

# **Frequent Transit Service Study**

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WSDOT

# Legislative proviso details

15(a) \$250,000 of the multimodal transportation account-state appropriation is provided solely for the department, in consultation with the joint transportation committee, **to conduct a study of statewide transit service benchmarks**. Elements of the study include:

- (i) **Development of definitions** of frequent fixed route transit and accessible frequent fixed route transit; and
- (ii) **Identification of, to the extent possible using existing data, current gaps** in frequent fixed route transit and accessible walking routes to frequent fixed route transit stops.

(b) An initial report is due by December 15, 2022, that **proposes a definition of frequent transit and documents how many people in Washington live within one half mile walk of frequent transit**. A final report is due by June 30, 2023, that identifies gaps in accessible frequent transit, analyzed for disparities in race, age, and disability, and develops funding scenarios to address the identified gaps.

*Source: ESSB 5689*

# Who is involved?

- **Stakeholders** – provide perspective, subject matter expertise, and input
- **Policy advisory group** – provide subject matter expertise and guidance; support stakeholder engagement; develop and vet recommendations (especially for mobility policy)
- **Technical advisory group** – provide subject matter expertise and guidance; support stakeholder engagement; develop and vet recommendations (especially for mobility and walkable/accessible data and analysis)
- **Joint Transportation Committee** (includes staff) – provide subject matter expertise and guidance; vet recommendations
- **WSDOT executives** – provide guidance; review and approve recommendations
- **WSDOT project team** (includes consultants) – project management; research and analysis; facilitation; stakeholder and public engagement; documentation

# Who is involved?

## Policy Advisory Group Members

- Amy Asher, Mason Transit
- Don Chartock, WSDOT Public Transportation Division
- Celeste Gilman, WSDOT Active Transportation Division
- Tom Hingson, Everett Transit
- Justin Leighton, Washington State Transit Association
- E Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit
- Paulo Nunes-Ueno, Front and Centered
- Angie Peters, Valley Transit
- Anna Zivarts, Disability Rights Washington

## Technical Advisory Group Members

- Lisa Ballard, WSDOT Management of Mobility
- Thomas Craig, WSDOT Public Transportation Division
- Melissa Gaughan, King County Metro
- Cliff Hall, WSDOT Multimodal Planning and Data Division
- Brian Lee, Puget Sound Regional Council
- Justin Leighton, Washington State Transit Association
- Steffani Lillie, Kitsap Transit
- Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit
- Lindsey Sehmel, Pierce Transit
- Tony Tompos, Pullman Transit
- Brad Windler, Skagit Transit

# Vision and hopes

Better understanding  
of those who lack  
access

This leads to more  
funding

Improve the  
experience for riders

Develop shared  
understanding of how  
transit delivery works

Consider local  
context

This leads to more  
stability in funding

Sets realistic  
standards

# Concerns

Standards we can't meet are risky, money, labor shortages

Will this look like "greedy transit?"

Big \$\$\$ could scare policymakers away

Local agencies are largely responsible for accessibility

Timeline – "lots to do and not very much time"

This will be difficult

Descriptions of frequent transit may need to be flexible

# What we heard from stakeholders

- **This is important and relevant work** – legislators and decision makers will use these reports
- **Frequency is context sensitive** – this work must address unique challenges and needs for a variety of providers
- Data limitations
- **Coordination is important** – between transits, local jurisdictions, the state, legislators, advocates, and more
- **We need to move fast!**

# Start with data

“live within one half mile walk of frequent transit”\*

Census data ✓

GTFS data ✓

Roadway data ✓

Sidewalk/walkability data 😞

*Major gaps in sidewalk data prevent answering this question directly in almost all the state.*

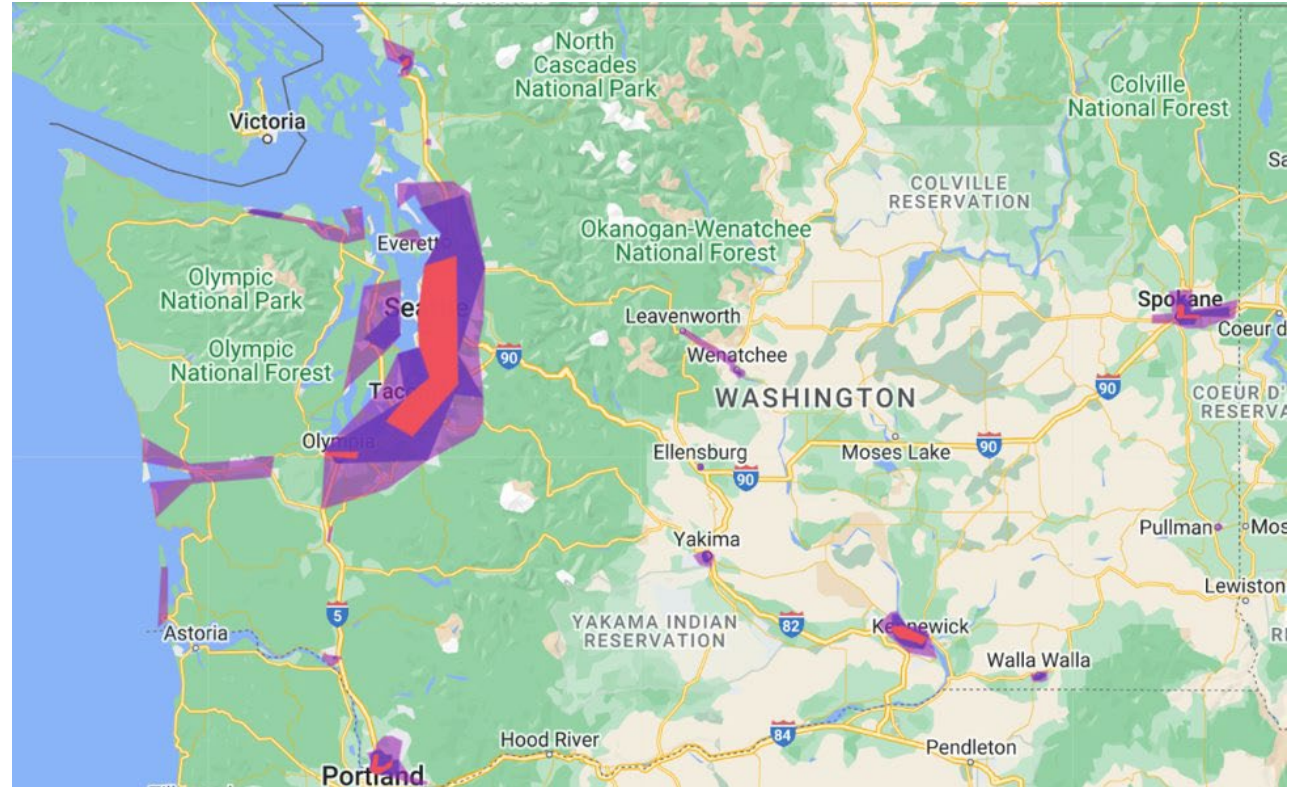
\*Source: ESSB 5689



# Visualizing multiple levels of frequency

**Example:**  
3 levels  
of service.

*Not based  
on real  
data.*

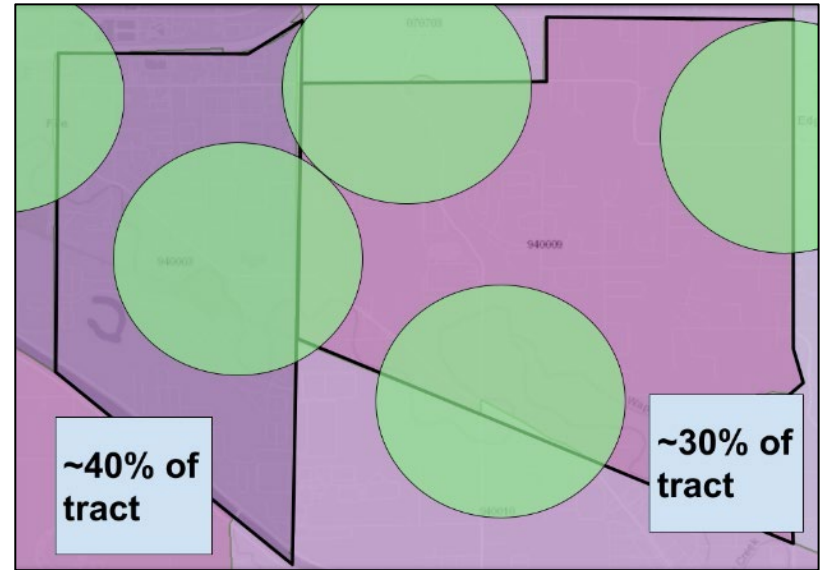


# Proposed levels to analyze

Frequency level	Day time (10am-6pm)	Extended hours (6am-10am; 6pm-10pm)	Weekend (10am-6pm)	Days of service (minimum)
Convenient	<=12 minutes	<=12 minutes	<=12 minutes	7 days
Visible	<=15 minutes	<=20 minutes	<=20 minutes	7 days
Dependable	<= 30 minutes	<= 60 minutes	<= 60 minutes	7 days
Basic	<= 60 minutes			5 days
Occasional	6 trips per day any time			5 days
Lifeline	2 trips per day any time			5 days

# Planned analysis process

1. Collect transit stop locations
2. Sort stops into frequency categories
3. Gather U.S. Census population data
4. Draw half-mile circles around stops
5. Calculate what percent of each census block group is inside each frequency layer
6. Calculate statewide totals by frequency category



# Next steps

1. Finalize frequency stop layer analysis
2. Continue stakeholder engagement
3. Submit report to the Legislature by Dec. 15 deadline, including the following components:
  - a. A definition of frequency which includes multiple levels
  - b. Analysis using census and stop data for each level of frequency
  - c. Recommend an approach to obtain more precise, granular data for improved analysis of accessible walking routes to frequent fixed-route transit stops and populations within ½-mile walk
4. Begin work on report due to the Legislature by June 30, 2023

# Thank you!

## Contact

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[Engage.wa.gov/Frequent-Transit-Service-Study/](https://engage.wa.gov/Frequent-Transit-Service-Study/)