



# 2018 Transit Integration Report

NOVEMBER 2018



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		 <small>Public Works and Utilities Department</small>
	 Puget Sound Regional Council	
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## 2018 TRANSIT INTEGRATION REPORT / November 2018

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# Introduction

The 2018 Transit Integration Report is the fifth annual report from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) documenting transit coordination activities underway and anticipated in the central Puget Sound region. This year's report focuses on agency coordination to build the regional transit system, specifically focused on the investment made at regional transit hubs and increasing access to these stations.



The Transit Integration Report fulfills reporting requirements in RCW 35.58.2796(2(a)), requiring the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to “develop an annual report summarizing the status of public transportation system coordination” in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. The report also fulfills reporting requirements of the Puget Sound Transit Coordination Grant identified in RCW 47.66.110(6). Grant recipients are highlighted with .

This report continues to document the efforts of transit agencies and other regional transportation stakeholders as they coordinate to improve the transportation system performance and lay the groundwork for the significant expansion of the region's transit network over the next several years. Many stories include future steps that stakeholders will take to continue coordination. These stories are marked with .

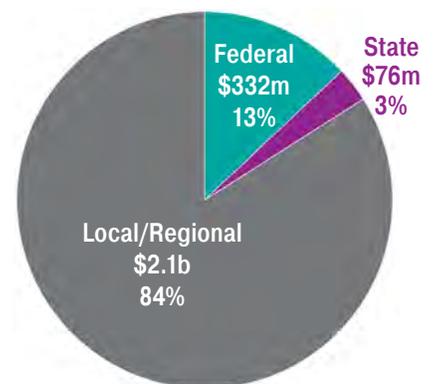
The central Puget Sound region has made a commitment to providing a transformative, multimodal transportation system that will provide fast, reliable connections between regional centers and surrounding communities. As these mass transit projects come on line, the region's transit vision ensures that all transit investments and services are integrated into one, easy-to-use network that makes regional and local destinations convenient to get to and that best serves the public. This is the vision established by the regionally integrated 2040 transit network developed in PSRC's Regional Transportation Plan.

Currently, transit agencies coordinate on a wide variety of fronts, including infrastructure planning and design, providing service, integrating fares and customer information, engaging with local communities, and the funding of operations and infrastructure. The adjacent chart illustrates the broad categories of funding sources transit agencies rely on to deliver the system that will be seamless for every user across the region.

Transit integration must continue to be seen in a broader context, not only among and between transit agencies, but also including local jurisdictions and other key stakeholders to realize the vision of an integrated regional transit system. This vision underscores the need to work with partner agencies to identify key issues and take steps to resolve them. Transit integration is a foundation for continuous improvement.

## Central Puget Sound Public Transit Operators — 2016 Revenue Sources

Source: 2017 Summary of Public Transportation.



**Local:** Local & Regional tax and operating revenues.

**State:** State grants (e.g. Regional Mobility, Special Needs, etc.).

**Federal:** Federal Grants (PSRC funds, Small Starts/ New Starts, etc.).



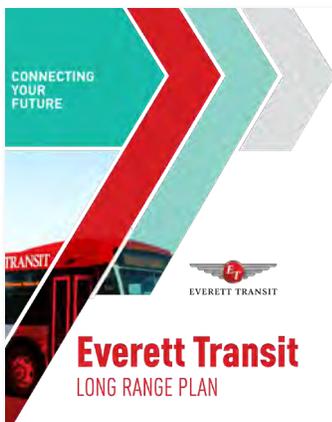
# Building an Integrated Transit System

## Long-range planning and Remix



In 2018 PSRC adopted the Regional Transportation Plan, an update of the region's long-range transportation vision. With a horizon year of 2040, the plan shows how the region intends to catch up and keep pace with expected growth by outlining regional investments that support the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Sound Transit updated its long-range plan in 2014, and subsequently the voters approved the third system investment package, Sound Transit 3 (ST3) in 2016, which provides a plan and funding for connecting the region with various modes of high-capacity transit through 2041. Development of ST3, along with continuing efforts to integrate public transit services, created an impetus for agencies throughout the region to develop or update their own long-range transit plans. As regional high-capacity transit and the frequent transit network that supports it continue to expand, agencies are thinking further ahead and collaborating more closely than ever to create a seamless and user-friendly public transit system.



In coordination with PSRC's Regional Transportation Plan, simultaneous long-range planning by local transit agencies resulted in a clearer picture of the bus network supporting and integrating with the high-capacity transit system through 2040. PSRC worked extensively with the region's public transportation providers to incorporate their latest long-range plans into an integrated 2040 transit network.

### AGENCY LONG-RANGE PLANS



The 2016 Transit Integration Report highlighted the multiple transit agency long range and system planning activities happening that year. Sound Transit, King County Metro, Pierce Transit, Kitsap Transit, and WSDOT each adopted a plan in 2016 or 2017. Community Transit adopted a long range plan in 2011.

On June 13, 2018, the Everett City Council adopted the Everett Transit Long Range Plan. The plan focuses on developing a more frequent service network that benefits from coordination with regional transportation providers. Everett Transit is unique in being one of only three municipally operated public transit systems in the state of Washington.

WSF is developing a long-range plan for the future of the state's ferry system through 2040. The update to the current 2009 long range plan will take into consideration the changing needs of ferry system users and associated funding opportunities and challenges.



## REGIONAL ACCESS TO REMIX

The Regional Access to Remix Transit Sketch Planning project was a partnership between PSRC and central Puget Sound transit agencies, including the City of Seattle and WSF, to obtain and utilize an enterprise license to the Remix transit sketch planning platform.

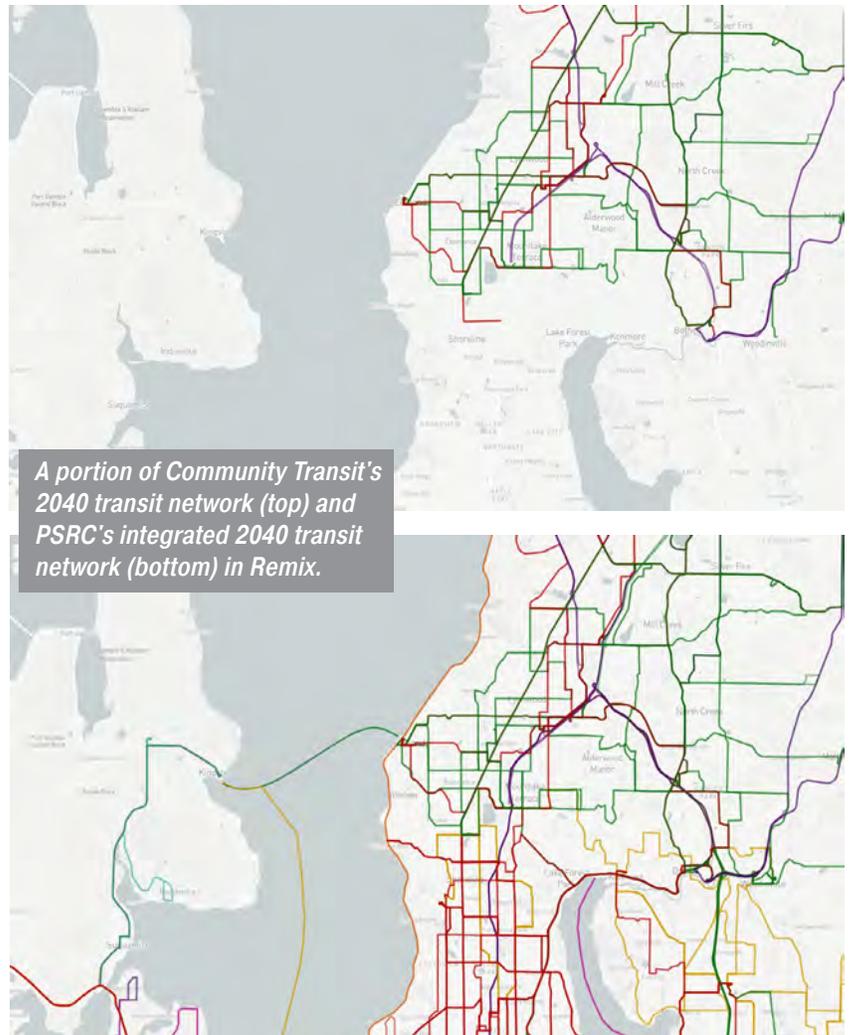
Remix is an online browser-based public transportation planning platform that provides rapid route design and modification of existing transit routes, allowing users to create complex scenarios and communicate their ideas visually, quickly, and simply. It maps transit routes, simultaneously providing order of magnitude cost estimates and demographic ridership impacts of proposed changes. Route designs can be shared between agencies and easily modified through shared links. Outputs from the Remix sketch planning platform, and even a live display of the tool, can be used as visuals for stakeholder and public outreach on planning projects.

The March 2016 Puget Sound Transit Coordination Grant and local matching funds provided by PSRC allowed for a regional enterprise license for the Remix software for sixteen months. A one-year grant extension allowed continued access through June 2018.

This project enabled collaboration between PSRC staff, public transit agencies, and ferry operators within the region on a wide variety of planning efforts. The most immediate and powerful impact of the project was to enable transit agencies and ferry operators to develop future transit network designs that account for the ST3 system plan and each agency's latest long-range plan. This regionally integrated future transit network developed in Remix was incorporated into PSRC's Regional Transportation Plan, adopted in May 2018.

With the Remix license extension through June 2018, agencies in the region had an opportunity to more fully evaluate the use of a common transit sketch planning software like Remix and identify options for use of Remix or a similar software on a longer-term basis.

The value of having a common transit sketch planning software platform has been demonstrated



through the interagency collaboration developing the region's 2040 transit network for use in the Regional Transportation Plan. The common software allowed agencies to work together to create an integrated transit system that expands service for customers and saves agency resources by identifying overlapping service. Transit agencies in the region used Remix for a variety of transit sketch planning work over the past year. Remix was used to prepare transit service changes, long-range transit corridor sketches, and to help prepare long-range plans. In the final year, average usage increased from 174 hours per month to 404 hours per month. At the end of the contract, five of the region's transit agencies purchased Remix licenses to continue use of the platform.

## Building the region's transit hubs

Major investment is happening to renovate and expand the region's multimodal hubs. The examples below describe several of these key hubs, including ferry terminals and other high capacity transit stations.



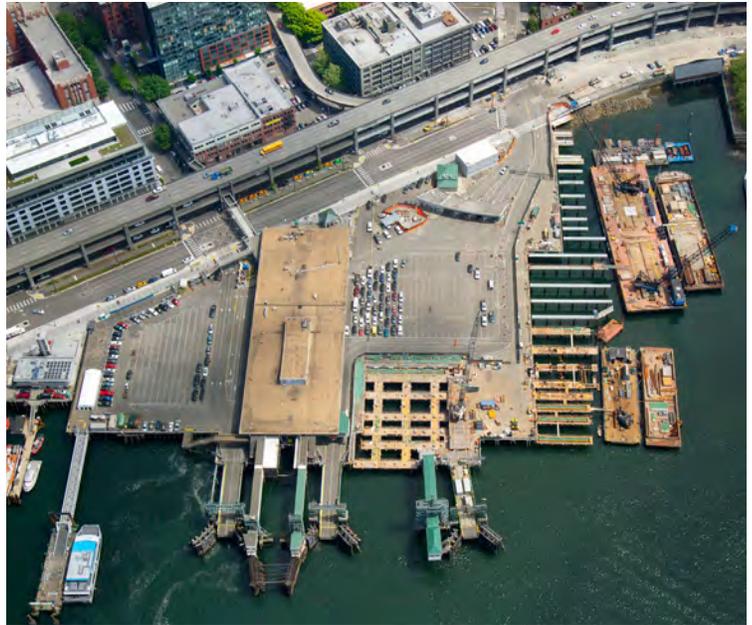
### COLMAN DOCK

The region's ferry system is one of the region's highest ridership public transportation providers, moving people, vehicles, and goods across the Puget Sound.

The central Puget Sound region has a long history of reliance on waterborne transportation. Many communities are bordered by water, and several communities — including Vashon Island and Anderson Island — are completely reliant on ferries to access the mainland. Ferries play a key role in the regional transportation system and economy by connecting residents to jobs and services and taking both locals and visitors to recreational opportunities. WSF is working in coordination with other transit agencies and local jurisdictions to modernize major multimodal ferry terminals, such as Colman Dock and the Mukilteo Multimodal Terminal.



Colman Dock in downtown Seattle is WSF's largest ferry terminal and supports transportation across the Puget Sound between downtown Seattle and communities in Kitsap County and the Olympic Peninsula. It serves as a multimodal linkage between the region's ferry system connections and critical modes of travel, such as bicycle facilities, transit routes, and pedestrian facilities. In 2017, more than 10 million people traveled through Colman Dock, including more than 5.7 million foot passengers, of whom over 235,000 were bicyclists.



Construction is currently taking place at this regional hub to address aging and seismically vulnerable infrastructure, improve customer experience, and increase operational efficiencies. This project benefits from coordination between WSF, King County Marine Division, the City of Seattle, and Kitsap Transit. It includes coordination at multiple locations, including the ferry terminal facility, the new King County passenger-only ferry facility, the Seattle waterfront, and the Bremerton and Bainbridge ferry terminals.

### **Construction coordination**

In order to maintain service between downtown Seattle and other parts of King County and Kitsap County during the Colman Dock project, agencies have coordinated to temporarily relocate services and provide transit connections at passenger destinations. This requires agencies to coordinate on communications to customers to provide accurate information on these changes.

The passenger only facilities used by the King County Water Taxi and Kitsap Transit's Fast Ferry are temporarily relocated to the northern side of Colman Dock. These agencies have worked together to coordinate sailing schedules, provide temporary wayfinding signage, and to alert their customers on where they can find these services.

To maintain the same number of crossings, WSF readjusted sailing times for routes to Bainbridge Island and Bremerton. Close coordination with Kitsap Transit on bus schedules has allowed passengers to continue to make critical connections between these ferry docks and communities in Kitsap County.

### **Project benefits**

By 2040 nonmotorized ridership at Colman Dock is expected to grow to 8.7 million. This 53 percent increase of walk-on and bike-on passengers puts high importance on the need to address the safety concerns and operational inefficiencies between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrian traffic.

Coordination between the City of Seattle and WSDOT is underway to prepare for a new pedestrian-only Marion Street Bridge pathway. The bridge will be completely reconstructed between the ferry terminal and Western Avenue and expanded to accommodate existing and future user volumes. The grade-separated pathway provides crucial connections directly from Colman Dock to the edge of downtown Seattle's office core and some of the region's transit options on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.



Closer to the ferry terminal, buses will begin running along Alaskan Way and Columbia Street, where customers will be able to exit the terminal and access stops using a new signalized intersection directly across the street from Colman Dock. Transit options will include existing and future RapidRide routes, peak-hour express services, and local bus service, providing hillclimb assist to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and connections north to Seattle's retail core, Belltown, and South Lake Union.

Other multimodal access improvements include a new pedestrian promenade and a two-way protected bike lane adjacent to Alaskan Way. Coordination between the City of Seattle and WSF will allow bicyclists connecting to the ferry a direct route to the terminal and onto ferries, avoiding conflict with other modes and making the loading and unloading process safer and more efficient for all modes of travel.

A new pedestrian bridge is planned to connect the new King County passenger-only ferry terminal and the WSF terminal. This will allow customers to connect between ferry services and provide passenger-only ferry customers a direct connection to amenities at Colman Dock and above-grade connections to the Marion Street Bridge.

These improvements provide critical connections between modes, making Colman Dock a safer and more efficient regional hub. To be successful, customer communication will be crucial to educate the public on new passenger-only ferry routes, facilities, and regional connections, both during construction and after completion. Agencies are currently coordinating on wayfinding, both within the terminals and outside to ensure customers know their transit options and that they can conveniently and safely connect to regional destinations.

## TACOMA DOME STATION



Tacoma Dome Station plays a critical role connecting customers to the opportunities available in Tacoma, as well as a connection point to the central Puget Sound region, surrounding counties, and beyond. Served by multiple Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, and Intercity Transit bus routes, the station accommodates approximately 870,000 annual passengers. It also provides a critical link as Tacoma's hub for Sounder commuter rail, Tacoma Link Light Rail, and future bus rapid transit (BRT) service. In March 2019, Amtrak Cascades will begin using the station, connecting Tacoma to eighteen cities along the I-5 corridor from

Vancouver, BC to Eugene, OR. Greyhound Bus and Amtrak's long-distance trains provide connections beyond the region and the state by offering routes across the country. In 2030, Tacoma Dome will become the southern terminus of the regional light rail system, with direct or connecting service to Sea-Tac Airport, Seattle, Lynnwood, Bellevue, and cities in between.

There are multiple projects recently completed or nearing completion at Tacoma Dome Station to enhance the location's role as a regional hub.

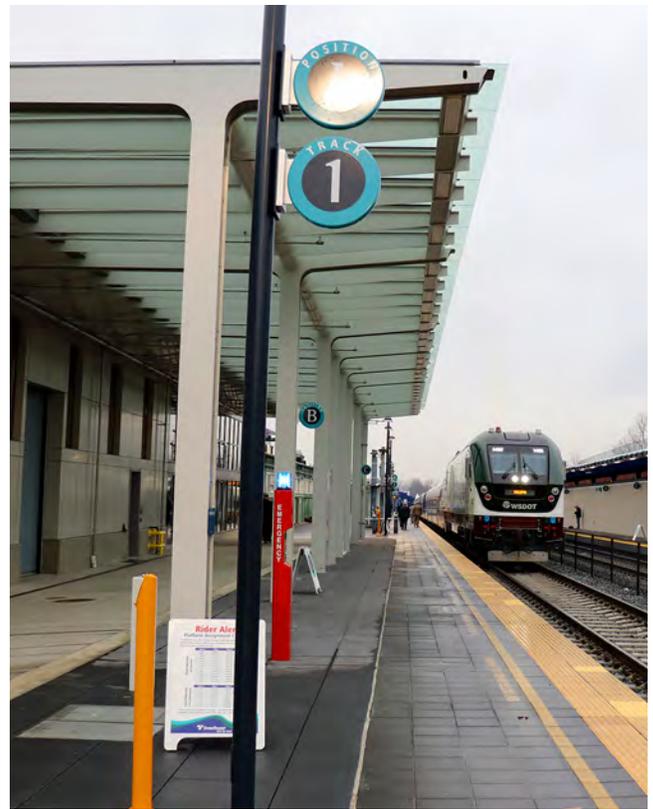


## Recent rail improvement

The Amtrak Cascades station in Tacoma is one of the most integrated transportation hubs in the state and Amtrak's fourth busiest station in the Cascades corridor. When Amtrak moves services to its new Tacoma Dome station in 2019, Sounder and Amtrak passengers will use the same platforms just steps from local and regional buses, Tacoma Link light rail, and other amenities surrounding the station.

To provide reliable service and accommodate future growth of both Sounder and Amtrak Cascades trains, WSDOT and Sound Transit coordinated on the construction of a second passenger platform, the extension of the original platform and the building of the new Tacoma Trestle.

Sound Transit replaced the existing wooden single-track railroad trestle east of Freighthouse Square with a modern, double-track bridge. The new bridge increases passenger and rail capacity along the corridor and improves reliability for passenger rail service.



These improvements add train and passenger capacity at Tacoma Dome Station, enabling a one-seat ride from Tacoma to destinations as far north as Vancouver, BC and as far south as Los Angeles, CA. Both Sound Transit and Amtrak have plans to increase ridership with longer trains and more daily trips, allowing more customers to access the opportunities available in Tacoma and connect to other modes in the region's transportation system.

## Tacoma Dome Station and mid-life renovation

The Tacoma Dome Station garage, located adjacent to Freighthouse Square, offers more than 2,300 parking spaces, secure bike parking and storage, and a covered waiting area for local, regional, and interstate buses.

To continue to accommodate these amenities and maintain this structure to serve as Tacoma's regional hub for transit service, Pierce Transit began a major refurbishment of the Tacoma Dome Station structure in 2018. Maintenance work is addressing mid-life deficiencies, such as lighting replacement, concrete repairs, ceramic tile replacement, and parking deck repairs. This maintenance will continue to serve customers of multiple transit agencies and long-distance transportation services for years to come.

## Enhancing the current transit system

### *Pacific Avenue/SR 7 BRT*

To provide faster, more reliable, and more frequent transit service to the Tacoma Dome Station, Pierce Transit is studying the feasibility of building BRT from downtown Tacoma to Spanaway, along the agency's current Route 1. Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, the City of Tacoma, Pierce County, WSDOT, and PSRC are collaborating to study potential alignments, determine funding sources, optimize connections to Tacoma Dome Station from Pacific Avenue, and identify opportunities to construct transit-oriented infill development along the 14.4-mile corridor.



The increased transit capacity provided by this route would have the ability to connect more residents in Pierce County to educational and employment opportunities available along the regional transportation system.



**Pierce Transit is working with its regional partners to determine the Locally Preferred Alternative, including station locations. Pierce Transit submitted a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts application for \$60 million under the Capital Investment Grants Program. This funding would supplement the up to \$60 million in funding provided in the ST3 plan and \$15 million from Connecting Washington. Based on available funding and coordination between partnering agencies, customers will have access to this enhanced service in winter 2022/2023.**

**Transit-oriented development**

Transit-oriented development (TOD) eases traffic congestion by building high-density housing units near transit hubs. Pierce Transit worked with the City of Tacoma and private developers to convert a surplus property adjacent to Tacoma Dome Station into a dense, mixed-use development. The site is identified as a catalyst site in the city’s South Downtown Area Plan. The developer will provide ORCA passes to all residents for the first five years, as well as parking for car share and bicycles. Construction is scheduled to begin fall of 2018 and be complete in early 2020. A nearby privately-owned property is in the development pipeline, as well as a mixed-use building, bringing more future residents to this multimodal transit hub.

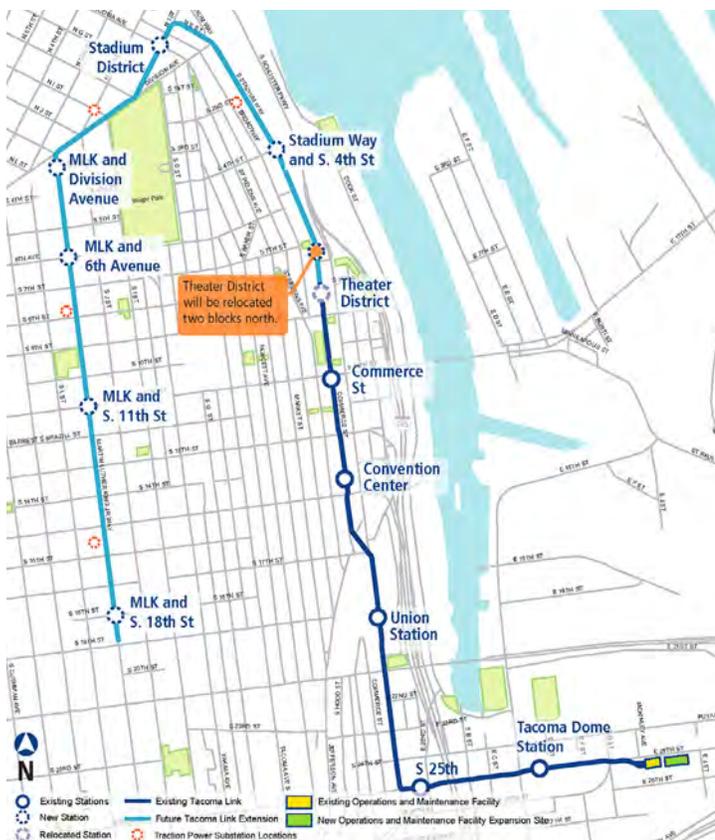
**Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension (2022) and Tacoma Dome Link Extension (2030)**

Construction is currently underway on the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension, a 2.4-mile extension that will more than double the length of Tacoma Link in 2022. In coordination with local Pierce Transit

fixed-route services, Tacoma Link riders will have enhanced connections to multiple local and regional destinations. Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, and the City of Tacoma have coordinated stop locations to improve connections between buses and Tacoma Link.

Currently in the planning phase, Sound Transit’s planned Tacoma Dome Link Extension will connect Pierce and South King County residents to the regional light rail network, including direct access to Sea-Tac Airport and downtown Seattle, with stations at Tacoma Dome, East Tacoma, Fife, and South Federal Way.

The extension will allow customers boarding light rail at Tacoma Dome Station the ability to access Sea-Tac Airport in 35 minutes. King County Metro, Pierce Transit and Sound Transit have been coordinating layover needs and future levels of service required to facilitate easy transfers between providers and modes.





**NORTHGATE STATION**

As the regional light rail system expands, the local and regional bus system will play an important role in connecting customers to and from light rail and surrounding destinations.

Opening in 2021, the Northgate Link Extension will add three new light rail stations in north Seattle. Northgate Station will be the northern terminus for this line for three years and is already an active transit hub with more than 5,200 daily bus boardings.

The redevelopment of Northgate Transit Center, including the construction of light rail, will provide multiple transportation options for current and future customers. Agencies are coordinating to provide riders with direct access to Link and local and regional buses, as well as enhancing the walking and bicycling environment. These intermodal connections will make it easier to access Northgate's range of housing, commercial, and educational opportunities.

When the Link station opens, customers taking light rail will be able to travel to downtown Seattle in fourteen minutes and directly to Sea-Tac Airport in less than an hour. Agencies estimate that 92 percent of customers accessing the station will arrive by transit, walking, or biking by 2030, requiring coordination by all stakeholders to ensure that access is seamless and efficient in this high-density, mixed-use community.

Sound Transit, King County Metro, the City of Seattle, and WSDOT have worked closely to design the station and bus island interface, identify layover space needs, and plan for other access improvements, including a new pedestrian-bike bridge over I-5 that will connect Northgate Station to North Seattle College and the Licton Springs neighborhood.

## Bus/rail integration

To design the station and assess the needs of each stakeholder, Sound Transit worked in partnership with King County Metro, the City of Seattle, and WSDOT to identify each agency's priorities. Because these stakeholders play varying roles in land ownership, funding contributions, and service provision, this coordination was critical.



With a goal of providing seamless and safe connections for customers transferring between modes, the elevated light rail station is being built above the bus passenger loading island, allowing customers to connect directly between buses and trains without crossing any streets.

Coordination not only determined the layout of the station and customer flow, but also how the space functions to meet customer needs. King County Metro and Sound Transit have partnered to provide passenger amenities, including shelters, wayfinding, and real-time arrival information. In addition, the Northgate Urban Design Framework calls for a mid-block east-west connection for people walking and biking between the station and other uses on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE, supporting safe and reliable access to the station platform.



***To accommodate bus layover needs, King County Metro, Sound Transit, Community Transit, and the City of Seattle are collaborating to locate spaces in proximity of the new bus island, anticipated to be implemented with the opening of the Northgate Station. This proximity will allow efficient off-street layover and reliable bus access to customers at the Link station.***

***King County Metro, Sound Transit, Community Transit, and the City of Seattle will partner to gather public input on how best to restructure bus service in north King County, anticipated to be implemented with the opening of Northgate Station.***

## Multimodal access

Utilizing input from the surrounding community, the City of Seattle is designing a pedestrian-bike bridge crossing I-5 to provide a better, more direct connection to Northgate Station.

Current conditions require pedestrians from the neighborhood west of the freeway to walk significantly out of the way to access bridges crossing I-5. Research conducted by the transit agencies shows that many of the residents from this neighborhood currently drive and use scarce parking spaces to access transit at Northgate. Many have indicated that this new pedestrian-bike bridge will greatly improve access to the station, minimizing their need to drive.

The City of Seattle will construct the bridge with input from WSDOT, Sound Transit, and King County Metro to ensure that it provides the best possible connection to buses, light rail, and other amenities around the station, including a new protected bike lane and multi-use path on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE and the Northgate retail center. Sound Transit and Connecting Washington funded design of both the bridge and the protected bike lane. Agencies have also been coordinating on the development of ten other pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects in the Northgate Station vicinity with funding provided by the City of Seattle.



The station design accommodates persons with disabilities by implementing a bus island concept and station access design that allows ample room for paratransit operators to view and engage customers. This same design promotes efficient operations, speed and reliability, and first/last mile connections by providing short-term parking space to drop-off and pick-up transit customers.

## **LYNNWOOD LINK**

The Lynnwood Link project extends light rail from Northgate to Lynnwood City Center with four stations serving Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace, and downtown Lynnwood. When the extension opens in 2024, riders will enjoy fast, frequent, and reliable service between south Snohomish County and the University of Washington, downtown Seattle, the Eastside of King County, Sea-Tac Airport and more.

As Link light rail's first extension into Snohomish County, planning at these stations requires coordination between Sound Transit, King County Metro, Community Transit, WSDOT, and the local jurisdictions light rail will serve.

This project is currently at the end of the design phase, with work being done on final design, permitting, and pre-construction. Coordination to date focuses on rail alignments, agency needs for bus movements and layover space, and other considerations related to how customers will access these stations. Sound Transit plans to begin construction in early 2019 in advance of the four stations opening in 2024.

### **Shoreline stations**

The Shoreline North/185<sup>th</sup> station area will serve as an important regional connection point between bus service and Link light rail. King County Metro will serve this station as well as the proposed extension of the Blue Line, Community Transit's Swift BRT line that operates north along Highway 99 to Everett.

As a critical connection point, it was important for agencies to coordinate on the transit center's layout to ensure efficient bus movements. To do this, Community Transit hosted a mockup in December of 2017 to bring Sound Transit engineers and bus operators from Community Transit and King County Metro together to understand how the proposed design and potential modifications worked. Based on this work, it was decided that more space was needed to accommodate bus movements; buses could service the station more efficiently if it had closer alignment to the street, and a connection was needed for customers transferring between bus and rail.



Working closely with staff from the City of Shoreline and King County Metro, Sound Transit completed a substantial redesign of the bus area and vehicle parking to improve bus circulation and the transfer environment. To increase connections between light rail and the newly located buses, King County Metro and the City of Shoreline are partnering with Sound Transit on a pedestrian bridge linking the two modes. Working together, agencies identified concerns and opportunities with the proposed design before construction began and agreed on modifications and funding contributions to make the station as accessible as possible for both transit operators and customers.



The mockup at Shoreline North/185<sup>th</sup> was so successful that King County Metro and Sound Transit coordinated on another mockup for the Shoreline South/145<sup>th</sup> station. In addition to this station being an access point for Metro buses, Sound Transit's SR 522/145<sup>th</sup> BRT will terminate at this station. Community Transit hosted the mockup, Sound Transit designed and managed it, and King County Metro provided buses and operators to test proposed and modified station layouts. As with Shoreline North/185<sup>th</sup>, this process led to modified designs to provide more space for bus operations and layover.

### Lynnwood City Center

Lynnwood Transit Center is Snohomish County's largest transit center, and one of the busiest in the region. With more than 8,000 daily bus boardings, it serves multiple Sound Transit and Community Transit routes providing connections within Snohomish County and to the rest of the region.

When Link reaches Lynnwood in 2024, Sound Transit projects approximately 17,000 daily rail boardings at this station. Ensuring customers can access light rail requires close coordination between Sound Transit, Community Transit, WSDOT, and the City of Lynnwood.



*Rendering of future Lynnwood City Center station. (Sound Transit)*

To prepare for this, Community Transit is examining how the Link extension will affect bus service. Previously focused on providing buses at peak hour and in peak direction to facilitate commuting patterns, Community Transit is preparing network changes that will enable customers to continue their journey to or from frequent light rail service.

In addition to increasing frequency and extending span of service on existing routes, Community Transit is examining what routes may be added and which existing routes may be truncated to connect to light rail. Planning is underway for the Orange Line, the newest in the agency's Swift BRT network. The Orange Line will provide frequent east/west BRT service connecting light rail to Edmonds Community College, Alderwood Mall, Ash Way Park and Ride, and north-east to Mill Creek.

These bus service changes, combined with Sound Transit's I-405 BRT terminus at the Lynnwood City Center Station, will require bus movements every 35 seconds during peak hours. This high vehicle volume requires continuous agency coordination on transit center design and bus layover space needs.

To support the high levels of transit ridership projected for this station, WSDOT, in partnership with the City of Lynnwood, Community Transit, Sound Transit, and FHWA, developed the Lynnwood Transit Center Multimodal Accessibility Plan in 2016. The plan highlights the need for additional investments in transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and land uses to encourage use of modes other than driving alone. The plan complements the City of Lynnwood's City Center vision, a redevelopment program for the area east and west of the station area.



# Enhancing User Experience



## Regional coordination on fare payment

The introduction of ORCA in 2009 has been one of the region's foremost transit integration success stories. ORCA allows customers to seamlessly use public transportation in the central Puget Sound region provided by Community Transit, Everett Transit, King County Metro, Kitsap Transit, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, and WSF. For these transit agencies, ORCA has reduced the costs associated with fare collection, maintenance, and revenue allocation. For customers, ORCA allows cash-free fare payments, free transfers between agencies, and the use of programs that make taking transit more affordable.

The seven agencies that comprise the ORCA system are collaboratively engaged in designing and developing the next generation of ORCA (next gen ORCA). By the end of 2022, this improved system will provide customers with convenient, flexible, and secure fare payment. The system will be designed with the ability to expand to accept innovative ways of paying for transportation and accommodate new modes as the regional transportation network expands. Next gen ORCA will make it easier for customers by providing them with many fare purchase options (including web, retail, vending, and mobile solutions) and by supporting immediate availability of purchased products and value.



## FARE SIMPLIFICATION TO SUPPORT NEXT GEN ORCA DEVELOPMENT

As the ORCA agencies embark on the development of next gen ORCA, it is an opportune time to evaluate the region's fare structure, ensuring any potential changes are incorporated into the new system design. Recognizing this opportunity, King County Metro, Sound Transit, and Community Transit have made recent decisions on simplifying their fare structures. These changes not only simplify fare payments to be incorporated into next gen ORCA, they also make paying for transit immediately simpler and easier to understand. Changes include:

**King County Metro:** In summer 2018, King County Metro eliminated zone-based and trip-based peak fares in favor of a \$2.75 flat fare for all full-fare adult trips.



**Community Transit:** In fall 2018 Community Transit simplified commuter fares, designating one fare for all commuter routes.

**Sound Transit:** Sound Transit is phasing in fare changes for ST Express service to address zone-based fares that used county boundaries to determine fares. In summer 2018, Sound Transit eliminated zone-based fares for commuters paying with an ORCA LIFT, youth, senior, or disabled pass. In 2020, Sound Transit will eliminate multi-county adult fares in favor of a flat fare.



**Adopted policies will be incorporated in the next gen ORCA system, resulting in a more consistent and simplified fare structure to make it easier for customers to navigate between regional agencies and reduce development costs of the new system.**

**In fall 2018, the ORCA agencies selected INIT, Innovations in Transportation, Inc. to develop the next gen ORCA system. This partnership will work collaboratively to further develop the system design prior to the system transition, beginning in late 2021.**

## REGIONAL ORCA MARKETING AND TDM PROJECT

The Regional ORCA Marketing and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Project is a partnership between King County Metro, Sound Transit, Pierce Transit, Community Transit, Everett Transit, and the City of Seattle funded through the Puget Sound Transit Coordination Grant. The collaboration between these agencies focuses on increasing transit ridership and operational efficiency across the region by increasing ORCA card usage within targeted geographies where significant barriers have made it challenging for customers to use ORCA.

The 2017 Transit Integration Report highlighted individual agency promotions that leveraged existing TDM programs to raise awareness of the benefits of ORCA usage and distribute cards. It also highlighted the 2017 Regional Marketing Campaign led by Sound Transit.

Continued grant funding through 2019 has allowed the partners to continue the successful 2017 Regional Marketing Campaign and conduct a new marketing campaign focused on high school students.



## Regional promotion

The project extended the successful 2017 Regional Marketing Campaign to increase awareness of the benefits of ORCA in areas with low usage. Sound Transit led implementation of TV commercials and social media campaigns to reach more existing and potential riders by providing information on how ORCA makes riding transit easier, faster, and more convenient.

Leveraging investments made in the previous grant cycle, the 2018 campaign included video advertisements in English and Spanish on TV, YouTube, and Facebook. In three months, the campaign videos had millions of views. The range of advertising platforms and different videos used allows Sound Transit to learn more about how targeted audiences react to these advertisements. Partners can share these lessons with all agencies on future campaigns promoting ORCA.

## Regional youth program

In fall 2018 transit agencies launched the Regional ORCA Youth Program. The agencies collaborated on a targeted marketing campaign to distribute over 22,000 pre-loaded \$10 ORCA cards to high school students.



To prepare for the marketing campaign, King County Metro worked with youth to develop materials and tactics to use in marketing campaigns promoting ORCA. A focus group provided perspectives from a diversity of race, age, and socioeconomic status to advise on the development of an inclusive campaign targeted at high school aged students.

Based on target populations and geographies where ORCA usage is low, each transit agency has developed tailored messaging to students. Each agency has based message content on specific barriers to using ORCA, including language, cultural, riding patterns, and cost. It also includes information on the benefits of using ORCA for youth and their parents, including cost savings and independent mobility on the region's transit system.

King County Metro created videos and print ads explaining the benefits of ORCA to these targeted populations. Developed in both English and Spanish, these videos are general enough to be used by any regional transit agency or local jurisdiction that wants to run social media or TV advertisements on the benefits of ORCA.



King County Metro will apply lessons learned from this outreach in a media campaign guide available to all of the region's transit agencies and local jurisdictions to more effectively promote ORCA to youth across the region.



*Upon the grant's completion in 2019, agencies will measure the success of the different regional marketing campaigns based on their ability to distribute ORCA cards, the reuse of distributed cards, and the ability to connect with targeted audiences.*

*The work transit agencies have done and continue to do to build and assess this regional marketing campaign provide valuable lessons for future campaigns for ORCA and other programs. The marketing materials that are being created for this project are not time or agency specific, so they can continue to be used for ORCA outreach. Valuable insights, including the need for translated materials and desire for students to see themselves in marketing materials, will continue to be useful for transit agencies and local jurisdictions as they continue to communicate the benefits of ORCA to the region's transit customers.*

## **REGIONAL REDUCED FARE PERMIT FOR SENIORS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AND PEOPLE WITH A MEDICARE CARD**



The Federal Transit Administration requires that fixed-route transit agencies provide a “half fare” payment for seniors, people with disabilities, and people with a Medicare card. Sixteen public transportation agencies in western Washington have agreed to maintain consistent eligibility standards for people to receive a Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP), meeting the requirements of this federal mandate.

RRFP is part of the ORCA card system within the central Puget Sound region. Outside of the central Puget Sound region, the permit is an ID card that entitles holders to discounted fares. This allows a person qualifying to receive an RRFP in one county to have their reduced fare status accepted on the other fifteen public transportation services, creating a seamless customer service experience for seniors, people with disabilities, and people with Medicare cards. The elimination of a duplicative eligibility review process makes it easier for customers who tend to have limited mobility access the entire system.

The participating agencies coordinate updates to eligibility criteria and other RRFP matters by implementing a Memorandum of Agreement signed by each agency. Implementation of the agreement is facilitated through an RRFP Task Force consisting of representatives from each of the sixteen signatory agencies. The task force most recently updated the agreement in 2017, adding Grays Harbor Transit.

- [Clallam Transit](#)
- [Community Transit](#)
- [Everett Transit](#)
- [Grays Harbor Transit](#)
- [Intercity Transit](#)
- [Jefferson Transit](#)
- [King County Metro Transit](#)
- [King County Water Taxi](#)
- [Kitsap Transit](#)
- [Mason Transit](#)
- [Pierce County Ferries](#)
- [Pierce Transit](#)
- [Skagit Transit](#)
- [Sound Transit](#)
- [WSDOT Ferries Division \(WSF\)](#)
- [Whatcom Transportation Authority](#)

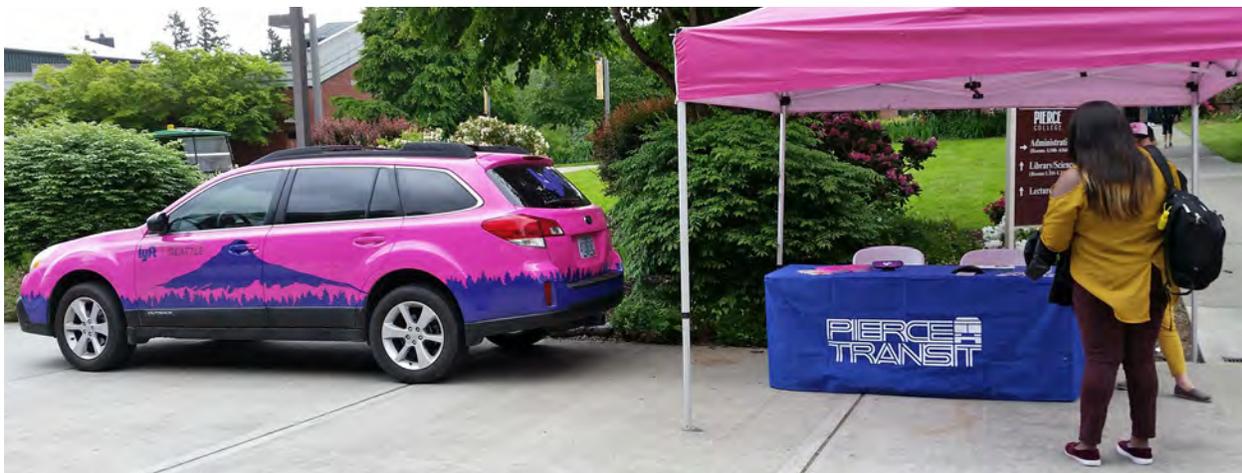


## Increasing access to the transportation system

Transit agencies recognize the value of integrating shared mobility services and emerging transportation technologies by leveraging them to provide first-mile/last-mile connections and beginning to think of complementary technologies and travel modes as “mobility as a service.” Incorporating services of other transportation providers has the potential to enhance existing transit service to connect more customers to more locations throughout the region, without relying on poorly utilized routes or constructing new park and rides.

Transit agencies in the central Puget Sound region are working together to develop approaches for integrating shared mobility, managing parking, and coordinating on getting information on access resources to customers. This coordination allows for a more robust, connected system of transportation choices for customers that is well-managed and provides consistency throughout the region.

### SHARED MOBILITY SERVICES THAT ENHANCE THE NETWORK



Shared mobility refers to transportation services that are shared among users. Shared mobility services are not new for the central Puget Sound region — the region leads the nation in vanpool participation with more than 2,200 vans in operation each weekday. In addition to the highly used vanpool, VanShare, and carpooling programs available, there are other shared-mobility services emerging. New car-share, ride-hail, and bike-share options have changed the way people in the region get around.

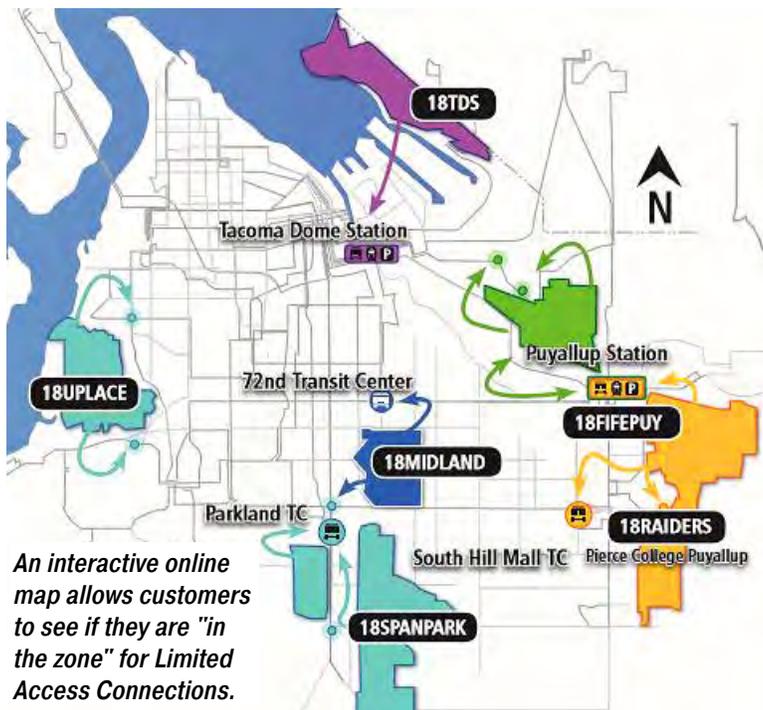
However, as many of these services are fairly new, transit agencies and local jurisdictions are determining how best to incorporate them so that they complement existing services, rather than duplicate them. As agencies explore opportunities for partnership, they are coordinating with private providers and with each other to implement new programs and pilots.

#### **On the ground: Limited Access Connections in Pierce County**

Due to recession-induced reduction in transit service hours and land uses not suitable for fixed-route transit, some of Pierce Transit’s riders are unable to rely on fixed-route service to meet their daily transportation needs. Early service termination, wait times in excess of one hour, and geographic gaps in service affect significant numbers of customers. In addition, park and ride capacity adds to the stress on the current transportation network and limits riders’ ability to access transit. With current demand, many customers divert to using single-occupancy vehicles for commutes.



Pierce Transit partnered with Pierce College Puyallup, Sound Transit, and Lyft to develop Limited Access Connections — a three-pronged approach providing customers to better access Pierce Transit and Sound Transit’s current service network.



**An interactive online map allows customers to see if they are "in the zone" for Limited Access Connections.**

**First/last mile solution:** Pierce Transit has mapped eight medium- and high-density areas of its service area that are beyond a half-mile walk from a fixed-route bus stop. Customers within these zones can use Lyft to fill the gap between their start or end point and a bus stop. These fully subsidized trips allow more people to access the current transit system without adding new routes in areas with less density and provide an opportunity to identify areas where new transit service may be used.

**Guaranteed ride home:** Limitations to Pierce Transit’s ability to provide all-night service on routes disincentivize many from being able to rely on the current system to fulfill rides outside operating hours. Through this program, riders

can use Lyft to get home outside normal service hours, while paying the standard transit fare. The target audience for this program includes students, faculty, and staff at Pierce College Puyallup, where classes get out as late at 10 p.m. and bus service ends by 8 p.m. By working closely with the college and distributing information to potential riders, this service provides needed rides to individuals without vehicles.

**Commute congestion relief:** Some park and ride lots are highly used, reaching capacity in the early morning. With current demand, many customers divert to single-occupancy vehicle use for commutes. Riders traveling during peak commute hours on weekdays, with a trip in a zone that does not have fixed-route bus services, are able to use Lyft to travel within 5 miles of a park and ride or Sounder station. These fully subsidized trips allow customers to use Lyft to access transit instead of traveling by single-occupancy vehicle.

Pierce Transit worked closely with Sound Transit and Pierce College Puyallup to identify areas best suited for pick-up and drop-off. These areas are marked, allowing customers and Lyft drivers to use the best points of access to avoid conflicts between other modes.

The year-long pilot program began in May 2018. In the first five months, 366 trips were taken. The highest used service was the first/last mile connection in the Parkland/Spanaway area and the commute congestion relief service ran a close second.



**Based on usage data and customer feedback, Pierce Transit may expand zone boundaries or active days and times to provide easier, more comprehensive access to the service. The most utilized zones will help inform future service planning.**



### On the ground: Duvall-Monroe Shuttle

The Snoqualmie Valley Transportation Coalition formed in the fall of 2017 to improve public transportation options in the Snoqualmie Valley, an area crossing between King and Snohomish counties. The coalition is a joint venture of Hopelink, Snoqualmie Valley Transportation, Easterseals, King County Metro Transit's Community Access Transportation program, the Snoqualmie Tribe, the Snohomish County Transportation Coalition (SNOTRAC), the Snoqualmie Valley cities of Monroe, Duvall, Carnation, Snoqualmie, and North Bend, and local medical providers and human services agencies.



In 2017 the coalition came together to identify gaps in service and infrastructure in the Snoqualmie Valley by gathering public feedback through surveys and online tools. The coalition identified the lack of transportation options between the cities of Monroe and Duvall as a major network gap. The clinics, shops, and businesses of Monroe are only fifteen minutes away for Duvall residents by car, but for patients and shoppers who rely on public transportation, a one-way trip between these two cities takes more than four hours, \$10, and three or more transfers on two or three different transit systems.

Funded by King County Metro, Community Transit, and Easterseals, the pilot Duvall-Monroe Shuttle bus service began in August 2018, providing a direct connection between Monroe and Duvall on a loop route operating from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays. Once in Duvall, riders can access the Valley Shuttle, a transportation service operated by Snoqualmie Valley Transportation, to access other destinations in the valley.

The coalition is developing a communications and outreach plan to inform residents of the local public transportation options already available in the area, such as Snoqualmie Valley Transportation's door-to-door and "Loop bus" services operating throughout the valley from North Bend to Duvall; King County Metro's transportation services throughout King County; Community Transit's service throughout Snohomish County; Hopelink's Medicaid transportation service; Sound Generation's Hyde Shuttle; and Catholic Community Services volunteer driver program.



*Depending on the success of the route, the coalition may expand service hours and incorporate it into the coalition's forthcoming five-year transit plan covering the entire Snoqualmie Valley.*

### In development: Canyon Park

The Canyon Park business park, located in northern Bothell, is a hub of business activity. Soon to be connected to northern Snohomish County by high-capacity transit via the Community Transit Swift Green Line, this area sees a large number of daily commuters. However, many employers are located more than a mile away from this infrastructure, requiring additional options for access. To leverage existing investments, Community Transit and King County Metro are exploring new ways to connect employees with transportation options.



Community Transit is planning stakeholder meetings to gain a better understanding of available transportation options, how people are using these options, and what barriers may exist to using transit or other alternative modes. Stakeholders involved include both small and large employers, property managers, the City of Bothell, and private transportation providers.

The goal of this outreach and information gathering is to determine what strategies could be piloted in this area to increase transportation options. Possible strategies may include van programs to increase HOV travel and connect to transit and increasing ORCA card distribution by partnering with employers and property managers to provide ORCA business accounts as a benefit for their employees.



*Once strategies are decided, pilots will launch in early 2019 to gauge motivation and how they work in this environment. Lessons learned could be transferable to other parts of the region with similar commute patterns and transportation investments.*

## REGIONAL PARKING MANAGEMENT COORDINATION

Past Transit Integration Reports have introduced the issues of capacity constraints and demand at the region's park and rides.

Parking demand management strategies, including pricing, can improve the customer experience by providing riders certainty that they will be able to find a space and greater flexibility for when they use transit. Pricing can offer more equitable access by freeing up spaces for use outside the peak period and may lower transportation cost burden for low income households when it leverages programs such as ORCA LIFT. Managing demand can also improve regional mobility by getting more transit riders per parking space, shifting demand to underutilized park and rides, and increasing non-auto access to transit.



Transit agencies are actively coordinating to make the best use of existing facilities and the approximately 18,000 new parking stalls planned by transit agencies in the coming decades. Sound Transit and King County Metro have had HOV permit parking in place at 24 of the region's most utilized park and rides since 2016 and 2017, respectively. These permits have only been available to customers with two or more transit, vanpool, or carpool users per vehicle. Permit-holders report that the greatest benefit of the program is certainty in finding a space, while Sound Transit and King County Metro are seeing more riders per parking stall.

To expand on this program and continue to manage the limited parking capacity at the region's most utilized park and rides, agencies are at various stages of expanding permit programs.

In 2018, the Sound Transit Board authorized the sale of permits to riders parking single-occupant vehicles (SOV) at Sound Transit owned park and rides with a 90 percent utilization rate or greater. This provides a new paid, reserved parking option for people driving alone to transit while also expanding the number of facilities where transit riders can utilize HOV permits free of charge.



The King County Council will consider implementing similar SOV permits at their most utilized park and rides in the fall of 2018. Metro is also considering reducing parking time limits from 72 hours to 24 hours to be consistent with Sound Transit.

To provide consistent messaging for customers and to avoid overloading unmanaged lots with customers avoiding parking fees, it is important for agencies to coordinate their parking permit programs across all of the region's highly utilized park and rides. The collaboration to date between Sound Transit and King County Metro has provided consistent messaging, but there are additional regional opportunities to expand these programs.



*This program as designed cannot be implemented at WSDOT-owned park and rides where state law does not currently allow managing demand through pricing. Because WSDOT owns several of the most utilized park and rides in the region, transit agencies are pursuing options to work collaboratively with WSDOT and the state Legislature to address these issues in the hopes of improving performance at these facilities.*

### SUPPORTING A REGIONAL WAYFINDING SYSTEM

Providing customers with accurate information for walking, using transit, and accessibility options greatly impacts their ability and willingness to use these investments. The lack of a coordinated wayfinding strategy and system often means that people, especially visitors and tourists, are less likely to explore walking routes on their own, including routes to bus and train stations, routes between transit stations, and first- or last-mile journeys.



Transportation investments being made in this region would benefit greatly from more coordinated wayfinding elements that provide more information on services and access opportunities. Without standardization, multiple individual systems could result in duplicative or conflicting information, crowding of the public realm, and gaps in information, similar to what is in place today in downtown Seattle.

Past Transit Integration Reports have highlighted the needs and potential advantages of a regional wayfinding system. Funded by the Puget Sound Transit Coordination Grant, the City of Seattle is working with King County Metro, Sound Transit, Community Transit, Everett Transit, and Pierce Transit to plan and design a consistent pedestrian wayfinding program. The pedestrian information system design will consider how implementation could be expanded and coordinated with transit information needs.



*This collaboration among transit agencies, the City of Seattle, and the community will provide input to a consultant team as it prepares a pedestrian wayfinding strategy, designs, plans for system implementation, and summer 2019 pilot projects in two downtown Seattle locations.*



# Matrix

## BUILDING AN INTEGRATED TRANSIT SYSTEM

	Marketing Efforts	Aligning Fare Structures	Service Planning	Long-Range Planning	Other Admin Functions	Customer-Focused Tools
Long-Range Planning & Remix 			X	X		
Regional Hubs						
• Colman Dock			X	X		
• Tacoma Dome Station			X	X		
• Northgate Station			X	X		
• Lynnwood Link			X	X		

## ENHANCING USER EXPERIENCE ACCESSING THE SYSTEM

	Marketing Efforts	Aligning Fare Structures	Service Planning	Long-Range Planning	Other Admin Functions	Customer-Focused Tools
Coordination on Fare Payment						
• Fare Simplification		X				
• ORCA Marketing and TDM 	X					X
• RRF					X	
Increasing Access						
• Mobility Services						X
• Parking				X		X
• Wayfinding 	X					X







Puget Sound Regional Council

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