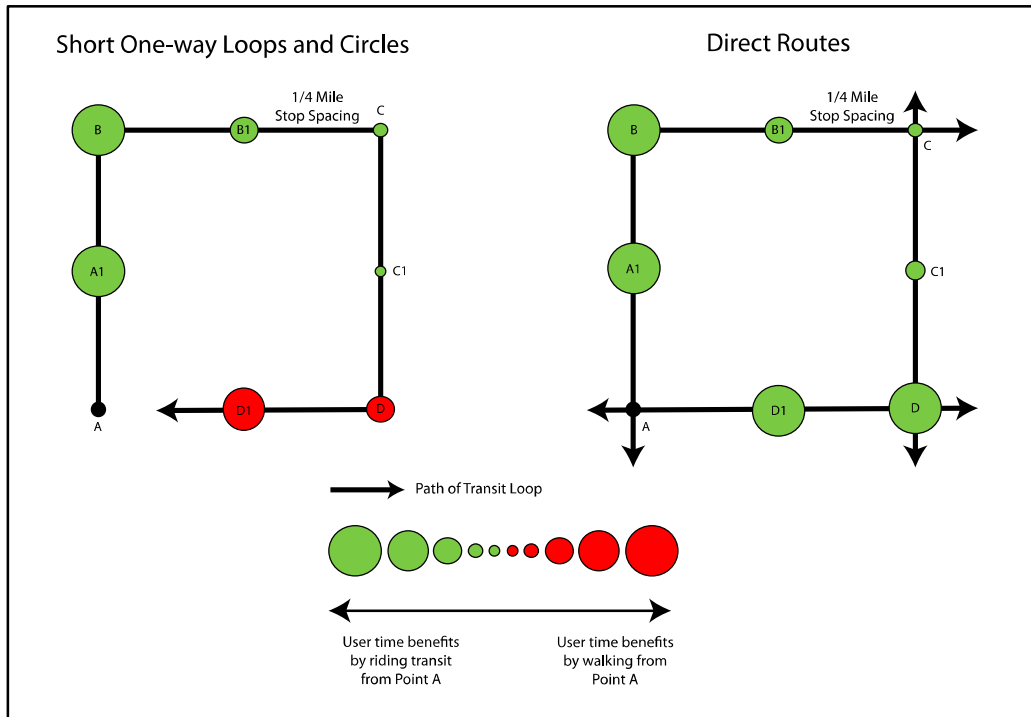


Figure 5 - One-way Loops vs. Direct Routes

13. Middle Ground

Where possible, routes should travel along corridors which have ridership generators on either side in such a way that the route bisects destinations rather than skirting the periphery or along physical barriers such as rivers, ledges or lakes.

14. Opportunity Cost and Change

Route design should focus more on providing good service and network design, rather than ridership preservation, to increase overall ridership.

Reallocation or restructuring of service to better fit good service and network design will typically result in increases in ridership. Despite this opportunity, there will always be pressure to maintain current service [in order to](#) preserve current riders' travel habits. Hence, ridership growth will always be pitted against ridership preservation.

Fixed-Route Service Design Policies

This section articulates policy, based on principles, that defines transit network architecture, extent and service levels for fixed-route transit service. These policies are intended to ensure consistency of existing service and for service modifications, enhancements, and reductions as well. The policies may be used by citizens, staff, and elected officials for the purposes of decision making, maintaining consistency, and network/route building guidelines. The following policies can be classified into two categories. The first set of policies can be applied to the system as a whole. The second set of policies is route-specific. The existing network, routes, and all proposed route changes should ~~be in compliance with~~ be following all of the policies to the greatest extent practicable.

Policy Summary

System-wide Policies

FR 1.0 Major Service Classes	These policies define the types of service found in the fixed-route network
1.1 HPT	This is a network of routes selected for higher capital and operating investment STA calls High Performance Transit (HPT).
1.2 Regular	This is the basic service level STA provides.
1.3 Targeted	This service is focused on specific travel markets and destinations, with limited service span commensurate with demand.
FR 2.0 Service Allocation	These policies identify targets for the allocation of service across service types and geography.
2.1 Geographic Extent	This policy defines the necessity of geographically extending service to serve the urbanized areas.
2.2 Service Type Allocation	This policy defines the minimum and maximum percentage of revenue service hours allocated to each service type
2.3 Geographic Allocation	This policy defines the minimum requirements for serving each travel shed within the PTBA.
FR 3.0 Service Span	The Service Span policies identify target hours of operation during each day of the week.
3.1 Regular System Hours	This policy defines the system operating hours requirements for regular basic service.
3.2 HPT System Hours	This policy defines the system operating hours requirements for the HPT.

Route-specific Policies

FR - 4.0 Headway	This policy defines the maximum headways for service by type.
FR - 5.0 Stop Spacing and Placement	This policy states guidelines for stop placement and defines the maximum and minimum distances for stop spacing by service type.
FR - 6.0 Stop Spacing and Placement	This policy states guidelines for stop placement and defines the maximum and minimum distances for stop spacing by service type
FR - 7.0 Vehicle Load Standards	This policy defines vehicle load standards
FR - 8.0 Route Numbering	This policy defines the standard numbering system for all routes.

FR 1.0 – Major Service Classes

STA provides three major classes of fixed-route service: High Performance Transit (HPT) Service, Regular Service, and Targeted Services

HPT and Regular service classes are generalized services that are designed to serve the greatest number of people within the region’s geographic area and STA’s financial capacity. The Targeted service class is a specialized service focused on attracting and accommodating targeted audiences, such as peak demand travelers to employment and education centers, as well as special shuttles that may operate intermittently or bridge service gaps either temporarily or geographically. The following descriptions provide a basic policy framework on which the attributes of each service class are constructed.

1.1 High Performance Transit (HPT) Service

The HPT service class is intended to be considered full-time service, operating in two directions. Spontaneous travel is supported by the relatively high frequency of service. The HPT routes are in major corridors where there is sufficient ridership to justify significant investments in passenger amenities. HPT routes also support regional growth plans and centers of education and employment. There are two general HPT configurations, Urban and Regional. Urban configurations primarily operate on arterials and are typically a single route providing end-to-end service on most if not all trips. Regional configurations operate principally on freeways and highways, with significant segments with limited or no access. More details can be found in the High Performance Transit element.

Routes serving HPT corridors as identified in this plan may be designated HPT service only after 1) a corridor development plan has been prepared and approved by the STA Board of Directors and 2) service levels along the route adhere to the minimum service levels for the respective mode or corridor configurations. Elevated branding and wayfinding investments for HPT service is commensurate with the implementation of corridor service plans.

1.2 Regular Service

The Regular service class comprises the majority of STA’s existing service and is general-purpose service. It is intended to be sufficient to meet general demand that exists in an area served while still being robust enough to meet many purposes throughout each day. The service class ~~provides for~~ provides flexibility in service span and frequency to accommodate the range of corridor circumstances, from newly minted service to routes envisioned to become part of the High Performance Transit network. For the purposes of service attributes of frequency and span, the Regular service class is subdivided into four families: Frequent, Standard, Basic, Downtown Shuttle.

Service Family	General Attributes
1.2.1 Frequent	Routes that warrant greater frequency based on demand and network capability. These routes may serve corridors identified for future High Performance Transit investments or may be candidates for future designation.
1.2.2 Standard	Routes that contribute to overall network effectiveness and operate daily, providing half-hourly frequency for most hours on weekdays and operating seven days a week.
1.2.3 Basic	Basic access for a variety of users at different times of day, basic is appropriate for fledgling travel markets and areas with medium density and limited commercial/mixed use activity. Service may gradually increase to reach Standard service definition as performance improves.
1.2.4 Downtown Shuttle	Elements of standard and frequent service with a span appropriate for travel market. May operate daily or weekday only

1.3 Targeted Services

The Targeted service class features routes that are tailored to serve a specific commute market or destinations on a limited basis, typically with limited or express stop patterns. Such routes typically, but not exclusively, operate one way in a given peak period. Routes in this class may be anchored by a park and ride facility or have a collection segment through residential areas before traveling limited stop to the employment/education center. Targeted Services also includes shuttles for special events, interim worksite connections, and supplementary connections and is tailored to the specific circumstances.

FR 2.0 – Service Allocation

Transit agencies generally provide a service allocation policy to guide transit planning and support the agency’s mission and goals. Common policies in other communities relate to geographic extent of service, spatial distribution of service among geographic partitions of an agency’s service area, and distribution of operating outlays among service types. The Spokane Transit service allocation policy will include a hybrid of these three methods.

2.1 Geographic Extent

Regular or HPT service shall be available within no more than one-half mile of at least 80% of the PTBA population residing within urban areas.

Urban areas are defined as the Spokane “urbanized area” (UZA) and “urban clusters,” as defined by the last available US Census. This policy recognizes the need to be geographically extended in order to be accessible and functional for the traveling public. It also highlights the position that fixed-route is a service made functional because it serves urban areas.

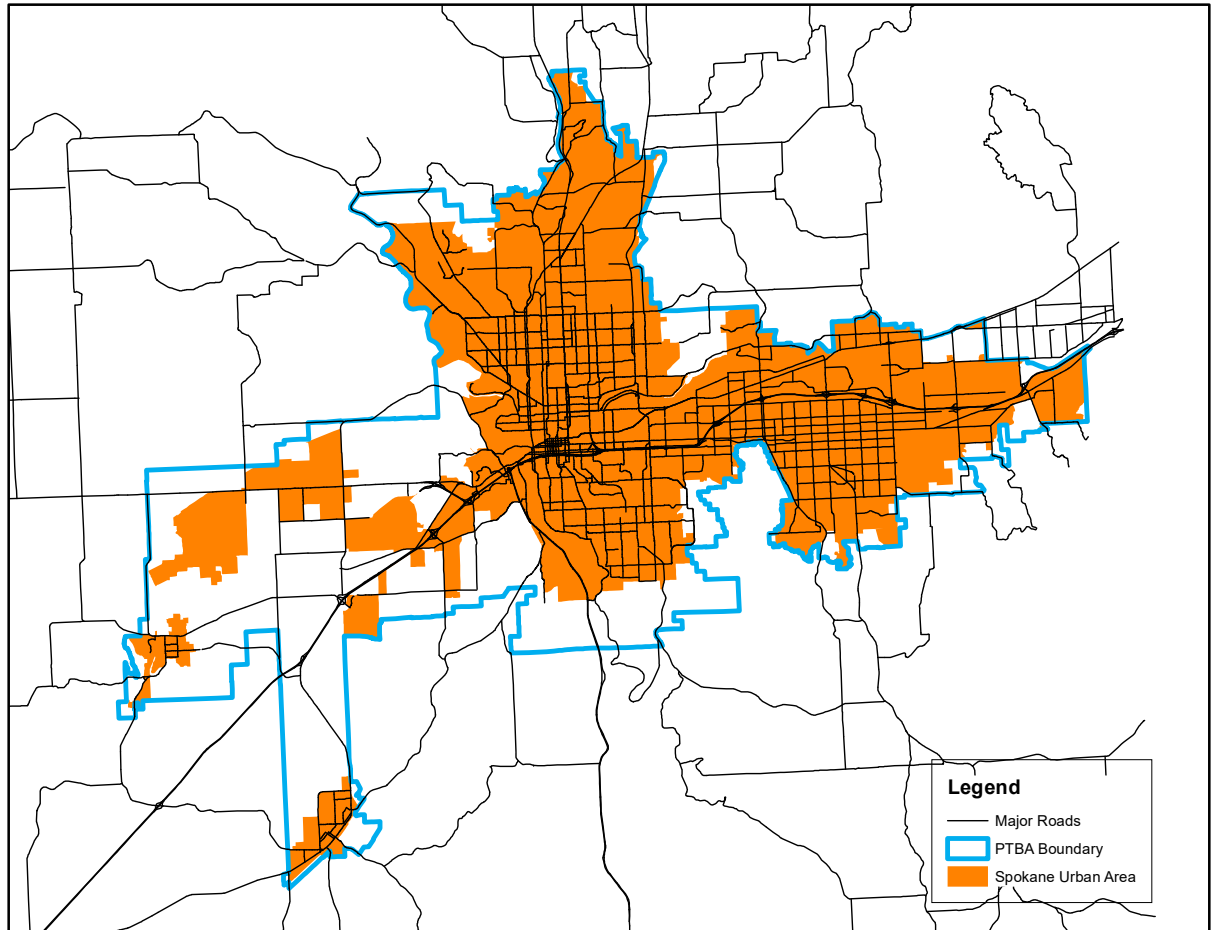


Figure 6 - Urban Areas and Clusters

2.2 Service Class Allocation

STA shall allocate service hours in a way which maximizes overall system efficiency.

An effective allocation of investment across the three classes of fixed route service will favor HPT on a per-route-mile basis, by virtue of the greater demand served. Regular services may represent the highest proportion of service until many of the HPT corridors are in operation. Because Targeted services have more limited operating profiles (e.g., number of trips, span of service) they should represent fewer than 10% of service hours.

2.3 Geographic Allocation

STA shall ensure a geographic distribution among service classes.

The following allocations of service should be observed in distributing service among Travel Shed Partitions, as detailed below:

1. Each Travel Shed Partition should have at least one Targeted service class route serving the partition so long as it meets service performance standards.
2. Within 15 years of implementation of the first HPT corridor service, HPT service should operate within each Travel Shed Partition.

Travel Shed Partitions will be defined as a service design criterion in meeting this objective. Conceptually these partitions will be defined as North, South, East and West Plains. The intent of the partitions is to ensure a geographic distribution among high quality service classes. Partition boundaries should not be defined by municipal boundaries; neither should tax revenues raised in a partition determine service provision. Rather, the partitions group component travel needs to ensure a reasonable distribution of HPT investments.

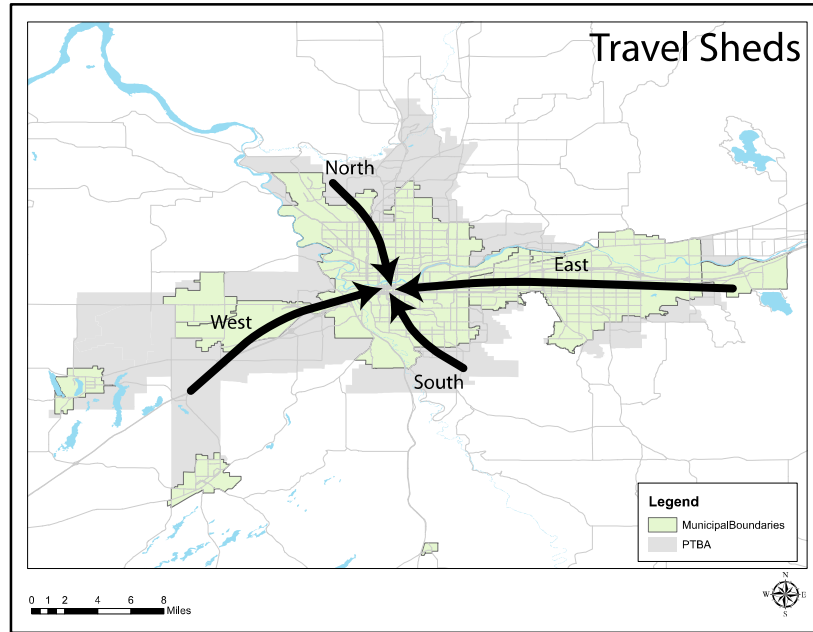


Figure 7 - Geographic Allocation

FR 3.0 – Service Span Policy

3.1 Regular Hours of Service (Span)

STA shall provide the maximum possible span of service for the Regular Service class.

3.1.1 Frequent / Standard System Hours of Service

The extent of each day in which the Frequent and Standard families are in operation is as follows, generalized to the nearest hour of the day:

Day	Span
Weekdays	5 am to 11 pm
Saturdays	6 am to 11 pm
Sundays/Holidays	8 am to 8 pm

3.1.2 Basic / Downtown Shuttle System Hours of Service

The minimum extent of each day in which the Basic and Downtown Shuttle families are in operation is as follows:

Day	Span
Weekdays	6 am to 6 pm
Saturdays	Route dependent
Sundays/Holidays	Route dependent

3.2 HPT Hours of Service (Span)

Whenever operationally feasible, STA shall provide an HPT span of service greater than that of the Regular System.

Day	Span
Weekdays	5 am to 12 am
Saturdays	6 am to 12 am
Sundays/Holidays	6 am to 10 pm

FR 4.0 – Headways for HPT Service and Regular Service

STA shall adhere to maximum headway standards when determining a route's frequency.

The following headways are maximum intervals considered acceptable for the various Regular service families and HPT modes and corridor configurations. The definition of Peak, Base and Sub-Base periods are relative to the travel demand, but generally Peak is between 6:30 am and 8:30 am and 4:00 pm and 6:30 pm on weekdays; Base is the period between weekday peaks as well the outside shoulders of Peak travel times; and Sub-Base is late-nights and weekends.

Maximum Headways (minutes)		Peak	Base	Sub-Base
Service Class	Variable			
HPT	Mode: Bus Rapid Transit	10	15	30
	Corridor Configuration: Urban	15	15	30
	Corridor Configuration: Regional	30	30	60
Regular	Service Family: Frequent	15	30	60
	Service Family: Standard	30	30	60
	Service Family: Basic	60	60	120
	Service Family: Downtown	30	30	60

FR 5.0 - Service Reliability and Operability

STA develops schedules to include sufficient time for recovery to ensure reliability and provide for operator respite.

The schedule blocking process creates recovery periods and ensures that the bus operator has enough time in the round trip to stay on schedule. If a route's cycle time is not long enough for adequate recovery time, it is commonly interlined with another route that has greater opportunity for recovery time.

FR 6.0 – Stop Spacing and Placement

STA balances customer access, service reliability, and system performance when determining the spacing and placement of bus stops.

The fixed-route service stop defines whether service is provided in a geographic area. The optimal placement of stops plays a critical role in customer access, service reliability, and system performance. Past practice has encouraged the proliferation of stops with the view that the biggest hurdle to increased transit patronage was a lack of access to transit within a convenient walk. The stop spacing policy recognizes the influence access has on speed and ridership. Research and service design changes in other transit markets have taught the following

lessons: 1) people are willing to walk greater distances (1/2 mile or more) for higher quality service and 2) stops closer than one-quarter mile generally don't provide more ridership; in most applications, ridership has grown after stops have been eliminated to meet a greater average distance between stops.

Placement of a stop should consider the following:

1. Relationship to high demand destinations
2. Proximity to intersecting routes and transit facilities
3. The ability for customers to safely access the stop from both sides of the street
4. The ability for the bus to efficiently and safely re-enter general purpose traffic

Where considerations 3 and 4 negatively impact the ability to place a stop considered due to 1 and 2, STA will work with the appropriate jurisdiction to provide a solution.

	Spacing	Process
HPT	Generally greater spacing than regular service it is replacing with a target of ½ mile outside the downtown core. (Minimum spacing of ¼ mile between most stations)	Develop as part of corridor plan. General station locations are subject to formal board approval (not required for other stops)
Regular	Arterials and local streets: 800'-1500' seeking an average quarter-mile stop spacing Highway environments where speed limits exceed 40mph: minimum ½ mile and where activity centers and infrastructure will support Rural/Limited access: subject to suitable location	Implemented as part of normal service development. No formal consultation process except for stop closure or major upgrades as part of integrated improvements
Targeted	Subject to specialized service needs	Same as Regular service

FR 7.0 - Vehicle Load Standards

STA adjusts bus and trip assignments to meet demand.

Ideally, a seat should be available for every STA passenger during all periods of operation. However, this is not always possible because of funding constraints or limited vehicle or driver availability. From the passenger's perspective, passenger loads reflect the comfort level of the on-board vehicle portion of a transit trip. The purpose of load guidelines is to ensure that most passengers will have a seat for at least the majority of most of their trip.

Load standards are thresholds of the ratio of passengers on board to seats available. Historically, STA's standards have been categorized based on Basic Service and Targeted service with the most recent standard being 150% of seating capacity during weekday peak/off-peak and 110% of seating capacity at all times for Express Commuter service. For example, a bus that has 40 seats would have no more than 20 standees for a total of 60 passengers.

Today, depending on the type of bus, STA will attempt to address any load where passenger loads exceed 150% of seating capacity or the legal weight limit of the bus during all periods of the day for local service. This translates into 20 standees for a total of 60 passengers. For routes utilizing freeways for substantial portions of their trips, STA will attempt to address any load where passenger loads exceed 125% of seating capacity as

measured at the peak load point and occurring on a regular basis. This translates into 10 standees on a 40-foot coach and 16 standing on a 60-foot articulated coach.

FR 8.0 – Route Numbering

STA maintains a route numbering practice consistent with industry standards.

The following policy provides guidelines on a numbering system for all fixed routes. A survey of various transit systems suggests that organizing route numbering series by service types and common geography (destination-based or travel-shed-based) is the most prevalent numbering logic outside of simple sequential numbering. A clear numbering system helps customers to make effective travel choices based on the service characteristics which are most important for their transportation needs.

STA route numbers are used to identify service types (HPT Lines, Regular Service, and Targeted Service) and may be organized further using geography for additional communication. Any reintroduction of a route number on a substantially different route than its prior identity should occur after no less than two years of non-use.

Colors, letters, and symbols may also be used to distinguish HPT or specialized routes as well as route variants. The use of colors, numbers, or symbols should fit within a systems-approach to service communication and branding.

Paratransit

Paratransit is a wheelchair-accessible shared-ride transportation service for individuals whose disability prevents them from using the regular fixed-route buses. This means that due to a disability a person must be unable to get to or from a bus stop, get on or off a lift or ramp equipped bus, or successfully travel by bus to or from their destination.

STA has a long history of collaboration and support regarding people with disabilities and people who are older. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed, ushering in a number of compliances required of public transit agencies, including upgrading/retrofitting fixed-route buses to better accommodate people with disabilities, as well as establishing paratransit services to compliment fixed-route service. STA has consistently fulfilled these requirements. The paratransit fleet has grown to 67 vehicles and additional service is regularly contracted through another provider to meet demand.

Although paratransit service is an essential piece to the transit network, people are encouraged to use fixed-route whenever possible. The 2016 average cost per paratransit trip was \$22.17, compared to \$3.80 per fixed-route trip. Paratransit service expense represents approximately 20 percent of STA's total operating budget, yet accounts for approximately 5 percent of STA's total trips. As a result of a high level of service, as well as a relatively inexpensive fare, STA's paratransit ridership has grown considerably since the inception of ADA regulations. STA's paratransit ridership experienced a general decline of ridership from 2009 – 2015, due in part to several initiatives such as in-person eligibility assessments, mobility training, and a van grant program. Once these programs have achieved full impact, ridership is expected to begin gradual growth of 1.5% to 2% as evidenced in 2016. Balancing quality service with fiscal effectiveness remains a key concern of STA's Paratransit department.

Paratransit Goal

Paratransit shall meet ADA standards as a comparable service which compliments fixed-route service.

Paratransit Principles

The principles listed below identify the basic concepts of paratransit. These principles are unchanging, define the basic foundation of paratransit, and will continue to serve as guidance for new and existing paratransit policies.

1. Purpose

Paratransit service is an origin to destination, shared-ride service.

Paratransit is not a personalized taxi service. Rather, paratransit is a service intended to serve multiple people and destinations using a shared trip. Service begins at the door of a rider's origin and ends at the door of their destination, usually making stops for other paratransit riders along the way.

2. Compliance

Paratransit service complies with the ADA service criteria.

As a requirement of operation, STA's paratransit service must comply with the ADA service criteria. Compliance is required in categories that include fares, travel time, eligibility, capacity constraints, service area, response time, transport of common people using wheelchairs, visitor service, no trip restrictions or waiting lists, no shows, and so forth. These compliance categories may change over time, but the principle of compliance requires STA to continually monitor changes at the federal level and adjust policies and practices to meet these requirements.

Paratransit Policies

Based on the paratransit principles, this section articulates policy and defines the intent and extent of the paratransit services provided by STA. These policies are intended to ensure consistency and coordination between existing service and future enhancements or reductions. The policies should be used for the purposes of decision making, maintaining consistency and service modifications.

PT 1.0 – Service Area

1.1 Geographic Area

Strictly adhere to a three-quarter mile geographic buffer around fixed-route lines of service and bounded by the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA) boundary.

STA provides paratransit service which is geographically comparable to fixed-route service. Paratransit service will be limited to origins and destinations located within a three-quarter mile radius of all fixed-routes.

1.2 Simple Boundary

Adhere to a consistent boundary for paratransit service availability relative to the maximum fixed-route service footprint and span provided.

Although paratransit boundaries are allowed to change in response to the specific hours a particular fixed-route is running, STA operates paratransit service within a static boundary of geography and span. The paratransit boundary adheres to the footprint created by the boundary associated with all of the fixed-routes at all times. If a geographic area is surrounded by fixed-route service on all sides, yet lies 3/4 -mile from any service, that area will still receive paratransit service, consistent with federal regulation. Additionally, the span of paratransit service will mirror the span of the entire fixed-route system.

PT 2.0 – Service and Eligibility Standards

2.1 Travel Time

Travel time for a paratransit ride shall be comparable to a similar fixed-route trip.

The time of the typical paratransit ride should be comparable to the time it would take to make the same trip using fixed-route service. The comparable time calculation for the fixed-route trip will consider the time that it would take to walk to the transit stop, wait for the transit vehicle and transfer to another vehicle if necessary.

2.2 Customer Service

Provide paratransit customer service capacity comparable to that of STA's general call center operation.

Paratransit customer service capacity should not be a limiting factor in accessing Paratransit services

2.3 Reservation Window

Provide a seven-day reservation window for paratransit service.

A seven-day reservation window allows customers to plan ahead. This is especially helpful for paratransit riders bound for medical appointments or other scheduled events.

2.4 Eligibility Determinations

Eligibility determinations will be based on trip-by-trip eligibility.

For those customers who are conditionally eligible, eligibility will be determined based on key factors of the nature of each particular trip vis-à-vis the customer's physical and cognitive abilities. For example, weather, terrain, accessibility, etc. may determine whether or not a customer with conditional eligibility is able to complete the trip with fixed-route or if they need paratransit service. This policy ensures that public resources are used responsibly and fairly.

2.5 Emergency Conditions

Emergency conditions may require trip prioritization at limited times.

STA is determined to refrain from prioritizing paratransit trips. However, severe weather or other emergency conditions may require STA to take the step of using prioritization techniques for paratransit vehicle trip assignments.

2.6 Safety

Securements for wheelchairs and safety/seat belts for all riders shall be required on all vehicles making paratransit trips.

Safety is the primary concern of STA. Requiring the use of securement devices on paratransit vehicles, as well as education on their proper use, is an important step towards keeping our riders and operators safe.

PT 3.0 – Service Structure

3.1 Balance

Sustain a service delivery architecture that provides for high productivity and operational flexibility (in-house, contracted) to meet the varying levels of service demand.

Due to an ever-changing operating environment, STA must balance productivity with flexibility when needed.

This page is intentionally left blank.

Flexible Services

To create a balanced and complete transit network, STA employs a variety of services. Just as fixed-route and paratransit services fill unique travel needs, STA's flexible services program offers an array of opportunities that meet needs not served by the other programs. The Flexible Service program has traditionally focused on the rideshare program serving groups of commuters who travel longer distances to their workplace, but there are numerous opportunities to capitalize on the benefits of flexible services. In addition, through the implementation of other mobility services like transportation network companies (TNC) (i.e. Lyft, Uber), [mobility on demand programs](#), bikeshare, special use vans and rideshare, STA will be able to help efficiently improve the mobility of its customers. STA's [rideshare \(formerly vanpool\)](#) program ridership has experienced considerable growth since its inception. The Flexible Services program holds considerable promise for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of STA's other services.

Flexible Services Goal

Spokane Transit Authority's Flexible Service program will support the overall transit network as well as local and regional commute trip reduction efforts by offering and facilitating specialized mobility services.

Flexible Services Principles

The principles listed below define Flexible Services. They provide guidelines for ensuring that the fundamental ideas behind Flexible Services service are understood by all. These principles are unchanging and will continue to serve as guidance for new and existing policies.

1. Purpose

The Flexible Services program meets specialized needs that cannot be met with other transit modes.

Services offered under the Flexible Services program is not a fixed-route service. The Flexible Services programs are a suite of various mobility options designed to expand the utility of fixed-route transit by integrating transit stops with other shared modes to meet the specific needs of its customers while often requiring lower capital, operating, and energy resources.

2. Partnerships

Spokane Transit Authority's Flexible Services program service is part of a partnership that extends across agencies.

Coordination between all national, state, and local agencies working towards the goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled is essential. Agencies that organize, advocate, and support an interconnected system of transportation options need to work together to achieve statewide goals.

3. Regional Service

Some of the mobility options offered under the Flexible Services program are a regional service that can extend beyond the Public Transportation Benefit Area, Spokane County and Washington State boundaries.

As a part of serving specialized mobility needs, Flexible Services provide for a larger region than fixed-route or paratransit services. Flexible Services is able to extend into areas with limited access or into rural areas which cannot be supported by fixed-route transit.

4. Benefits Must Outweigh Alternatives

To be successful, collective benefits (cost, time, convenience, peace of mind, etc.) of using the Flexible Services mobility option must be greater than driving alone.

For emerging mobility services and fixed-route transit service to effectively complement one another, riders must perceive these services as a frictionless extension of the transit network.

Existing and potential riders are continually evaluating options and weighing the collective benefits of each mode of transportation. Riders rarely make decisions based on only one benefit, thus the Flexible Services program continually considers the collective benefits of its services compared to other options.

5. Availability

Flexible Services is on-demand.

Flexible Services has the flexibility to be scheduled around specific work shifts or events.

Flexible Services Policies

The following Flexible Services policies articulate the guidelines for service standards and coordination. Each policy contributes to specificity and provides guidance towards reaching the overall goal of Flexible Services. As a whole, the collection of policies establishes a framework for the future development of Flexible Services programs.

FS 1.0 – Service Standards

1.1 Rideshare Service Types

STA rideshare service types may include rideshare, special use vans, and vanshare.

Each service is defined as the following:

- **Rideshare:** A van or small SUV provided by STA that is shared by people who live and work in approximately the same areas and can commute together to a place of employment. The driver is not an employee of STA.
- **Special Use Vans:** Special use vans are awarded to select service providers in our area who primarily serve residents who travel to, from and within the PTBA. They are used for providing transportation for people with special needs and their caregivers.
- **Vanshare:** A van used to bridge gaps between public transit and a group's destination. It is particularly useful when a place of employment is not within walking distance of a major transit facility.

1.2 Flexible Services Program Types

STA Flexible Services Shared Mobility) programs provide services and resources that are shared among users, either concurrently or one after another.

Flexible Services are classified as Mobility Hubs (infrastructure) or Mobility on Demand (Systems).

1.2.1 Mobility Hub

Mobility Hubs are a place where people can seamlessly connect with multiple modes of transportation in a safe, comfortable, and accessible environment. They provide physical integration among modes by co-locating carsharing, bike sharing, and other shared mobility services at/near public transit.

1.2.2 Mobility on Demand (MoD)

Mobility on-demand is a mode that, if implemented, is intended to extend the reach of STA's services by connecting riders to fixed route service at major stops, stations or transit centers. Mobility on-demand may be instituted in areas not served by Fixed Route within the PTBA. These services may be directly operated by STA (using agency technology, drivers and vehicles) or may be partially or completely contracted to a third party.

Any service should not be used to replace or compete with existing STA fixed route and ADA paratransit services. MoD might be able to meet coverage goals in areas that cannot support regular service, such as low population exurban and rural communities, or to help people in those areas connect to fixed route systems at transit hubs. It could also serve as a tool to evaluate demand for expanded fixed route service hours or coverage.

Before the introduction of any type of MoD service, the following factors must be identified:

- Operational parameters
 - Start/end points
 - Time span
 - Restrictions
 - Geographic area
- Scheduling
 - Methods
 - Timing (day of or pre-scheduled)
- Operational method
 - Who provides the drivers
 - Who provides the vehicles
- Payment method

1.3 Geography

Begin or end all Flexible Services programs within the PTBA.

Although Flexible Services program trips may be entirely within the PTBA, this policy allows groups of people who live or work outside of the PTBA boundary to reach their destinations inside of the PTBA more efficiently. This policy reflects the reality that the regional employment base, and by extension, the travel shed extends well beyond the PTBA.

1.4 Safety

Support customer safety.

The safety of STA passengers is of great importance. All rideshare vehicles are equipped with seatbelts and safety devices to help ensure the safety of drivers and riders. Safety education programs for rideshare drivers and Flexible Service Program riders will help all customers ride more safely and comfortably.

FS 2.0 – Service Coordination

2.1 Complementary Service

Flexible Services programs shall support fixed-route and paratransit services.

For STA's transit network to thrive, all services must connect to and complement each other. In cases where fixed-route service cannot meet the service design guidelines, Flexible Services programs can be an efficient way to serve places of work or residency with public transportation.

2.2 Coordination

Support Flexible Services programs coordination and connections with all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and other transit services.

No transit trip is ever completed without the use of another mode. All trips begin and end with walking, riding a bicycle, or driving to reach the transit network. Improving and enhancing the ability for customers to reach transit can be just as important as the transit trip itself. Promoting coordination and connectivity between modes is essential.

System Integration

The scope of Spokane Transit Authority's services is broad. Including fixed- route service, paratransit, flexible services, and the High-Performance Transit (HPT) Network, each of these system elements is sufficiently complex to warrant tasking entire departments with their administration. However, the interconnectedness of these elements adds to the system's overall effectiveness to provide public transportation services to the region. For this reason, both internally and in its communications with the public, STA should strive to promote the integration of its various system elements. A few examples of system integration within STA are listed below.

HPT Network ↔ *Flexible Services*

Members accessing a flexible services program are generally without access to a personal vehicle during the day. The HPT Network provides an efficient form of transportation either for commute trip completion or for day-time mobility by making spontaneous transit trips as convenient as those made with a private vehicle.

HPT Network ↔ *Other Fixed-Route Service*

Customers of fixed-route service have varying needs. Some riders require more frequent stops to more easily access their destination, while others are willing to walk longer distances to use a faster, more frequent HPT service. The non-HPT routes also often serve to provide the essential "last mile" connection for a rider transferring from another transit vehicle with a higher speed and higher frequency.

HPT Network ↔ *Paratransit*

Some paratransit customers may only require paratransit services due to the distance or conditions between their home/destination and the nearest transit stop. By linking HPT stops with Paratransit services whenever possible, overall system efficiency increases by reducing the resources required to provide Paratransit services.

Flexible Services ↔ *Fixed-Route Service*

Flexible Services programs provides an essential link for riders between the fixed-route system and their final destination. The fixed-route network also provides flexible service customers with an efficient form of transportation for spontaneous trips throughout the day.

Rideshare ↔ *Paratransit*

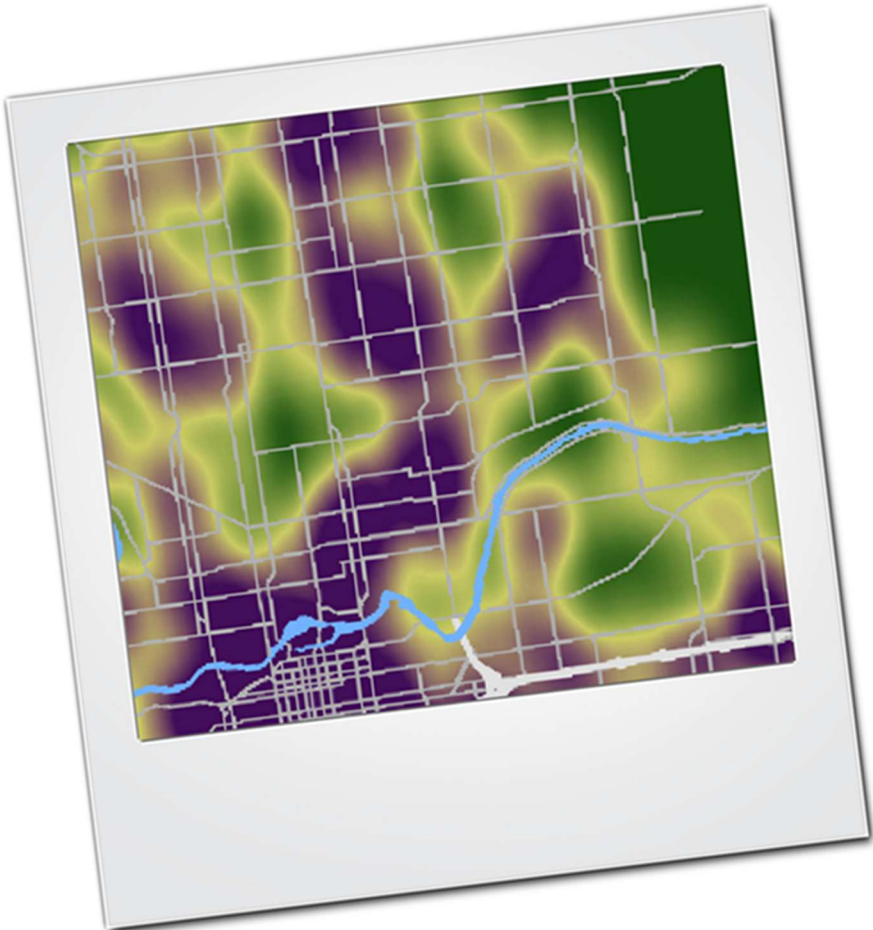
Many paratransit customers reside in group care facilities. By encouraging the use of rideshare's special use vans, efficiency develops by eliminating redundant trips. Instead of assigning multiple Paratransit vehicles to serve a group home over the course of a day, one special use van could meet riders' needs.

Fixed-Route Service ↔ *Paratransit*

The paratransit service boundary is determined by the scope of the fixed- route service area. Therefore, no paratransit rider's origin or destination is ever more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the nearest transit route. By easing use and accessibility of the fixed-route system, some current customers of paratransit may be able to consider the use of fixed-route service.

This page is intentionally left blank.

PART III: Activities and Programs



This page is intentionally left blank.

Transit Equity and Inclusion

According to the Transportation Planning Capacity Building program within US Department of Transportation, “Equity in transportation seeks fairness in mobility and accessibility to meet the needs of all community members.” An inclusive public transportation system seeks to value the input of the whole community, especially those who primarily rely on it for their daily mobility.

Equity and inclusion, when taken together, together comprise a critical element of STA’s commitments, plans and services (both past and present).

Background

Spokane Transit adheres to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act which states, “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program receiving Federal financial assistance.” STA prepares and adopts a Title VI Program every three years to advance its obligations under the law. The principles and policies contained in this element both inform that program and enhance it by demonstrating STA’s integration of equity and inclusion into all aspects of service delivery.

Transit equity is a response to decades-long inequities in transportation, where wealthier and less marginalized parts of society receive more transportation benefits while the more marginalized people in our communities – historically including communities of color and lower income populations - receive less transportation or experience more negative effects of transportation activities.

Transportation Secretary Buttigieg notes in his December 18, 2023 *Policy Statement: Equity and Access* “The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, environmental justice, and equal opportunity. The simple yet powerful mandate of equity and access in transportation will shape and drive all Departmental programs and activities.” STA’s vision of connecting everyone to opportunity aligns with the federal objective to increase equity and access.

Environmental justice in Washington State, as provided in the Healthy Environment for All Act (HEAL Act) addresses disproportionate environmental and health impacts in all laws, rules, and policies by prioritizing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, the equitable distribution of resources and benefits, and eliminating harm. (RCW 70A.02.010). The passage of the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act in 2021 is a historic step toward eliminating environmental health disparities and more equitably distributing health and environmental benefits among communities of color and low-income households.

At the national level, the US Department of Transportation has adopted three fundamental environmental justice principles to guide transportation justice efforts:

- Avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on communities of color and low-income populations.
- Ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- Prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by communities of color and low-income populations.

Spokane Transit affirms the importance of the principles identified by the National Campaign for Transit Justice, which calls for transit that is equitable, sustainable, economically productive, safe and accessible, and affordable. As a result, Transit Equity and Inclusion is not a program or activity that can stand alone. It integrates with everything the organization does, and principles and policies that relate to equity and inclusion are contained throughout Connect Spokane and not isolated to this chapter alone. Ultimately, equity and inclusion should be evident in both the processes STA undertakes when planning, and the outcomes it delivers, primarily in transportation services.

Transit Equity and Inclusion Goal

STA works towards a system that normalizes transit use and embeds equity throughout the system with the goal of creating inclusive, accountable, transparent, and equitable access to our programs, services, and transit system for the people traveling throughout the region.

Transit Equity and Inclusion Principles

These principles describe the foundation for the policies found in this element:

1. Access and Mobility

Transit systems that are designed to work for a city or region's most vulnerable populations will work for everyone.

Access to high-quality public transportation can make cities and regions more inclusive by increasing mobility and opportunity, particularly for people with disabilities, low incomes, minority and limited English proficiency (LEP) populations, and those who otherwise, for whatever reason, cannot drive a personal automobile.

Enabling people to meet their day-to-day needs - getting to work, school, the grocery store, the doctor's office, and social and leisure activities - allows people to meet these needs and creates long-term economic opportunities.

2. Equitable and Effective Decision-Making

Effective transportation decision-making depends upon understanding and properly addressing the unique needs of different socio-economic groups.

Public transportation is more effective when decision-making is informed by equity and inclusion considerations. For STA, such considerations should include decisions about:

- transit service to low-income neighborhoods and communities of color
- placement of bus stops and shelters
- service for non-English speaking populations
- service for students

3. Accountability through Transparency

A transparent and public account of decisions made and responses to public input regarding these decisions increases a transit agency's accountability to its customers.

Thorough recordkeeping helps to ensure a common understanding of decisions, policies, and responses. Sharing records and analysis with the public demonstrates the transparency with which STA conducts its business.

4. Strength through Diversity

A diversity of viewpoints, backgrounds and circumstances contributes to effective policy development, and broadens our understanding of the world. Diversity fosters resilience and broadens the stakeholders engaged in the success of an endeavor.

Transit Equity and Inclusion Policies

TEI 1.0 – Designing Public Engagement and Outreach

STA will strive to design inclusive and accessible engagement and outreach efforts, including efforts to reach out and seek participation from historically marginalized communities.

STA staff will develop engagement strategies with the goal of reaching out and seeking participation, especially from those communities that have historically been marginalized and are more vulnerable to changes in access to jobs, goods and services, medical care, and other essentials of daily life.

TEI 2.0 – Accessible Information

Providing access and non-technical explanations of relevant reports, records, and documents in a variety of formats demonstrates STA's commitment to transparency.

STA conducts its business in a fair, honest, and legal manner. For that reason, providing access to relevant documents so that the material may be consumed and understood by people of all abilities broadens the public's perception of STA's high operating standards.

TEI 3.0 – Designing an Inclusive Transit System

The design of programs, services, routes, and facilities shall aim, to the extent practicable, for inclusivity of current and future customers and community members.

Design considerations may address ages, abilities, languages, lived experiences, cultural backgrounds, family background, economic status, gender, and sexual orientation. Wherever possible, maximizing inclusivity should be pursued first through principles of universal design, making a product or service usable by all people.

TEI 4.0 - Title VI Program Policies

TEI 4.1 System-Wide Title VI Policies

STA will not “utilize criteria or methods of administration which have the effect of subjecting persons to discrimination because of their race, color, or national origin, or have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color, or national origin.” (See CFR 42.104)

STA will “take affirmative action to assure that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, the program or activity on the grounds of race, color, or national origin.”

STA assures that “no person or group of persons shall be discriminated against with regard to routing, scheduling, or quality of service transportation on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Frequency of service, age and quality of vehicles assigned to routes, quality of stations serving different routes, and location of routes may not be determined on the basis of race, color, or national origin.”

TEI 4.2 Major Service Change Policies

In developing annual plans and service changes, STA will assess whether changes meet the Major Service Change threshold. This threshold is as follows:

- **Cost Impacts: More than 5% reduction in revenue hours of service in any calendar year**
- **Ridership Impacts: 5% or more of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of bus stop(s), trip(s), or route(s) at any given service change.**

A Title VI analysis and evaluation of the impacts of major service changes will be published prior to a formal public hearing on the service change or a draft recommendation is published, whichever comes first.

TEI 4.3 Service Change Disparate Impact Policy

When a major service change impacts a census tract with a minority population that exceeds the average minority population of the service area by 10% or more, a disparate impact exists, and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.

The average minority population for the PTBA is identified in STA’s adopted *Title VI Program*. To determine if a disparate impact exists, each route impacted is analyzed to determine the percentage of minority population along that route. If the percentage exceeds the PTBA minority population by more than 10%, then a disparate impact exists.

TEI 4.4 Service Change Disproportionate Burden Policy

When a major service change impacts a census tract with a low-income population that exceeds the average low-income population of the service area by 10% or more, a disproportionate burden exists, and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.

The average low-income population in the PTBA is identified in STA’s adopted *Title VI Program*. To determine if a disparate impact exists, each route impacted is analyzed to determine the percentage of low-income population along that route. If the percentage exceeds the PTBA low-income population by more than 10%, then a disparate impact exists.

TEI 4.5 System-wide Transit Amenities Service Policy

Installation of transit amenities along bus routes are based on the number of passenger boardings at stops and stations along those routes and the High Performance Transit facility standards with variances from this policy to support connectivity of routes and riders with limited mobility.

TEI 4.6 Vehicle Assignment Service Policy

STA bus assignments take into account the operating characteristics of buses of various lengths, which are matched to the operating characteristics of the route such as passenger loads and overall ridership of each route. Local routes with lower ridership may be assigned a smaller fixed route vehicle. Some routes requiring tight turns on narrow streets may be operated with smaller fixed route vehicles. The age of the vehicle shall not be a consideration when assigning the vehicle to a particular maintenance garage for daily service.

TEI 4.7 Fare Change Policy

STA evaluates fare changes to ensure fare increases do not disproportionately negatively impact a class protected under Title VI.

TEI 4.8 Fare Change Minority Disparate Impact Policy

If a fare change affects fare categories or payment methods used disproportionately by minority populations (10% or greater) than the overall population, a fare change disparate impact exists and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.

TEI 4.9 Fare Change Low-Income Disproportionate Impact Policy

If a fare change affects fare categories or payment methods used disproportionately by low-income populations (10% or greater) than the overall population, a fare change disproportionate burden exists and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.

TEI 4.10 On-Time Performance Standard

STA's on-time performance objective will be identified and tracked in STA's annual performance measures, which will be posted to the STA website.

TEI 5.0 Economic Development

TEI 5.1 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

STA is committed to eliminating barriers, creating opportunities and building capacity for underrepresented and women-owned businesses to ensure businesses building our regional transit system represent the communities we serve.

STA's DBE program information can be accessed at <https://www.spokanetransit.com/bidding-opportunities/disadvantaged-business-enterprise-program/>, where the agency program and goals are linked.

System Infrastructure

Transit agencies, including STA, use investments in built infrastructure to provide safe, reliable public transportation. As a part of its budget process, STA annually identifies needs for improvement to the system infrastructure. To ensure that these funds are spent responsibly and methodically, this element defines how decisions about system infrastructure are made and how projects become prioritized. Without following the policies contained within this element, investments in system infrastructure become piecemeal and often prove to be wasteful, resulting in losses of both time and financial resources.

System Infrastructure Goal

Invest responsibly in infrastructure that supports STA's Mission Statement and stated Comprehensive Plan goals and policies.

System Infrastructure Principles

These principles are designed to help guide investment priorities. They are not intended to note specific projects or investments, but rather to help decision makers understand the context of system infrastructure prioritization within the whole of STA.

1. Support

Successful infrastructure investments align with the mission, long-term goals, and long-range plan of a resilient, self-sustaining transit agency.

To ensure that infrastructure investments are sustainable, cost-effective, useful, equitable, and efficient, capital projects must support long-term agency objectives. Infrastructure built with the support of the transit agency's coordinated long-range vision is more likely to succeed than infrastructure built independent from system-wide goals.

2. Operating Implications

The development of system infrastructure has long-term implications for operational functionality.

Transit infrastructure projects can range in price and scope. Whether an investment is a large or small project, well-planned sustainable system infrastructure improvements have long-term implications on operating costs and ensuring equity and efficiency.

3. Fiscal Responsibility

The public expects transit agencies to improve its infrastructure in a fiscally responsible, resilient manner.

Customers and other non-riding taxpayers provide the funding necessary for all of STA's infrastructure improvements. Therefore, STA should ensure that infrastructure expenditures are made in a way which reduces waste, maximizes benefit, and ensures climate resiliency.

4. Strategic Opportunism

Transit agencies faced with free or low-cost capital opportunities should consider the long-term operating expenses to prevent those investments from becoming liabilities.

On the surface, any free or inexpensive land/facility offered to the transit agency may seem too good to pass up. However, if it is not part of a long-range plan or a strategic opportunity to improve service, seemingly excellent development opportunities can become burdensome investments.

Refusing donated/inexpensive capital may seem foolish, but it may prevent those projects from becoming an unnecessary strain on the transit agency's network and finances.

5. Capital Investment Yields

Not every dollar of investment yields the same benefit.

Capital investments should be designed to provide the greatest benefit. Cost effectiveness will vary and may not be subject to the same metrics.

System Infrastructure Policies

SI 1.0 – Capital Investment Considerations

Use the following list of considerations to help evaluate the benefits of proposed capital projects.

Capital projects are required as a part of an assortment of services which are provided. STA does not have the resources to complete ~~all of~~ all the capital projects identified. However, the following list of considerations help STA evaluate the benefits of each project. These considerations are in addition to the other policies in this plan.

Impact ~~to~~ on Operations

Consider the impacts on operational cost, STA staff requirements, speed and reliability of service, and how the project supports the transit network and system.

Impact to the Customer Experience

Consider the impacts on ridership, customer comfort and usability of the system.

Resilient/Value Engineering/ Expected Lifetime

Consider options that create resilient networks and infrastructure, providing greater elasticity in operations and faster recovery times. Consider options which may increase durability, reduce maintenance needs and add value relative to the cost. Also consider the expected useful life span of the capital investment. Lower initial capital outlays may not be the best value when operations, maintenance, and replacement cycles are also factored as costs of ownership

Impact to Safety and the Environment

Consider the safety, sustainability, environmental and other impacts related to how the project will impact the surroundings of employees and customers throughout the lifecycle- design, construction, use, and demolition – of the facility.

SI 2.0 – Facility Infrastructure

2.1 Property

Consider the capital investment considerations defined in Policy 1.0 prior to any property acquisition or sale.

STA should continually look for property investments likely to enhance the transit system. Additionally, the sale of property should be made under ~~the consideration~~ consideration of the goals and policies contained within this Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation.

2.2 Transit Centers

Enhance the transit system by investing in transit centers where appropriate.

A transit center is a designated facility where multiple routes intersect to provide passenger transfers and where significant physical improvements for customers are constructed outside the public right-of-way. Transit centers are geographically distributed to provide customer and operating needs across the region. New transit centers should be located in areas that meet Policy 1.0, Capital Investment Considerations. At minimum, transit centers should include:

- Sheltered, lighted passenger waiting areas
- Real-time and static route, wayfinding and customer information
- Operator relief amenities
- Vehicle layover and staging capacity for planned and future requirements

2.2.1 The Plaza

Invest in capital improvements that work toward making The Plaza safe, comfortable, easily accessible, and operationally and economically efficient.

The Plaza has been recognized as having a positive effect on bus operations, passenger experience, and ridership, and offers connectivity to future network enhancement. In spring of 2017, STA completed a renovation of The Plaza to improve the customer experience. STA should continue to support The Plaza by pursuing additional improvements to the structure, amenities, and operational design. Capital improvements to the Plaza should also improve integration within the existing urban form and work with surrounding neighbors to create a more pleasant downtown environment.

2.3 Transit Station

Enhance the transit system by investing in transit stations where appropriate to enable connections and improve the customer experience.

A transit station consists of 2 or more stops or bays at a location where 2 or more routes intersect. Less investment than a Transit Center. Station can be on STA property or in the public right-of-way. The station should have an anchoring stop that has 75 boardings or more or is associated with a larger transit facility, such as a park and ride. These facilities may include a park & ride, off-street layover or operator comfort facility.

2.4 Park and Ride Lots

New park and ride facilities should be considered an accessory to a transit center, transit station, or STA stop, and carefully located to maximize benefit and minimize impacts.

STA's service area has an abundance of surface parking. Although it may be tempting to build new park and rides in places where land has been reserved or it is inexpensive, STA should first pursue opportunities to develop underutilized or unused parking lots into park and rides to minimize costs, preserve the environment and capitalize on potential pedestrian riders from existing adjacent development. The high per-passenger cost of park and rides generally reduces the system-wide benefit of these facilities. Any new park and ride lot shall meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Location provides for a logical terminal for High Performance Transit Service.
2. Location is collocated with a transit center.

3. The parking lot for the park and ride is pre-existing or is shared with other businesses or institutions allowing for a greater all-day utilization of the lot.
4. The facility is developed in cooperation with WSDOT adjacent to a major highway facility and operational priority is given to transit vehicles for ingress/egress of said highway.

2.5 High Performance Transit (HPT) Station

Enhance the HPT system by investing in stations along the HPT corridor to improve certainty and experience.

An HPT station is generally in the public right-of-way but can be located on STA property or other private ROW per agreement. The HPT station location should coincide with neighborhood or other development center designations and/or where placement at the location supports a balanced distribution of station investments along an HPT corridor.

2.6 Transit Lanes and Transitways

STA will coordinate with local and state jurisdictions to identify appropriate locations for, installation of, and enforcement of dedicated rights-of-way for transit vehicles.

Transit lanes are a portion of the street designated by signs and markings for the preferential or exclusive use of transit vehicles, sometimes permitting limited use by other vehicles. Transitways are running ways dedicated to the exclusive use of transit vehicles, protected from incursion by physical separation. Transitways often involve a higher level of investment than transit lanes, but can provide the highest level of transit reliability, speed, and comfort available for transit operations and customers.

2.7 Community Hubs

Enhance the fixed-route system by investing in HPT equivalent stations at ~~important~~ a select number community or neighborhood centers along non-HPT routes.

A community hub communicates ~~an~~ importance and permanence of the transit system at key community locations throughout the STA service area. A community hub is formally identified by the STA Board of Directors before improvements are made. A community hub will meet at least 3 of the following criteria, while be physically separated from existing community hubs by at least one mile:

- Be located along a fixed-route line that is not identified as a future HPT line
- Be located at important, community-identified locations
- Expand placemaking for the community
- Be reasonably located near several key community destinations
- Have a daily ridership greater than 15 boardings/day

2.8 ~~7~~ Stops

All STA bus stops shall feature signs mounted in a uniform manner to identify the area as a stop and provide readable and accurate information.

Transit stops are one of the most important pieces of the transit network and should be treated accordingly. They determine ~~the access~~ access for the customers, so their placement, type, and branding should be carefully considered. May also include transfer opportunities.

2.87.1 Design Standards for Bus Stop Areas

Coordinate with local and regional jurisdictions to establish, maintain and implement uniform design standards for the bus stop environment.

Standardization of the elements that make up the bus stop area – including (but not limited to) benches, shelters, and lighting - results in less confusion for coach operators, passengers and other users of the street right-of-way. Established, agreed-upon standards can also streamline the design of street improvements and the review of private development proposals.

2.78.2 Accessibility

When making improvements and/or designing bus stops, STA shall partner with local and regional jurisdictions to assure that bus stops promote usability for all passengers, including passengers who use mobility devices.

Inaccessible bus stops can effectively prevent the use of fixed-route bus service by people with disabilities, thus limiting their mobility and potentially leading to increased paratransit costs. Accessibility improvements for people with disabilities can enhance the usability of the transit system for all riders. The accessibility and utility of public transportation resources will become increasingly important in the future as our population ages.

2.98 ADA Transition Plan

Develop a plan to systematically address obstacles to accessibility at bus stops.

Many more barriers to accessibility at STA bus stops exist than possibly can be addressed all at once with available resources. STA will coordinate with local and regional jurisdictions to identify barriers, prioritize addressing them and to outline funding and a timeline to do so.

SI 3.0 - Passenger Interface Components

3.1 Benches

~~STA will work with local and regional jurisdictions to ensure recommend that benches are placed properly, designed adequately, and serve the needs of customers sufficiently.~~

~~Benches provide enhance the convenience and comfort of passengers of varying abilities as they wait for transit vehicles for all types of passengers. Benches may be provided by STA, local jurisdictions, or other partner organizations.~~

~~STA installs, or recommends to be installed, benches at bus stops that Stops with benches provided by Generally, STA recommends bench locations which must meet one of the following criteria:~~

5. 10 or more ~~weekday~~ average ~~weekday~~ boardings
1. Transfer point between two or more routes
2. Adjacent to ridership generator with a high proportion of riders with limited mobility

3.2 Shelters and Awnings

3.2.1 Placement and Maintenance

The placement and maintenance of shelters or other weather cover for passenger waiting areas where appropriate shall be encouraged.

STA shall work with local and regional jurisdictions to position bus shelters, awnings and other weather protection as funding allows and consistent with Title VI requirements. Shelters and awnings can encourage

ridership by protecting waiting patrons from adverse weather elements. Shelters also provide an appropriate location for posting important ridership information. Stops with new shelters will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Stops with shelters funded by STA must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. 25 or more weekday average boardings
2. Transfer point between two or more routes
3. Adjacent to a ridership generator with a high proportion of riders with limited mobility

3.2.2 Removal

The removal of shelters may occur after a review of ridership data and/or physical condition.

In the programmed shelter replacement plan, STA reviews stops with less than 10 boardings per day and considers those locations for shelter removal. STA will also review a shelter's physical condition based on a point rating of the frame, roof, panels, bench, and the concrete foundation.

3.3 Lighting

STA works to provide pedestrian-scale lighting at stations, shelters, and general stops whenever possible.

While any lighting enhances the safety and security of transit stops, benches, and shelters, lighting designed specifically to illuminate the path of a pedestrian can do a better job than general streetlights.

3.4 Bicycle Facilities

Bicycles, including bicycle share, shall be accommodated at STA's facilities and on STA coaches.

A good bicycle network and appropriate facilities are similar to a good pedestrian network and facilities. They can couple with transit to extend the range of non-motorized modes of transportation. By supporting bike share and bicycle ridership through short- and long-term bicycle parking, greater bicycle capacity racks on coaches, and other supportive efforts, STA is able to increase options for those who choose to travel by more than one mode.

3.5 Pedestrian Infrastructure

As funding allows, Spokane Transit may partner with local jurisdictions to improve pedestrian infrastructure in locations where there is a direct and tangible benefit to customers accessing a transit stop or other transit facility.

The vast majority of STA's transit customers use public sidewalks to access transit stops. By allowing people to safely and efficiently reach their destination, pedestrian infrastructure plays a significant role in completing the transit network. STA supports efforts to improve and enhance pedestrian connections to its facilities. Financial contributions to such infrastructure should maximize transit benefit and grant opportunities and should be directly determined by Spokane Transit, and not other jurisdictions or agencies

3.6 Flexible Services Infrastructure

When making improvements and/or designing and designating mobility hubs, STA shall partner with local and regional jurisdictions to assure that appropriate locations for drop-off and pick-up are co-located within or adjacent to the mobility hub.

3.7 Information Systems Infrastructure

Information Systems Infrastructure - including digital wayfinding, smart phone applications, real time information, and fare system components - shall be developed and designed to provide a direct and tangible benefit to customers accessing transit.

As STA grows the transit network throughout the region, providing additional information to passengers at key stops will increase passenger knowledge and comfort level with the transit system, ultimately increasing confidence in and usage of the transit system.

3.8 HPT Station Amenities

The permanence of the HPT Corridor shall be expressed to customers and those developing the built environment with distinctive amenities at HPT stations and stops.

Enhancements that distinguish stations in High Performance Transit (HPT) Corridors from other types of transit stops are a critical part of the High Performance Transit principles.

3.8.1 HPT Station Identification Customization

STA strives to maintain a consistent “kit of parts” look, feel and branding of station locations for all HPT corridors while providing for certain limited elements to be customized based on input from recognized neighborhood councils and business associations. Customization improves station identification and integration with the existing surrounding environment.

In reviewing requests for customization, the following shall be the process followed by STA:

- Minor adaptations to sizing and scaling of design elements based on input from property owners, businesses and those directly using the service may be approved by the CEO.
- Major customization requests (such as commissioning independent station design, etc.) shall be approved by the Board and only under the following conditions:
 - The requested customization is submitted by a recognized community organization or institutional partner; and,
 - The customization will not interfere with essential STA branding placement; and,
 - The proponent of said customization agrees to pay for design and construction expenses that are above the expected costs for the typical shelter design, OR the station will be constructed on institutional property, subject to a third-party agreement and other considerations.

SI 4.0 – Capital Improvement Programming

4.1 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

STA shall maintain a capital improvement program that shall cover a period of no less than six years and be in general conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

To enable STA to make educated, coordinated, and financially sound capital investments, a 6-year capital improvement program must be developed. This program will be reviewed annually.

4.2 Capital Projects

Capital projects shall adhere to the capital investment priorities found in Policy 1.0.

A capital project is a significant investment project intended to acquire, develop, improve, or maintain a capital asset (such as property, buildings, infrastructure, etc.)

4.3 Capital Programs

Capital programs shall be established to ensure a flexible, prompt, coordinated, and efficient process for completing capital projects.

A capital program is a series of projects aimed to achieve common objectives. This strategy allows for greater flexibility in the delivery of capital investments.

4.4 Program Categories

Capital Improvement Program Categories are established to organize and communicate overall capital plans.

These program categories are as follows:

4. Vehicles
5. Facilities - Maintenance & Administration
6. Facilities - Passenger & Operational
7. Technology
8. High Performance Transit Implementation

SI 5.0 - Maintenance and Administration Facilities

5.1 Facility Master Plan

STA maintains a Facility Master Plan that is updated routinely every 4-6 years.

A facility master plan provides the direction for how STA will physically grow and add facilities to provide the necessary infrastructure to support the planned network system growth. The facility master plan will address current needs and future agency growth in several areas, including:

- Garages and maintenance facilities – identifying strategic locations throughout the region.
- Charging infrastructure –supporting additional battery electric bus purchases with appropriate charging infrastructure across the region.
- Facility infrastructure – a collaboration between Facilities and Capital Development, identifying where appropriate facility infrastructure (SI 2.0) should be located within the region, and what are other needs, such as operator comfort stations and maintenance sheds, that can co-located at different passenger facilities.
- Administrative facilities – Identifying strategic path forward for how STA grows and accommodates additional staff (administrative, maintenance, facilities, drivers, etc)

All other System Infrastructure Connect Strategies will be/are housed in the Capital Improvement Program.

Communications and Public Input

As a public agency, Spokane Transit Authority believes that proper communications and public input is of the highest importance. To ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness, STA must use a broad range of communication tools and tactics to reach as many people as possible. As technology improves, the amount of information available and the speed at which it can reach those interested increases daily, creating both opportunities and challenges.

Communications and Public Input Goal

STA will promote openness, honesty, and fairness through appropriate public engagement efforts.

In order to increase meaningful feedback, STA provides engagement opportunities that allow for ample participation. This will vary based on the target audience, but includes:

1. **Frequency:** One opportunity is rarely sufficient, whether due to conflicting obligations or barriers in the effectiveness of that opportunity (such as lack of trust). We will provide multiple opportunities and convey true interest in hearing input and enable more people to participate.
2. **Choice:** Offer multiple ways to engage, as different opportunities are more or less attractive to different people. By offering multiple ways to engage, such as online surveys and in-person open houses, it will encourage everyone to participate, and allow for participation that is convenient and effective for each individual. We will endeavor to offer a remote component to every engagement opportunity.
3. **Accessibility:** Address barriers to access including various disabilities, limited internet or technology capabilities, childcare needs, language differences, lack of availability at various times of the day, and others. The first step to breaking down barriers to access will be identifying them before the engagement. Co-create materials to be culturally relevant, culturally resonant and in-language.
4. **Location:** We will need to engage people in neutral and inclusive locations where they are comfortable. Unfamiliar or formal settings can invoke unease. Additionally, the further the location of engagement is from a community, the less likely it is for robust engagement to occur. Familiar settings will promote comfort, and settings within the community convey that the community is in control of their future. Furthermore, going to the community takes effort, which will convey to our audience a genuine interest in engagement.
5. **Brevity:** We need to seek formats that are approachable and take little time to complete.
6. **Moderation:** To moderate effectively, we will make sure those who are not the loudest voices can be more active in the conversation. Our formats will allow everyone to give equal input and we will use quantitative research to understand how the majority feels.
7. **Input:** We can use both qualitative input methods (for breadth and depth of input) and quantitative input methods (for numbers and representation).
8. **Information:** The information about progress will need to be easily accessible and educate participants on transit in the region. This way, people can jump into engagement at any point with an understanding of public transit and provide meaningful input.
9. **Transparency:** STA promises that it will keep the public informed. We will listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations that are shared with us, which will inform the decision-making. We will share how public input influenced our decision-making.

Communications and Public Input Principles

These principles describe the foundation for the policies found in this element:

1. Equitable Communication

Open, honest, early, and continuous equitable communication with all stakeholders increases public confidence in STA.

Changes in STA's operations can impact stakeholders, both inside and outside of the agency. As a result, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) and low-income populations can be disproportionately impacted by transportation decisions in their communities—increasing the risk of harmful outcomes for residents of these neighborhoods. For this reason, care should be taken to ensure all stakeholders are identified and remain well-informed.

2. Two-way Communications

Consideration of the views of regulators, stakeholders, and the public in making decisions demonstrates STA's commitment to fairness and equity.

Transit agencies exist to serve the community. To that end, community members have the right to share their views regarding transit service.

3. Timely

The provision of sufficient time for full public participation, including advance notice of activities and steps in the public process, demonstrates fairness and respect.

Scheduling events and the overall public process with an appreciation of today's busy lifestyles allows for the broadest public participation process possible.

4. Purposeful

Questions pertinent to issues under consideration should be answered by knowledgeable staff.

One can appreciate the frustration stemming from poorly answered questions. Providing complete, accurate information increases the public's confidence in STA.

Communications and Public Input Policies

CI 1.0 – Designing Public Engagement and Outreach

Where appropriate, STA staff or consultants will design comprehensive engagement and outreach strategies that follow the principles of this element while utilizing the appropriate tactics. The engagement strategies will be designed to communicate clear expectations regarding the intent of the public participation projects. The Public Participation Spectrum designed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) is a framework designed to understand the key levels that lie along the spectrum, and that must be considered when designing an effective public engagement and outreach strategy.

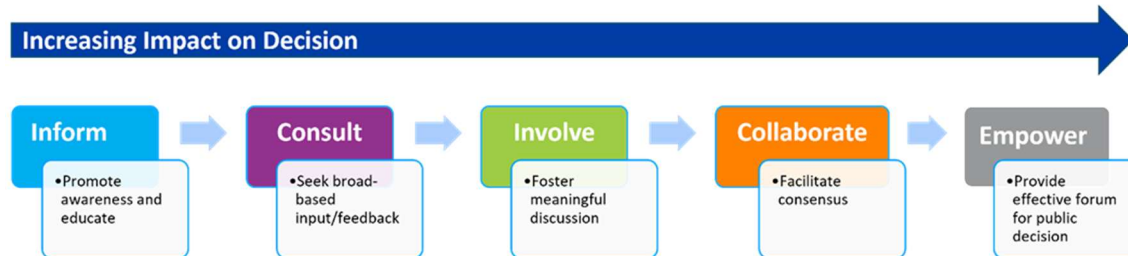


Figure 8 – The Public Participation Spectrum

CI 1.1 – Public Engagement: Service Activities

1.1.1 Service Changes

In addition to following Federal Transit Administration guidelines for public outreach for service reductions, STA will also comply with the policy found in the following table.

How to read the following table:

1. Determine cost and ridership impacts.
2. Consider exceptions.
3. The more severe cost or ridership impact determines the category (ex. Cost impacts fall into Category II but ridership impacts fall into Category I, follow the decision making and input/outreach process of Category II)

Any fixed-route adjustment or elimination which would change the paratransit boundary enough to eliminate service from at least one active customer* will trigger a Category II process.

**Active customer is someone who has used paratransit services within a year of the public hearing date.*

Public Input Categories				
		I – Minor	II – Moderate	III - Major
Determining Threshold	Cost Impacts	Less than 2.0% growth or less than a 1.0% reduction in revenue hours of service at any given service change.	1.0% up to 5.0% reduction or 2.0% - 10.0% growth in revenue hours of service at any given service change.	More than 5.0% reduction or more than 10% growth in revenue hours of service at any given service change.
	OR	OR	OR	OR
	Ridership Impacts*	Less than .5% of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of route, trips, or bus stop [^] , at any given service change	.5% up to 5.0% of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of route, trips, or bus stop [^] , at any given service change	5% or more of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of bus stop(s), trip(s) or route(s) at any given service change
	Exceptions	Construction-related or emergency changes necessary for a period not exceeding 180 days for changes that would otherwise be moderate or major	Changes that would normally be classified as minor changes, but require a higher classification because of significant public interest (as directed by CEO) or board involvement	None
Resulting Actions	Input and Outreach	Employee and customer input, etc. Documented informal outreach for feedback on changes; may include survey or other tools and tactics.	Outreach activities include driver and rider input, surveys, meetings with community groups, or other tools and tactics. Report to Board on activities.	Public Outreach Plan approved by Board in advance of outreach, which may include outreach to affected community groups, employers, etc.
	Decision-Making Process	CEO or designee; staff report summarizing changes submitted to the Board no later than 30 days of changes going into effect.	Public hearing prior to Board action.	At least one public hearing. Board action following with Title VI report.
Examples		Running time adjustments Departure time adjustments Minor bus reroutes Changes to bus stop locations (Per CI 1.4)	Significant route changes Addition or deletion of service to a large area	A large service reduction A restructure of the network

*Ridership impacts are calculated using best available data and is an approximate tool as it is a dynamic number

[^] Route is proposed to be discontinued and there is no equivalent replacement within ¼-mile. Trip impact is the loss of a trip within a 15-minute window either side there is an actual impact. Bus stop refers to ridership impacts within 600 feet of a stop pair.

1.1.2 Fare Increases

Fare increases of more than 10% in any three-year period shall be considered through the public outreach process as a Category III-Major Change as defined in Policy 1.1.1. For cumulative changes, the Category III-Major Change public process will only be applied to the increase which breaks the 10% threshold, not the previous increases.

1.1.3 Title VI Reporting

During major service reductions and fare increases, STA will conduct an analysis to verify that no discrimination of protected classes takes place.

Title VI provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

1.1.4 Stop Changes

If the cumulative stop changes that take place within a calendar year affect the boardings of 10% of a route’s annual ridership, STA will use the tactics described in the beginning of this element to gather public input before a final decision is made.

A stop serves as the point at which a rider can access the transit service. The placement of this access is important for the rider, driver, and riders already on board. STA is continually evaluating stop locations along all transit routes by considering safety, stop spacing, and proximity to destinations.

CI 1.2 – Public Engagement: Planning Activities

1.2.1 Comprehensive Plan

STA will undertake public outreach efforts for subsequent updates to the Comprehensive Plan and allow an opportunity for public testimony prior to any substantive amendments.

Any change which affects the substance of the Comprehensive Plan will require a public hearing and supporting public outreach.

1.2.2 Strategic Plan

STA will undertake public outreach efforts for subsequent updates to the Comprehensive Plan and allow an opportunity for public testimony prior to any substantive amendments.

Any change which affects the substance of the Strategic Plan will require a public hearing and supporting public outreach.

1.2.3 Transit Development Plan

STA will hold at least one public hearing while developing its program for each annual update.

As a public transportation benefit area authority in Washington State, STA is required to prepare a six-year transit development plan (TDP) and annual report. This document provides updated information to the Washington State Department of Transportation on the various activities of STA. The TDP can be found here: <https://www.spokanetransit.com/projects-plans/transit-development-plan>.

1.2.4 HPT Corridor Planning

During any Alternatives Analysis for a High Performance Transit corridor, STA or its consultant will develop a public outreach plan to both gather input and provide information about the project being evaluated.

1.2.5 Grants

Public engagement in the grant application process provides the public with additional information on why the agency is seeking state or federal dollars for the project. Public engagement also provides the granting agency with additional information, including overall support of the proposed project. Public engagement for grants may occur at many different stages of the project. Also, many grant programs require the applicant to demonstrate public input into a project's development. Additional public input will be sought in connection with such applications.

Grant Condition	Public Process
Grants in Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	Adoption of CIP is considered component of public input
Grants applications less than \$1 million	Notice on STA's website
Grants applications at least \$1 million* (and not in CIP)	Adoption by Board of Directors
Grant is for project that originates in Corridor Development Plan (CDP)	CDP's have an associated public engagement framework. The grant opportunity might trigger additional public engagement

CI 1.3 – Public Engagement: Capital Development Activities

1.3.1 Major Capital Projects

During the annual Capital Improvement Program (See System Infrastructure Policy 4.0) update process, which identifies all major capital projects, appropriate public outreach and a public hearing shall take place prior to adoption. Amendments to the Capital Improvement Program will follow a similar process.

Any capital project requiring board approval and outside of the normal budgeting process shall be subject to a public hearing to receive public input and testimony.

1.3.2 NEPA/SEPA/Environmental outreach

Where appropriate or required, STA shall incorporate public outreach and SEPA and NEPA evaluations, with the intent to exceed minimum requirements.

1.3.3 Major Construction Projects

During any Major Construction Project over \$5 million, STA or its consultant will develop a public outreach plan to provide information about the project.

1.3.4 Budget

STA shall hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of the annual budget.

Each year the Board of Directors adopts an annual budget that outlines how the agency intends to spend tax, fare, grant and ~~advertising~~ other monies.

CI 2.0 – Service Communication

2.1 Branding

All branding shall be part of a coordinated system-wide branding plan developed to better the customer experience.

Effective branding can help the customer by conveying simple messages about frequency, span, destinations, and connectivity. By creating a larger branding plan, STA will be consistent with branding styles and purposes.

2.2 Technology

Use improving technology to increase the amount of ridership information available to customers.

By using new and existing technologies, STA can increase ridership by creating a more pleasant experience for transit riders. Technology can decrease wait time, improve decisions about mode choice, increase safety, etc.

2.3 Public Education

Invest resources in educating existing and potential customers about travel options.

STA offers a variety of transportation services (i.e. fixed-route, paratransit, rideshare) that assist in providing solutions to many different customer needs. By investing in education, STA can help customers ensure that they are best utilizing the transportation services which STA provides.

Revenues and Fares

STA maintains a convenient, reasonably priced fare structure aimed at increasing access to public transit within its service area. This fare structure is governed by a Board approved fare policy which is reviewed periodically

A variety of methods exist for fare payment, designed to create the best value for STA's customers by ensuring they pay the right fare for the way they ride transit. These changes help address fare inequities and reduce financial barriers.

Passenger fares are an important revenue source for Spokane Transit. STA has sought to cover about 20% of the cost to provide transit service in the Spokane region with customer fares. Without them, simply put, the region would have less transit to serve those who need and want it. Other revenue sources exist for funding STA's operating costs. Tax revenues, both from Federal and State allocations and from taxes assessed within the Public Transportation Benefit Area, provide a significant proportion of STA's financial resources.

Government grants and revenues from [advertising and](#) other sources further mitigate operating costs. These revenues should be used in a manner which upholds STA's role as a responsible steward of community funds.

Revenues and Fares Goal

STA's revenue structure should appropriately balance farebox, tax, grant, and other revenue to provide high-quality service.

Revenues and Fares Principles

The principles listed below define STA's fare structure. They provide guidelines to ensure that the fundamental ideas behind the fare structure are understood by all. These principles are unchanging and will continue to serve as guidance for new and existing fare policies.

1. Fares Matter

Ridership increases are achieved by making public transportation cost effective and simple to use.

Depending on the operating environment, type of transit service, and current market demand, fare changes can play a role in the increase or decrease of ridership. The imposition of fares for most transit agencies means there is opportunity to provide more service to more people with the additional revenues.

2. Perceived Value

Fares and "local match" help avoid the pitfalls known to free commodities.

Thomas Paine said, "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly." Fares provide the opportunity for riders to better appreciate the cost of service. This can facilitate better travel choices.

3. Revenues and Services

The amount of revenue collected correlates with the potential amount of services able to be provided.

The amount of service that STA is able to provide is tied to the amount of revenue from fares, taxes, grants, etc. that is available. When these revenue sources rise or drop, STA must make decisions about the services to provide to maintain a sustainable budget.

4. Diverse Ridership

A range of fare options recognizes the diversity of trips measured in customer attributes, distance, travel times, and purpose.

Many youth, college students, riders with disabilities, and low-income riders rely upon STA to serve their transportation needs. A fare structure which recognizes the diversity of customers' needs increases the use of STA services.

5. Other Revenues – Supplement Fares

The collection of tax, funding from grants, and other non-fare-based revenues supplement revenue generated by customer-paid fares.

Although transit agencies often desire to be more dependent upon fares, non-fare-based revenue sources help to keep service levels higher than would be supported by fares alone.

6. Fiscal Responsibility

The fiscally responsible use of revenues increases the public's confidence in transit agencies.

A large proportion of STA's revenues come from tax-based funding sources. To earn taxpayers' confidence, STA should be viewed as operating in a fiscally responsible way. STA should always strive to achieve its objectives with the greatest efficiency and minimal waste.

7. Alignment with Agency Priorities

Revenue sources should support the priorities of an agency. A funding source (i.e. grant requirements) should not define the priorities of an agency.

Some revenue sources, such as grants, often have specific stipulations which may not align with STA's stated priorities and goals. Ensuring that revenue sources support the agency's priorities reduces wasteful spending and improves STA's overall public image.

Revenues and Fares Policies

RF 1.0 – Revenues

1.1 State and Federal Funding

STA will work to maximize funding from state and federal sources as well as support efforts to increase such financial resources.

State and federal funds are important for STA to be able to maintain a desirable level of service. By supporting efforts to increase the available financial resources, STA may find itself in a position to be better able to provide improved services to the customers throughout the region.

1.2 Pursuit of Grants

STA shall pursue grants which align with the agency's priorities and the public good.

Occasionally, grants are pursued simply for the attached dollars. Such grants have the potential to direct the agency's attention away from its stated goals and priorities. By pursuing grants which directly support STA's priorities, the agency helps to ensure the responsible use of revenues.

1.3 Debt

STA will not incur debt.

STA operates on a pay-as-you-go basis. STA shall not incur debt or agree to other financial commitments beyond the balance of current or projected revenue.

1.4 Non-Traditional Revenue Sources

STA shall review the appropriateness and purpose of potential non-traditional revenue sources.

Numerous non-traditional funding sources, ranging from corporate sponsorship to donations-in-kind to partnerships, could potentially support the achievement of STA's goals and policies. Prior to acceptance of such revenues, STA should ensure the legality and implications surrounding such revenue sources.

RF 2.0 – Fares

The following fare policies articulate the guidelines for determining STA's fare structure and collection. Each policy contributes to specificity and provides guidance towards reaching the overall goal of fare collection. These policies together establish a framework for the determination and collection of fares.

2.1 Philosophy

STA's philosophy is to encourage increased ridership by providing a convenient and reasonably priced method for citizens to enjoy the advantages of public transportation.

Fares are only one of many factors which influence ridership numbers. However, STA will encourage increased ridership by following the principles described earlier in this element and providing a sensible fare structure and payment method.

2.2 Rider Contribution to Cost of Service

In establishing fare rates, Spokane Transit pursues a pro-ridership philosophy rooted in the recognition that more revenue allows for more and better transit service, which, when available for a reasonable rate to the passenger, attracts more ridership and therefore more revenue.

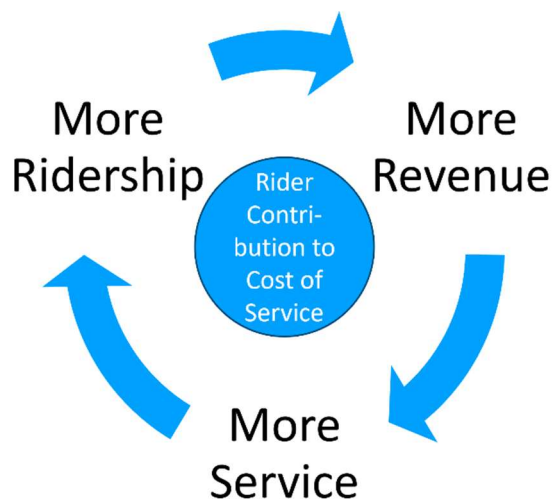


Figure 9 – The Virtuous Cycle of a Pro-Ridership Philosophy

A farebox recovery of at least 20% for the standard fare at the average Fixed Route cost per passenger is the benchmark objective when setting the standard fare rate, providing for meaningful rider contribution and more service than otherwise possible.

$\frac{\text{Total Cost Fixed Route Operations}}{\text{Total Number of Passengers}} = \text{Operating Cost per Passenger}$
$\frac{\text{Current Standard Fare Rate}}{\text{Operating Cost per Passenger}} = \text{Standard Farebox Recovery} \quad (\geq 20\% \text{ Benchmark Objective})$

Figure 10. Calculating Farebox Recovery Rate

2.3 Complexity of Fare Structure

Minimize complexity—emphasize a simple and easily understood system.

1. Sustain a flat rate fare structure throughout the Public Transportation Benefit Area.
2. Customers use time-limited passes (two-hour, day, monthly, etc.) to accomplish multi-route/directional trips.
3. Utilize fare capping, providing customers with the best options for daily and weekly travel

2.4 Pre-Payment of Fares

2.4.1 Increase Pre-Payment of Fares

Pre-payment of fares eliminates delays caused by on-board fare payment, increases the reliability of revenues, and encourages the use of transit for spontaneous trips.

Increasing access to methods of pre-payment supports this policy. Examples of pre-payment media include mobile ticketing, smart cards, institutional bus pass programs, and day passes.

2.4.2 All Door Boarding

All door boarding will be introduced on select lines to support the use of smart cards and the pre-payment of fares.

All door boarding, in conjunction with the use of smart cards and the pre-payment of fares, helps reduce delay at stops and stations, increasing speed and reliability of the service. All door boarding may require fare enforcement to be successful for the agency.

2.5 Business and Institutional Fare Programs

STA supports and pursues opportunities to partner with employers, universities, developers, and other interested parties to provide access to public transportation.

Opportunities for individuals to take advantage of simplified fare programs provided through a partnership with their employer, university, or landlord/developer increase access and mobility for regular and part-time transit users.

2.6 Eligibility-based Fare Programs

STA supports opportunities for individuals to use public transportation at a discounted cost based on targeted eligibility criteria and rigorous due diligence.

Opportunities for individuals to use public transportation should be made available through eligibility-based fare programs that offer customer-facing discounts. Eligibility determination and classifications will be made by the STA Board of Directors and identified in STA's existing fare structure. Prior to the creation and implementation of any eligibility-based fare program, the Board shall conduct an evaluation to determine if the proposed program can meet the following criteria:

- The program and the basis for eligibility is relatively simple to describe and understand, particularly for those who are prospective participants.
- The discount offered by the program considers proportionate costs and benefits relative to other eligibility-based fare programs, as well as other fare partnerships and rates
- Insofar as possible, the program adheres to eligibility requirements that can be determined with verifiable public information without the creation of storage by STA of sensitive health or income information.
- The program can be deployed without undue burden on STA operations or community partners.
- The program provides safeguards against abuse.
- The program has a method for reporting performance.
- The estimated ridership and financial impacts of the proposed program have been estimated and reasonably understood as far as STA's commitment to community benefit and fiscal accountability.

2.7 Community Access Programs

STA supports opportunities to partner with community-based organizations to provide access to public transportation at a discounted cost.

Opportunities for vulnerable individuals to use public transportation may be made available through community access programs that subsidize the purchase of standard fare instruments. This partnership strategy helps manage eligibility challenges, especially in addressing acute or transitory needs, and maximizes the benefit of community partners in delivering transportation access.

Monitoring and Improvement

Customers expect Spokane Transit Authority (STA) to provide reliable and convenient service in a courteous, cost-effective manner. For STA to ensure the reliability, consistency, and proper development of its transit services, it must continually evaluate and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the products offered. Performance measures exist throughout the agency to ensure a high level of customer service and system performance is maintained.

Many behind-the-scenes activities result in improved customer service and performance. The principles and policies applying to agency-wide operations and decisions are, therefore, published separately.

Monitoring and Improvement Goal

STA will frequently monitor its performance to ensure the reliability, effectiveness, and efficiency of its services and to promote overall system improvement.

Monitoring and Improvement Principles

The principles listed below identify the basic concepts of service monitoring and improvement. These unchanging principles serve as a guide to STA as it continuously monitors and improves its service.

1. Change and Uncertainty

Change is inevitable and uncertainty a reality in any endeavor.

While there are many prevailing patterns, change is always in the works. The constancy of change ensures there will always be uncertainty that will foil plans or goals that are too prescriptive over too long of a period.

2. Aim High

A goal or aim that is lofty yet achievable is necessary to direct improvement.

Despite uncertainty and the constancy of change, the act of establishing goals is fundamental to positive growth and development.

3. Continuous Feedback

Measures to collect and analyze continuous feedback encourage adaptation to circumstances while maintaining the pursuit of goals.

Goal setting does little to bring improvement to an agency unless its actual performance is evaluated against those goals through continuous feedback measures. Whether done bi-weekly, quarterly, or annually, consistent evaluation provides an opportunity to compare actual and desired performance levels within a standard time period, allowing for comparative improvement analysis.

4. Course Corrections

Course corrections and goal modifications do occur and, if done deliberately, can support dynamic adaptation and improvement.

No long-range planning should assume a step-by-step, year-by-year approach. Rather, regular periods of course correcting and setting should be assumed and unexpected course corrections should be expected.

5. Ownership

Regardless of title or function, each department and employee plays a role in improving an organization and, therefore, should take ownership.

Improvement of agency services is not the sole responsibility of one individual or department. Agencies must understand that problems or deficiencies of service are often solved by many people from different departments. Understanding the interconnectedness of the agencies' functions is essential.

6. Respect Diversity

The overall function of a product or process is important to keep in mind when developing appropriate monitoring tools.

When monitoring an agency's products or processes, it is important to keep in mind that sub-groups of the same product may require different resources, serve different purposes and/or function differently. For diverse products and processes, it may be fundamentally necessary to develop the appropriate standards that fit their function.

7. Checks and Balances

Evaluating more than one measure of performance helps to limit extremism during the implementation of remedial actions.

By developing a number of complementary performance measures, the results of an evaluation process are more balanced and comprehensive. Measuring just one aspect of a product or process can misguide the suggestions for improvement.

Monitoring and Improvement Policies

MI 1.0 – Fixed-Route Performance Standards

Standards imply accountability, comparison, and remediation in the event of non-compliance. Standards should be straight-forward and derived from a rational, transparent basis. The performance standards set forth herein are directly related to the effectiveness and sustainability of STA's fixed-route system. These performance standards reflect a triple bottom line (TBL) approach that seeks to improve the system's performance as it relates to its riders, the environment, and taxpayers. Literature on the subject of triple bottom line refers to People (social), Planet (environmental), and Profit (economic) as the primary metrics for evaluating agency performance.

Fixed-route performance standards are found in Annex 1.

MI 2.0 - Agency Performance Measures

STA shall use performance measures to evaluate the success of the agency.

To evaluate the success of the broad services provided, STA shall develop performance measures and update the Board of Directors on a regular basis to help inform agency success, direction, and progress.

MI 3.0 – Resiliency Planning

STA shall develop resiliency planning efforts for when circumstances dictate a change in operations outside of normal periods.

To plan for unforeseen circumstances to the best of the agency’s ability, STA shall develop resiliency planning efforts and update the Board of Directors on a regular basis.

MI 4.0 – Revisions and Adaptation

4.1 Comprehensive Plan Update

STA shall update *Connect Spokane* routinely.

Spokane Transit will review and update as appropriate the Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation beginning no later than three years following the last major adoption and/or revision. Significant public outreach shall be required as part of the update process, consistent with the policies of the Communications and Public Input Element.

4.2 Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Minor amendments to the Comprehensive Plan may take place at any time so long as the change does not significantly change the scope or direction of the plan.

4.3 STA Planning Documents

STA prepares for both the near-term and long-term needs by updating and maintaining a series of planning documents. Working in concert, these plans are built upon the goals, principles and policies contained within this document, *Connect Spokane*.

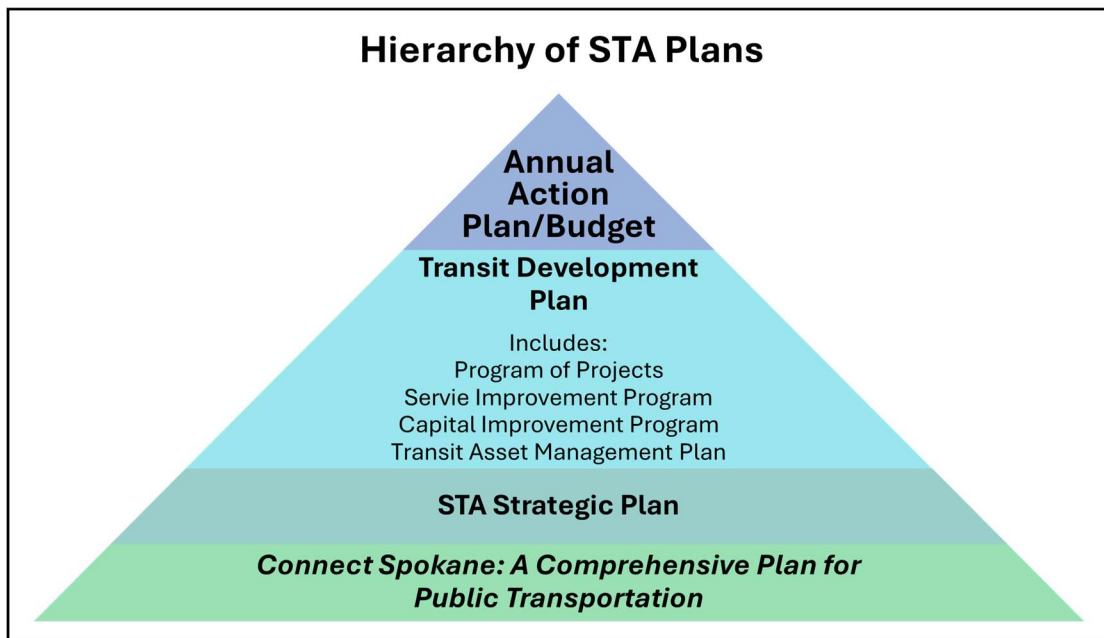


Figure 10 - Hierarchy of STA Plans

4.3.1 STA Strategic Plan

The STA Strategic Plan is a 10–15-year plan with short- to mid-term strategies and objectives for a fixed target year. This document acts on the policies and visions within *Connect Spokane*, and the projects are identified in the Transit Development Plan for implementation.

4.3.2 Transit Development Plan

The Transit Development Plan provides background information on STA, accomplishments during the previous year, and planned projects and programs for the following six years. As a public transportation benefit area authority, STA is required to prepare this plan. The document provides updated information to the Washington State Department of Transportation on the development of the various transit activities undertaken by STA.

4.3.2.1 *Program of Projects*

Details of the proposed Program of Projects for Sections 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula Funding program), 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities), and 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary program) are included in the TDP annually and are included in the TDP public hearing.

4.3.2.2 *Capital Improvement Program*

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) enables STA to make educated, coordinated, and financially sound capital investments. The 6-year CIP includes capital projects, programs, and program categories. The CIP is updated annually.

4.3.2.3 *Service Improvement Program*

Developed with and included in the Transit Development Plan, this document guides the delivery of Fixed-Route service. The SIP describes service revisions proposed for the three calendar years following adoption, plus additional concepts to consider for years 4-6 of the program.

4.3.2.4 *Transit Asset Management Plan (TAM)*

The Transit Asset Management Plan is included as an Appendix to the Transit Development Plan. The TAM is updated in its entirety no less than once every 4 years, and covers a horizon period of at least 4 years, and includes:

- Projected targets for the next fiscal year
- Condition assessments and performance results; and
- A narrative report on changes in transit system conditions and the progress toward achieving previous performance targets

In addition, the TAM is submitted to the state and MPO on a regular schedule, generally within 30 days of Board approval.

4.3.3 Annual Action Plan

As part of the annual budget adoption process, STA will prepare a concise annual action plan identifying agency priorities for the coming year, including major implementation actions, whether they impact service, infrastructure, or processes. The plan will be a companion to the budget and will be generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

3.4 Update Schedule

Document	Horizon	Revision Schedule
Connect Spokane	20-30 Years	Begin update no later than three years from last major update
Strategic Plan	10-15 years	Development of next plan starts no later than three years prior to sunset of current plan
Transit Development Plan	Current calendar year plus six years	Adopt before September 1 of each year
Program of Projects	Current calendar year plus six years	Included in annual update of Transit Development Plan
Capital Improvement Program	Six Years	Included in annual update of Transit Development Plan
Service Improvement Program	Three Years	Included in annual update of Transit Development Plan
Transit Asset Management Plan	Current calendar year plus six years	No less than once every four years
Annual Action Plan	One year	Publish draft by October of each year and adopt before January 1

This page is intentionally left blank.

Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development

This Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation outlines long-term ~~transit-related~~ **transit-related** goals and policies for the region. However, long-range transit planning requires the consideration of other jurisdictional plans that overlap the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA). Despite autonomy, coordination between agencies must occur to ensure seamless planning for local and regional improvements.

This section is devoted to the recognition that transit planning cannot be done independent of land use or general transportation planning; and land use or general transportation planning cannot be done independent of transit planning. The following text describes the relationship of the Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation with other regionally influential planning and policy documents.

Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development Goal

STA will be an active partner in the development and coordination of regional transportation, land use, and economic development strategies while leading the implementation of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the region.

Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development Principles

The principles listed below identify the basic concepts of regional transportation and land use coordination. These unchanging principles serve as a guide to STA as it attempts to serve as a leader in shaping regional transportation and land use goals and policies.

1. Transit Disoriented Development

There is no effective transit panacea for poor land planning and development.

Too often transit is imagined as a singular solution to make up for poorly- positioned development decisions made over time. While transit helps connect people and places, a myriad host of location-based and design-based variables directly affect the ability of transit to be a meaningful transportation service, irrespective of transit mode or service design. As a result, there are locations that should never expect to be provided a basic level of transit service.

2. Paradox of New and Used

Despite our inclinations for casting off the old for the latest and greatest, transit has the greatest opportunity for improvement and initial success in existing places rather than upstart developments.

For over a century, transit has often been developed concurrently with new development as a marketing tool. Success of the transit investment is not always guaranteed, especially given the heavy ongoing operational costs transit demands. Transit will generally have greater success in and around existing strengths before it can be a powerful influence in travel patterns for new developments. Street grids and land uses established before

the automobile heavily influenced land use decisions hold the greatest opportunity for near term transit success.

3. Be on the Way

Development should be focused along or near existing public transportation corridors or in ways that transit can support due to providing for or achieving adherence within the Fixed-Route Design Principles.

Transit service is most successful when it directly serves many places conveniently throughout the day. Land use and road patterns that require out-of-direction travel increase operating costs and inconvenience riders. Prospective property owners or developers who wish to have good transit service will most likely succeed if they locate along an existing transit route.

4. Density

Land use density and the intensity allows for a mix of land uses. Coordination among stakeholders promotes a mix of uses that can support a greater share of trips made by the pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit customer.

Transit is effective at serving trips with common origins and destinations or, at minimum, shared travel paths. This is only made possible if there is a level of density at which there is the possibility for a regular and sustained commonality in travel pattern. Density also means there are more destinations that will be within walking distance and facilitates more pedestrian activity. Pedestrian activity both supports and is supported by transit. Some studies have found four dwelling units per acre to be the minimum density to support local bus service. However, in most cases densities need to be two to three times that amount to support viable transit.

5. Design

Infrastructure constructed by developers and municipalities should support the needs of pedestrians and transit facilities.

Development patterns should support pedestrians and other non-motorized modes to gain easy access to transit. “Complete Streets” principles and design standards that promote a network of local streets and sidewalks, ADA-accessible improvements, and the placement of useful and inviting public spaces near transit support transit use and can reduce dependency on private auto ownership.

6. Partnerships

Fostering partnerships with both public and private entities should be encouraged to cultivate coordinated land use and transportation throughout the region.

No agency or person alone can ensure that land uses and transportation investments are made in such a way to be supportive of transit investments. Partnerships are critical to success of any endeavor, particularly those involving private property, public rights of way, and public transportation.

Regional Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development Policies

TL 1.0 – Leadership

1.1 Proactively Educate and Communicate

STA will educate decision-makers and other members of the community regarding the importance and value of transit to successful development in the region.

1.2 Adherence to Service Design Guidelines

STA shall promote the best practices of land use development, including supporting increased densities and reduced parking requirements on key transportation corridors, by strictly adhering to its adopted Service Design Guidelines.

TL 2.0 – Collaboration & Partnership

2.1 Agency Collaboration

STA shall collaborate with jurisdictions and other agencies to move forward with planning and development that strengthens the transit network and regional mobility.

Numerous regional jurisdictions and agencies are stakeholders in the broader development and planning of the region. To encourage a positive partnership with these other groups, STA shall collaborate with these stakeholders, providing early and frequent information and opportunities to provide input. In return, STA should expect a similar courtesy to be extended.

2.2 Transit Oriented Development Support

STA may make resources available to jurisdictions to do planning and development work in advancing Transit Oriented Development in the region.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is the creation of compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities centered around and supported by high quality transit. This makes it possible to increase the use of transit for mobility for a variety of trip purposes. This is possible not only because of quality transit access, but by the collocation of other community and commercial services in walking distance to housing and jobs. ~~STA shall find appropriate local and regional partners to actively develop TOD in appropriate locations within the region.~~

2.3 Joint Development Program and Policies ~~Form Development Partnerships~~

STA shall develop a Joint Development Program with policies and guidelines to encourage Transit-Oriented development around its facilities where possible. ~~partner with private firms on transit-oriented development.~~

Joint development can further STA’s mission while growing ridership, increasing revenues, and facilitating economic development. STA shall develop a site planning and solicitation process that reduces risk and increases marketability of joint development opportunities at STA-owned properties. ~~STA shall find appropriate local and regional partners to actively develop TOD in appropriate locations within the region.~~

2.4 Collaboration with Other Planning Documents and Regulations

STA shall collaborate with partner jurisdictions in developing planning documents and guidance that ensures STA’s service goals, principles, and policies are considered and enabled by adopted plans and policies.

Numerous documents created by municipalities and agencies, including this Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation, guide land use and transportation decisions throughout the region. To reduce the likelihood of competing plans or policies, interagency communication should be encouraged. Examples of documents impacting STA's operations are included below.

Comprehensive Plans of Municipalities

Cities within the PTBA who follow adopted comprehensive plans include Airway Heights, Cheney, Spokane, Millwood, Spokane Valley, and Liberty Lake. As a regional service provider, Spokane County also has an adopted comprehensive plan that works to coordinate land uses with cities and unincorporated areas among other purposes. STA holds some interest in most elements of every comprehensive plan adopted by jurisdictions within the PTBA. From housing and utilities to transportation and land use, the policies of each city have an impact on the level of service STA is able to provide now and in the future. Specific policies that are favorable to transit are always encouraged; however, just as each jurisdiction's plan was considered during the creation of this plan, STA expects that Connect Spokane be consulted during subsequent updates of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) is the federally- designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Spokane County. This local intergovernmental agency encourages coordination and collaboration between planning and transportation departments across the region. SRTC updates the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) (also known as Horizon 2045) every four years, documenting the blueprint for an inter-modal solution to transportation needs brought about by continued growth and development. The 2013 MTP update calls for system enhancements aimed at increasing transit ridership. Future plan updates or visioning sessions should refer to this plan for guidance.

Spokane County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Prepared jointly by SRTC and STA, the Spokane County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan attempts to create a "unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited income, laying out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizing services" per the requirements of Federal Transit Administration. STA will continue to work with SRTC on future updates of this document.

WSDOT Washington Transportation Plan

At the state level, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) adopted the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) in 2007. The plan is designed to offer policy guidance for all jurisdictions statewide on matters related to the state's transportation system over the next 20 years. STA operates transit services on state highways and referenced the WTP during the creation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was adopted because uncoordinated and unplanned growth posed a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the quality of life in Washington State.

All of the preceding plans fall under laws found in the Revised Code of Washington. The GMA requires state and local governments to identify and protect critical and natural areas by guiding urban growth through comprehensive plans, capital investments, and development regulations. STA's Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation supports this notion and works to enact the vision of the state while continually working with local jurisdictions. To jointly oversee this planning effort within the urban growth areas, Spokane County established a Steering Committee of Elected Officials charged with defining standards for urban growth area delineation, minimum levels of service, distribution of future growth, and negotiating designations for urban growth areas in the form of a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Sustainability

Spokane Transit’s definition of Sustainability is:

Sustainability at Spokane Transit is about providing services in ways that optimize our ability to meet the needs of present and future generations through actions that balance the region’s economic, environmental, and social well-being.

STA does its part to safeguard the community’s current and future quality of life by being socially responsible, preserving the natural environment, and contributing to a thriving economy. On a day-to-day basis, these guiding principles are a way for STA to become more resource efficient, engage more with employees and customers while improving access, market share and funding support.

More than any other element of this comprehensive plan, Sustainability is not a program or activity that can stand alone. It involves everything the organization does, and principles and policies that relate to sustainability are contained throughout Connect Spokane and not isolated to this chapter alone. Sustainability is included in STA’s programs, policies, and business practices; it is also a foundation for STA’s role in our region.

Sustainability Principles

Framework

Research reveals several different frameworks that can be applied to the concept of sustainability. Some frameworks encompass broad concepts such as global warming or enabling national energy independence. Others are more narrowly focused on environmental management systems that address specific issues such as reducing an agency’s carbon footprint or energy consumption.

Through the work of its Citizen Advisory Committee, STA chose a conceptual framework for sustainability that could relate general concepts to specific applications within an organization or community. STA adopted the “Triple Bottom Line” framework.

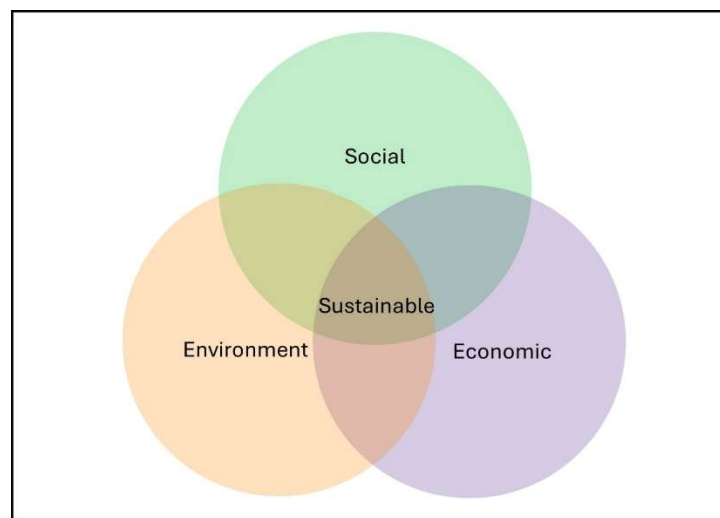


Figure 11 - “Triple Bottom Line” framework

The phrase was coined by John Elkington in 1994. It was later expanded and articulated in his 1998 book *Cannibals with Forks: the Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business*. Sustainability, itself, was first defined by the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations in 1987. The Triple Bottom Line is often abbreviated as “TBL” and referred to as the “3 E’s” (economic, environmental, and social equity) or the “3 P’s” (people, planet, and profit). More than some other sustainability frameworks, it captures the full spectrum of values and criteria for measuring organizational (and societal) success: economic, ecological and social.

This framework identifies sustainability as being about practices that make good environmental sense as well as good business sense. Sustainability is essentially responsible resource management: it draws on natural, human and financial resources to find strong, enduring solutions. It recognizes that environmental considerations are not an end in themselves. True sustainability is the intersection of not only what is good for the environment, but also what is economically feasible and results in benefits to our citizens/taxpayers.

Sustainability Policies

Based on the principle of a Triple Bottom Line Framework, this section articulates policy that guides decision-making.

SU 1.0 – Connecting People and Communities

1.1 Sustainability in STA Services

Manage STA services (Fixed Route, Paratransit, Flexible Services) to promote sustainability.

Public transportation can play a significant role in achieving sustainability objectives for the region and each of the jurisdictions within the Public Transportation Benefit Area. However, the financial, natural and human resources dedicated to public transportation must be effectively employed and well used in order to achieve this objective.

- Maintain a high quality of service in order to attract maximum use by the public.
- Ensure basic bus service availability is balanced with emerging Paratransit eligibility requirements. The agency should not spread resources so thin so as to be overextended and unable to maintain quality service to neighborhoods and activity centers that have the highest potential for public transit use.
- Evaluate effectiveness of bus routes based on the social, environmental and financial impacts of STA’s services. Existing standards are: Total ridership; energy use compared to passenger miles; and farebox return (see Annex 1: Fixed Route Performance Standards to this Comprehensive Plan)
- Encourage growth of the Flexible Services program. This adds flexibility and complements the fixed route system.
- Utilize long-range financial forecasts to continuously measure the level of service that can be maintained given anticipated revenue. The agency’s goal is to provide stability and reliability of service.

1.2 Transportation Alternatives

Provide services that are an attractive transportation alternative compared to single occupant vehicles (SOVs).

Reliable and predictable service is perhaps the most important characteristic that defines a viable transportation alternative.

- Conduct route planning and scheduling to get people to destinations in a timely manner.
- Maximize convenience by enhancing route frequency as articulated in the Service Design Principles in this Comprehensive Plan (Part II: Services; Fixed -Route Service, Fixed-Route Service Design Principles).
- Pursue system enhancement technology that makes STA services easier for the public to understand and use.
- Provide transit services to community events to maximize access and use of its services (e.g., additional hours, special fee structure, special routing). This special event service effectively moves large numbers of participants with minimum use of energy resources.
- Take advantage of Washington State and Spokane County Commute Trip Reduction programs that incentivize use of STA services.

1.3 Connectivity

Serve as regional connection to neighborhoods/jurisdictions, places of employment, community events, and public services in a way that meets the needs of the service area.

STA is a major regional asset. Staff should be actively engaged in supporting and informing the land use planning and growth-management activities of the jurisdictions it supports. Educate the region’s planners, developers, and decision makers on the characteristics of urban design that can best be supported by public transportation. STA should work with jurisdictions to help identify and integrate TOD Emphasis Areas that will be locations to concentrate the growth of employment and housing over the jurisdictions’ planning horizon.

Examples include:

- Use the HPT concept to communicate a vision of corridors where public transportation services will be consistent and prioritized for further investments (e.g. East Sprague Avenue and Division Street).
- The role of the “built environment” such as streetcars, electrified trolleys, or high-quality passenger shelters in helping shape development.
- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and the impact of residential and employment density on transit effectiveness.

STA should maintain a close relationship with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (SRTC) to ensure transit plans are integrated into overall long-range transportation plans and coordinate with Washington State Department of Transportation to facilitate the integration of public transportation into project planning and design.

1.4 Multi-modal Connectivity

Increase ~~interest in~~ the quantity and quality of multi-modal connections.

The ability to seamlessly transition between various modes of transportation helps expand the public’s use of alternative transportation.

- Maintain strong connections to the airport and the intermodal center.
- Create accommodation for bicycle and pedestrian interfaces to STA services. This accommodation should be incorporated in bus stop design and locations as well as the design and capabilities of its vehicles.
- Prioritize investment in multi-modal improvements within one-half mile walksheds within TOD Emphasis Areas.

- Strategically locate and serve park and ride facilities.

1.5 Public Input

Maximize public input and stakeholder engagement in STA's sustainability initiatives.

The success of STA's sustainability initiatives depends on authentic and transparent efforts to engage all stakeholders. This element reinforces the public process policies as outlined in Part III: Activities and Programs; Communications and Public Input of this Comprehensive Plan.

- Define a stakeholder as anyone with an interest in STA; e.g., employees, riders, regulators, tax payers, neighborhood residents, activity center tenants and local governments, as well as those who provide services to STA such as suppliers, contractors, and professional services like banking and insurance.
- Strive at all times to balance the long-term perspective of sustainability-related issues against the more short-term needs that arise within our community.

SU 2.0 –Connecting People and Communities

2.1 Stewardship

Build stewardship and service in STA operations.

As a significant user of resources, stewardship must be an essential component of an organization that embraces sustainability. STA should strive to be a leader in conservation programs. The leadership of the organization should actively reinforce a culture that puts a high value on conservation of resources and service to the public. Stewardship also involves a respect for the people who serve and are served by STA.

2.1.1 Fiscal Responsibility

STA will use financial forecasts to make good use of tax dollars.

2.1.2 Zero Point Emission

Guided by the Zero Emission Vehicle Transition Plan, STA will manage STA fleet procurement with an emphasis on zero-point emission vehicles and a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

2.1.3 Resource Management

STA will review and/or reduce consumption of natural resources against current levels with a goal of continuous improvement. This includes siting recycling capabilities as affordable and practical in all facilities.

2.2 Purchasing

Establish a sustainable purchasing policy.

The agency should have a holistic decision-making process for purchasing equipment and services.

- Conduct cost/benefit that considers lifespan costs and replacement strategy. Lower initial capital outlays may not be the best value when operations, maintenance, and replacement cycles are also factored as costs of ownership.
- Establish procurement decision process that considers costs involved at each stage of the entire lifecycle of goods purchased; e.g., resource extraction, material processing, product design and

manufacturing, transportation and distribution, purchase and use, and end of life disposal or recycling.

- Evaluate the impact of staff resources required to support equipment or new capabilities.
- The agency's fleet replacement plan will anticipate emerging alternate fuel options for its vehicles.

2.3 Capital Projects

Integrate sustainability into facility design, construction, and demolition.

The physical plant that supports the agency has a long-term effect on the agency's ability to operate efficiently and represents an opportunity to conserve natural and financial resources.

- Anticipate emerging requirements e.g., ADA.
- Integrate sustainable design criteria into facility design and construction decisions.
- Strive to achieve the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standard for facilities.
- Construct facilities to the highest defined energy conservation standard justified by net present value analysis of capital and forecast energy costs of at least 30 years.
- Maximize use of recycled building materials.
- Incorporate recycling (deconstruction practices) into the demolition of obsolete STA facilities.

SU 3.0 – Community Resilience and Socio-economic Health

3.1 Affordability

Position transit to mitigate the effect of rising fuel costs on the increasingly large segment of population that is unable to afford other travel options.

- Keep fares affordable in accordance with the fare policies as outlined in Part III: Activities and Programs, Revenues and Fares of this Comprehensive Plan.
- Regularly review opportunities presented by the development of alternate fuel sources.
- Improve the cost competitiveness of STA services compared with the use of Single Occupant Vehicles (both in terms of an individual's time and energy expended).

3.2 Supporting the Community

Attend to the social and transportation challenges faced by groups within the community.

- Include investments in plans and projects for passenger amenities and reduction of barriers that inhibit access to transit stops. The accessibility and utility of public transportation resources will become increasingly important in the future as our population ages.
- Support community efforts to develop a comprehensive set of alternatives to traditional Paratransit service delivery. Paratransit service will face increasing demands in the future as it competes for resources required by other modes.
- Participate in jurisdictions' land use planning, in particular housing planning, and inform supporting transportation infrastructure plans to adapt to meet the changing demographics of our community.
- Make Vanpools available to a variety of groups to meet multiple needs.

Safety & Security

The safety and security of STA's system, its users, and our employees is of the utmost importance. Creating a safer transportation experience for everyone means a secure and comfortable system for users of all transportation modes and STA programs, as well as safe facilities, vehicles, and areas in which to work. Safety and security are closely interrelated concepts – safety is protection against unintended hazards, while security is a state of feeling protected against threats that are deliberate and intentional.¹

STA is voluntarily adopting the FTA's Safety Management System (SMS) Framework which is anchored by four main components:

- Safety Management Policy
 - The Safety Management Policy Statement
 - Safety Accountabilities and Responsibilities
 - Integration with Public Safety and Emergency Management
 - SMS Documentation and Records
- Safety Risk Management
 - Hazard Identification and Analysis
 - Safety Risk Evaluation
- Safety Assurance
 - Safety Performance Monitoring and Measurement
 - Management of Change
 - Continuous Improvement
- Safety Promotion
 - Safety Communications
 - Competencies and Training

FTA will publish and codify agency Safety Program Plan requirements shortly and it is expected to most transits 3-5 years to fully implement.

Safety & Security Goal

STA will promote safety & security in all operations and facilities.

Safety & Security Principles

STA protects the safety and security of customers, employees and facilities in a variety of ways, including planning, policing, facility design, operational practices, safety training, and collaboration with local jurisdictions and other agencies on safety-related matters

¹ <http://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-safety-and-vs-security/>

Safety & Security Policies

SS - 1.0 Safety & Security

In partnership with local organizations and jurisdictions, STA will promote and provide safe and secure operations.

STA, working with employees, contractors, and local partners; will work to provide stop and station security along all transit lines. Efforts will be prioritized along lines/stations with high ridership, existing issues, and a large number of transfer points.

Safety and Security plans establish formal mechanisms through which employees, contractors, passengers and community members can:

- Appropriately identify and report threats, vulnerabilities, and hazards within STA's operation to the correct personnel or external parties (e.g. emergency response agencies, police, etc.) so that preservative actions may be implemented to eliminate, control or minimize their impact.
- Establish clear lines of accountability and responsibility at all levels to ensure tasks are documented and tracked in a useful manner.
- Heighten security and safety awareness.
- Develop relations and coordination with local community partners to ensure prevention measures and emergency response activities are effective.

SS - 2.0 Employee Training

STA will educate and train its employees to improve the safety and security of the public transportation system and STA's offices and facilities.

STA will continue to train drivers in conflict avoidance and self-defense and continue to invest in infrastructure to provide appropriate training resources, programs and procedures.

SS - 3.0 User Assisted Technology

STA will actively monitor advancements in safety and collision avoidance technology and other user assist technology and adopt as the fleet turns over.

Automated technologies have the potential to transform the provision of public transit. Pilot testing of driverless shuttles is already underway on private and public roads worldwide. AV technology development is commonly led by private businesses, or in partnership with transit agencies.

SS - 4.0 CPTED Implementation

STA will utilize the principles of CPTED on all major capital projects.

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design. Fundamentally, CPTED suggests that you can change how people act in a place by altering its design. The goal is to reduce crime and fear, and improve quality of life.

SS - 5.0 Planning

STA will continue to implement and develop internal plans related to safety and security, such as the snow emergency plan and natural disaster response plan.

SS - 6.0 Customer Privacy

As technology needs and services change, STA will strive to maintain and protect the privacy of all customers.

All other polices related to Safety & Security will be/are housed in the Capital Improvement Program.

This page is intentionally left blank.

Annex 1

Fixed-Route Performance Standards

Standards imply accountability, comparison, and remediation in the event of non-compliance. Standards should be straight-forward and derived from a rational, transparent basis. The performance standards set forth herein are directly related to the effectiveness and sustainability of STA's fixed-route system. These performance standards reflect a triple bottom line (TBL) approach that seeks to improve the system's performance as it relates to its riders, the environment, and taxpayers. Literature on the subject of triple bottom line refers to People (social), Planet (environmental), and Profit (economic) as the primary metrics for evaluating agency performance. Routes are compared against annual benchmark scores set for routes similar in-service type and/or vehicle types. The service types and performance standards used are explained below.

Performance Standard 1: Ridership (Social)

Ridership is a basic indication of a transit route's effectiveness in serving people. There may be a great community dialogue about serving a particular facility, geography, or community, but if the result is a route that has little or no ridership, clearly this goal is not met. It may be that the service is designed poorly or that densities do not justify fixed-route bus service. Only by having a minimum performance standard can these routes be fairly evaluated and remediated.

Productivity is a measure of riders per revenue hour and is used as the framework for the ridership standard.

Basic Routes Ridership Standard

One of the best indicators of potential performance ~~For Basic Fixed-Route Service in Spokane the best indicator of potential performance~~ is a route's relation to the Central Business District (CBD). A route that ties into downtown has more connectivity than other routes. Furthermore, it must meet a higher expectation due to ~~the fact that~~ the downtown Plaza's ~~has a~~ finite number of bus bays and overall capacity. Accordingly, ~~it should~~ use of the Plaza's capacity should be focused on routes with a higher level of effectiveness in terms of ridership. The metric used for ridership is Boardings per Revenue Hour. Revenue hours represent the hours the bus is in service. Boardings per Revenue Hour are calculated by dividing the annual boardings of a route by the annual revenue hours of that same route. As of 2022, STA's service classes are High Performance Transit (HPT), Regular, and Targeted. Regular service is the basic level of service STA provides. HPT and Regular service classes are generalized services that are designed to serve the greatest number of people within the region's geographic area and STA's financial capacity. The Targeted service class is a specialized service focused on attracting and accommodating targeted audiences, such as peak demand travelers to employment and education centers, as well as special shuttles that may operate intermittently or bridge service gaps either temporarily or geographically. Ridership benchmarks for each follows. The annual performance standard is produced based on the most up-to-date actual annual riders per annual revenue hours figure. For routes traveling into the CBD, the performance standard is one-half the standard deviation below the average of the basic routes traveling into the CBD. For all other routes, the standard is precisely one-half this number. By necessity this standard will need to change after substantial changes to the system have been such that one-half the standard deviation is less than 10% of the average ridership productivity. At this time, routes traveling into the CBD that are one standard below the standard deviation will be considered inconsistent with this performance measure.

HPT Ridership Standard

Due to higher expectations of performance of the High Performance Transit network over the performance of the Regular route network, it is thought that the HPT class of routes in their aggregated totality are to be greater than the average performance of regular service. For this reason, and since the benchmark of Regular service is based on the routes relationship with the CBD, the benchmark of HPT service is equal to the average Boardings per Revenue Hour for all regular routes which intersect the CBD. The value the benchmark is compared against is the average of Boardings per Revenue Hour weighted by hours of service. The High Performance Transit Network has only a slightly higher standard level since the increased frequency should result in greater ridership but may not necessarily rise to a productivity level significantly greater than the entire system. As a starting point, the high-performance transit network routes should be one-half standard deviation above the average basic route productivity of similarly situated routes (i.e. that travel to the CBD). For routes that do not travel in the CBD, the standard is one-half the productivity rate for HPT routes that travel in the CBD.

Commuter Peak Ridership Regular Service Standard

The Regular service class comprises the majority of STA's service and is general-purpose service. It is intended to be sufficient to meet general demand that exists in an area served while still being robust enough to meet many purposes throughout each day. It is further expected that demand on CBD-intersecting routes will be higher due to the greater amount of routes intersecting. For routes traveling into the CBD, the performance standard is one-half the standard deviation below the average Boardings per Revenue Hour of the regular routes traveling into the CBD. For all other routes not serving the CBD, the standard is one-half the CBD-intersecting number. From a performance evaluation perspective, Commuter Peak Routes have the benefit of not being in operation in off-peak times when travel demand is lighter. However, peak routes are very capital consumptive in terms of rolling stock and facilities because they only operate six to seven hours per day, increasing the capital cost per passenger. A bus that carries passengers for 12 hours in a day amortizes the capital costs of that bus over more hours of service and spread to many customers over 12 years of such use. For this reason, the productivity expectation for Commuter Peak routes should be equal to an HPT route. For routes that operate as a function of what would otherwise be out-of-service time on a route ("Commuter Peak Route—Subordinate") the standard is equal to one-third the productivity of the dominant Commuter Peak routes benchmark. This reflects the reality that a bus serving passengers in the opposite direction of peak demand will have lower ridership and yet is typically better than operating out of service and providing no transportation benefit. The performance standards for 2007 and 2008 are illustrated below.

Service Type	Grouping	2007	2008
Basic	Intersects CBD	22.08	25.45
Basic	No CBD intersection	11.04	12.73
HPT	Intersects CBD	29.84	33.95
HPT	No CBD intersection	14.92	16.97
Commuter Peak	Dominant	29.84	33.95
Commuter Peak	Subordinate	9.95	11.32

Targeted Service Standard

These routes are tailored to serve a specific commute market or destination on a limited basis, typically with limited or express stop patterns. Due to different behaviors of the Targeted routes, three different sub-groupings of benchmarks are calculated.

- Primary Peak: Such routes typically operate one way in a given peak period. The performance standard is equal to the average Boardings per Revenue Hour of the Regular routes intersecting the CBD.
- Secondary Peak: Routes which operate as a function of what would otherwise be out-of-service time on a route (previously considered “Commuter Peak – Subordinate”). The standard is one-third the Primary Peak benchmark.
- Two-Way Peak: Routes which provide trips in both directions during operation, offering trips both with high-demand peak travel, and out-of-direction peak travel. The performance standard is two-thirds of the Primary Peak benchmark.

The Boardings Per Revenue Hour for each service type and group are reported annually in the Annual Performance Report, published on STA’s website.

Performance Standard 2: Comparable Energy Consumption (Environmental)

Since the 1970s, there has been recognition of the value of mass transit as it pertains to environmental sustainability and energy conservation. Often missing from this recognition are any measurable outcomes other than car trips avoided. Because they are larger and heavier, transit vehicles ~~actually consume~~ consume more energy per vehicle mile traveled than private automobiles.

The Equivalent Energy Consumption standard relates to the duration of a passenger’s ride time on a vehicle. As stated in Connect Spokane, a bus route should at minimum perform equally to the private automobile in terms of energy consumed per mile traveled for each passenger. The private automobile is improving in efficiency each year. For example, in 2000 the average automobile fuel economy for all passenger light vehicles (car, light truck, van, SUV, etc.) was 20 mpg and has since increased to 23.7 mpg in 2021 (the most recent data available).

The energy consumption for each passenger mile of a route will vary by the typical vehicle size and vehicle type used for each route. Below is a table that shows typical vehicle types assigned to Basic and Commuter Routes and their required minimum average load factor. Basic Routes must meet an average load factor that results in the route being as energy efficient as a typical single occupancy vehicle (SOV). The benchmark for Commuter Routes is higher than that for Basic Routes and must be as energy efficient as the average-loaded private automobile.

STA has modified the above approach for the battery electric bus (BEB) benchmark. Annual kilowatt hours of service energy are converted into a comparable gallons-of-diesel-burned equivalent. Calculations were made to determine the miles driven per kilowatt hour of energy used and the equivalent BTUs per mile were calculated from that.

<u>2024 Average Load Factor Benchmarks</u>		
<u>Prior Classes</u>	<u>Basic Routes</u>	<u>Commuter Peak Routes</u>
<u>New Classes</u>	<u>Regular Routes</u>	<u>HPT and Targeted Routes</u>
<u>30’ Bus</u>	<u>5.53</u>	<u>9.24</u>
<u>35’ Bus</u>	<u>4.63</u>	<u>7.73</u>

<u>40' Bus</u>	<u>4.55</u>	<u>7.6</u>
<u>60' Bus</u>	<u>6.71</u>	<u>11.21</u>
<u>60' City Line BEB</u>	<u>2.15</u>	<u>N/A</u>

The average passenger load (load factor) of a route is calculated by dividing the annual passenger miles of a route by the annual platform miles of a route. Passenger miles are the cumulative sum of the distances ridden by each passenger, while platform miles represent all miles the vehicle travels, both in-and out-of-service. STA may consider modifying the approach to this standard to better reflect transit's environmental benefits and impacts.

In order to reap any benefit as it pertains to energy consumption, looking at energy consumed per passenger mile is the easiest to obtain and likely the most effective in measuring outcomes. British Thermal Units (BTUs) are commonly used for similar metrics and will be used here.

A minimum standard for BTUs per passenger mile is useful in evaluating the performance of routes in a different way than the previous standard. While productivity measures gross riders, the "BTUs per passenger miles" metric speaks to the duration of passengers' time on the vehicle. BTUs per passenger miles speaks to energy consumed for a particular vehicle type given a particular trip pattern.

At the very minimum, a bus route should perform equally to the private automobile in terms of energy consumed per mile traveled for each passenger. Assuming a load factor of one person in an automobile and current fuel economy (<http://cta.ornl.gov/data/download28.shtml>), there are 5,500 BTUs consumed for every single passenger mile traveled in a car. While routes will have trips that can exceed this consumption rate, no route should be worse than an automobile when judged from the

cumulative service provided. Translating these consumption rates to buses by size of bus requires looking at average fuel consumption of each major vehicle type in STA's fixed route fleet as opposed to actual consumption on a route by route basis.

The performance standard for energy expressed in passenger miles over platform miles is found below. The numbers are for diesel vehicles. The numbers below are established given fuel economy of the existing fleet and its comparison to private automobiles. Average load factor, or passenger miles divided by platform (vehicle) miles, provides information on how many people are served for every mile of travel. As new propulsion sources come online this table should be amended to reflect those sources. Carbon based fuel sources have different concentrations of energy. Electrified systems use generally less energy and therefore may have a different ratio which would be a minimum standard in the event such vehicles are added to the STA fleet.

Vehicle Size	Basic	Commuter Peak (Dominant Only)	NPT Network
Cutaways	2.84	4.45	4.45
30'	5.35	8.39	8.39
35'	5.16	8.10	8.10
40'	5.48	8.60	8.60
60'	6.65	10.45	10.45

Performance Standard 3: Fares (Economic)

An important performance indicator for medium- to large-sized transit systems is fare revenues. While small agencies often find that the cost of collecting fares is equal to or exceeds the fares potentially collected, STA collects millions of dollars annually from its riders for services rendered. STA collects fares in the form of cash, passes and institutional pass programs which STA administers. Farebox recovery represents the revenue collected along a route as a percentage of the total cost of operating the route. Fares per passenger are not the same for every route. Two routes with the same ridership could have very different farebox recovery ratios based on fare media and operating costs.

The Fares performance standard uses a route's farebox recovery ratio to show the relationship between fares collected versus the operating cost of a route. Farebox recovery ratio is calculated by dividing the annual fare revenue by the annual unallocated cost (the cost of the route and associated support). The benchmark which must be met or exceeded is equal to one-half the system-wide average (for revenue allocated to routes) farebox recovery ratio. The average system-wide fare calculated for this measure does not incorporate fare revenue which cannot be confidently allocated to any route. *As a minimum standard of performance, routes shall have a farebox recovery no less than one-half the system average.*

~~An important performance indicator for medium- to large-sized transit systems is fare revenues. While small agencies often find that the cost of collecting fares is equal to or exceeds the fares potentially collected, STA collects millions of dollars annually from its riders for services rendered. Farebox recovery for this performance standard is the total fixed route revenue collected as a percentage of the total fixed route operating cost. It is valuable as a metric since both fares per passenger and cost per hour are not equal for every route. Two routes may have the same ridership but have different farebox recoveries. Routes using larger vehicles traveling longer distances in an hour will cost more to operate. Without a corresponding increase in fares per passenger, farebox recovery is likely to be lower than the comparable route.~~

Performance Reporting

By April of each year, the Planning Department will report on both the performance of each route for the previous two years and the standards that applied for those years. New service will be evaluated following its development period, typically 18 to 24 months. Any route that falls below the minimum standard for all three performance standards for two consecutive years will be considered out of compliance with the standards. A partial year of operation (e.g. if a route begins operation in September) will not be counted against a route's compliance with these standards. This provides for at least two and not more than three years for a route to mature before any corrective action is required. The annual report will offer reasons why the route may be below standard and offer preliminary concepts for remediation.

Remediation

Remediation is not simply about eliminating poor performing routes, but instead considering both the route's relationship to the network and other possible network changes that could ultimately improve the entire network. Remedial actions should take place no more than 18 months following a performance report indicating non-compliance.

Non-compliance of routes with respect to performance standards is typically an indication of a route being designed inconsistent with the design principles or adopted service design policies. There may also be changes

in land use (e.g. a major mall closes indefinitely) or changes in the network which unintentionally deteriorated service or demand.

Remedial efforts should identify how proposed improvements will better align with design principles and adopted policy and provide a rough projection of the relationship to performance standards.