

Opportunities for City Investment to Improve Bus Service in Seattle

With 60%+ of Metro's service in Seattle, maximizing its effectiveness is a priority. Seattle's Transit Master Plan preliminarily identifies priority transit corridors that are consistent with Metro's Strategic Plan for Public Transportation.

- **Seattle Center City Transit Priority Pathways:** With nearly two-thirds of all Metro bus trips traveling through the regional center of the Puget Sound, prioritizing the movement of buses into, through and out of the downtown core is the single most critical enhancement to leverage the significant annual operating investment in transit service. Although the priority pathways focus on downtown, the speed and reliability benefits riders from all areas of Seattle. Queen Anne, First, Denny, Wall, Battery, Pike/Pine, Madison/Marion, James/Yesler, Jackson and south downtown via Pioneer Square are all corridors where specific improvements are possible, some already underway.
- **Transit Priority Corridors:** Street improvements focused on increasing bus speeds in corridors identified as priorities by the Seattle Transit Master Plan. These corridors are part of the backbone of the Metro system, carrying very high numbers of transit trips, connecting Seattle's most populous neighborhoods, and supporting sustainable growth.
 - **Transit Lanes:** Transit lanes help move bus riders efficiently and improve safety for everyone on the road. Some transit, HOV or bus only lanes have been implemented, and additional locations along key corridors would help buses move more efficiently.
 - **Transit Signal Priority:** Signal priority systems give buses extra time to get through an intersection or give priority to buses, similar to the way priority is given to streetcars.
 - **Bus Bulbs:** A wider sidewalk at bus stops improves passenger waiting areas and eliminates the need for buses to merge in and out of traffic. Metro has worked with SDOT over the past several years to add some bus bulbs on key corridors such as N 45th Street in Wallingford and Third Avenue downtown.
 - **Queue Jumps:** Short bus-only lanes at signals allow transit to bypass traffic lined up at intersections. Some queue jumps have been implemented or are planned in key transit corridors such as Rainier Ave. S. and N. 46th St.
- **Service Partnerships:** Metro's *Transit Now* Financial Partnership with the City of Seattle invests nearly 43,000 annual service hours in 19 Metro routes throughout the City of Seattle. Funding for the partnership comes from *Transit Now* and the City's *Bridging the Gap* levy. Improvements were implemented over three years starting in 2008 and will remain in place until at least 2016. Five thousand additional hours will be invested as part of a *Transit Now* Speed and Reliability partnership with the City. Continuation of these or other future service partnerships may be possible.
- **RapidRide Lines:** In 2012 RapidRide C and D Lines will open serving West Seattle to Downtown and Ballard/Uptown to Downtown respectively. In 2013 RapidRide E Line will open serving the Aurora Ave N corridor. *When all six Metro RapidRide lines are operational the \$200 million investment will carry more than 50,000 people daily.* Additional RapidRide lines could be developed in Seattle on key corridors where speed and reliability improvements can be made.
- **Electric Trolley Network Enhancement or Expansion:** Metro has a fleet of 159 electric trolley buses that run along nearly 70 miles of overhead wire on 14 routes in Seattle, carrying 20% of Metro's weekday ridership. Metro does not plan to expand the existing trolley network because of a lack of funding, but opportunities exist for strategic investment by Seattle to expand the network.