



June 2024

## Long-Time CEO E. Susan Meyer Announces Retirement



*Above: E. Susan Meyer, CEO of STA, on a City Line coach*

On Thursday, June 20 at the STA Board of Directors meeting, STA CEO E. Susan Meyer announced her plans to retire at the end of the year. Meyer has served as STA's CEO for 19 years.

"It has been a profound privilege to be the chief executive officer at Spokane Transit," Meyer said. "Nineteen years ago, I didn't expect my career would take me to the public sector or to transit, but I am grateful that it did. I found the perfect place to serve the community I love alongside people who are passionate about our mission."

During her tenure, Meyer has collaborated with over 60 elected officials from Spokane County and the cities of Spokane, Spokane Valley, Cheney, Liberty Lake, Airway Heights, Medical Lake, and Millwood, who have served on the STA Board.

Meyer has been recognized for her focus on financial stewardship and executing a ten-year strategic plan, including the launch of the region's first Bus Rapid Transit

route, City Line, without incurring debt. In addition to local funding approved by voters in 2016 for expanding transit across the region, the STA team secured a historic \$53.4 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration and a \$15 million grant from Washington State for the City Line and its five-door zero-emission buses. The project is expected to come in more than \$10 million under budget, and the new line has already surpassed 500,000 rides. STA is committed to achieving a full fleet transition to zero-emission vehicles by 2040, with 25% of the bus fleet currently meeting this standard.

Among Meyer’s many contributions to the agency, she has ensured strict regulatory compliance with local, state, and federal requirements as demonstrated by a nearly flawless audit record. City of Spokane Valley Mayor, Pam Haley, expressed her respect and appreciation for the agency’s high standards and the confidence from agencies like the Washington State Auditor’s Office and the Federal Transit Administration. “STA’s track record of clean audits is nothing short of impressive,” said Mayor Haley. “Under Meyer’s leadership, STA has become an example of efficient and effective local government.”

Under Meyer’s leadership, STA successfully navigated the complex challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic without cutting service or laying off employees, ensuring reliable transit service was available, especially for essential workers. STA was recognized last fall as one of just nine transit systems across the country whose ridership met or exceeded pre-pandemic levels.

“Through it all and for what lies ahead, the key to STA’s successes,” Meyer said, “is the people.”

The STA Board of Directors will begin a search for STA’s next Chief Executive Officer soon. In the meantime, Meyer will continue to lead the organization.



## Route 9 Sprague Line Planned for September Service Change



*Above: An upgraded bus stop along Route 90 Sprague*

For the September 15 Service Change, the Sprague Line will be renamed from Route 90 into Route 9. As part of the route's transformation, 17 new stations with enhanced customer amenities will be added between Spokane and Spokane Valley.

As the first High Performance Transit route connecting with Spokane Valley, the Sprague Line represents a substantial enhancement of STA's presence in the area. The combination of frequent service and enhanced stations and amenities will not only elevate riders' traveling experience but also solidify STA's commitment to providing efficient and reliable transit options for the growing Spokane Valley region.

The improved route will feature 15-minute service intervals throughout the day with 30-minute frequency in evenings and weekends.

"The upgrade into the new Route 9 will mark a notable step forward for connectivity between Spokane and Spokane Valley," commented Karl Otterstrom, STA's Chief Planning & Development Officer.

The project is being conducted in two phases. The first phase of improvements is coming to completion, which includes the installation of 12 new enhanced bus stops and a completed, new entrance to the Valley Transit Center.

The new platforms are designed to facilitate near-level boarding with higher curbs, reducing the need for buses to kneel and thereby speeding up the boarding process. The platforms are equipped with benches, leaning rails, and lighting to enhance passenger comfort. Additionally, five of the 12 new stations will feature STA's branded markers with digital monitors providing real-time schedule information.

Phase 2 of the project aims to add 15 more locations with similar enhancements. This phase involves negotiating property acquisitions or easements with property owners and improving additional stops. Construction for Phase 2 is anticipated to



“Route 7 presents a fantastic opportunity to enhance both service and the infrastructure along the I-90 Valley Corridor,” commented Karl Otterstrom, STA’s Chief Planning & Development Officer. “One of the major benefits for the Spokane Valley area is the introduction of a direct bus route to the airport, eliminating the need for transfers at the Plaza.”

The new route will also allow STA to upgrade several stations along the corridor to meet needed service standards and enhance accessibility. The improved infrastructure will also support the growing communities in Spokane Valley and Liberty Lake, providing a reliable transit service that connects these areas to the rest of Spokane.

Once the Board approves the draft report on July 18, the project will move into the design and construction phases, which are expected to last several years. STA anticipates that Route 7 will be operational by 2026 or early 2027.

[Learn more](#) about Route 7 and the *Corridor Development Plan*.



## Read & Ride: Library Kiosk at Five Mile Park & Ride



*Above: The library kiosk at Five Mile Park & Ride*

Spokane Public Library (SPL) has partnered with STA to launch a library kiosk at the Five Mile Park & Ride, offering riders the convenience of borrowing books and DVDs

while waiting for their transportation. The kiosk is accessible with a library card at no charge and is stocked with a range of general options that will adapt based on what gets checked out over time. Additionally, patrons can pick up items they have placed on hold.

Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer at STA, said, “Spokane Public Library and STA have a great partnership that goes back several years now.”

STA and SPL collaborated during the COVID pandemic when SPL was remodeling its downtown branch, now known as the Central Library. To maintain access to library services, a temporary branch was opened in the 2nd floor rotunda of STA Plaza, which became highly popular among transit riders. The success of this temporary branch inspired both organizations to continue their partnership in new and creative ways.

The catalyst for the kiosk came when Spokane Public Library identified underserved areas in Spokane that lacked access to existing library branches. These areas included Latah Valley, Northpointe, Five Mile, and the Logan neighborhood.

Recognizing the potential benefits, STA welcomed the opportunity to work together again. A site tour confirmed that the Five Mile Park & Ride would provide a perfect location to host the kiosk.

“The kiosk will need the infrastructure that STA already has at its park and rides, such as power and fiber optic cabling,” Cortright noted. “Putting the kiosk at the park and ride is great because it will allow commuters to pick up a book or DVD on their way home or grab something to read on their morning commute.”

SPL already has two other kiosks in place: one at Yoke’s in Latah Valley by Cheney Spokane Road and another at Gonzaga Haven on North Foothills and Hamilton.

STA’s role in the installation of the Five Mile kiosk involved providing the land, while SPL has handled the installation. Moving forward STA will cover the electricity costs, and SPL will maintain the kiosk.

“It’s a win-win for everyone,” Cortright said. “There are areas of our community that are underserved both by access to mobility options and the wide range of materials a public library offers. The kiosk and the park and ride are wonderful ways to truly connect local residents to opportunity.”

SPL expects the kiosk to be operational in early July; installation of the wrap is the final step. Visit [www.spokanelibrary.org](http://www.spokanelibrary.org) to learn more.



## Take STA to Hoopfest



*Above: Hoopfest courts in downtown Spokane*

Ride City Line or take the Jefferson Hoopfest Shuttle to all the courtside action!

Thanks to the 50th anniversary celebration of the Spokane World's Fair, Expo '74, bus fare during Hoopfest is free on all routes.

There are several ways to get downtown for the games:

1. Use regular bus service. Saturday and Sunday schedules apply.
2. Catch a bus from a Park & Ride (for locations, [visit here](#)).
3. Park at SCC or WSU lots for free and take City Line downtown.
4. Take the Jefferson Hoopfest Shuttle.

Starting Friday, June 28, at 6:30 pm through Sunday, June 30, STA will operate regular service from alternate downtown boarding locations in the area of Second Avenue and Howard Street during the annual Hoopfest event in downtown Spokane.

Please note that City Line will drop off at Howard & 2nd but board at Howard & 3rd. Service is every 15 minutes.

The Jefferson Hoopfest Shuttle boards at the Jefferson Park & Ride lot located at 4th & Jefferson. The shuttle will serve the west side of the downtown tournament area. Shuttles operate from 6 am to 8 pm on Saturday and 7 am to 6 pm on Sunday and run every 15 minutes.

For more information as well as to view the alternate boarding bays map for Hoopfest, visit [spokanetransit.com/hoopfest](http://spokanetransit.com/hoopfest).



# July 4 Holiday Service



STA will operate on Holiday Service for Independence Day on July 4 and provide extended holiday service hours until after the fireworks at Riverfront Park.

All buses will leave alternate boarding zones at 10:45 pm. A map of these alternate zones may be found [here](#).



## Expo '74 Promotional Fare to End in Early July





*Above: The Route 11 Downtown/North Bank Shuttle passing by River Park Square*

As other promotional fares to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Expo '74 wind down at the end of the month, 50-cent fare on Route 11 is continuing every day from July 1 - 7. All STA routes are free to ride on Saturdays and Sundays through June 30, including Route 11.

STA increased service for Route 11 in early May to include nights and weekends. The updated route will make it easier for riders to get between Downtown Spokane and sports and entertainment venues just north of Riverfront Park, an area known as the North Bank. The route was updated based on extensive feedback from the public as well as conversations with STA partners and local businesses.

Come enjoy the **Expo celebrations** or explore new destinations with this limited-time fare promotion.



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Spokane Transit Authority | 1230 W Boone Ave | Spokane, WA 99201 US

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