

# ALL ABOARD

## SEATTLE TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT DISTRICT YEAR 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT JUNE 2018 - JUNE 2019





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# MAYOR'S & DIRECTOR'S LETTERS



Dear Seattle,

In Seattle, transit is an essential component to building the city of the future. The Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) improves transit service throughout Seattle and ensures

communities who need service the most can access our robust transit system. Our most recent STBD investments in King County Metro's transit system provide even more options for Seattleites, adding more than 930 transit trips in Seattle. Through STBD, the City of Seattle now funds more than 8% of King County Metro's bus service.

STBD also helps provide improved transit access for those who need it through our successful ORCA Opportunity Program, which provides a free transit pass for our students, seniors, and income-eligible adults who need it most.

The region's population and economic growth, combined with key development and transportation infrastructure projects, create the "Seattle Squeeze" and will impact all people traveling to downtown Seattle over the next few years. This will all be worth it, but we need everyone's help to reduce the number of drive-alone trips downtown by taking other modes of transportation, including taking transit.

Investments in transit improve our sustainability in the midst of climate change. Road transportation represents two-thirds of Seattle's climate-changing carbon pollution. To achieve our climate goals, we need to reduce the miles driven and electrify our cars, buses, and trucks.

Through continued investments in transit, Seattle can help ensure a thriving city and planet for future generations to come. Better transit service through STBD is an essential building block to making our city more livable, affordable and sustainable.

Sincerely,

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan



Dear Seattle,

Our mission at the Seattle Department of Transportation is to deliver a transportation system that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities. The Seattle

Transportation Benefit District (STBD), in partnership with King County Metro Transit, advances our mission by providing more bus service across Seattle, increasing mobility for all.

At the start of STBD, we set a goal of 72 percent of Seattle households within a 10-minute walk of a bus that comes at least every 10 minutes by 2025. Before our STBD investments in Metro transit service, just 25 percent of households had this convenience. Now, thanks to STBD investments, we are well on our way, with over 70 percent of Seattle households meeting this goal.

Transit is the future of Seattle and a vital component to creating a more livable city. Through our investments, more people are choosing to walk, bike, carpool, or ride transit in Seattle than ever before. In 2017, 48 percent of downtown Seattle commuters rode the bus or light rail, while just 25 percent chose to drive alone. Transit ridership during the most congested times of day increased by more than 200,000 rides per day over the last decade. Through the ORCA Opportunity Program, we are improving the availability and access to transportation for 14,600 students, seniors, and income-eligible adults by providing a free transit pass to get where they need to go in our city.

Thanks to Seattle voters, we continue to make investments through the Seattle Transportation Benefit District that build a better and more equitable transportation system for everyone.

Sincerely,

Director Sam Zimbabwe



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## SDOT Report Team

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# PARTNER THANK YOUS

## Community Partners

City of Seattle Voters, Residents, and Workers  
City of Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning  
City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods  
City of Seattle Human Services Department  
Seattle Public Schools  
Seattle Housing Authority  
Seattle-King County Public Health Department  
King County Metro Transit  
Washington State Department of Licensing  
Rainier Beach High School  
City of Mercer Island  
King County Parks Department

## STBD Board

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| • Sally Bagshaw      | • Debora Juarez     |
| • M. Lorena González | • Teresa Mosqueda   |
| • Bruce A. Harrell   | • Mike O'Brien      |
| • Lisa Herbold       | • Abel Pacheco, Jr. |
| • Rob Johnson        | • Kshama Sawant     |

## Seattle Transit Advisory Board

With the approval of City of Seattle Proposition 1 by voters in November 2014, the Seattle City Council established a public oversight board to increase accountability. The Transit Advisory Board (TAB) is made up of six council-appointed and six Mayor-appointed positions. During the fourth year of the Seattle Transportation Benefit District, the TAB consisted of:

- **Keiko Budech** - Secretary, SBAB Liaison
- **Marci Carpenter** - Co-Chair (through 5/19)
- **Enjoleah Daye** - SPAB Liaison
- **Lynn Hubbard** - Member
- **Bryce Kolton** - Member (as of 5/19)
- **Jennifer Malley-Crawford** - Co-Chair
- **Andrew Martin** - Vice Chair
- **Alexandra Wakeman Rouse** - Move Seattle Liaison
- **Carla Saulter** - Member
- **Lucas Simons** - Get Engaged Member (as of 8/18)
- **Michelle Tang** - Get Engaged Member (through 8/18)
- **Erin Tighe** - Co-Chair
- **Barbara Wright** - Member
- **Michelle Zeidman** - Member

# SDOT VISION & MISSION

**Vision:** Seattle is a thriving, equitable community powered by dependable transportation.

**Mission:** Our mission is to deliver a transportation system that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities.



# SDOT VALUES & GOALS

## EQUITY

We believe transportation must meet the needs of communities of color and those of all incomes, abilities, and ages. Our goal is to partner with our communities to build a racially equitable and socially just transportation system.

## SAFETY

We believe everyone should be able to move safely throughout the city. Our goal is to create safe transportation environments and eliminate serious and fatal crashes in Seattle.

## MOBILITY

We believe transportation choices are critical to access opportunity. Our goal is to build, operate, and maintain an accessible transportation system that reliably connects people, places, and goods.

## SUSTAINABILITY

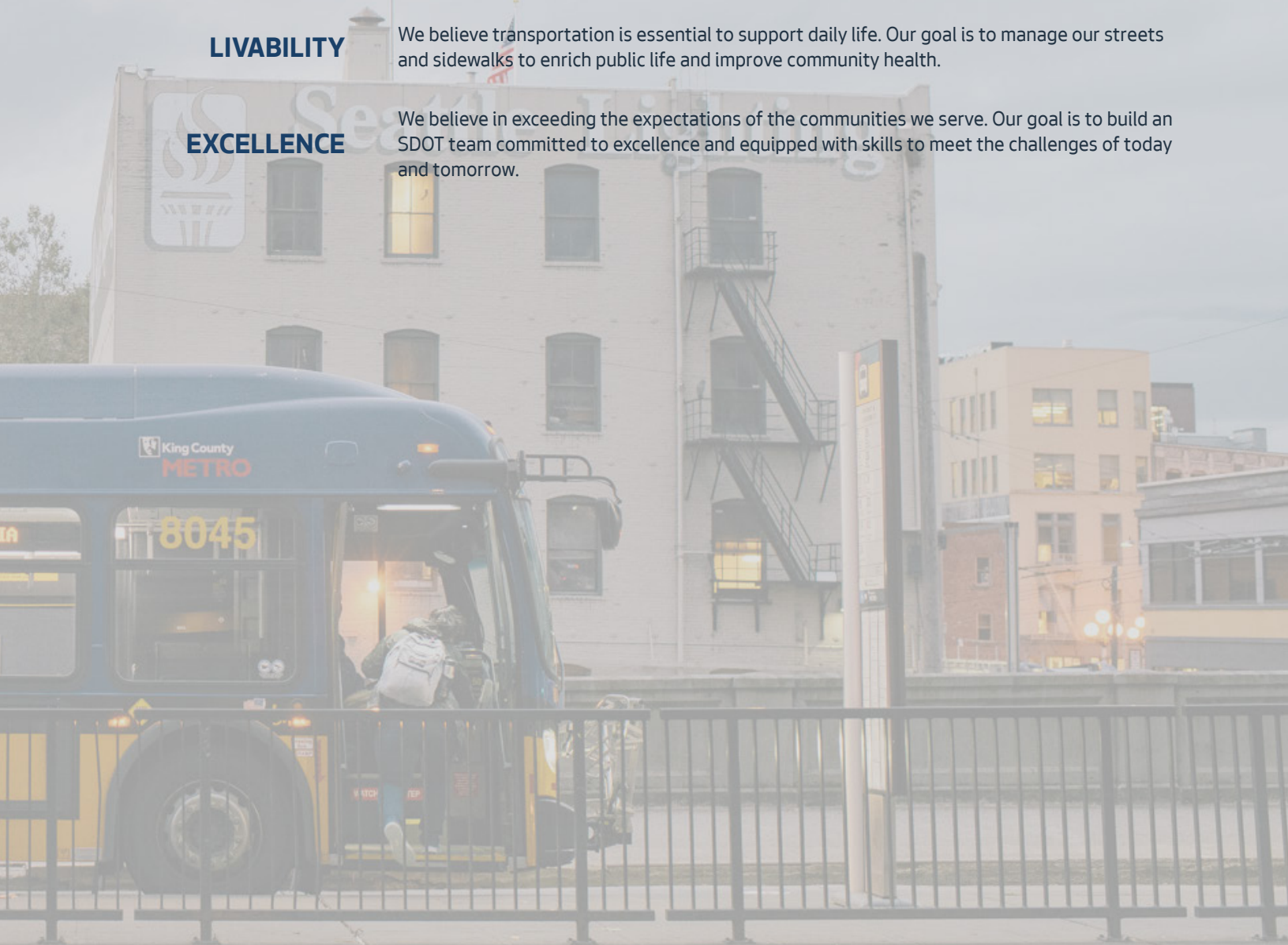
We believe environmental health should be improved for future generations through sustainable transportation. Our goal is to address the climate crisis through a sustainable, resilient transportation system.

## LIVABILITY

We believe transportation is essential to support daily life. Our goal is to manage our streets and sidewalks to enrich public life and improve community health.

## EXCELLENCE

We believe in exceeding the expectations of the communities we serve. Our goal is to build an SDOT team committed to excellence and equipped with skills to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.



# STBD BY THE NUMBERS - YEAR 4

## WHAT IS "STBD"?

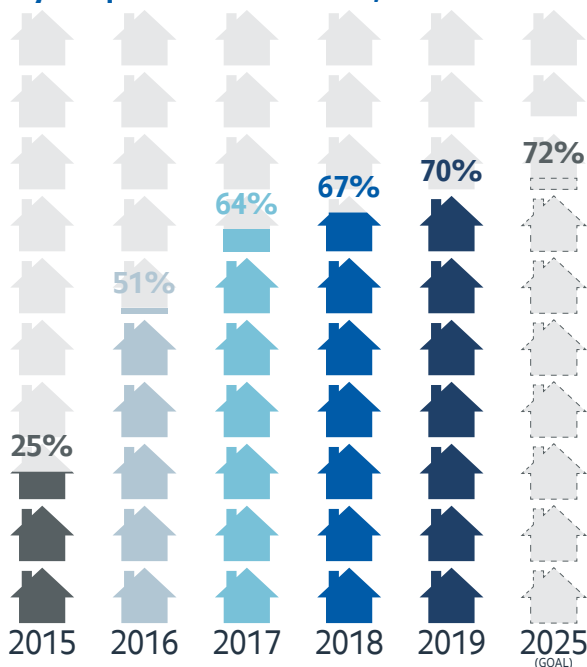
In 2014, Seattle voters approved the **Seattle Transportation Benefit District Proposition 1 (STBD)** to fund the purchase of increased Metro service and additional transit programs for Seattle residents. This voter-approved funding measure includes a **\$60 vehicle license fee** and **0.1% sales tax** increase to generate over **\$50 million annually** to improve **transit service and access** for six years (2015-2020).

## STBD Funds More Trips on More Routes to More Places (p. 10 - 15)

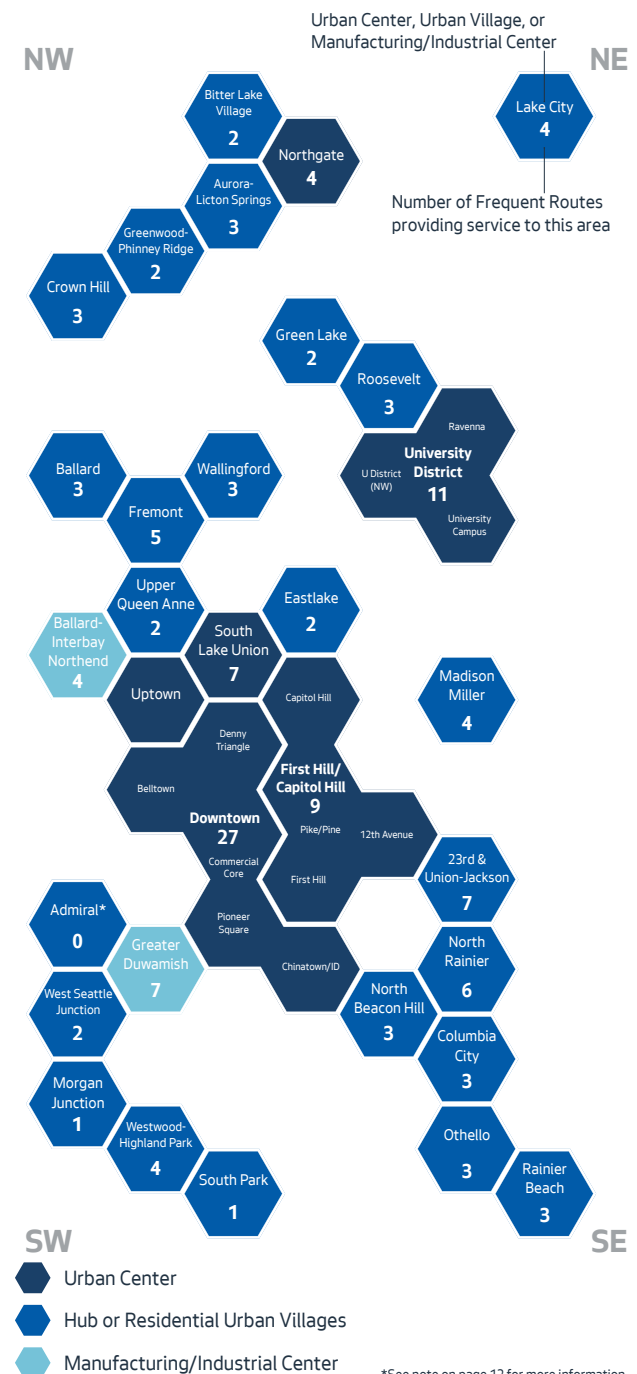
### Program Accomplishments To Date

- ☒ **70% of Seattle Households** have access to at least one Very Frequent (10-minute or better) route
- ☒ **40 out of 41 Urban Villages & Centers** have access to at least one Frequent (15-minute) route
- ☒ Over **8,000 New Weekly Trips Added** on routes serving Seattle
- ☒ Over **78 King County Metro Routes** have better service today thanks to STBD
- ☒ As of 2019, **8% of King County Metro's Network** is funded by STBD
- ☒ **22 Transit Spot Improvements completed** in 2019 to improve speed, reliability, and rider experience
- ☒ Transit access improved for over **12,400 Seattle Public School students** in 2019

### Percent of Households with Access to Very Frequent Transit Service, 2015 - 2019



### Frequent Routes by Neighborhood



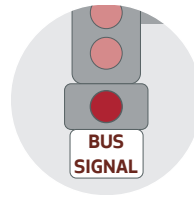


## Capital Projects to Support Service (p. 16 - 17)

### The Transit Spot Improvement Toolkit & Year 4 Completed Projects



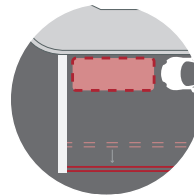
**4 Projects**  
Improve Rider & Pedestrian Safety



**6 Projects**  
Change Traffic Signals



**6 Projects**  
Dedicate Right-of-Way



**3 Projects**  
Enhance Roadway Operations



**9 Projects**  
Upgrade Bus Stops & Amenities



**2 Projects**  
Expand Multimodal Access

Spot improvement projects are funded by both Move Seattle and STBD, and multiple toolkit items may apply to an individual project.

## Improving Transportation Access (p. 18 - 19)

### Organizations Engaged through the Transportation Equity Program



**11 High Schools:** ORCA Opportunity



**18 Middle Schools:** ORCA Opportunity



**24 SHA Properties:** ORCA Opportunity



**2 Youth Organizations:** Youth Transportation Ambassadors Program



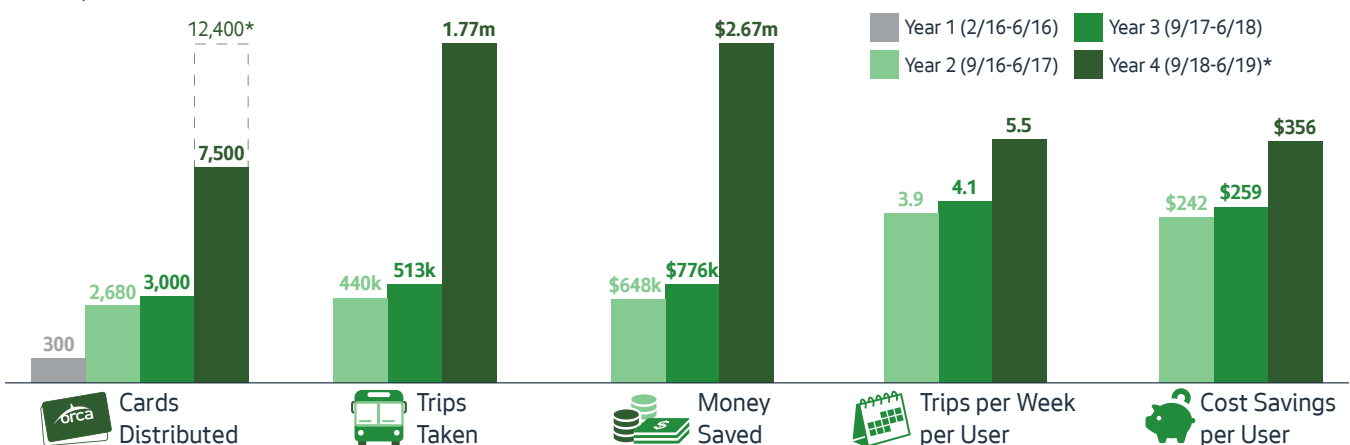
**3 Senior Centers:** Regional Reduced Fare Permit Pilot



**10 Community Organizations:** Transportation Equity Workgroup

### ORCA Opportunity/Youth ORCA Performance 2016 - 2019 City-funded Cards

ORCA Opportunity provides a free ORCA card to all 15,000 Seattle Public Schools high school students, 500 ORCA cards for income-qualified middle school students, and Seattle Promise Scholars.



\*During year 4 of the program 11,900 high school students received a 12-month card, but only school year data is included here as a comparison to previous years. Additional details available on page 18.



# INTRODUCTION

## A Growing City

Since 2010, the number of jobs in the Seattle area has increased by 24%, and the city's population has grown by almost 23%. Seattle continues to be one of the fastest growing big cities in the country. Each new person in Seattle increases demand for convenient travel options across the city and region, and it is critical that every mode of transportation is reliable, accessible, and affordable for all.

With the region's continued population and economic growth, a combination of private development and key transportation infrastructure projects over the next five years will continue to impact all users traveling to, from, and through the center city. This period, known as the "Seattle Squeeze," began in early 2019 with the permanent closure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct.

While Seattle's growth has come hand-in-hand with economic prosperity, it has also put additional pressure on those already struggling to live and work in Seattle. Housing prices continue to increase and the overall cost of living in Seattle is among the highest of anywhere in the country. Because transportation remains the second highest cost for many households, STBD focuses on improving transportation affordability to help improve overall livability for Seattle residents.

## Public Transit in Seattle

Since 2010, the number of commuters traveling to downtown Seattle in the morning using modes like transit, walking, biking, and carpooling grew by nearly 10%. Most of this growth occurred on transit: 48% rode the bus or light rail in 2017, compared to 42% just seven years prior.

Overall, transit ridership during the most congested times of day increased by over 200,000 rides per day, while drive-alone trips decreased 10% - from 35% in 2010 to 25% in 2017.

As the city grows and densifies, more efficient, equitable, and environmentally friendly travel options become increasingly important, and transit remains a key tool for addressing this need. Roadway availability is in limited supply and high demand; high capacity modes (such as buses and trains) along with active transportation (biking and walking) will play important roles in moving people as the city continues to grow. On an average weekday in 2016, over 1 million vehicles drove on Seattle streets - more than three times the average number of people that rode the bus each day. Particularly during morning and afternoon commute times, Seattle's transportation network is already at capacity. To accommodate the planned growth for Seattle and the region, the majority of existing and new trips will need to occur on more space-efficient modes of transportation, such as transit, walking, biking, or carpooling.

Key voter approved measures (Seattle Transportation Benefit District Proposition 1 (STBD) in 2014, the Levy to Move Seattle in 2015, and Sound Transit 3 (ST3) in 2016) fund additional capital improvements and service to improve access to high capacity modes and active transportation options for the traveling public. While not every person can use these modes, each mode plays a part in reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) on the roads. In turn, shifting to more space-efficient modes of transportation is imperative to keep our city moving each day.

### The Seattle Transit Master Plan

The City of Seattle Transit Master Plan (TMP) identifies the types of transit service, facilities, programs, and system features required to meet Seattle's transit needs. It also establishes the Frequent Transit Network (FTN), which guides transit service priorities in Seattle and provides direction for where capital investments should be made to best improve transit operations and provide the greatest community benefit. The FTN prioritizes frequent, reliable service on designated corridors that connect urban villages and urban centers— every day of the week.

# OVERVIEW

## Background

In May 2011, the Seattle City Council implemented a \$20 vehicle license fee through the Seattle Transportation Benefit District to fund roadway maintenance and preservation, roadway safety enhancements, transit corridor projects, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. In November 2014, Seattle voters approved Seattle Transportation Benefit District Proposition 1 (STBD), which implemented a 0.1% sales tax increase and an additional \$60 annual vehicle license fee, generating over \$50 million annually to improve transit service and access through 2020.

While King County Metro plans and manages the county-wide transit system based on policy guidance in the King County Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines, STBD provides funds for Seattle to invest as guided by the Seattle Transit Master Plan.

In 2014, the Seattle City Council proposed the Seattle Transportation Benefit District Proposition 1 (STBD) on the November 2014 ballot to fund additional transit service within the city. Understanding the growing demand for transit service in the City, Seattle voters approved STBD Proposition 1 (62% in favor, 38% against) November 4, 2014, providing for the expansion of transit service and low-income access to transit.

Since the passage of STBD in 2014, Seattle has seen dramatic changes, including increased population growth and demand for transit service, an affordability crisis, and major changes to roadways. Through STBD, Seattle is more responsive and flexible to transit service needs within the city (such as time, span, and frequency).

## Program Scope

The voter-approved STBD Proposition 1 funds the expansion of transit service and low-income access to transportation programs. For the first three years of the program, STBD focused its investments on transit service expansion and low-income access to transit. However, starting in 2017, Metro's base capacity and fleet constraints limited the investments SDOT could continue to make in transit service.

In 2018, Seattle City Council approved changes to the scope of STBD to accommodate policy changes and provide SDOT with additional flexibility when implementing transit improvements. The scope change continues the voter-approved priority to improve transit service and

adds two new uses: capital improvements and ORCA Opportunity. A full account of STBD's current scope of improvements is listed below:



### Transit Service

The bulk of STBD funds are used to purchase additional trips on King County Metro routes that operate within Seattle. Today, routes with 65% or more of their stops within

Seattle (as well as current and future RapidRide routes in Seattle) are eligible for direct investment of STBD resources. Routes that do not meet this definition require an even split with a funding partner (additional information about service investments on page 10).



### Capital Improvements

In order to provide STBD with additional flexibility to improve transit in Seattle, STBD funds can now be used to build capital facilities to improve transit speed and

reliability and passenger amenities. Through this funding source, STBD can fund projects like transit lanes, queue jumps, and all-door bus boarding. These investments help to improve transit operations and the rider experience and complement the existing transit service investments made through STBD, especially as Metro's ability to implement additional bus service is constrained (additional information about capital improvements on page 16).



### Transportation Equity and Low-Income Access to Transit

STBD includes several programs that improve transportation access while providing more affordable transportation options. Through

these programs, SDOT aims to provide high-quality and low-cost transportation options that allow car ownership to be an option, not a necessity within Seattle. These efforts include marketing and helping enroll income-eligible people in the ORCA LIFT program, the ORCA Opportunity program (providing ORCA cards to both students and Seattle Housing Authority residents), and various outreach and engagements opportunities (additional information on transportation equity and access on page 18).

# SERVICE INVESTMENT GOALS

## More Trips to More Destinations

Since the Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) began service investments in 2015, SDOT has used this funding source to meet the ever-growing demand for better and more frequent transit service throughout the city and to think proactively about creating a transit network for the future of Seattle. When considering which routes to invest in, or the type of investment to make, SDOT evaluates options and improves service in alignment with its service investment goals.

## Priorities for Improving Transit Service



### Build Out the Local, Frequent, and Very Frequent Transit Networks

The Frequent Transit Network (FTN) established Local (30-minute service), Frequent (15-minute), and Very Frequent (10-minute) routes that create a network of transit options for riders in Seattle. Since 2015, STBD has been able to improve service span and frequency on the Frequent Transit Network throughout the city.



### Align Increases in Service with Increased Density

Understanding that Seattle's housing growth, especially in urban villages and centers, increases transit demand, STBD focuses investments in densifying neighborhoods to ensure adequate transit service to accommodate new residents and proactively provide additional service in locations with anticipated growth.



### Ensure Transit Works for Those Who Need it Most

While public transit is an important tool for reducing drive-alone rates and increasing commuter capacity, its most critical role is providing access for those who rely on transit for their mobility needs. Prioritizing investments that provide the most benefit to these groups is crucial for creating an equitable transit system.



### Encourage Use of Non-SOV Modes

Seattle's rapidly growing populations needs to travel by modes other than driving a single-occupancy vehicles (the least space-efficient method of travel) and instead by transit, walking, biking, and carpooling. To do this, STBD aims to improve transit connections to make transit more attractive and functional for riders.



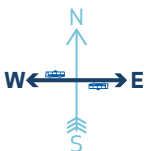
### Address Chronically Overcrowded Trips and Pass-Ups

Morning and evening commute hours are the busiest times for the transportation network, and as the region grows demand will continue to grow for already overcrowded routes. SDOT works closely with King County Metro to identify overcrowded trips on specific routes, and to add additional service wherever possible.



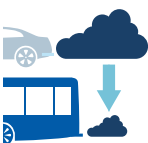
### Improve Evening, Night, and Weekend Frequencies and Connections

While the traditional commute hours are the busiest times for travel, many Seattle residents, visitors, and workers travel outside of those periods. To benefit these riders, STBD increases frequency during evening, night, and weekends to ensure connections and transfer opportunities across the city and around the clock.



### Improve East-West Transit Connections

Given geographical and topographical constraints and the limitations of Seattle's roadway network, many parts of Seattle lack strong east-west transit connections. Where east-west routes exist, STBD improves frequencies for riders.



### Promote Continued Reduction in Carbon Emissions & Energy Efficient Transit

Transit remains one of the most energy efficient means of moving people around the city. Aided by the ever-increasing shift in fleet away from diesel vehicles and towards electric vehicles, transit remains a key tool in helping to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and bringing the city closer to its carbon emission targets.



## Downtown Mobility and the Seattle Squeeze

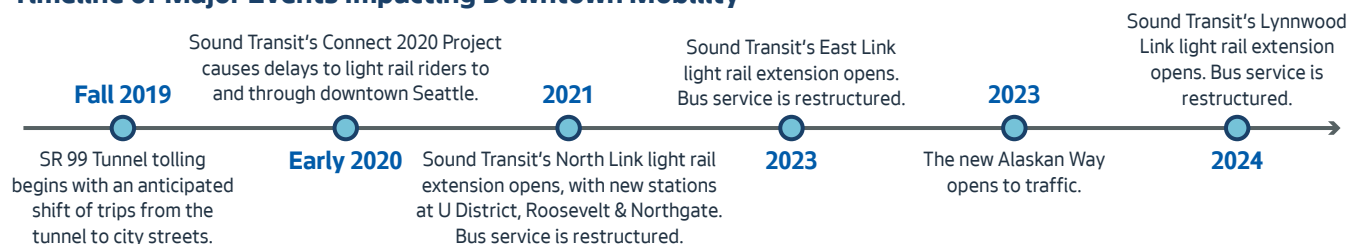
The Seattle Squeeze is the period from 2019 through 2024 where downtown Seattle faces a state of transition to meet the needs of our growing city. The Seattle Squeeze kicked off on January 11, 2019, when the Alaskan Way Viaduct closed permanently and SR 99 through downtown Seattle remained closed for three weeks to align the highway into the new SR 99 tunnel. This chapter in the Seattle Squeeze was shortly followed by the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel transitioning to Link light rail-only in March 2019, bringing more than 800 buses per day to surface streets. Tolling will begin in the SR 99 tunnel at the end of 2019, again changing traffic patterns on downtown streets.

This will all be worth it. Through these projects, as well as many more planned for the coming years, Seattle will build the infrastructure for the city we are today. We're reconnecting downtown with our waterfront and building 20 acres of public spaces. Sound Transit's Link light rail expansions will provide fast, predictable service to downtown from communities in the north and on the eastside, and private construction projects will continue to transform downtown Seattle.

In the meantime, travel times will increase, reliability will decrease, and transit operating costs will increase to accommodate demand on downtown streets. To address these issues, we partnered with our regional agencies, including Sound Transit, King County Metro, the Downtown Seattle Association, and the Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development to create a Near-Term Action Plan. This plan lists key projects, policies, and actions to improve traffic operations; increase transit speed and reliability; improve the pedestrian experience and accessibility; and improve center city bike network connections to help ease congestion impacts in the near term.

STBD investments in transit service, transit capital projects, and programmatic efforts align to help address the Seattle Squeeze. Many of STBD's existing investments aim to improve transit service to, from, and through downtown Seattle. Additional investments, such as those made in September 2019, provide more bus trips and capacity for transit riders. The Seattle Squeeze is a priority as we make future investments in our transit system.

### Timeline of Major Events Impacting Downtown Mobility
























# FREQUENT TRANSIT NETWORK

First identified in the Transit Master Plan, Seattle's Frequent Transit Network (FTN) presents a long-term vision of interconnected bus routes crisscrossing the city, providing high quality and frequent transit service to all Seattle residents, employees, and visitors. This network helps to guide STBD's service investments.

## Defining Our Frequency Goals

Seattle's FTN establishes three different categories of routes: Local, Frequent, and Very Frequent. The FTN focuses on service that is frequent, all-day (18- to 24- hour service span), and everyday of the week. This interconnected network of routes helps create transit options for all Seattleites. The FTN scales frequency around parts of the day with the highest demand for transit, while also proactively creating a transit network for the Seattle of the future.

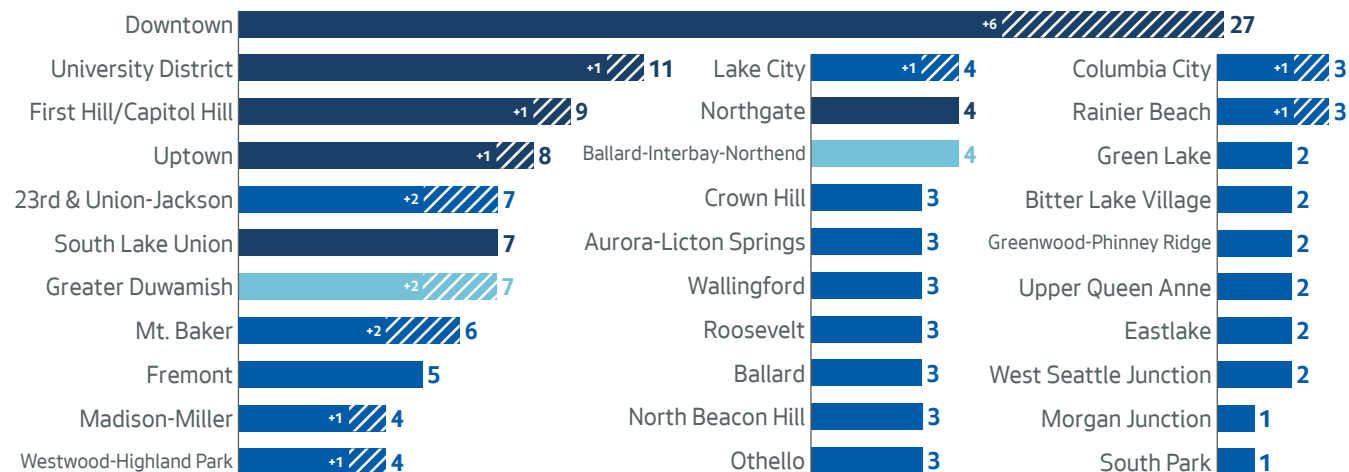
### FTN Frequency Targets

	All-day (6A - 7P)	WEEKDAY Evening (7P - 12A)	Night (12A - 6A)	All-day (6A - 7P)	SATURDAY Evening (7P - 12A)	Night (12A - 6A)	All-day (6A - 7P)	SUNDAY Evening (7P - 12A)	Night (12A - 6A)
<b>Very Frequent Routes</b> 10-Minute Service	 6 trips/hr 10-min Headways	 4 trips/hr 15-min Headways	 1 trips/hr 1-hr Headways	 4 trips/hr 15-min Headways	 3 trips/hr 20-min Headways	 1 trips/hr 1-hr Headways	 4 trips/hr 15-min Headways	 3 trips/hr 20-min Headways	 1 trips/hr 1-hr Headways
<b>Frequent Routes</b> 15-Minute Service	 4 trips/hr 15-min Headways	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	If need is identified	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	If need is identified	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	If need is identified
<b>Local Routes</b> 30-Minute Service	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	If need is identified	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	If need is identified	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	 2 trips/hr 30-min Headways	If need is identified

## Connecting Neighborhoods with Frequent Transit

Connecting our frequency improvements to where growth is occurring throughout Seattle is a core tenet of how STBD adds service to the network. The following graphics shows every Urban Center, Urban Village, and Manufacturing/Industrial Center in Seattle, along with the list and number of routes with Frequent service levels. The white hashes and numbers show how many routes were added to this network just in 2019.

### Number of Frequent or Better Routes by Neighborhood (and Number improved to Frequent in 2019)



The **Admiral Urban Village** is the only remaining neighborhood not being served by a Frequent Transit route. SDOT has added trips on Routes 50, 55, 56, and 57; has launched the Ride2 first/last mile service (see page 17); and is exploring options with Metro to continue to improve transit service and access in this area.

 Urban Center
  Urban Village
  Manufacturing/Industrial Center
  Routes Added in 2019

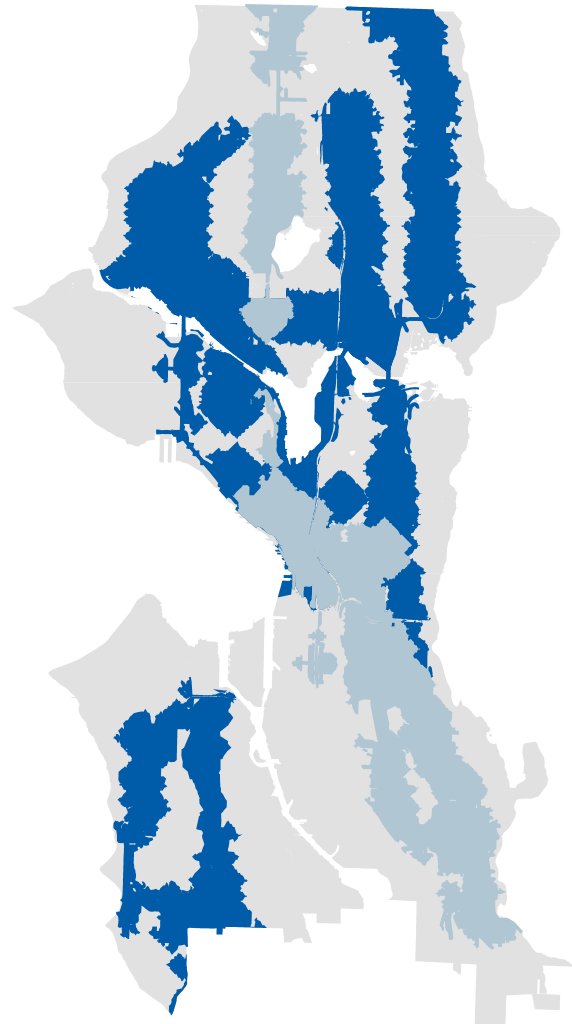




# The Very Frequent Transit Network

SDOT's "Very Frequent" routes serve the highest density and highest ridership areas of the city, providing connections north, south, east, and west to serve homes, jobs, and activities throughout Seattle. **Through STBD funding, Seattle increased its number of Very Frequent by eleven - from five routes in 2015 to sixteen routes in 2019.**

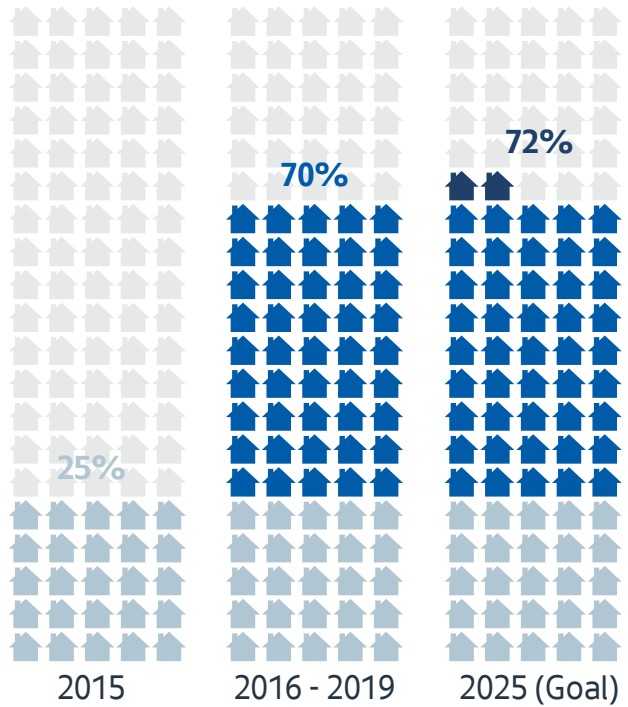
## Coverage of the Very Frequent Transit Network



-  **2015 10-Minute Walkshed**  
**Routes:** 3/4 (Central District), 7, 36, E Line, Central Link (Rainier Beach to Westlake)
-  **2016 - 2019 10-Minute Walkshed Improvements**  
**Routes:** 3/4/13 (Queen Anne), 40 (Downtown to Crown Hill), 41 (Northgate to Downtown)\*, 44, 48, 65, 67, 70, 120, C Line, D Line, U Link (Capitol Hill to Husky Stadium)

\*Last year's report incorrectly indicated that the full extent of the Route 41 to Lake City met the 10-minute definition.

## Percent of Households with Access to Very Frequent Transit Service, 2015 - 2019



The Levy to Move Seattle, a nine-year transportation funding levy passed by Seattle voters in 2015, put forth the goal of providing 72% of Seattle households with a 10-minute or shorter walk to 10-minute or better transit service by the year 2025. In just four years, STBD funded service investment to provide 70% of Seattle households with this level of service, up from just 25% in 2015. This puts the city within 2% of its 2025 goal with six years to go.

## Percent of Households with Access to one or more Very Frequent Routes



# INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE

## Growing Ridership and More Connections

Transportation connects people to opportunities for work, play, and life. In Seattle, the majority of public transit ridership occurs on King County Metro buses. STBD focuses investments on increasing the frequency and service span of bus connections to provide access to jobs and opportunities for Seattle residents and visitors.

As the primary transit provider in Seattle, King County Metro operates and manages the transit system. STBD investments allow Seattle to make additional investments in this network to improve service in Seattle. This allows Seattle to more quickly react to changing travel patterns and growth and proactively implement network improvements (like the Frequent Transit Network).

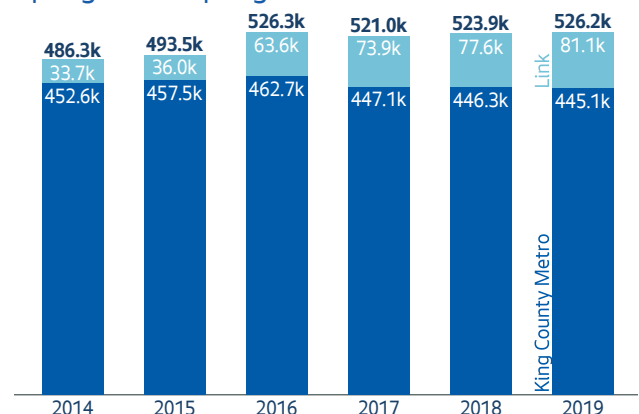
Additionally, when transit comes at a high frequency throughout the day and night, people can rely on the service and start to change their travel patterns and modal choices. As a result, STBD measures performance through increased frequency and service span and the utilization of that service (ridership).

## Ridership

Almost every major U.S. city has seen years of decline in bus ridership, but Seattle has been the exception in recent years. Since 2010, Seattle experienced continued ridership growth, in contrast to most major U.S. cities. In 2016, with the expansion of Link light rail to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington, ridership in Seattle saw another increase.

In recent years, ridership growth has slowed, but continues to buck the national trend of decreased transit ridership. Steady transit ridership is one of the priorities for the city and Seattle's Downtown Mobility efforts. To keep riders moving, STBD continues to work with our partners to improve service and make capital improvements that support transit service (see page 16).

**Weekday Daily Ridership on Metro Buses & Link**  
Spring 2014 - Spring 2019



## Year 4 Investments - 95,000 New Hours, Over 1,550 New Weekly Trips

At the end of Year 3, STBD had added over 6,500 weekly bus trips on routes serving Seattle (capacity for over 81,000 additional rides on Weekdays alone). In just Year 4, STBD added 617 new weekly trips, and will add 937 new weekly trips in September 2019 - capacity for an additional 12,000 rides on weekdays. See below for additions by service change during this period.

### Service Investment Metrics by Service Change September 2018 - September 2019

#### September 2018

+20,000  
New Hours

+301  
Weekly Trips

15 Routes  
Improved

+2,300 Daily Rider Capacity  
To/From Downtown during Peak

#### March 2019

+25,000  
New Hours

+316  
Weekly Trips

4 Routes  
Improved

+1,300 Daily Rider Capacity  
To/From Downtown during Peak

#### September 2019

+50,000  
New Hours

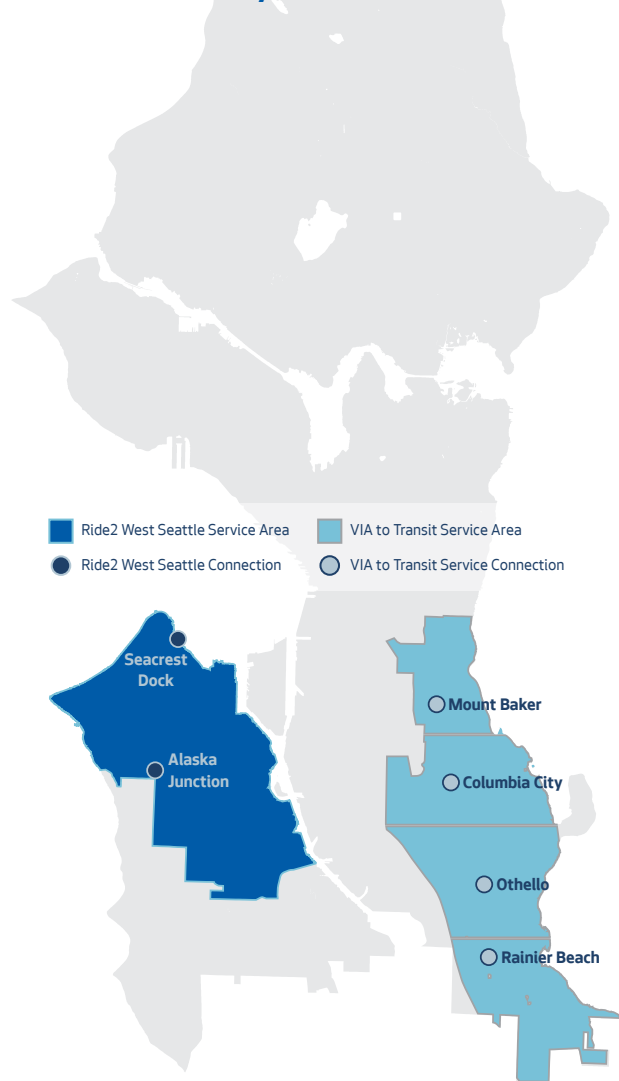
+937  
Weekly Trips

23 Routes  
Improved

+3,500 Daily Rider Capacity  
To/From Downtown during Peak



## Ride2 and VIA First/Last Mile Services



## First Mile/Last Mile Connections

First mile/last mile refers to the distance between transit and a person's origin or destination. For riders who live far from a transit stop or otherwise experience barriers to accessing transit, first mile/last mile services can help improve connections. Through STBD funding, Seattle pays for two first mile/last mile services that King County Metro is currently piloting. In partnership with Metro, SDOT will evaluate each pilot after 12 months of operations to inform potential service revisions or improvements.

### Ride2 West Seattle

In December 2018, as a part of efforts to address impacts to West Seattle riders during the viaduct closure, Metro launched Ride2 West Seattle. Fully funded by STBD, Ride2 provides peak period on-demand rides to and from the Alaska Junction and to and from the Water Taxi at Seacrest Park dock. Riders can connect to or from their home, school, or work and these transit hubs. From December 2018 – June 2019, Ride2 West Seattle carried over 130 average weekly riders between West Seattle and Seacrest Dock and Alaska Junction.

### VIA to Transit

In April 2019, King County Metro launched Via to Transit in Southeast Seattle and Tukwila. This service connects riders to and from Link light rail stations (Mount Baker, Columbia City, Othello, Rainier Beach, and Tukwila Int'l Blvd) 18 hours per day, seven days per week. STBD funding pays for over 80% of the Via to Transit service in Southeast Seattle, ensuring that riders can get to and from light rail stations whenever Link is operating. From April 2019 – June 2019, Via to Transit carried over 3,300 average weekly riders to all four Link Stations in Southeast Seattle.

## Other Services

### Trailhead Direct Regional Partnership

In 2018, Seattle began contributing funding to Trailhead Direct service. Trailhead Direct is a seasonal service (April - October) that operates on weekends and holidays between Seattle and popular hiking destinations outside of the City. In partnership with King County Metro, STBD funds 50% of the operational costs for these two Trailhead Direct routes:

The City helps fund two Trailhead Direct routes:

- Issaquah Alps from Mount Baker Transit Center
- Mount Si from the Capitol Hill Link light rail station

### Mercer Island Regional Partnership

Through the Regional Partnership program, STBD funds

25% of the Route 630. This investment connects the residential areas of Mercer Island and jobs in downtown Seattle and First Hill and provides a new connection for all riders.

### Downtown Circulator

In 2012, the Downtown Circulator began operations through Downtown Seattle to mitigate the discontinuation of the Ride Free Area. The Circulator provides transit service to key social services in the downtown core and operates from 7AM-4PM on weekdays. The Circulator is operated by Solid Ground through an agreement with King County Metro. The Seattle Transportation Benefit District funds the Downtown Circulator service.

# SPOT IMPROVEMENTS

## The Transit Spot Improvement Toolkit and Year 4 Completed Projects

While the City doesn't run the buses or light rail trains, we do work closely with King County Metro, Sound Transit, and other transit providers on major service and infrastructure changes within the city limits. We enhance transit through construction of capital improvements that improve speed and reliability, the operational environment, and passenger experience. These types of projects are funded through the Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) and the Levy to Move Seattle.



**Improve Safety:** SDOT revises existing channelization to help transit operate better and improve safety for all users of the public right-of-way.

- **NE Campus Pkwy & 12th Ave NE:** Signal change and turn restriction
- **5th Ave & Jackson St:** Advanced warning signs
- **15th Ave NW & NW 65th St\*:** Safety enhancements
- **Beacon Ave & Lander St\*:** Pedestrian-activated signal



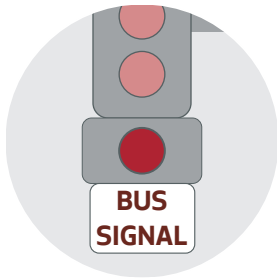
**Dedicate ROW:** SDOT converts existing travel lanes to dedicated lanes for buses to address delays caused by congestion, both all day and at peak congestion times.

- **4th Ave:** Red lane treatment
- **3rd Ave:** Bus Only restrictions
- **Terry Ave:** Red lane treatment
- **Westlake Ave:** Red lane treatment
- **15th Ave NW & NW 53rd St\*:** Bus Only lane
- **5th Ave/6th Ave\*:** New transit-only pathway



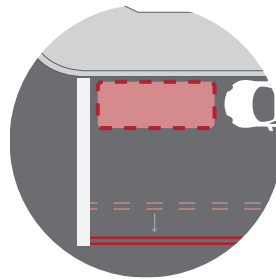
**Upgrade Bus Stops & Rider Amenities:** SDOT's improvements vary from installing new shelters and seating to providing lighting and real-time information signs to improve conditions for riders.

- **15th Ave NW & NW 65th St\*:** Stop improvements
- **15th Ave S & S Dakota St, S Stevens St, and S Spokane St:** Rear-door bus pads
- **California Ave SW & S Andover St and S Stevens St:** Rear-door bus pads
- **30th Ave NE & NE 127th St:** Rear-door bus pad
- **35th Ave NE & NE 81st St:** Rear-door bus pad
- **5th Ave W & W Galer St:** Rear-door bus pad



**Change Traffic Signals:** SDOT provides dedicated lane space and a green light for transit prior to a green light for general purpose traffic, helping transit to avoid congestion-related delays at busy intersections and improve travel for all.

- **NE 45th St & 17th Ave NE\*:** Signal change
- **Howell St & Yale Ave\*:** Queue jump
- **Seattle Blvd\*:** Signal improvements
- **Beacon Ave & Lander St\*:** Pedestrian-activated signal
- **15th Ave NW & NW 53rd St\*:** Pedestrian-activated signal
- **5th Ave/6th Ave\*:** Transit signal improvements



**Enhance Roadway Operations:** To enhance roadway operations, SDOT may change curb space uses (e.g. restricting parking) and adjust travel lanes (e.g. shifting center lines to accommodate turning movements).

- **NE 45th St & 17th Ave NE\*:** Increase turn pocket length
- **Howell St\*:** Shift Bus Only lane
- **Seattle Blvd\*:** Rechannelization



**Expand Multimodal Access:** SDOT may construct in-lane bus stop or bus bulbs which extend bus stops for rider and pedestrian use; these projects allow transit to serve a bus stop navigating in an out of traffic while accommodating multimodal uses.

- **15th Ave NW & NW 65th St\*:** Pedestrian access improvements
- **Rainier Ave S & S Charles St:** Pedestrian access improvements

\*Project fits in multiple categories.

**Year 4 Projects Complete: 22**



## Highlighted 2018-2019 Projects

### 3rd Ave Bus-Only Lane Extension

In August 2018, SDOT extended the transit-only hours on 3rd Ave (from Stewart St to Prefontaine Pl S) in downtown Seattle to reserve these lanes for buses and people biking, from morning to night, 6 AM - 7 PM, seven days a week. In the morning, 3rd Ave median speeds remained constant - around 6 MPH in the southbound direction and 7 MPH in the northbound direction - from June 2018 to June 2019. In the afternoon, 3rd Ave median speeds increased slightly from June 2018 to June 2019. In the southbound direction, speeds increased from ~5.5 MPH to 6 MPH and in the northbound direction, speeds remained constant around 5.5 MPH.



### Howell Street

In March 2019, SDOT made operational improvements to Howell St between 9th Ave and Yale Ave to make it easier for bus and car trips to access I-5 in the afternoon peak. To do this, SDOT relocated the bus lane on Howell St to the left curb lane, added a new eastbound transit queue jump on Howell St at Yale Ave that gives a head start to buses, and restricted parking during the PM peak on the left curb lane on Howell St between 9th Ave and Yale Ave.

Previously, the bus lane was located in the right center lane of Howell St, impacted by backups and delays as cars merged right to the I-5 south onramp at Yale St. This change improved travel time by 30% (3.2 minutes to 2.2 minutes) for transit operating along this pathway.



### 5th & 6th Transit Pathway

In March 2019, the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel closed to buses and 15 bus routes started operating on new pathways through downtown. This change added about 800 more bus trips on downtown streets each day, including 70 more bus trips during rush hour, and about 37,600 daily riders, including the 11,000 people who catch their bus downtown during the evening rush hour.

To keep buses and riders moving, the City of Seattle built a new transit pathway on 5th and 6th Avenues. SDOT extended the existing, northbound transit lane on 5th Avenue to Marion Street, where it connects to 6th Ave so buses can continue north to Olive Way. This new pathway provides more transit capacity and improves travel time and reliability for northbound buses. Bus speeds and travel time reliability are steady month to month, with median travel speeds around 7 MPH.







# TRANSPORTATION EQUITY & ACCESS

Created in 2017, the Transportation Equity Program (TEP) helps provide safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation options for Seattle's most vulnerable and disproportionately cost-burdened individuals and households. To achieve this, the Transportation Equity Program utilizes innovative and inclusive programming to design equitable programs and deploys mitigation strategies for cost-burdened individuals and households. Each program below is a strategy implemented in the past year to help improve access and education around transportation options.

## Transportation Equity Workgroup\*

In 2019, SDOT created the Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW) to provide a set of community-guided recommendations to be considered in the development of a Transportation Equity Agenda, a framework for transportation equity goals and priorities. The TEW consists of 10 community members with personal and professional connections with marginalized communities

including communities of color, people with disabilities, seniors, and immigrant and refugee populations. TEW members meet monthly for one year through facilitated engagement to collaborate and develop community guided recommendations and build community trust. This is a first step in utilizing inclusive community engagement to help SDOT define its transportation equity values and priorities.

## Youth Transportation Ambassadors Program

The TEP partners with community-based organizations serving communities of color to deliver culturally relevant programming on accessible and affordable transportation options. Through the Youth Transportation Ambassadors Program, SDOT partnered with two Seattle community-based organizations serving youth of color to develop and implement transportation equity and transportation

options projects led by youth. In 2019, Red Eagle Soaring and We.APP (Act.Present.Perform) participated in the partnership and the TEP collaborated with King County Metro and Hopelink to provide support and technical assistance to the organizations. This partnership supports these organizations to develop and implement youth-led transportation equity-related education projects.

## ORCA Opportunity

To improve travel options for students, the City of Seattle launched the ORCA Opportunity Program in 2018. In August 2018, ORCA Opportunity expanded to include free, unlimited 12-month ORCA cards for:

- High school students at Seattle Public Schools\*
- Income-eligible middle school students in Seattle Public Schools (500 students enrolled, all city-funded)
- Seattle Promise Scholars (~200 cards distributed)

In 2019, SDOT expanded to serve additional populations through a partnership with the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA). In June 2019, SDOT and SHA launched a pilot that provides 12-month, unlimited ORCA cards to 1,500 income-eligible SHA residents. Eligible residents must live in a pre-selected SHA property, be ages 19-64, and live in a household with less than 30% of the area median income.

\*Of the 15,000 SPS high school students, 11,900 received a 12-month ORCA card, 7,000 of which were fully funded by STBD. The remaining 4,900 cards were extended through summer thanks to STBD funding. The remaining students may not have known they were eligible or did not know how to enroll - two issues addressed in marketing materials for the 2019-20 school year.

## Senior Regional Reduced Fare Permit Pilot

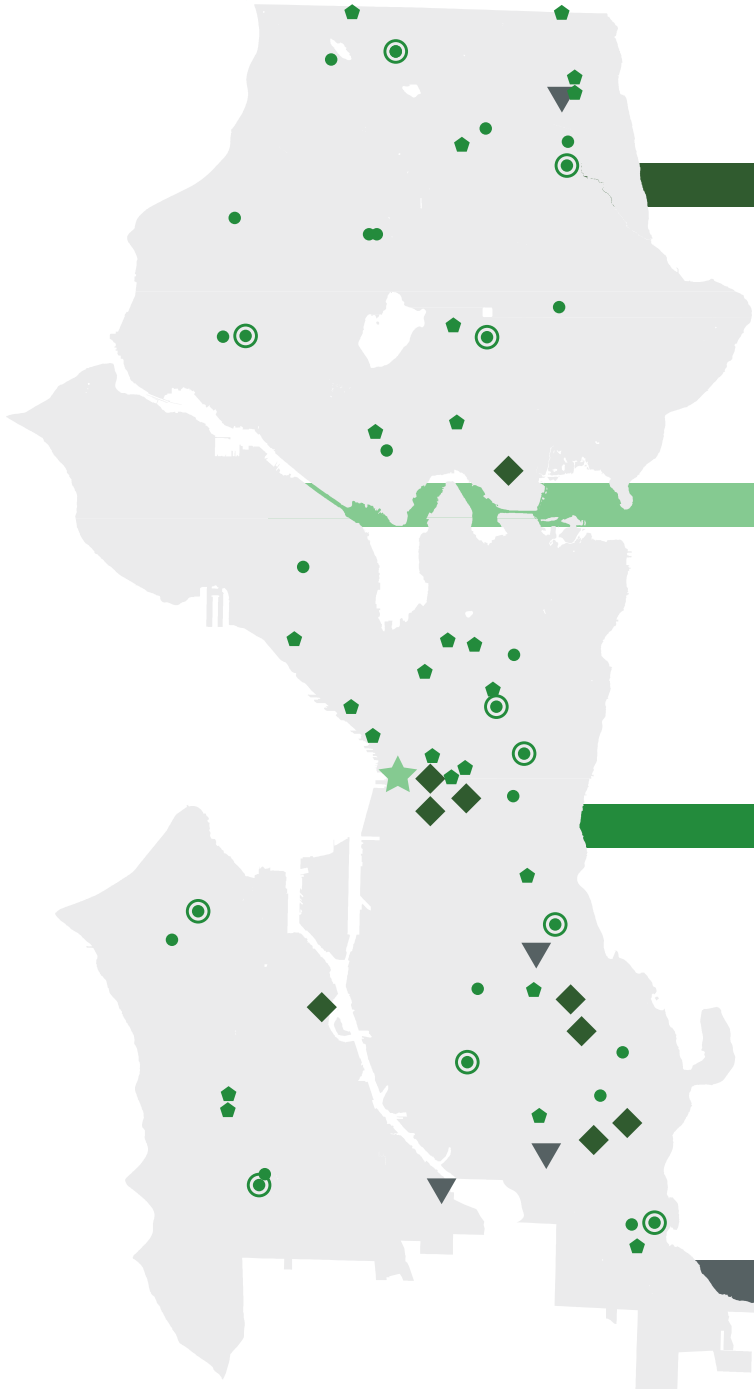
In 2019, SDOT launched a pilot program to enroll and educate Seattle seniors on the Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP), the ORCA card that entitles senior riders (65+), riders with a disability, and Medicare card holders to a reduced fare. The RRFP is an underutilized program and the pilot is an opportunity for SDOT to further learn the challenges seniors face in accessing RRFP and transit.

The Senior RRFP pilot is a partnership between SDOT, Hopelink, Department of Neighborhoods (DON), King County Metro, the City of Seattle Human Services

Department (HSD) - Aging & Disability Services (ADS) and four Seattle-based senior center sites: Lake City Senior Center Project, Asian Counseling & Referral Service, IDIC Filipino Senior and Family Services and South Park Senior Center. SDOT's Transportation Equity Program provides \$36 vouchers to newly enrolled seniors in the RRFP program and coordinates training for senior center staff and DON Community Liaisons to provide RRFP education and enrollment assistance to seniors. TEP estimates serving 200 seniors for the pilot.



# Organizations Engaged through the Transportation Equity Program



## ◆ Transportation Equity Workgroup Organizations

Chinese Information Service Center, Duwamish Tribe, Food Empowerment Education Sustainability Team (FEEST - White Center), Multicultural Community Coalition, Muslim Housing Services, People of Color Against AIDS Network (POCAAN), Rainier Valley Corps, Rainier Valley Greenways, Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDpda), UW Center for Experiential Learning & Diversity

## ★ Youth Transportation Ambassador Organizations

We.APP youth scholars were trained on transit options and used public transportation to attend a series of diversity dinners called Plate of Origin to experience unique cultures within the greater Seattle area.

Red Eagle Soaring youth were trained on public transit options and created a film that narrates the connection between public transportation and how native youth utilize transportation to stay connected to their culture and larger native community.

## ● All Seattle Public High Schools

Ballard, Chief Sealth, Cleveland, Franklin, Garfield, Ingraham, Nathan Hale, Rainier Beach, Roosevelt, West Seattle, World School

## ● Seattle Public Middle Schools

Aki Kurose, Broadview Thomson, Denny, Eckstein, Hamilton, Hazel Wolf, Jane Addams, Licton Springs, Madison, McClure, Meany, Mercer, Orca, Robert Eagle Staff, Salmon Bay, South Shore, Washington, Whitman

## ◆ Seattle Housing Authority Properties

Denny Terrace, Lake City Court, Lake City House, Rainier Vista, High Point, Green Lake Plaza, Hoa Mai Gardens, Kebero Court, Jackson Park, New Holly , Jefferson Terrace, Ross Manor, University House, University West, Cedarvale House, Tri-Court, Olive Ridge, Barton Place, Capitol Park, Harvard Court, Stewart Manor, Center Park, Center West, Bell Tower

## ▼ Participating Senior Centers

Lake City Senior Center (Sound Generations), Asian Counseling & Referral Service (ACRS) and International Drop In Center, Filipino Senior & Family Services, South Park Senior Center

## Transportation Equity Engagement

- ◆ 10 Community Organizations (Transportation Equity Workgroup)
- ★ 2 Youth Organizations (Youth Transportation Ambassadors Program)
- 11 High Schools (ORCA Opportunity)
- 18 Middle Schools (ORCA Opportunity)
- ◆ 24 SHA Properties (ORCA Opportunity)
- ▼ 4 Senior Centers (Regional Reduced Fare Permit Pilot)

\*The Transportation Equity Workgroup is not directly funded through STBD.

# FINANCIALS

## STBD Revenue and Budget

STBD Proposition 1 implemented a 0.1% sales tax increase and an additional \$60 vehicle license fee, which generates over \$50M annually. STBD revenues have grown each year and are expected to continue to grow throughout the life of the program.

### Effective and Efficient Use of Revenues

STBD funds several programs through the sales tax and vehicle license fee revenues. The largest portion of STBD expenditures goes to transit service on routes traveling to, through, and from Seattle. These services provide additional capacity and bus trips to riders across the city, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

In 2018, STBD underwent a Material Scope Change (additional information on page 9) to authorize funding for the ORCA Opportunity Program (page 40) and capital investments to improve transit speed and reliability and passenger amenities. Funding for these programs comes from STBD beginning in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

### Equitable and Affordable

Income-eligible Seattle residents are eligible for a partial refund of the fees collected under the vehicle license fee portion of STBD. Through the Transportation Equity Program (established in 2017) and associated income-eligible work, STBD funds increased outreach and awareness among the community about the ORCA Opportunity Program (transit cards for high school students, income-eligible middle school students, and select Seattle Housing Authority residents), and the Downtown Circulator service. These income-eligible programs help to improve the affordability of transit throughout the city.

### Fiscally Responsible

STBD funds about \$40 million in transit service each year, which can only be added or removed at two times during the year (March and September) based on King County Metro's operational rules. Because of the requirement to make changes at those times, STBD reserves funds to pay for transit service until the next available service change.

At the end of 2020, STBD will stop accruing revenue, but will need to fund service through at least March 2021 (the next available time to remove service based on King County Metro's operational rules). As a result, STBD maintains a reserve fund to pay for this service.

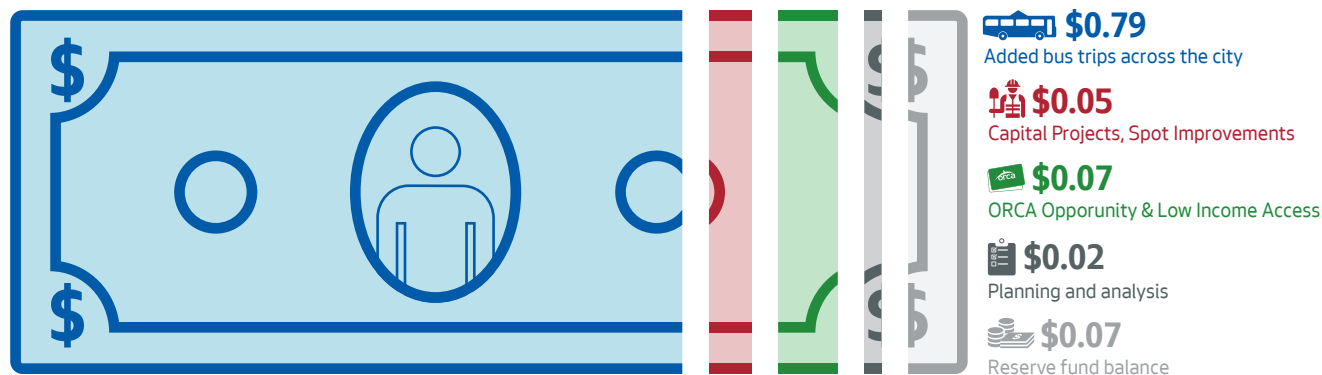
In 2015, STBD set aside \$10 million in the reserve fund. As revenues increased, STBD set aside an additional \$10M in 2018, providing SDOT with \$20 million in 2021 to fund service through part of 2021 (see note 7 in the budget below).

### Transparent and Accountable

As a voter-approved initiative, STBD provides annual budget spending information in its reporting. The budget below provides a high-level overview of revenues and expenditures by programmatic area. To ensure transparency and accountability, a detailed budget is included on the next page.

## STBD Spending Breakdown, per Dollar 2015 - 2018 Actuals, 2019 Revised, 2020 Proposed

\$0.91 of every dollar collected through STBD Proposition 1 goes directly towards improving transit service and access in Seattle



# STBD Budget Summary 2015 - 2018 Actuals, 2019 Revised, 2020 Proposed

Category	Activity	2015 ACTUAL	2016 ACTUALS	2017 ACTUALS	2018 ACTUALS	2019 REVISED	2020 PROPOSED
Revenue	Sales Tax - 0.1%	\$ 17,542,790	\$ 24,727,410	\$ 26,454,472	\$ 28,905,632	\$ 30,234,942	\$ 30,912,698
	VLF - \$60	\$ 13,711,121	\$ 23,570,448	\$ 23,911,218	\$ 24,177,064	\$ 24,270,468	\$ 24,610,254
	Interest Earnings	\$ 29,283	\$ 213,069	\$ 412,497	\$ 3,950	\$ -	\$ -
	Prior Year Fund Balance Carryforward	\$ -	\$ 7,668,498	\$ 14,853,801	\$ 27,952,671	\$ 27,564,331	\$ 24,737,764
	<b>Revenues Total</b>	\$ 31,283,195	\$ 56,179,424	\$ 65,631,988	\$ 81,039,317	\$ 82,069,741	\$ 80,260,716
VLF Rebate	Program Administration	\$ 8,937	\$ 48,851	\$ 86,171	\$ 339	\$ -	\$ 25,000
	Rebate Cost	\$ 42,650	\$ 108,200	\$ 88,740	\$ 109,020	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
	HSD Partnership	\$ 115,148	\$ 324,275	\$ 260,141	\$ 186,212	\$ 212,940	\$ 218,263
	Communications & Marketing	\$ 48,077	\$ 10,399	\$ 12,866	\$ 4,031	\$ -	\$ 45,000
	<b>VLF Rebate Subtotal</b>	\$ 214,812	\$ 491,725	\$ 447,918	\$ 299,602	\$ 312,940	\$ 388,263
Low-Income Access to Transit	Downtown Circulator Service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 339,840	\$ 284,258	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000
	Transportation Equity Program Management	\$ 233,069	\$ 192,119	\$ 290,983	\$ 606,023	\$ 500,000	\$ 370,000
	Partner Administration (KCPH, HSD, DON)	\$ 56,098	\$ 272,601	\$ 311,863	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 80,000
	ORCA Cards	\$ -	\$ 242,100	\$ 62,065	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Ambassador Program	\$ 2,447	\$ 161,079	\$ 8,224	\$ 131,870	\$ -	\$ 50,000
	Youth ORCA	\$ -	\$ 830,489	\$ 829,432	\$ 561,621	\$ -	\$ -
	SHA ORCA Pilot	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
	HSD Senior Transportation Pilot	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
	<b>Low-Income Access to Transit Subtotal</b>	\$ 291,614	\$ 1,698,389	\$ 1,842,407	\$ 1,583,772	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
	Program Administration	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,325	\$ 246,515	\$ 985,000
ORCA Opportunity	ORCA Cards	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,574,120	\$ 3,252,067	\$ 3,015,000
	<b>ORCA Opportunity Subtotal</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,590,445	\$ 3,498,582	\$ 4,000,000
Planning & Analysis	Communications & Marketing	\$ 440,167	\$ 126,123	\$ 110,042	\$ 121,141	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000
	Program Management	\$ 49,103	\$ 554,069	\$ 535,719	\$ 168,461	\$ 200,000	\$ 692,477
	Service Planning	\$ 38,916	\$ 5,056	\$ 2,418	\$ 202,903	\$ 480,466	\$ -
	<b>Planning &amp; Analysis Subtotal</b>	\$ 528,186	\$ 685,247	\$ 648,179	\$ 492,505	\$ 980,466	\$ 992,477
Transit Service	Seattle Routes	\$ 12,410,562	\$ 37,249,225	\$ 32,916,038	\$ 38,570,025	\$ 43,538,772	\$ 54,590,582
	First Mile/ Last Mile Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,650,000	\$ 3,976,000
	Regional Partnership Routes	\$ 95,026	\$ 1,115,493	\$ 1,769,003	\$ 844,158	\$ 875,000	\$ 847,626
	<b>STBD Transit Service Subtotal</b>	\$ 12,505,588	\$ 38,364,718	\$ 34,685,041	\$ 39,414,183	\$ 47,063,772	\$ 59,414,208
Capital Investments	Transit Capital Projects	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,600,000	\$ 9,414,462
	<b>Capital Investments Subtotal</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,600,000	\$ 9,414,462
Other	FAS Administration (Non-SDOT)	\$ 74,497	\$ 85,544	\$ 55,774	\$ 94,479	\$ 95,000	\$ 82,523
	Election Costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 750,000
	Reserve Funds*	\$ 10,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000	\$ -	\$ -
	<b>Other Subtotal</b>	\$ 10,074,497	\$ 85,544	\$ 55,774	\$ 10,094,479	\$ 95,000	\$ 832,523
	<b>Expenditures Total</b>	\$ 23,614,697	\$ 41,325,623	\$ 37,679,319	\$ 53,474,986	\$ 60,550,760	\$ 77,041,933
	<b>Balance</b>	\$ 7,668,498	\$ 14,853,801	\$ 27,952,669	\$ 27,564,331	\$ 21,518,981	\$ 3,218,783

\*STBD set aside \$10 million in Reserve Funds in 2015, and an additional \$10 million in 2018, in the event that a reduction in service is needed.







