

# Seattle Transit Measure (STM) 2024 Annual Performance Report

Transit Advisory Board Presentation  
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September 24, 2025

# SDOT's vision and goals, from the 2024 Seattle Transportation Plan:

## VISION

Seattle is an equitable, vibrant, and diverse city where moving around is safe, fair, and sustainable. All people and businesses can access their daily needs and feel connected to their community.

## GOALS



**SAFETY**

Prioritize safety for travelers in Seattle, with no serious injury or fatal crashes



**SUSTAINABILITY**

Respond to climate change through innovation and a lens of climate justice



**LIVABILITY**

Reimagine city streets as inviting places to linger and play



**EQUITY**

Co-create with community and implement restorative practices to address transportation-related inequities



**MOBILITY & ECONOMIC VITALITY**

Provide reliable and affordable travel options that help people and goods get where they need to go



**MAINTENANCE & MODERNIZATION**

Improve city transportation infrastructure and ready it for the future

Seattle Department of Transportation

# Seattle Transit Measure 2024 Performance Report



September 2025

 Seattle  
Department of  
Transportation



## Today's Presentation

- STM Background and History
- Overview of STM 2024 Performance Report
  - Transit Service Investments
  - Transportation Access Program (TAP)
  - Transit Capital Programs
  - Emerging Needs
- What's Next
- Questions

# The Seattle Transit Landscape

- Most bus service in Seattle operated by **King County Metro Transit**
  - Additional bus service through **Sound Transit & Community Transit**
  - Light rail and commuter rail operated by **Sound Transit**
  - Passenger and car ferry service operated by **Washington State Ferries**
  - Other modes/operators: Water taxi, Monorail, Streetcar, and more

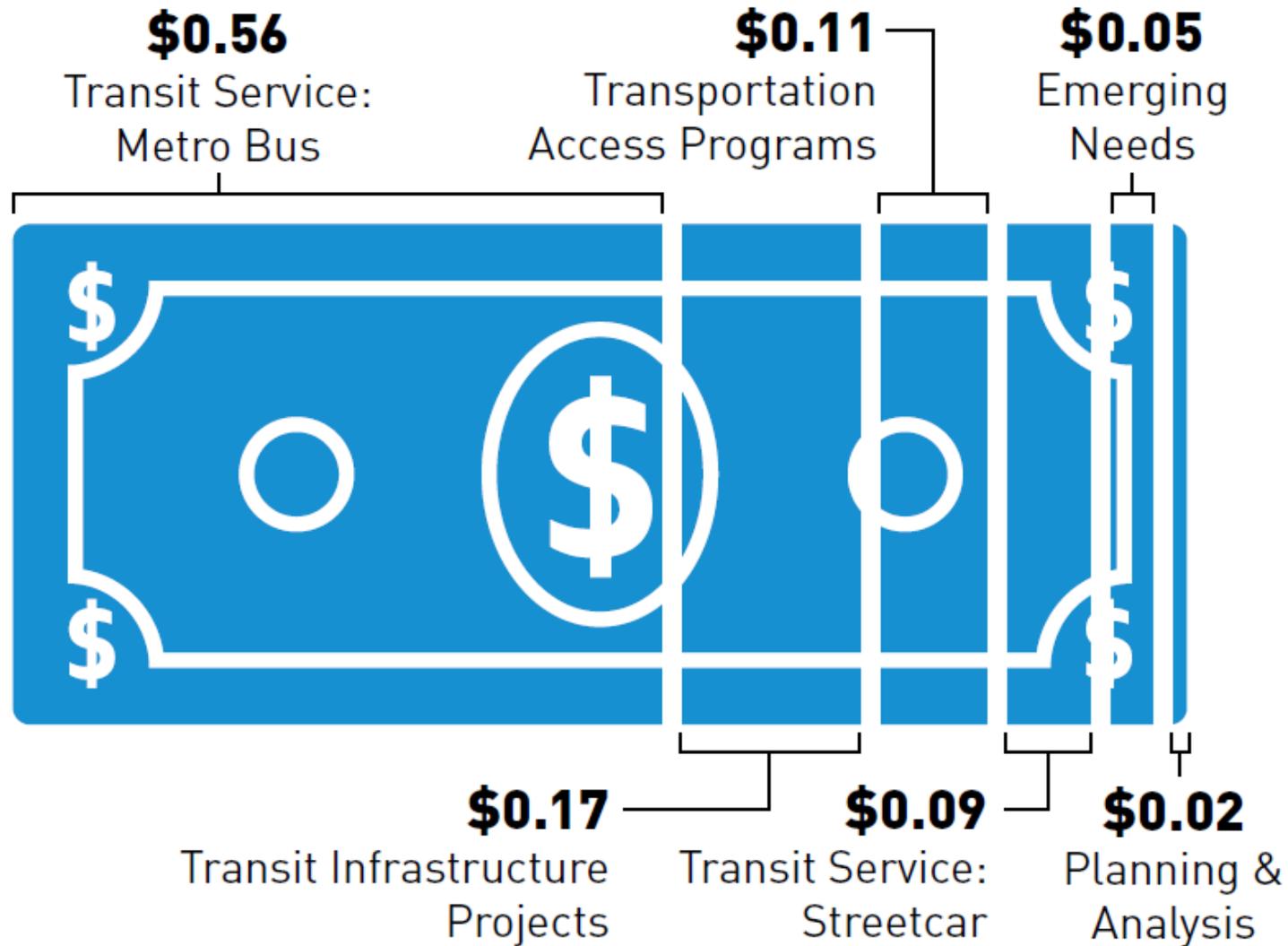


# STM Background

- Seattle Transit Measure (STM) approved in November 2020 with 80% voter approval
- Replaced the 2014 STBD Prop 1 (expired 2020) and continues much of the same programming
  - 2014 STBD Prop 1 was funded by a 0.1% sales tax and \$60 vehicle license fee
- Levies a 0.15% sales and use tax (equivalent of \$0.15 on a \$100 purchase) from April 2021 – March 2027
- Raises ~\$50M/year on average for transit service and access improvements, capital and emerging needs
- Oversight provided by the Transit Advisory Board



# STM Background: Average Annual Expenditures 2021-2024



# STM Outcome Statements:

## THROUGH THE STM:

### WE



**Invest** in more transit service in Seattle, focused on equity-priority areas



**Provide** ORCA cards to low-income residents



**Lead** transit education programs for youth and aging adults



**Fund** transit capital projects focused on efficient transit operations and safe access to transit



**Respond** to emerging transit needs, such as from the COVID-19 pandemic and West Seattle Bridge closure



**Support** Seattle Streetcar service delivery

### WHICH MEANS THAT



More people choose to take transit because it is safe, frequent, and reliable, particularly for those who depend on it the most



Low-income residents, youth, and older adults can save money on transit, leaving more for other essential needs



People feel more confident, comfortable, and secure using transit, especially those who rely on it regularly



More people can access their work and daily needs using transit



People in Seattle can adapt to changes in travel patterns caused by unexpected issues

# Transit Service Investments



## TRANSPORTATION GOALS SUPPORTED



Equity



Mobility & Economic Vitality



Sustainability

## WE



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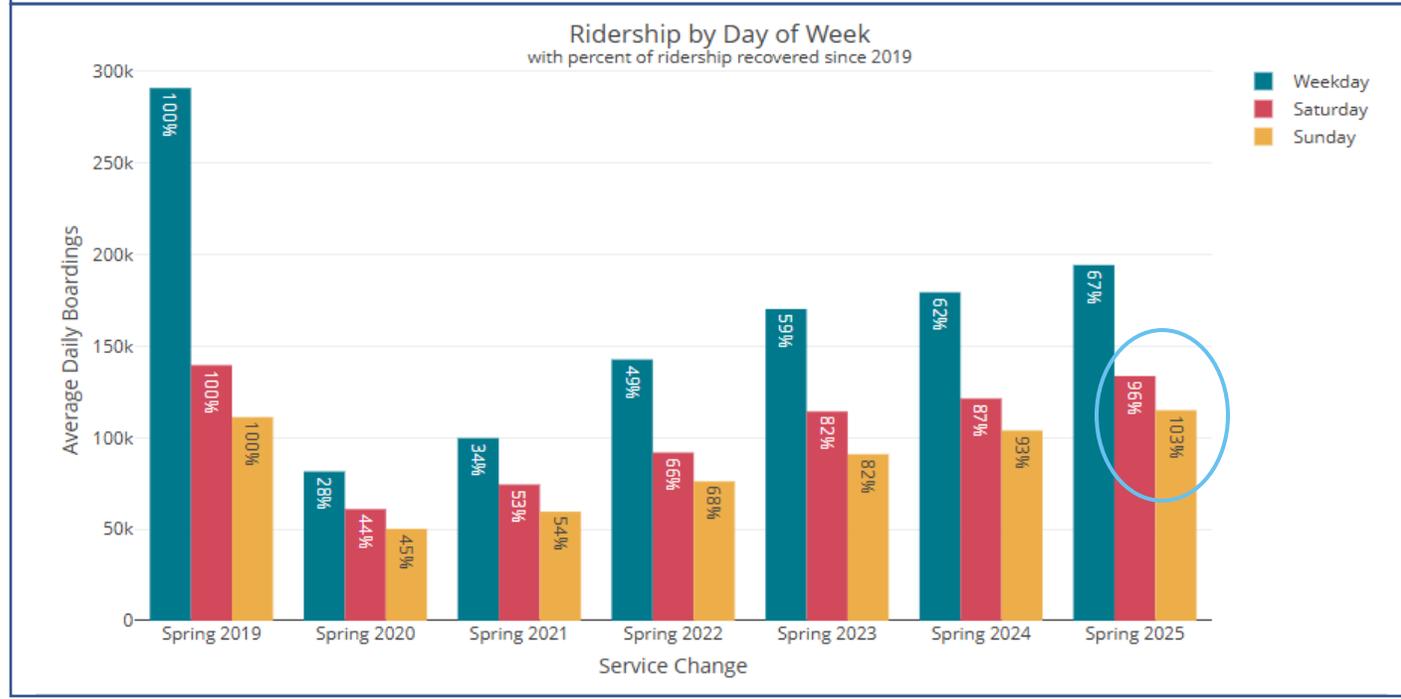
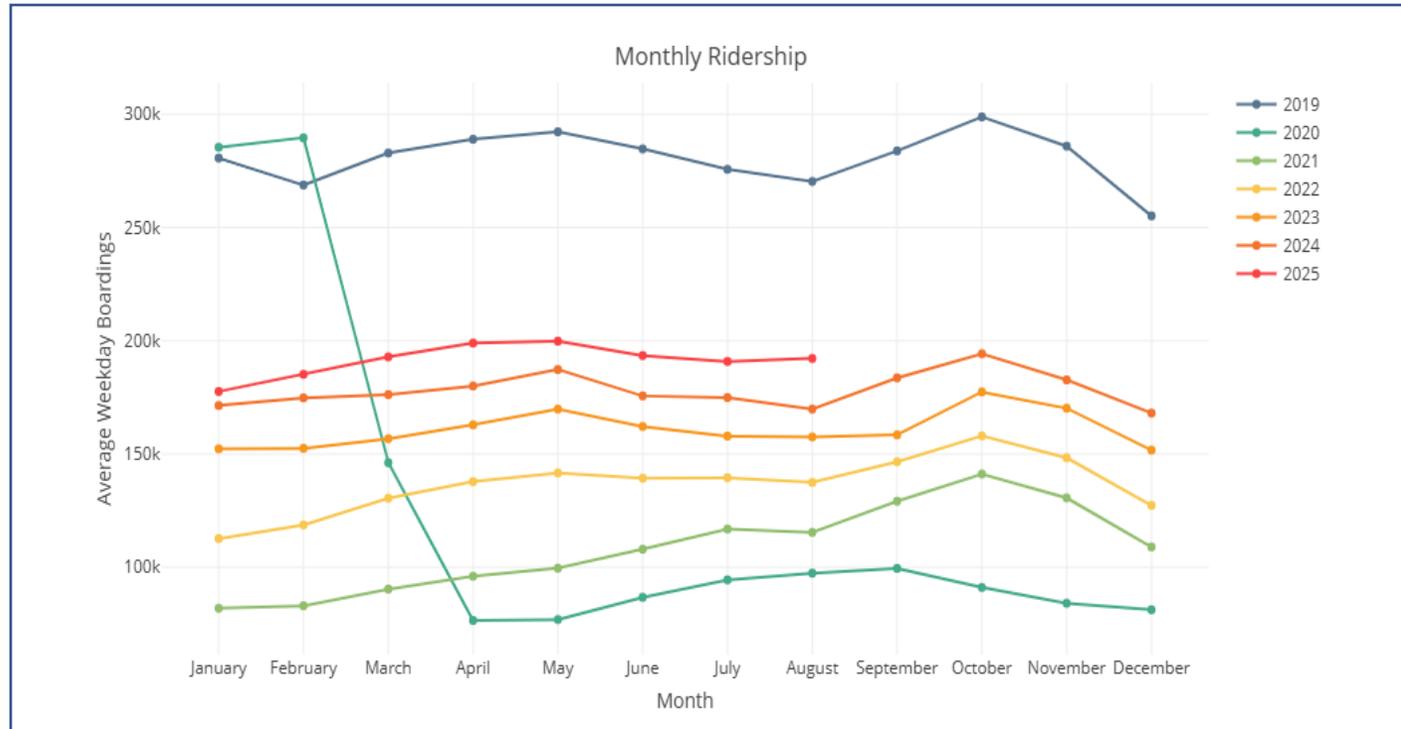
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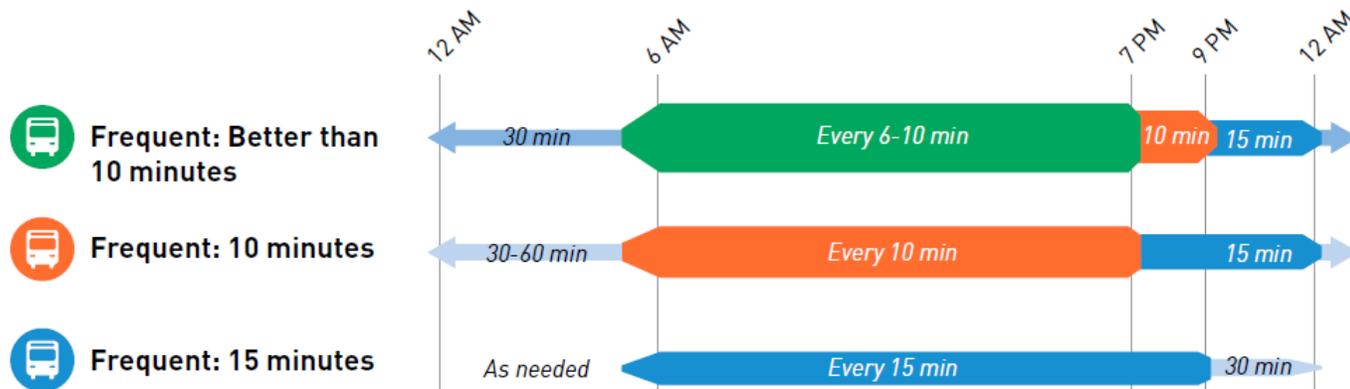
# TRANSIT SERVICE TRENDS

- Transit ridership patterns in Seattle are similar to national trends since the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - A slow, steady increase from about 30% to 72% of pre-Covid levels.
- Ridership in off-peak times (midday, night, weekends) has rebounded faster than during peak times.

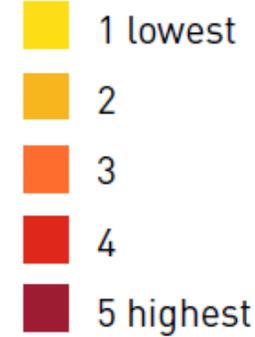


# Transit service investments

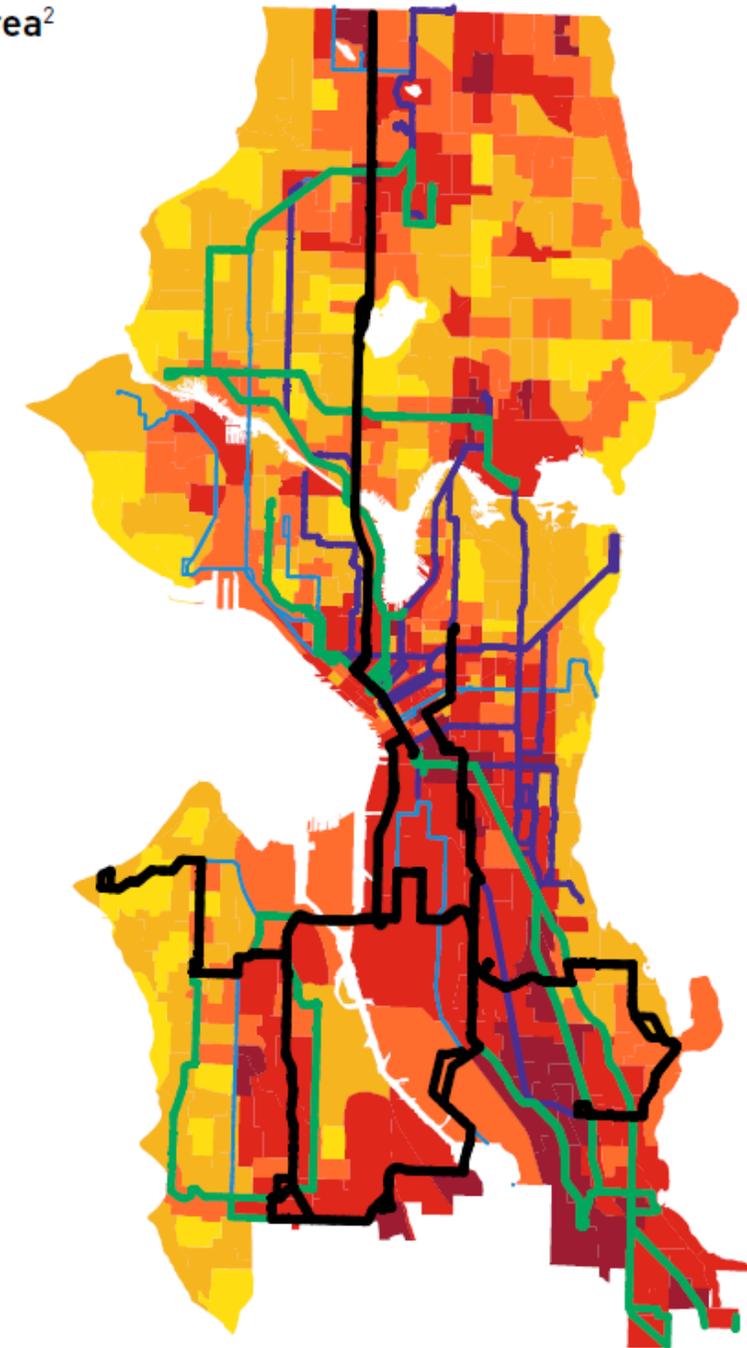
- The Frequent Transit Network (FTN) was updated in 2024 as a part of the Seattle Transportation Plan (STP)
  - FTN envisions a network of frequent and reliable routes that provide robust mobility options and transfer opportunities, at all times of day and all days of the week
- In 2022, SDOT and Transit Advisory Board collaborated on equity-centered Investment Prioritization Methodology
- SDOT uses a gap analysis between current service levels and FTN targets to define the universe of potential investments and the prioritization methodology to prioritize which investments get made at any given service change



## Equity Priority Area<sup>2</sup>



## Annual STM-Funded Hours

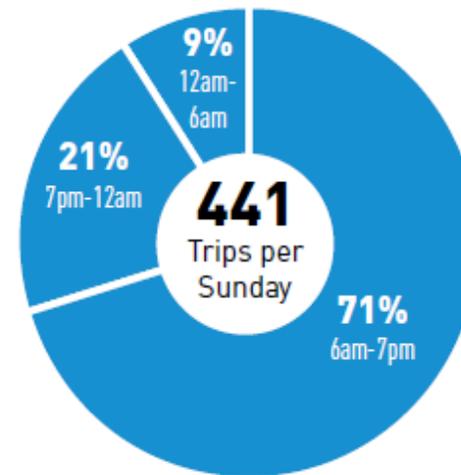
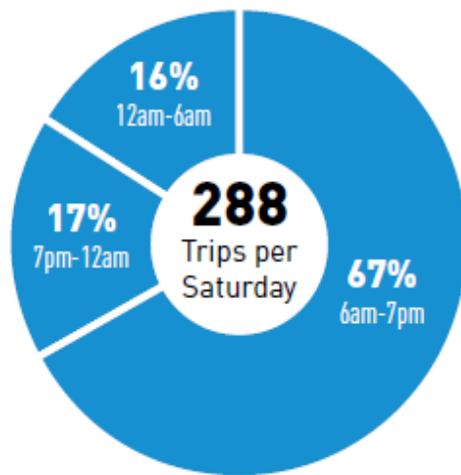
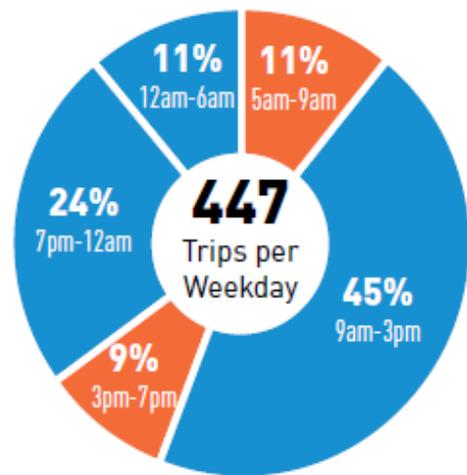


# Transit service investments

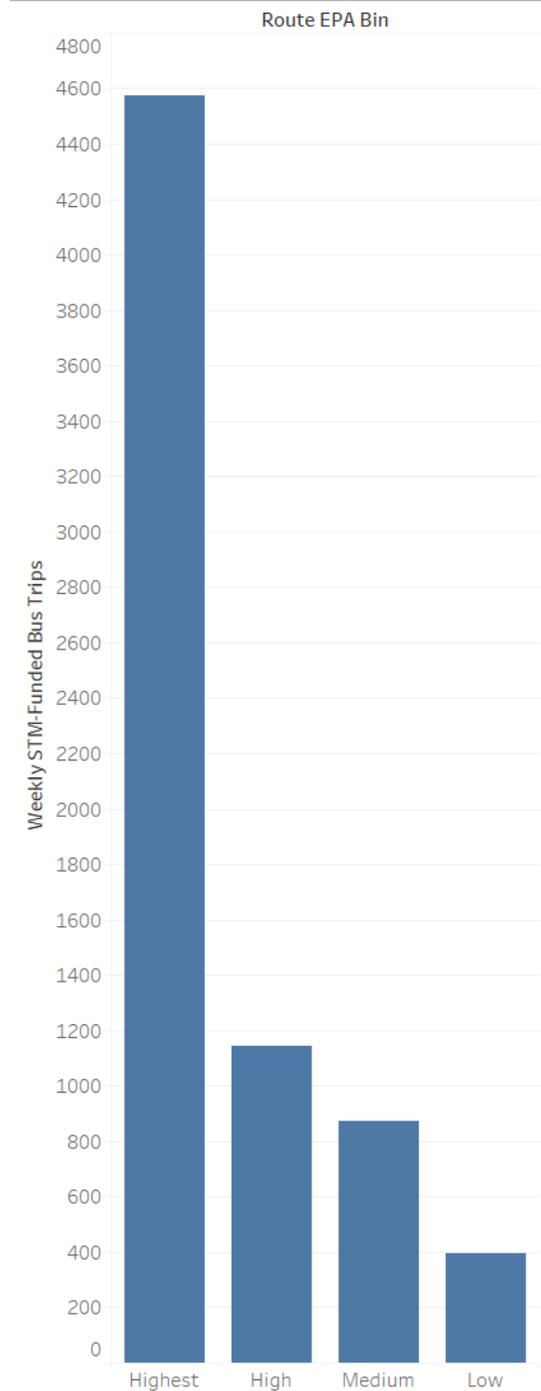
- STM’s investment process has been successful in prioritizing additional bus service for people who rely on transit the most.
- In 2024, STM funded close to 3,000 additional weekly bus trips on Metro routes operating within Seattle.
- Only 15% of these trips were during AM or PM peak times
- 85% of trips supported off-peak travel in the midday, evenings, nights, and weekends.

## STM funds transit investments at all times of day:

*Pie charts show STM-funded bus trips, and when they take place by time of the day and day of the week.*



Peak Hours Non-Peak Hours



# Other transit service investments

- Seattle Streetcar – a city-owned asset
  - STM funded \$10.2 million to cover operations and maintenance costs in 2024.
  - Streetcar ridership increasing by approximately 6% in 2024 to a total of nearly 1.5 million riders.
- Delridge/South Park Metro Flex Pilot
  - On-demand transit shuttle service launched in July 2024.
  - Arose out of spatial analysis and community conversations about mobility barriers in the area such as highways, hills, incomplete sidewalks, and availability of east-west transit service.
  - Close to 9k rides in first 5 months of operation.
- Trailhead Direct
  - Supports equitable and low-pollution access to popular hiking spots
  - SDOT supported the return of the Issaquah Alps route from Mt Baker transit station in 2024 (in addition to the Mt Si route).



# Transportation Access Programs (TAP)



## WE



**Provide** ORCA cards to low-income residents



**Lead** transit education programs for youth and aging adults

## WHICH MEANS THAT



Low-income residents, youth, and older adults can save money on transit, leaving more for other essential needs



People feel more confident, comfortable, and secure using transit, especially those who rely on it regularly



More people can access their work and daily needs using transit

## TRANSPORTATION GOALS SUPPORTED



Equity



Mobility & Economic Vitality



Sustainability



# TAP Overview

*Mission: To provide affordable, safe, and equitable access to public transportation by providing transit resources and community-centered programming to diverse Seattle communities.*

- **Focus Populations:** Low- and No-Income Residents, Low-Income Workers, Students and Youth, Seniors
- **ORCA subsidy programs** to remove financial burden from accessing transit
- **Community engagement programs** offer educational opportunities and services for historically excluded groups, helping improve rider confidence
- **Research projects** to explore new ways of improving transit access and safety outcomes for our community.
- **The Downtown Circulator**
- All TAP programs are STM-funded



# TAP Fare Subsidy Program Performance in 2024

TAP ORCA Program	Cards distributed	Trips Taken	Money Saved by Recipients	Timing
SHA Transit Pass	6,282	1,256,000	\$3,488,000	All year
Recovery Card <sup>3</sup>	2,408	250,000	\$705,000	Jan - May
Promise Scholars	1,550	201,000	\$501,000	All year
Seattle Public Preschools <sup>4</sup>	1,500	32,000	\$90,000	Sept - Dec
Seattle Public Library Partnership <sup>5</sup>	4,000	302	\$844	December

<sup>3</sup>Program ended on May 31, 2024

<sup>4</sup>Program initiated in September 2024

<sup>5</sup>Cards loaded with 4 trips each; data from end of 2024, additional usage expected in 2025

*“The free ORCA card will allow me to go doctor appointments, shopping, school, and training programs without worrying about how I will get there. Thank you.”*

— SHA Program Participant

# TAP – Community Engagement and Research

## Transit Education Program

- Partnered with Hopelink and three unique senior centers - Central Area Senior Center, Kin on Health Care Center, and the Vietnamese Senior Association - to host 12 transit-oriented field trips.

## Youth Transportation Summit

- In January 2024, nine young people who participated in Seattle’s first-ever Youth Transportation Summit in December 2023 presented a youth-developed Action Plan to the Mayor.

## Uplift Seattle’s Equitable Access to Transit (U-SEAT)

- Launched in 2023, this study examines the impact of fully subsidized transit on low-income job seekers.

## Safe Access to Transportation research project

- SDOT staff studying how safety perceptions affect transit access for unhoused individuals, working with numerous community partners

## Downtown Circulator

- Free, fixed-route, day-time shuttle meant to connect low/no income and disabled people to services downtown.



# TAP Makes A Difference – Participant Perspectives

“Having this card has drastically cut down on how much I’m driving and spending on the bus fare out of pocket. It’s transformed the way I navigate the city!”

“My family has never been on a train (any rails), ferry, let alone a streetcar and have never seen so many different forms of transportation! Not only do we want to discover where and what different places can be discovered, but my goal is to ride every King County Metro Transit bus, etc. so that we can see and explore the locations of where the transportation begins, ends, and where they go.”

*“My son has to drive me everywhere but now I know how to get to the library and the aquarium from my new apartment, and I am excited to get out there on my own!”*

*“I’m extremely grateful about this program and it has saved me a ton of money in transportation to get to and from work which really helped offset the costs of living in Seattle.”*

# Transit Capital Projects

## WE



**Fund** transit capital projects focused on efficient transit operations and safe access to transit

## WHICH MEANS THAT



People feel more confident, comfortable, and secure using transit, especially those who rely on it regularly



More people can access their work and daily needs using transit

## TRANSPORTATION GOALS SUPPORTED



Safety



Maintenance and Modernization

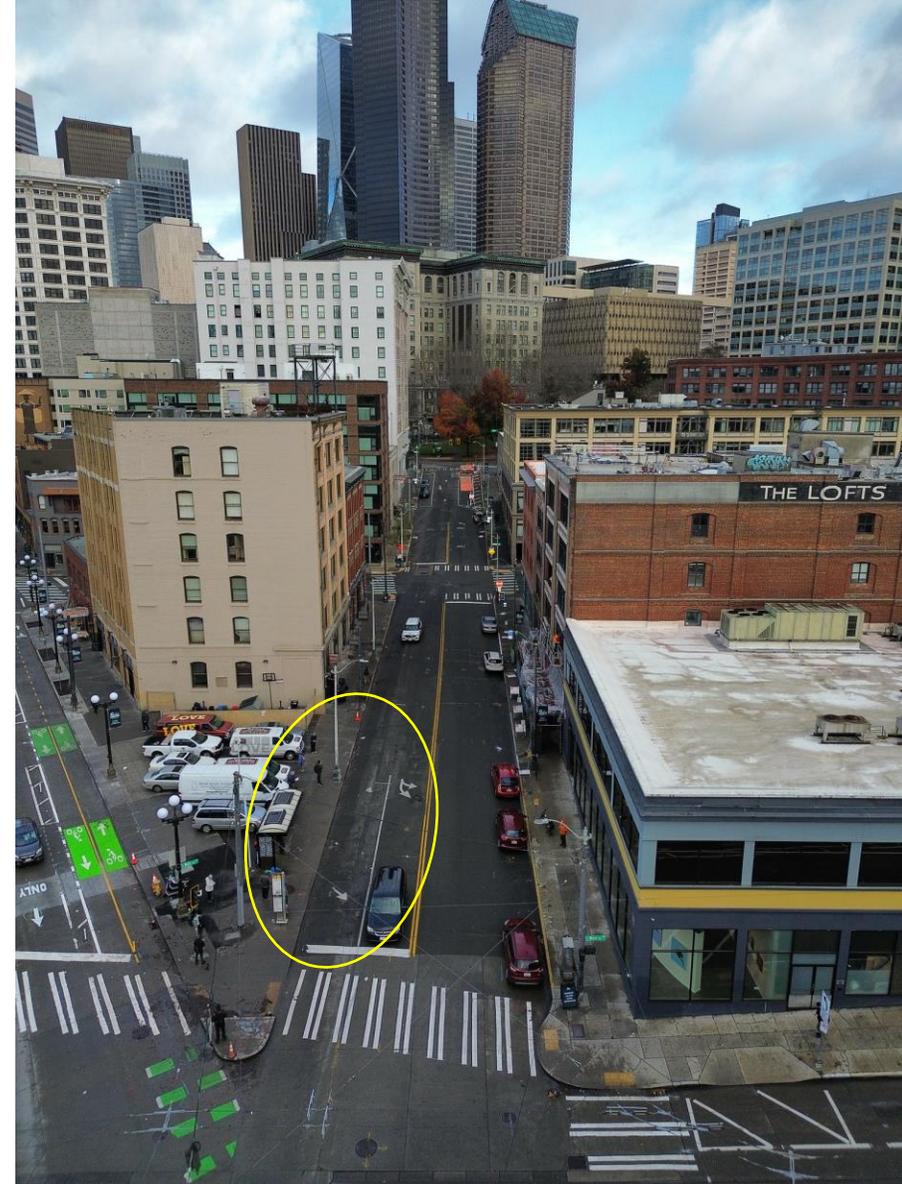


Livability



# STM support of transit capital projects

- STM capital investments contribute to a better transit experience for people across Seattle.
  - SDOT makes investments in bus lanes, transit signal priority, pedestrian signals, crosswalks, sidewalks, lighting, and wayfinding near bus stops and transit hubs and other enhancements to improve transit safety, reliability, and efficiency.
- Banner year for STM spending on capital projects
  - Capital spending almost doubled in 2024 at \$15.2 million.
  - Helped the Levy to Move Seattle finish strong
  - Support for RapidRide G Line and J Line
  - Jump started planning/design on 2024 Levy projects



# STM Transit Improvement Investments

## Transit Corridors

- **Rainier Ave S Bus Lane Project:** This project added bus lanes and priority treatments along Rainier Ave S, improving transit reliability for Route 7.
- **RapidRide G Line – Madison St Project**
- **RapidRide J Line** – Service launch in 2027
- Support for 3 projects connecting transit to Pinehurst Link Station (130<sup>th</sup>)

## Safe Access to Transit:

- **Safe Streets for All:** planning/design for 24 locations
- **14th Ave S And Dallas Ave S Crossing:** supports access to route 60 in South Park

## Transit Operations and Reliability

- **30th Ave Transit Street**
- **4th Ave S – BAT Lane Analysis**

## Transit Spot Improvements

- Focus on route 125 in West Seattle, 4 locations delivery; 9 designed



19

Capital projects that were completed or under construction in 2024



13

Projects with funds for planning and design



40

Routes benefiting from STM capital projects



# Emerging Needs

## WE



**Respond** to emerging transit needs, such as from the COVID-19 pandemic and West Seattle Bridge closure

## WHICH MEANS THAT



People in Seattle can adapt to changes in travel patterns caused by unexpected issues



People feel more confident, comfortable, and secure using transit, especially those who rely on it regularly

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# 2024 Emerging Needs

This category was created to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the West Seattle Bridge closure, and to support or pilot innovative partnerships with King County Metro

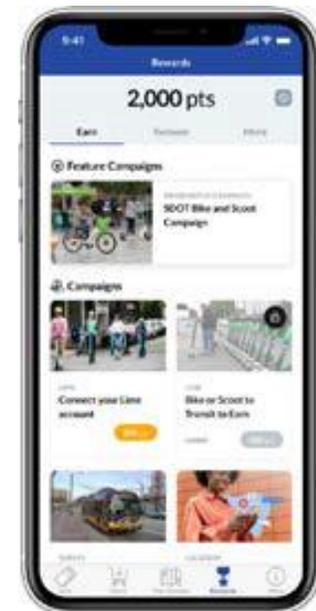
**Transit Ambassadors:** 2024 City council budget proviso: \$1 million of STM funds to support more Transit Ambassadors on King County Metro bus routes and Seattle Streetcar.

- In 2024, Metro Transit Ambassadors were stationed at three locations in Seattle: Central District, Lower Queen Anne/Seattle Center, and the Rainier Valley.

**Bike and Scoot to Transit:** STM funded the transit portion of trips earned through Metro's Bike and Scoot to Transit campaign.

**The Transit GO App Rewards Program:** The Rewards platform was used to support transit incentives to support both SDOT and Metro's campaigns

- Goal: boost ridership in Seattle and lower single occupancy vehicle use



# What's Next



# What's Next for STM

- **Transit Service:**

- ~16,000 of additional service hours to be invested as part of the phased Lynnwood Link Service Recovery Project
- Evaluate the Delridge/ South Park Metro Flex pilot
- Continued support and better frequency for Trailhead Direct
- Continued funding of Seattle Streetcar

- **Transportation Access Program:**

- Finalize the USEAT and Safe Access to Transit research
- Updated branding for the Downtown Circulator

- **Capital:**

- Continued funding of key transit-focused projects:

- **Emerging Needs**

- Ambassador work continues in 2025; support for Rewards program spun down

# Questions/Discussion

