

Seattle Department of Transportation

# 2022 TRANSIT SPOT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM REPORT



September 2023



**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation

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# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Transit Spot Improvement Program is led by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Transit and Mobility Division, with support from several teams within SDOT, including Project Development, Capital Projects, Transportation Operations, Maintenance Operations and Communications. The Transit Spot Improvement Program is part of the Levy to Move Seattle. Approved by voters in November 2015, the 9-year, \$930 million Levy to Move Seattle provides funding to improve safety for all travelers, maintain our streets and bridges, and invest in reliable, affordable travel options for a growing city. This annual report describes 2022 Transit Spot Improvement Program accomplishments.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Transit Spot Improvement Program is to build smaller-scale transit capital investments that improve the operating environment for transit, making trips faster, safer, and more reliable for transit riders. The goals for the Transit Spot Improvement Program include:

1. Reduce delays in travel time and increase reliability for bus operations.
2. Improve safety for transit riders, bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers.
3. Improve passenger experience by making passenger facilities better.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDING

The Transit Spot Improvement Program is funded by a variety of funding sources, including voter approved and partnership funds. These sources include the Levy to Move Seattle, Vehicle License Fees (VLF), including a \$20 VLF implemented in 2010 and the 2020 Seattle Transit Measure; and partnerships with King County Metro and Sound Transit.

To maximize the use of available local resources with SDOT, the Transit Spot Improvement Program successfully partners with other SDOT programs to plan, design, and implement projects. Partner programs include Sidewalk Repair; Americans with Disability Act (ADA); Bike, Pedestrian, and Pavement programs; Vision Zero; and Safe Routes to Schools. The Transit Spot Improvement Program also delivers projects on behalf of the Seattle Transit Measure.

The Transit Spot Improvement Program partners with King County and Sound Transit, to identify projects that are needed to support their bus operations and safety needs. By supporting these agencies with roadway infrastructure, Seattle transit riders benefit from these improvements.

## ADVANCING EQUITY

SDOT recognizes equity as a core value and believes transportation must meet the needs of communities of color and those of all incomes, ages, and abilities. SDOT's goal is to partner with communities to build a racially equitable and socially just transportation system.

To help achieve this goal, SDOT created the [Transportation Equity Program](#) which provides department-wide policy and strategic advisement on equitable, safe, environmentally sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation systems that support Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, low-income populations, people living with disabilities, and other communities historically and currently underinvested in by government. The Transit Spot Improvement Program contributes to the goals of the Transportation Equity Program by seeking to make transit safe, attractive, and

reliable. Staff participated in the development of the Transportation Equity Framework in 2021, which is ongoing. The Transit Spot Improvement Program also continued to prioritize investments in historically underserved or currently disinvested areas.

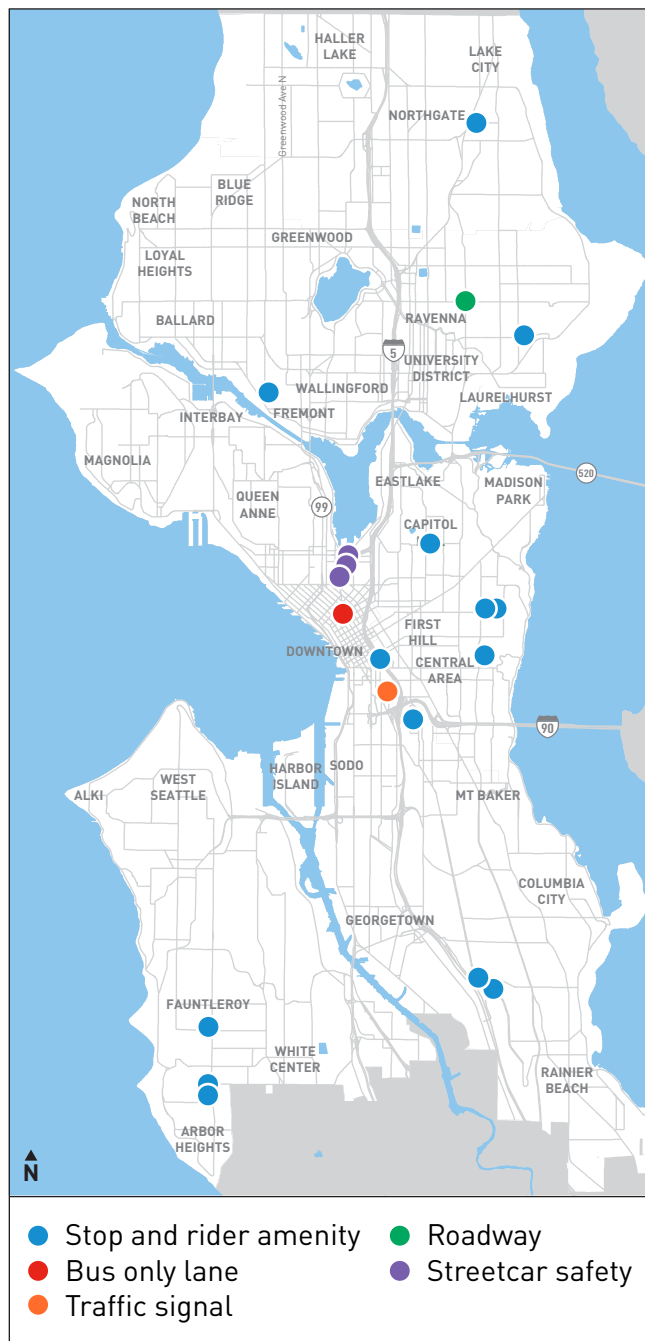
In 2022, the Transit Spot Improvement Program focused on supporting strategies that have been identified in the Transportation Equity Framework, including the following:

*Identify opportunities to repurpose some travel lanes for transit, biking, and smaller, lighter-weight vehicles and devices to create more travel options with the Seattle Transportation Plan.*

## Summary of 2022 Transit Spot Improvement Program Accomplishments

Type of Transit Spot Improvement Program	Total Completed
Bus-Only Lanes	1
Bus Stop and Rider Amenities	14
Traffic Signal Upgrades	1
Roadway Improvements	1
Streetcar Safety Improvements	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

## MAP OF 2022 TRANSIT SPOT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS



# 2022 TRANSIT SPOT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## 1. BUS-ONLY LANES

SDOT converted existing travel lanes to dedicated bus-only lanes to improve transit travel time and reliability in congested areas. Before implementing these changes, SDOT conducted an evaluation of the benefits and trade-offs of converting a general-purpose travel lane to a bus only lane. The capital investment for a lane conversion can include signage, lane markings and red paint to reinforce the “bus only” lane designation.

### Accomplishments include:

Location	Project
Pine St between 3rd Ave and 9th Ave	Red paint treatment and signage to improve bus lane operations

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Pine St between 3rd Ave and 9th Ave

In August 2022, SDOT installed red paint treatment on Pine St between 3rd Ave and 9th Ave. On this section of Pine St, King County Metro operates several routes including routes 10, 11, 49 and 162. Given the high volume of buses, riders often experienced delays while traveling westbound on Pine St. By making the bus lane more visible to drivers, violation rates and delay to bus operations will be reduced.



## 2. BUS STOP AND RIDER AMENITIES

To make riding transit more attractive and comfortable, SDOT makes improvements to existing bus zones by installing bus benches, bus shelter footings, rear door landing pads, and bus bulbs. Rear door landing pads allow passengers to board and alight from the rear of the bus, while bus bulbs provide more waiting areas for

transit riders. In some cases, the Transit Spot Improvement Program partners with other SDOT programs such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) program to provide enhancements such as curb ramps. The Transit Spot Improvement Program also partners with King County Metro to install bus shelters which provide riders with weather protection and a seating area.

### Accomplishments include:

Location	Transit Spot Improvement Program	Transit Route Benefit
35th Ave SW and SW 100th St	Asphalt overlay of roadway adjacent to bus zone	21
35th Ave SW and SW 98th St	Asphalt overlay of roadway adjacent to bus zone	21
27th Ave S and Yesler Way	Rear door pad	8, 27
Beacon Ave and S Myrtle St	Rear door pad	107
39th Ave NE and NE 55th St	Rear door pad	65, 79
5th Ave and Jefferson St	Fill In Tree Pits	257, 302, 303, 412, 413, 416, 421, 425
Lake City Way and NE 113th St	Bus shelter pad	20, 320, 322, 372
N 39th St and Greenwood Ave N	Bus shelter pad	28
15th Ave E and E Harrison St	Bus platform	10
Beacon Ave and S Othello St	Rear door pad	107
35th Ave SW and SW Elmgrove St	Rear door pad	21
12th Ave and S Judkins St	Rear door pad	36, 60
E Union St and 30th Ave S	Rear door pad	2
E Union St and 31st Ave S	Rear door pad	2



## HIGHLIGHTS

### Eastbound Union St and 30th Ave E

The Seattle Department of Transportation installed bus zone improvements on E Union St and 30th Ave. The improved bus zone allows passengers to disembark using the rear door and repaired sidewalk.





### 3. TRAFFIC SIGNALS

SDOT installs transit signal priority on busy corridors. Transit signal priority allows traffic lights to turn green when the Streetcar and buses approach the intersection and thereby reduce delay and increase reliability. SDOT partners with King County Metro to identify signal locations and install bus only signals that meet the requirements for King County Metro, Community Transit and Sound Transit buses.

#### Accomplishments include:

Location	Project
Jackson St between 5th Ave and 9th Ave	Transit signal priority

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Westbound Jackson St and 7th Ave

On eastbound and westbound Jackson St between 9th Ave and 5th Ave, transit signal priority was installed. Transit signal priority has improved reliability and reduces delay for the First Hill Streetcar.





## 4. ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The Transit Spot Improvement Program makes changes to existing right-of-way, curb space (restricting or adjusting parking and loading) and adjusts travel lanes (shifting traffic stop bars) to improve bus operations on roadways. These changes make it easier for buses to operate in the urban environment and reduce the potential for collisions with other modes of transportation. Benefits to transit riders include reductions in travel time and a safer travel experience.

### Accomplishments include:

Location	Project
25th Ave NE and NE 65th St	Parking restriction extension

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Southbound 25th Ave NE and NE 65th St

At the intersection of southbound 25th Ave NE and NE 65th St, King County Metro buses experienced delay when merging back into traffic after serving the bus stop located at the northwest corner of NE 65th St and 25th Ave. On street parking was restricted on southbound 25th Ave NE to provide merging space, reducing delay and increasing safety for buses and riders.



## 5. STREETCAR SAFETY

SDOT owns and maintains the South Lake Union and First Hill Streetcars. As the owner of the Streetcar, SDOT complies with federal safety regulations and prioritizes safety in investment decisions. The Transit Spot Improvement Program works in partnership with Streetcar Chief Safety Officer and the Vision Zero program to identify safety needs and implement projects to improve safety.

Safety improvements include separating bicycle facilities from the streetcar tracks, installing bicycle signals and installing barriers to prevent automobiles from parking in or too close to streetcar tracks.

### Accomplishments include:

Location	Project
5th Ave and Stewart St	“Look” legends at McGraw Square
Terry Ave and Mercer St	Bicycle markings
Terry Ave and Thomas St	Hatchings to prevent cars from blocking tracks
Westlake Ave and Thomas St	Hatchings to prevent cars from blocking tracks
Westlake Ave and John St	Hatchings to prevent cars from blocking tracks
Jackson St and Occidental Ave	Reflective Markers

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Westbound Jackson St and Occidental Ave

To increase the visibility of the Streetcar, SDOT installed reflective markers along the Streetcar platform at Occidental and Jackson Streets. The purpose of reflective pavement markers is to provide safety reminders to drivers about where they are on the road. Reflectors help alert drivers if they have drifted out of a lane or that they should proceed with caution.



# 2023 LOOK AHEAD

The Transit Spot Improvement Program had a very successful year, managing multiple priorities for its resources and delivering over 23 Transit Spot Improvement Program projects throughout the City of Seattle. To produce this high volume of projects, the Transit Spot Improvement Program partnered with other programs, such as the Pavement Spot program, Vision Zero, and the Sidewalk Repair program to deliver projects. With the Move Seattle Levy program nearing its completion in 2024, the Transit Spot Improvement Program is on track for meeting its Levy commitments. This success has been attributed to working closely with other divisions, including Project Development and Delivery and Capital Projects which deliver most of the Transit Spot Improvement Program projects.

As the Transit Spot Improvement Program heads into 2023, the Transit Spot Improvement Program will continue to manage a high volume of requests and support the following SDOT priorities:

- Move Seattle Levy funded projects
- King County Metro partnered spot improvements
- Streetcar and transit safety projects
- Seattle Transit Measure capital investments
- Transportation Equity Framework advancement



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9.2023