

# DRAFT Connect Spokane Selected Elements

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**Prepared for:**  
STA Board of Directors

*PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDED DRAFT*

*10/7/2024*



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# High Performance Transit

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High Performance Transit (HPT) is STA's term for core lines serving local and regional corridors that are all-day, two-way, frequent, and easy to use. Together, the lines represent STA's High Performance Transit Network, a focus for integrated investment in infrastructure and supporting land use.

## High Performance Transit Principles

### 1. Pedestrian Support

*More than any other service type, HPT extends the range of the pedestrian.*

Most studies show that people are comfortable walking a quarter-mile for most activities. As the number of destinations within a mile increase, people are likely to increase the proportion of trips executed by walking. Beyond one-half mile to a mile, most persons will prefer other modes, especially if the trip is for purposes other than exercise. Rather than competing with short walking trips, transit can support greater mobility without dependence on the private automobile. The HPT network, with its emphasis on all-day, two-way connectivity at reasonable levels of frequency, supports the pedestrian's mobility beyond normal walking ranges. This emphasis on pedestrian mobility is a more effective way to view HPT mobility than looking at congestion relief or other less tangible societal benefits.

### 2. Ubiquity

*HPT service should attempt to serve the greatest number of people possible and the greatest number of destinations possible.*

The perceived importance of organic and inorganic properties often is proportionate to their availability and visibility. Despite the perception, ubiquity is not synonymous with importance; however, serving a broad geographic coverage and a broad array of transport needs means that HPT can be important to many people. Important things in our lives are things we share, value, and seek to take care of.

### 3. Activity Centers

*HPT should connect the region's cities and centers of population and jobs as much as possible.*

Urban studies over the last century have reinforced the intuitive notion that there are hierarchies of place and space. If there are centers, then there are peripheries. For about 50 years, gravity models have been used to express trip distribution in urban areas. Namely, that interaction between two locations declines with increasing distance (or time) between them but is positively associated with the amount of activity at each location.

Another way to say it is a place with more activity is more important to a greater number of places. It is for this reason that connecting activity centers, particularly those amenable to pedestrian activity, is important with HPT.

## 4. System Effectiveness

*HPT should improve the effectiveness of the transportation system.*

While often misunderstood to be simply about moving traffic, the regional transportation system is successful when it provides mobility for people and goods. All the “good ideas” about transit and transportation can be measured from the perspective of system effectiveness. When replacement costs (fiscal and environmental) and investment life cycles are not considered, it is tempting to create infrastructure that may not be founded upon the principles described within this element. Improving the effectiveness of the transportation system may be less about ensuring certain patterns of travel continue to exist, but about encouraging and facilitating only those travel patterns that can be sustained.

## 5. Appropriate Scale

*HPT should be fiscally responsible and scaled appropriately to the region’s current and long-term needs given competing demands for scarce public resources.*

Many factors beyond planning define the infrastructure realities of metropolitan areas. Try as a metropolitan area might, it has a unique politic, demography, geography and climate that make it impossible to replicate the perceived successes of other metropolitan areas. Appropriate scale of the HPT network reflects the fact that the Spokane region’s urban layout, density and fiscal capacity are unique. To be functional and achievable, design of the HPT network must respect, and even magnify this unique set of circumstances.

## 6. Mode Neutrality

*Service quality, not mode technology, is the defining feature of HPT.*

Although the vehicle type or mode is often the first topic of conversation during transit corridor discussions, the service type is the most important feature. For this reason, the aggregated service quality (relative to travel needs) and not the mode is the defining feature of HPT.

## 7. Permanence

*HPT features permanence of investments.*

Regardless of mode, HPT should express to the customer through wayfinding, tactile enhancements at stations, or alignments that it will be available in the future. This permanence and definitiveness is also critical in directing those developing the built environment to focus new growth around transit.

## 8. Integration

*HPT should integrate and provide connections with other modes and transport services.*

While the most critical mode with which transit should be integrated is the pedestrian (walking) mode, integration with other modes is important to expand customer base and make use of synergies that can occur by connecting to modes that connect with transit systems in other urban areas. Integration with other modes can expand the customer base to include customers who may use the system less regularly than typical customers.

## 9. Competitive

*HPT should make desired connections better than competing modes whenever possible.*

Nearly every transportation alignment in cities is no older than the city itself. Often transportation alignments define how sections of a metropolitan area relate to other sections. As a matter of geographic definition, it is easy to assume that these alignments are the only option for future transportation investments. Penetrating barriers and making new connections are features of the HPT Network that can enhance its competitiveness with other modes, particularly the private automobile.

## High Performance Transit Policies

In addition to the policies listed below, policies addressing HPT service levels and infrastructure can be found in Fixed Route (FR) and System Infrastructure (SI), respectively.

### HP 1.0 - Corridor Development Plan

*To be recognized as an HPT line, a corridor development plan should first be approved by the STA Board of Directors.*

The HPT lines are in major corridors where there is sufficient need to justify significant investments in passenger amenities and information. The corridor development planning process provides a method to determine the appropriate scale of investment, the service design and the implementation steps toward plan realization. It engages stakeholders including existing and future passengers, property owners and agencies in envisioning the future state of a corridor and ways to make progress, even if incremental. It also may identify the locations of stations and stops and infrastructure requirements.

### HP 2.0 - Corridor Characteristics

#### 2.1 Vehicle Type Assumption

*Unless otherwise evaluated or identified in a corridor development plan, rubber-tired buses are the standard HPT vehicle.*

#### 2.2 Corridor Configuration

*STA configures a corridor's service architecture in response to geographic context, reflecting particular conditions that affect speed, service, frequency, and access.*

There are two general corridor configurations, Urban and Regional. Urban configurations primarily operate on arterials and are typically a single route providing end-to-end service on most if not all trips. Regional configurations operate principally on freeways and highways, with significant segments with limited or no access. While speeds are higher in Regional corridors than in Urban corridors, limited access reduces overall travel possibilities. To enhance service usefulness and effectiveness, Regional corridors may feature two or more routes that work together to provide HPT service, with operational techniques to provide greater frequency along the most traveled portions of a corridor. Regional corridors may have longer headways (less frequency) than Urban corridors and configured with service branching while maintaining all other HPT elements.

### 2.3 Mode Selection

*When evaluating modes, STA shall consider the strengths and weaknesses of various vehicle types in relation to the demands of the corridor being served.*

Modal selection can generally be classified into two categories, conventional bus and rail. Conventional bus includes a variety of buses that may be categorized by vehicle type (including double-deckers, articulated buses, 40' passenger buses, etc) propulsion (battery electric buses, diesel hybrids, etc) and service characteristics (e.g., bus rapid transit). Rail includes both commuter rail and light rail vehicles. Each mode has its own set of benefits and weaknesses. Some vehicles have the capacity to move a dozen passengers, while others carry several hundred passengers at a time. In Spokane, Of course, these different vehicle types also have significantly different costs. These costs, both up-front and operational in nature, must be considered when selecting appropriate vehicles for HPT service. Mode selection is often part of an "alternatives analysis" conducted in a way to make the corridor project eligible for federal New Starts/Small Starts funding. If such funding is not sought, it may be appropriate to scale the mode selection process to take less time while still providing for public input. This may mean limiting the number of modes to be considered in a particular corridor.

## HP 3.0 - High Performance Transit (HPT) Implementation

### 3.1 Prioritization

*STA will prioritize the implementation of HPT corridors and selection of service types based on the principles outlined in this section.*

### 3.2 Speed and Reliability

*STA will advance measures to improve the speed and reliability of HPT corridors to improve service efficiency and ~~increasing~~increase mobility and access for STA riders.*

STA will actively seek to improve policies, roadway design and operating practices that influence the speed and reliability of HPT service. This includes measures such as transit signal priority, exclusive or semi-exclusive transit lanes, traffic queue jumps, and optimize stop placement. STA also seeks to reduce elements of travel time within its control by measures such as all-door boarding and stop spacing and design.

### 3.3 Land Use Implementation

*In addition to the policies in Regional Transportation and Land Use Coordination, STA will actively pursue partnerships, policies and other measures that result in greater access to HPT.*

STA will promote policy changes, such as reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements, reducing regulatory burdens and upzoning that allows more housing and activity near HPT stations and stops. Additionally, STA will partner with agencies and organizations to provide more urban activity, particularly affordable and market-rate housing, near HPT stations and stops.

### 3.4 HPT Standards and Guidelines

*STA may develop additional standards and guidelines to support HPT implementation.*

Standards and guidelines for HPT planning, implementation and operation may address the following:

- Process and contents of a corridor development plan
- Branding specifications and the criteria for when HPT corridors receiving branding elements

- Standard station elements and typical plans and specifications
- Resources for partner agencies and contractors

## HP 4.0 - High Performance Transit Network Map

*The HPT network map is the foundation, framework, and basis for future service improvements.*

The following map depicts how the HPT network may look in 20 to 30 years. Many factors, including but not limited to, economic conditions, ridership demand, funding opportunities, and regional priorities will affect how quickly and where the network begins taking shape. Additionally, modifications to this map are likely after the development of each corridor and as land use patterns change. This map will continue to take shape incrementally as directed by the policies found within this element. Corridors are identified by operational status:

- Existing – Service is in place and recognized as a component of STA’s existing High Performance Transit network.
- Planned – Service and capital investments are programmed in adopted plans to support implementation.
- Future – Corridors corresponding to existing bus routes that are candidate for future HPT investments but are currently not planned or programmed.
- Concept – Corridors that are distinct from existing services and are identified for long-range planning purposes.

***The table below has been completely updated to reflect existing conditions, planned improvements and refined future and conceptual investments in HPT corridors in the region.***

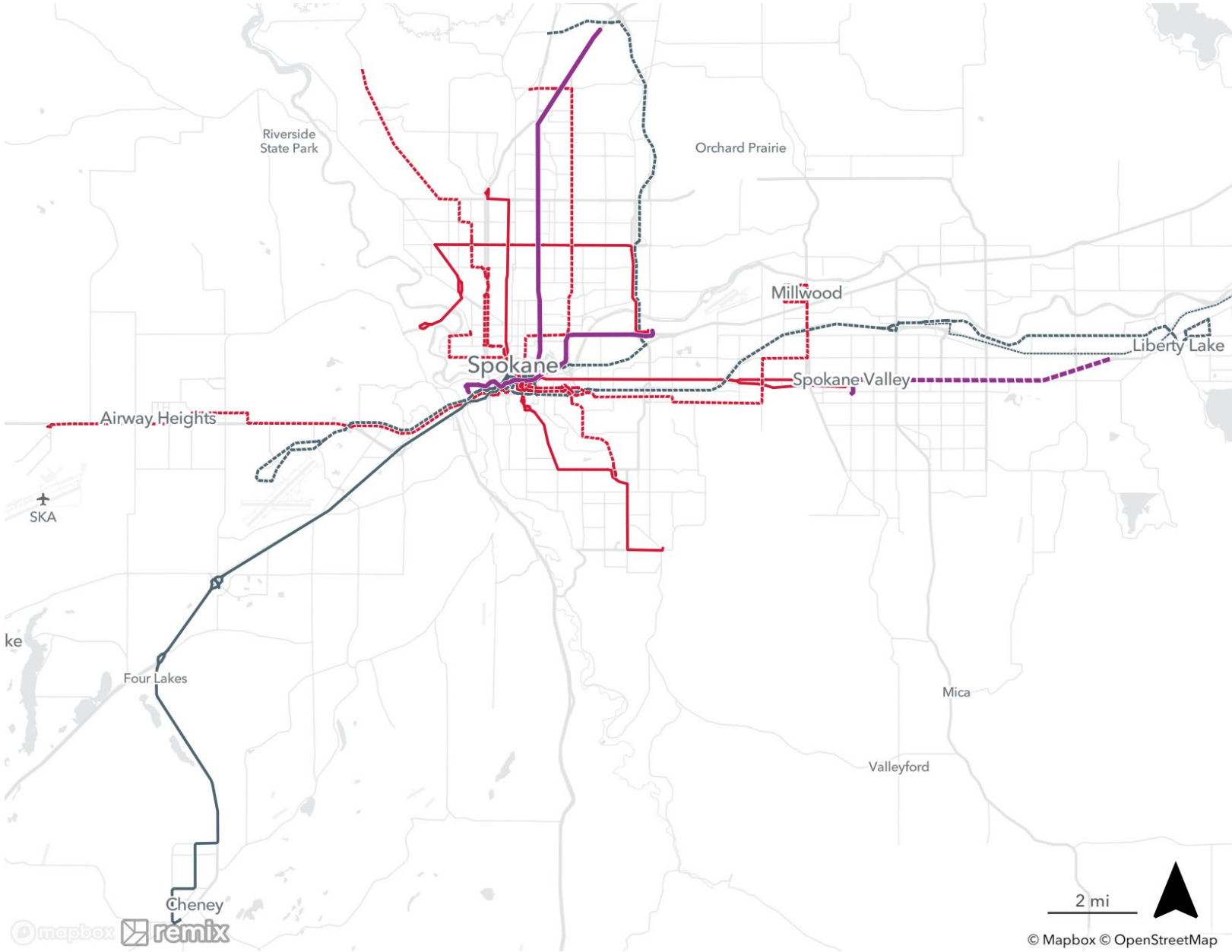
Route	Status (2024)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
<b>1 – City Line</b>	Existing	Browne’s Addition - SCC	Downtown Spokane, Riverpoint Campus, Cincinnati Ave., Mission Ave.	<p><i>Implemented July 2023, with committed service levels in place May 2024.</i></p> <p><b>Near-term-</b> Partner with the City of Spokane in advancing Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the corridor.</p>
<b>BRT-A</b>	Planned	Downtown Spokane – Mead Transit Center	Downtown Spokane, Division Street, Newport Hwy.	<p><b>Near-term-</b> Implement Division Street BRT consistent with board-adopted Locally Preferred Alternative, including new Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes between the Division ‘Y’ and the Spokane River. Support planning for TOD in the corridor.</p> <p><b>Mid-term-</b>Extend service to a new Mead Transit Center and expand service there. Advance TOD plans in the corridor.</p>
<b>BRT-B</b>	Concept	VTC – Appleway Station	Sprague	<p><b>Near-term-</b> Conduct corridor development planning for future BRT in the corridor, defining terminals, station locations and service levels.</p> <p><b>Mid-term-</b> Construct Appleway Station; improve service night and weekend service on Route 98 Greenacres/Liberty Lake.</p> <p><b>Long-term-</b> Implement BRT.</p>



Route	Status (2024)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
<b>4-Monroe /Regal</b>	Existing	Five Mile P&R – Moran Station	Monroe St., Downtown Spokane, Grand Blvd., 29th Ave., Lincoln Heights, Regal St.	<p><i>Service implemented September 2019 with committed stop improvements in place in 2023.</i></p> <p><b>Near-term-</b> Make additional stop improvements (Phase 3) with remaining project budget.</p>
<b>Urban-A</b>	Planned	Downtown – Valley Transit Center	Sprague	<p><b>Near-term-</b> Implement Route 9 Sprague September 2024 with stop improvements phased in through 2025.</p> <p><b>Mid-term-</b> Explore linkage to other HPT corridors, including future BRT (corridor BRT-B) and HPT on West Broadway</p>
<b>Urban-B</b>	Planned	SFCC – SCC	Wellesley, Market/Haven	<p><b>Near-term-</b> Secure funding to implement HPT on the corridor with improved passenger amenities.</p> <p><b>Mid-term-</b> Pursue opportunities to advance TOD in the corridor. Enhance additional stops beyond initial investment.</p>
<b>Urban-C</b>	Future	Indian Trail - South Hill Park & Ride	Indian Trail, Wellesley Ave, Shadle Shopping Center,	<p><b>Near-term-</b> Improve frequency during nights and weekends along Route 23 Maple/Ash and Route 45 Perry District.</p>

Route	Status (2024)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
Urban-D			Downtown, Perry St, South Hill Park & Ride	<p><b>Mid-term</b>- Regular bus; add 15-minute daytime weekday frequency; construct Indian Trail Park &amp; Ride</p> <p><b>Long-term</b>-Enhanced bus; ensure frequency and span meet HPT Frequent standards; install HPT stations and stop amenities where appropriate.</p>
	Future	Whitworth University – Airway Heights	Hawthorne Rd, Nevada St, Mission Ave, Downtown, Sunset Blvd, Airway Heights	<p><b>Near-term</b>- Improve frequency during nights and weekends along Route 28 Nevada and Route 61 Highway 2/Fairchild.; build end of line facilities in Airway Heights.</p> <p><b>Mid-term</b> - Regular bus; add 15-minute daytime weekday frequency.</p> <p><b>Long-term</b> -Enhanced bus; ensure frequency and span meet HPT Frequent standards; install HPT stations and stop amenities where appropriate.</p>
Urban-E	Future	West Central – Argonne Station	Broadway, 5 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> , Argonne	<p><b>Near-term</b> – upgrade passenger amenities; Improve frequency during nights and weekends along Route 94 East Central/Millwood</p> <p><b>Mid-term</b> - Regular bus; restructure service in the Valley, add 15-minute daytime weekday frequency; Construct Argonne Station Park &amp; Ride</p> <p><b>Long-term</b> - Enhanced bus; ensure frequency and span meet HPT Frequent standards, install HPT stations and stop amenities where appropriate.</p>

Route	Status (2024)	Terminals	Via	Implementation Strategy and Challenges
6 - Cheney	Existing	WSU Health Sciences Campus Spokane – Cheney/EWU	Plaza, I-90	<b>Near-term</b> - Branded articulated bus or double-decker bus; ensure frequency and span between Downtown Spokane and Cheney meets HPT Express standards
R-A	Planned	Liberty Lake – Airport	Mission Ave, Indiana Ave, Mirabeau P&R, I-90 Corridor	<b>Near-term</b> – Implement Route 7 between Liberty Lake and Spokane International Airport (planned September 2025); construct Argonne Station Park and Ride.  <b>Mid-term</b> – Pursue transit speed and reliability measures along I-90.
R-B	Concept	Hastings Park & Ride – Plaza	Mead Transit Center, NSC, Trent, U-District, Plaza	<b>Mid-term</b> - Introduce express service on the North Spokane Corridor once completed.  <b>Long-term</b> - Branded articulated bus or double-decker bus; ensure service to Hastings Park & Ride meets HPT Express span and frequency standards. Under consideration for merger with 6-Cheney
R-C	Concept	Post Falls, ID – Mirabeau Transit Center	I-90	<b>Near-term</b> – Implement pilot bus service connect to Mirabeau Transit Center (2026)  <b>Mid-term</b> – Develop long-term funding and operating plan for cross-state service  <b>Long-term</b> – Design and implement HPT investments, integrating with the overall I-90/Valley HPT Corridor.



## Paratransit

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Paratransit is a wheelchair-accessible shared-ride transportation service for individuals whose disability prevents them from using the regular fixed- route buses. This means that due to a disability a person must be unable to get to or from a bus stop, get on or off a lift or ramp equipped bus, or successfully travel by bus to or from their destination.

STA has a long history of collaboration and support regarding people with disabilities and people who are older. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed, ushering in a number of compliances required of public transit agencies, including upgrading/retrofitting fixed-route buses to better accommodate people with disabilities, as well as establishing paratransit services to compliment fixed-route service. STA has consistently fulfilled these requirements. The paratransit fleet has grown to 67 vehicles and additional service is regularly contracted through another provider to meet demand.

Although paratransit service is an essential piece to the transit network, people are encouraged to use fixed-route whenever possible. The 2016 average cost per paratransit trip was \$22.17, compared to \$3.80 per fixed-route trip. Paratransit service expense represents approximately 20 percent of STA's total operating budget, yet accounts for approximately 5 percent of STA's total trips. As a result of a high level of service, as well as a relatively inexpensive fare, STA's paratransit ridership has grown considerably since the inception of ADA regulations. STA's paratransit ridership experienced a general decline of ridership from 2009 – 2015, due in part to several initiatives such as in-person eligibility assessments, mobility training, and a van grant program. Once these programs have achieved full impact, ridership is expected to begin gradual growth of 1.5% to 2% as evidenced in 2016. Balancing quality service with fiscal effectiveness remains a key concern of STA's Paratransit department.

### Paratransit Goal

***Paratransit shall meet ADA standards as a comparable service which compliments fixed-route service.***

### Paratransit Principles

The principles listed below identify the basic concepts of paratransit. These principles are unchanging, define the basic foundation of paratransit, and will continue to serve as guidance for new and existing paratransit policies.

#### 1. Purpose

***Paratransit service is an origin to destination, shared-ride service.***

Paratransit is not a personalized taxi service. Rather, paratransit is a service intended to serve multiple people and destinations using a shared trip. Service begins at the door of a rider's origin and ends at the door of their destination, usually making stops for other paratransit riders along the way.

#### 2. Compliance

***Paratransit service complies with the ADA service criteria.***

As a requirement of operation, STA's paratransit service must comply with the ADA service criteria. Compliance is required in categories that include fares, travel time, eligibility, capacity constraints, service area, response time, transport of common people using wheelchairs, visitor service, no trip restrictions or waiting lists, no shows, and so forth. These compliance categories may change over time, but the principle of compliance requires STA to continually monitor changes at the federal level and adjust policies and practices to meet these requirements.

## Paratransit Policies

Based on the paratransit principles, this section articulates policy and defines the intent and extent of the paratransit services provided by STA. These policies are intended to ensure consistency and coordination between existing service and future enhancements or reductions. The policies should be used for the purposes of decision making, maintaining consistency and service modifications.

### PT 1.0 – Service Area

#### 1.1 Geographic Area

***Strictly adhere to a three-quarter mile geographic buffer around fixed-route lines of service and bounded by the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA) boundary.***

STA provides paratransit service which is geographically comparable to fixed-route service. Paratransit service will be limited to origins and destinations located within a three-quarter mile radius of all fixed-routes.

#### 1.2 Simple Boundary

***Adhere to a consistent boundary for paratransit service availability relative to the maximum fixed-route service footprint and span provided.***

Although paratransit boundaries are allowed to change in response to the specific hours a particular fixed-route is running, STA operates paratransit service within a static boundary of geography and span. The paratransit boundary adheres to the footprint created by the boundary associated with all of the fixed-routes at all times. If a geographic area is surrounded by fixed-route service on all sides, but yet lies 3/4 -mile from any service, that area will still receive paratransit service, consistent with federal regulation. Additionally, the span of paratransit service will mirror the span of the entire fixed-route system.

### PT 2.0 – Service and Eligibility Standards

#### 2.1 Travel Time

***Travel time for a paratransit ride shall be comparable to a similar fixed-route trip.***

The time of the typical paratransit ride should be comparable to the time it would take to make the same trip using fixed-route service. The comparable time calculation for the fixed-route trip will consider the time that it would take to walk to the transit stop, wait for the transit vehicle and transfer to another vehicle if necessary.

#### 2.2 ~~Call Center~~ Customer Service

***Provide paratransit ~~call center~~ customer service capacity comparable to that of STA's general call center operation.***

~~Paratransit customer service capacity should not be a limiting factor in accessing Paratransit services. In an effort to offer comparable service to that of fixed route, the paratransit call center should maintain the same relative capacity for calls as is expected for fixed route.~~

### 2.3 Reservation Window

***Provide a seven-day reservation window for paratransit service.***

A seven-day reservation window allows customers to plan ahead. This is especially helpful for paratransit riders bound for medical appointments or other scheduled events.

### 2.4 Eligibility Determinations

***Eligibility determinations will be based on trip-by-trip eligibility.***

For those customers who are conditionally eligible, eligibility will be determined based on key factors of the nature of each particular trip vis-à-vis the customer's physical and cognitive abilities. For example, weather, terrain, accessibility, etc. may determine whether or not a customer with conditional eligibility is able to complete the trip with fixed-route or if they need paratransit service. This policy ensures that public resources are used responsibly and fairly.

### 2.5 Emergency Conditions

***Emergency conditions may require trip prioritization at limited times.***

STA is determined to refrain from prioritizing paratransit trips. However, severe weather or other emergency conditions may require STA to take the step of using prioritization techniques for paratransit vehicle trip assignments.

### 2.6 Safety

***Securements for wheelchairs and safety/seat belts for all riders shall be required on all vehicles making paratransit trips.***

Safety is the primary concern of STA. Requiring the use of securement devices on paratransit vehicles, as well as education on their proper use, is an important step towards keeping our riders and operators safe.

## PT 3.0 – Service Structure

### 3.1 Balance

***Sustain a service delivery architecture that provides for high productivity and operational flexibility (in-house, contracted) to meet the varying levels of service demand.***

Due to an ever-changing operating environment, STA must balance productivity with flexibility when needed.

## Flexible Services

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To create a balanced and complete transit network, STA employs a variety of services. Just as fixed-route and paratransit services fill unique travel needs, STA's flexible services program offers an array of opportunities that meet needs not served by the other programs. The Flexible Service program has traditionally focused on the vanpool program serving groups of commuters who travel longer distances to their workplace, but there are numerous opportunities to capitalize on the benefits of flexible services. In addition, through the implementation of other mobility services like transportation network companies (TNC) (i.e. Lyft, Uber), bikeshare, special use vans and [vanshare/rideshare](#), STA will be able to help efficiently improve the mobility of its customers. STA's vanpool program ridership has experienced considerable growth since its inception. The Flexible Services program holds considerable promise for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of STA's other services.

### Flexible Services Goal

***Spokane Transit Authority's Flexible Service program will support the overall transit network as well as local and regional commute trip reduction efforts by offering and facilitating specialized mobility services.***

### Flexible Services Principles

The principles listed below define the Flexible Services. They provide guidelines for ensuring that the fundamental ideas behind Flexible Services service are understood by all. These principles are unchanging and will continue to serve as guidance for new and existing policies.

#### 1. Purpose

***The Flexible Services program meets specialized needs that cannot be met with other transit modes.***

Services offered under the Flexible Services program is not a fixed-route service. The Flexible Services programs are a suite of various mobility options designed to expand the utility of fixed-route transit by integrating transit stops with other shared modes to meet the specific needs of its customers while often requiring lower capital, operating, and energy resources.

#### 2. Partnerships

***Spokane Transit Authority's Flexible Services program service is part of a partnership that extends across agencies.***

Coordination between all national, state, and local agencies working towards the goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled is essential. Agencies that organize, advocate, and support an interconnected system of transportation options need to work together to achieve statewide goals.

#### 3. Regional Service

***Some of the mobility options offered under the Flexible Services program are a regional service that can extend beyond the Public Transportation Benefit Area, Spokane County and Washington State boundaries.***



As a part of serving specialized mobility needs, Flexible Services provide for a larger region than fixed-route or paratransit services. Flexible Services is able to extend into areas with limited access or into rural areas which cannot be supported by fixed-route transit.

#### 4. Benefits Must Outweigh Alternatives

***To be successful, collective benefits (cost, time, convenience, peace of mind, etc.) of using the Flexible Services mobility option must be greater than driving alone.***

For emerging mobility services and fixed-route transit service to effectively complement one another, riders must perceive these services as a frictionless extension of the transit network.

Existing and potential riders are continually evaluating options and weighing the collective benefits of each mode of transportation. Riders rarely make decisions based on only one benefit, thus the Flexible Services program continually considers the collective benefits of its services compared to other options.

#### 5. Availability

***Flexible Services is on-demand.***

Flexible Services has the flexibility to be scheduled around specific work shifts or events.

### Flexible Services Policies

The following Flexible Services policies articulate the guidelines for service standards and coordination. Each policy contributes to specificity and provides guidance towards reaching the overall goal of Flexible Services. As a whole, the collection of policies establishes a framework for the future development of Flexible Services programs.

#### FS 1.0 – Service Standards

##### 1.1 Rideshare Service Types

***STA rideshare service types may include ~~vanpool~~ rideshare, special use vans, and vanshare.***

Each service is defined as the following:

**Vanpool/Rideshare**: A van or small SUV provided by STA that is shared by people who live and work in approximately the same areas and can commute together to a place of employment. The driver is not an employee of STA.

**Special Use Vans**: Special use vans are awarded to select service providers in our area who primarily serve residents who travel to, from and within the PTBA. They are used for providing transportation for people with special needs and their caregivers.

**Vanshare**: A van used to bridge gaps between public transit and a group's destination. It is particularly useful when a place of employment is not within walking distance of a major transit facility.

## 1.2 Flexible Services Program Types

**STA Flexible Services (Shared Mobility) programs ~~types may incorporate Transportation Network Companies, dynamic routing, bike share, or other emerging mobility options.~~ provides services and resources that are shared among users, either concurrently or one after another.**

~~Each Service is defined as the following:~~ Flexible Services are classified as Mobility Hubs (infrastructure) or Mobility on Demand (Systems).

### 1.2.1 Mobility Hub

Mobility Hubs are a place where people can seamlessly connect with multiple modes of transportation in a safe, comfortable, and accessible environment. They provide physical integration among modes by co-locating carsharing, bike sharing, and other shared mobility services at/near public transit.

### 1.2.2 Mobility on Demand (MoD)

Mobility on-demand is a mode that, if implemented, is intended to extend the reach of STA's services by connecting riders to fixed route service at major stops, stations or transit centers. Mobility on-demand may be instituted in areas not served by Fixed Route within the PTBA. These services may be directly operated by STA (using agency technology, drivers and vehicles) or may be partially or completely contracted to a third party.

Any service should not be used to replace or compete with existing STA fixed route and ADA paratransit services. MoD might be able to meet coverage goals in areas that cannot support regular service, such as low population exurban and rural communities, or to help people in those areas connect to fixed route systems at transit hubs. It could also serve as a tool to evaluate demand for expanded fixed route service hours or coverage.

Before the introduction of any type of MoD service, the following factors must be identified:

- Operational parameters
  - Start/end points
  - Time span
  - Restrictions
  - Geographic area
- Scheduling
  - Methods
  - Timing (day of or pre-scheduled)
- Operational method
  - Who provides the drivers
  - Who provides the vehicles
- Payment method

**Transportation Network Companies (TNC):** ~~A TNC typically connects via websites and mobile apps, pairing passengers with drivers who provide such passengers with transportation on the driver's non-commercial vehicle. Examples include Lyft and Uber. STA may partner with TNCs to address:~~

~~**Suburban Point-to-Point services:** In low density areas and other areas not traditionally suitable for fixed-route transit, ridesourcing may become the primary means of transportation. This may follow a model similar to dial-a-ride service, where a number of ridesourcing vehicles are made available for trips within a particular geographic area, or a different form altogether.~~

~~**Service Gaps:** TNCs can provide lifeline services for individuals needing to travel at times of day when demand is low and fixed routes are unproductive (e.g. late nights, weekends, and off-peak trip, often needed by low-income workers or as protection against drunk driving)~~

~~**Dynamic Routing:** Provides flexible service as a way to maintain mobility in low density areas with minimal or no fixed route service. These services may include demand response shuttles, seasonal or special event shuttles, or mobility software.~~

~~**Bike Share:** A service in which bicycles are made available for shared use to individuals on a very short term basis. Bike share schemes allow people to borrow a bike from point "A" and return it at point "B". Many bike share systems offer subscriptions that make the first 30–45 minutes of use either free or very inexpensive, encouraging use as transportation. This allows each bike to serve several users per day.~~

### 1.3 Geography

***Begin or end all Flexible Services programs within the PTBA.***

Although Flexible Services program trips may be entirely within the PTBA, this policy allows groups of people who live or work outside of the PTBA boundary to reach their destinations inside of the PTBA more efficiently. This policy reflects the reality that the regional employment base, and by extension, the travel shed extends well beyond the PTBA.

### 1.4 Safety

***Support customer safety.***

The safety of STA passengers is of great importance. All rideshare vehicles are equipped with seatbelts and safety devices to help ensure the safety of drivers and riders. Safety education programs for rideshare drivers and Flexible Service Program riders will help all customers ride more safely and comfortably.

## FS 2.0 – Service Coordination

### 2.1 Complementary Service

***Flexible Services programs shall support fixed-route and paratransit services.***

For STA's transit network to thrive, all services must connect to and complement each other. In cases where fixed-route service cannot meet the service design guidelines, Flexible Services programs can be an efficient way to serve places of work or residency with public transportation.

### 2.2 Coordination

***Support Flexible Services programs coordination and connections with all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and other transit services.***

No transit trip is ever completed without the use of another mode. All trips begin and end with walking, riding a bicycle, or driving to reach the transit network. Improving and enhancing the ability for customers to reach transit can be just as important as the transit trip itself. Promoting coordination and connectivity between modes is essential.

## Transit Equity and Inclusion

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According to the Transportation Planning Capacity Building program within US Department of Transportation, “Equity in transportation seeks fairness in mobility and accessibility to meet the needs of all community members.” An inclusive public transportation system seeks to value the input of the whole community, especially those who primarily rely on it for their daily mobility.

Equity and inclusion, when taken together, together comprise a critical element of STA’s commitments, plans and services (both past and present).

### Background

Spokane Transit adheres to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act which states, “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program receiving Federal financial assistance.” STA prepares and adopts a Title VI Program every three years to advance its obligations under the law. The principles and policies contained in this element both inform that program and enhance it by demonstrating STA’s integration of equity and inclusion into all aspects of service delivery.

~~Transit equity is intimately tied to environmental justice.~~ Transit equity is a response to decades-long inequities in transportation, concerns come up when wealthier where wealthier and less marginalized parts of society receive more transportation benefits while the more marginalized people in our communities – historically including communities of color and lower income populations - receive less transportation or experience more negative effects of transportation activities.

Transportation Secretary Buttigieg notes in his December 18, 2023 Policy Statement: Equity and Access “The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, environmental justice, and equal opportunity. The simple yet powerful mandate of equity and access in transportation will shape and drive all Departmental programs and activities.” STA’s vision of connecting everyone to opportunity aligns with the federal objective to increase equity and access.

Environmental justice in Washington State, as provided in the Healthy Environment for All Act (HEAL Act) addresses disproportionate environmental and health impacts in all laws, rules, and policies by prioritizing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, the equitable distribution of resources and benefits, and eliminating harm. (RCW 70A.02.010). The passage of the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act in 2021 is a historic step toward eliminating environmental health disparities and more equitably distributing health and environmental benefits among communities of color and low-income households.

At the national level, the US Department of Transportation has adopted three fundamental environmental justice principles to guide transportation justice efforts:

- Avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on communities of color and low-income populations.
- Ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.

- Prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by communities of color and low-income populations.

~~STA is committed to providing high-quality service to low-income communities and communities of color. We use transit equity and environmental considerations in our decision-making. This element is focused on external-facing inclusion and equity goals, principles and policies.~~

Spokane Transit affirms the importance of the principles identified by the National Campaign for Transit Justice, which calls for transit that is equitable, sustainable, economically productive, safe and accessible, and affordable. As a result, Transit Equity and Inclusion is not a program or activity that can stand alone. It integrates with everything the organization does, and principles and policies that relate to equity and inclusion are contained throughout Connect Spokane, and not isolated to this chapter alone. Ultimately, equity and inclusion should be evident in both the processes STA undertakes when planning, and the outcomes it delivers, primarily in transportation services.

## Transit Equity and Inclusion Goal

*STA works towards a system that ~~ensures inclusive and equitable access to our programs, services, and transit system for the people of our region~~. ~~normalizes transit use and embeds equity throughout the system with the goal of creating inclusive, accountable, transparent, and equitable access to our programs, services, and transit system for the people traveling throughout the region.~~*

## Transit Equity and Inclusion Principles

These principles describe the foundation for the policies found in this element:

### 1. Access and Mobility

***Transit systems that are designed to work for a city or region's most vulnerable populations will work for everyone.***

*Access to high-quality public transportation can make cities and regions more inclusive by increasing mobility and opportunity, particularly for people with disabilities, low incomes, minority and limited English proficiency (LEP) populations, and those who otherwise, for whatever reason, cannot drive a personal automobile. Enabling people to meet their day-to-day needs—getting to work, school, the grocery store, the doctor's office, and social and leisure activities - allows people to meet these needs and creates long-term economic opportunities.*

### 1.2. Equitable and Effective Decision-Making

*Effective transportation decision-making depends upon understanding and properly addressing the unique needs of different socio-economic groups.*

Public transportation is more effective when decision-making is informed by equity and inclusion considerations. For STA, such considerations should include decisions about:

- transit service to low-income neighborhoods and communities of color
- placement of bus stops and shelters
- service for non-English speaking populations
- service for students

### 2.3. Accountability through Transparency

*A transparent and public account of decisions made and responses to public input regarding these decisions increases a transit agency's accountability to its customers.*

Thorough recordkeeping helps to ensure a common understanding of decisions, policies, and responses. Sharing records and analysis with the public demonstrates the transparency with which STA conducts its business.

### **3.4. Strength through Diversity**

*A diversity of viewpoints, backgrounds and circumstances contributes to effective policy development, and broadens our understanding of the world. Diversity fosters resilience and broadens the stakeholders engaged in the success of an endeavor.*

## **Transit Equity and Inclusion Policies**

### **TEI 1.0 – Designing Public Engagement and Outreach**

***STA will strive to design inclusive and accessible engagement and outreach efforts, including efforts to reach out and seek participation from historically marginalized communities.***

STA staff will develop engagement strategies with the goal of reaching out and seeking participation, especially from those communities that have historically been marginalized and are more vulnerable to changes in access to jobs, goods and services, medical care, and other essentials of daily life.

### **TEI 2.0 – Accessible Information**

*Providing access and non-technical explanations of relevant reports, records, and documents in a variety of formats demonstrates STA's commitment to transparency.*

STA conducts its business in a fair, honest, and legal manner. For that reason, providing access to relevant documents so that the material may be consumed and understood by people of all abilities broadens the public's perception of STA's high operating standards.

### **TEI 3.0 – Designing an Inclusive Transit System**

***The design of programs, services, routes, and facilities shall aim, to the extent practicable, for inclusivity of current and future customers and community members.***

Design considerations may address ages, abilities, languages, lived experiences, cultural backgrounds, family background, economic status, gender, and sexual orientation. Wherever possible, maximizing inclusivity should be pursued first through principles of universal design, making a product or service usable by all people.

## TEI 4.0 Title VI Program Policies

### TEI 4.1 System-Wide Title VI Policies

*STA will not “utilize criteria or methods of administration which have the effect of subjecting persons to discrimination because of their race, color, or national origin, or have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color, or national origin.” (See CFR 42.104)*

*STA will “take affirmative action to assure that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, the program or activity on the grounds of race, color, or national origin.”*

*STA assures that “no person or group of persons shall be discriminated against with regard to routing, scheduling, or quality of service transportation on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Frequency of service, age and quality of vehicles assigned to routes, quality of stations serving different routes, and location of routes may not be determined on the basis of race, color, or national origin.”*

### TEI 4.2 Major Service Change Policies

*In developing annual plans and service changes, STA will assess whether changes meet the Major Service Change threshold. This threshold is as follows:*

- *Cost Impacts: More than 5% reduction in revenue hours of service in any calendar year*
- *Ridership Impacts: 5% or more of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of bus stop(s), trip(s), or route(s) at any given service change.*

*A Title VI analysis and evaluation of the impacts of major service changes will be published prior to a formal public hearing on the service change or a draft recommendation is published, whichever comes first.*

### TEI 4.3 Service Change Disparate Impact Policy

*When a major service change impacts a census tract with a minority population that exceeds the average minority population of the service area by 10% or more, a disparate impact exists, and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.*

The average minority population for the PTBA is identified in STA’s adopted *Title VI Program*. To determine if a disparate impact exists, each route impacted is analyzed to determine the percentage of minority population along that route. If the percentage exceeds the PTBA minority population by more than 10%, then a disparate impact exists.

### TEI 4.4 Service Change Disproportionate Burden Policy

*When a major service change impacts a census tract with a low-income population that exceeds the average low-income population of the service area by 10% or more, a disproportionate burden exists, and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.*

The average low-income population in the PTBA is identified in STA’s adopted *Title VI Program*. To determine if a disparate impact exists, each route impacted is analyzed to determine the percentage of low-income population along that route. If the percentage exceeds the PTBA low-income population by more than 10%, then a disparate impact exists.



#### TEI 4.5 System-wide Transit Amenities Service Policy

*Installation of transit amenities along bus routes are based on the number of passenger boardings at stops and stations along those routes and the High Performance Transit facility standards with variances from this policy to support connectivity of routes and riders with limited mobility.*

#### TEI 4.6 Vehicle Assignment Service Policy

*STA bus assignments take into account the operating characteristics of buses of various lengths, which are matched to the operating characteristics of the route such as passenger loads and overall ridership of each route. Local routes with lower ridership may be assigned a smaller fixed route vehicle. Some routes requiring tight turns on narrow streets may be operated with smaller fixed route vehicles. The age of the vehicle shall not be a consideration when assigning the vehicle to a particular maintenance garage for daily service.*

#### TEI 4.7 Fare Change Policy

*STA evaluates fare changes to ensure fare increases do not disproportionately negatively impact a class protected under Title VI.*

#### TEI 4.8 Fare Change Minority Disparate Impact Policy

*If a fare change affects fare categories or payment methods used disproportionately by minority populations (10% or greater) than the overall population, a fare change disparate impact exists and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.*

#### TEI 4.9 Fare Change Low-Income Disproportionate Impact Policy

*If a fare change affects fare categories or payment methods used disproportionately by low-income populations (10% or greater) than the overall population, a fare change disproportionate burden exists and the impacts will be assessed and evaluated for mitigation.*

#### TEI 4.10 On-Time Performance Standard

*STA's on-time performance objective will be identified and tracked in STA's annual performance measures, which will be posted to the STA website.*

### TEI 5.0 Economic Development

#### TEI 5.1 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

*STA is committed to eliminating barriers, creating opportunities and building capacity for underrepresented and women-owned businesses to ensure businesses building our regional transit system represent the communities we serve.*

STA's DBE program information can be accessed at <https://www.spokanetransit.com/bidding-opportunities/disadvantaged-business-enterprise-program/>, where the agency program and goals are linked.

# Communications and Public Input

As a public agency, Spokane Transit Authority believes that proper communications and public input is of the highest importance. To ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness, STA must use a broad range of communication tools **and tactics** to reach as many people as possible. As technology improves, the amount of information available and the speed at which it can reach those interested increases daily, creating both opportunities and challenges. Fortunately, STA is able to utilize a variety of **communications tools and tactics** to both inform and gather information. **The following list is not intended to be a complete list of communications tools which may be used but a sample of some strategies that STA may use for a variety of purposes:**

Outreach Tool	Definition
Public Hearing	A meeting during which public testimony may be heard and formal action may be taken on any measure before the STA board of directors
Legal Notice	Public posting or advertising in newspapers to announce a legal action or intent
Display Ads in Newspaper	Paid advertisement in the newspaper to alert readers about an upcoming event or action
Website/Online Social Media	Updates to the website and social media are quick and efficient ways of getting notice to the public quickly
Mobile Device Alerts	Real-time information can alert customers to important real-time information
Signs	Signs on buses, at stop locations, and at transit centers can help to reach people who use transit services
Rider Alerts	Notifications of route, frequency, or other information that is of particular interest to riders
Direct Mailings	Mail sent to an affected group or area to educate, notify, or request
Workshops/Open Houses/Town Halls	Types of meetings where staff and public interact and discuss various issues
Surveys (scientific and self-selected)	Surveying opinions and ideas can help public agencies understand how to better serve the constituency
On-board Information	Pamphlets and posters that alert riders to information
Displays at Transit Centers	Permanent or temporary displays at transit centers are able to reach a large number of system riders
SEPA	The public outreach requirements of Washington State's State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) can be an effective tool for communicating with the public about proposed actions

In order meaningful feedback, STAs vary each individual to our audience a

## Communications and Public Input Goal

STA will promote openness, honesty, and fairness through appropriate public ~~outreach~~ engagement efforts.

In order to increase meaningful feedback, STA provides engagement opportunities that allow for ample participation. This will vary based on the target audience, but includes:

1. **Frequency:** One opportunity is rarely sufficient, whether due to conflicting obligations or barriers in the effectiveness of that opportunity (such as lack of trust). We will provide multiple opportunities and convey true interest in hearing input and enable more people to participate.
2. **Choice:** Offer multiple ways to engage, as different opportunities are more or less attractive to different people. By offering multiple ways to engage, such as online surveys and in-person open houses, it will encourage everyone to participate, and allow for participation that is convenient and effective for each individual. We will endeavor to offer a remote component to every engagement opportunity.
3. **Accessibility:** Address barriers to access including various disabilities, limited internet or technology capabilities, childcare needs, language differences, lack of availability at various times of the day, and others. The first step to breaking down barriers to access will be identifying them before the engagement. Co-create materials to be culturally relevant, culturally resonant and in-language.
4. **Location:** We will need to engage people in neutral and inclusive locations where they are comfortable. Unfamiliar or formal settings can invoke unease. Additionally, the further the location of engagement is from a community, the less likely it is for robust engagement to occur. Familiar settings will promote comfort, and settings within the community convey that the community is in control of their future. Furthermore, going to the community takes effort, which will convey to our audience a genuine interest in engagement.
5. **Brevity:** We need to seek formats that are approachable and take little time to complete.
6. **Moderation:** To moderate effectively, we will make sure those who are not the loudest voices can be more active in the conversation. Our formats will allow everyone to give equal input and we will use quantitative research to understand how the majority feels.
7. **Input:** We can use both qualitative input methods (for breadth and depth of input) and quantitative input methods (for numbers and representation).
8. **Information:** The information about progress will need to be easily accessible and educate participants on transit in the region. This way, people can jump into engagement at any point with an understanding of public transit and provide meaningful input.
9. **Transparency:** STA promises that it will keep the public informed. We will listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations that are shared with us, which will inform the decision-making. We will share how public input influenced our decision-making.

## Communications and Public Input Principles

These principles describe the foundation for the policies found in this element:

#### 4.5. ~~Continuous~~ ~~Accountable~~ and ~~Equitable~~ Communication

*Open, honest, early, and continuous equitable communication with all stakeholders increases public confidence in STA.*

Changes in STA's operations can impact many stakeholders, both inside~~within~~ and outside of the agency. As a result~~STA, acknowledges that~~ Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) and low-income populations can~~continue to be~~ disproportionately impacted by transportation decisions in their communities—increasing the risk~~resulting in higher risks~~ of harmful outcomes for residents of these neighborhoods~~those communities~~. For this reason, care should be taken to ensure all stakeholders are identified and remain well-informed.

#### 5. ~~Accountable~~

*A public account of decisions made and responses to public input regarding these decisions increases STA's accountability to its customers.*

*Thorough recordkeeping helps to ensure a common understanding of decisions, policies, and responses. Sharing records with the public demonstrates the transparency with which STA conducts its business.*

#### 6. ~~Accessible Information~~

*Providing access and non-technical explanations of relevant reports, records, and documents demonstrates STA's commitment to transparency.*

*STA conducts its business in a fair, honest, and legal manner. For that reason, providing access to relevant documents people broadens the public's perception of STA's high operating standards.*

#### 7.6. ~~Two-way Communications~~

*Consideration of the views of regulators, stakeholders, and the general public~~public~~ in making decisions demonstrates STA's commitment to fairness and equity.*

Transit agencies exist to serve the community. To that end, community members have the right to share their views regarding transit service.

#### 8.7. ~~Timely~~

*The provision of sufficient time for full public participation, including advance notice of activities and steps in the public process, demonstrates fairness and respect.*

Scheduling events and the overall public process with an appreciation of today's busy lifestyles allows for the broadest public participation process possible.

#### 9.8. ~~Purposeful~~

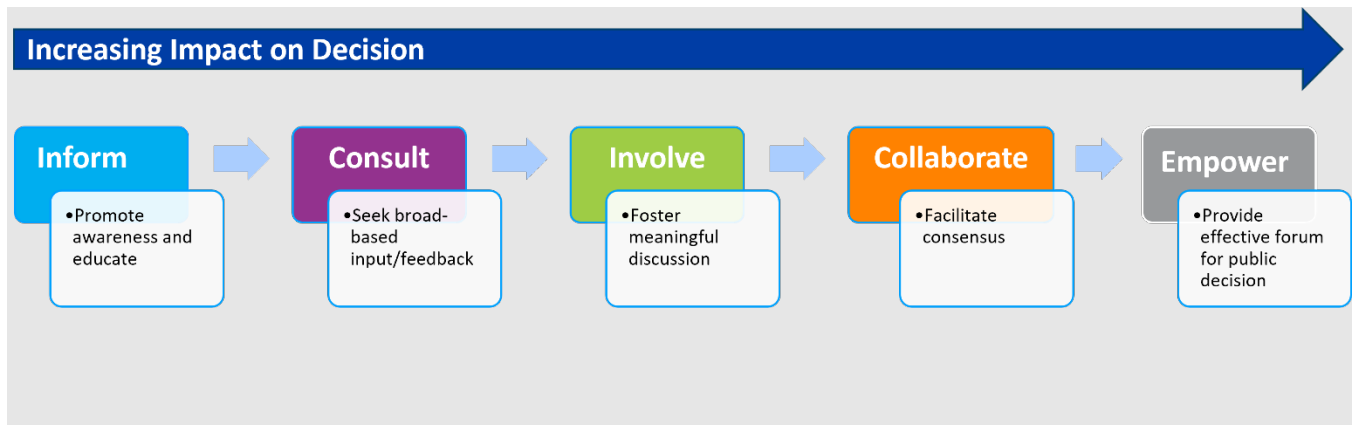
*Questions pertinent to issues under consideration should be answered by knowledgeable staff.*

One can appreciate the frustration stemming from poorly answered~~poorly answered~~ questions. Providing complete, accurate information increases the public's confidence in STA.

## Communications and Public Input Policies

### CI 1.0 – Designing Public Engagement and Outreach

Where appropriate, STA staff or consultants will design comprehensive engagement and outreach strategies that follow the principles of this element while utilizing the appropriate tactics. The engagement strategies will be designed to communicate clear expectations regarding the intent of the public participation projects. The Public Participation Spectrum designed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) is a framework designed to understand the key levels that lie along the spectrum, and that must be considered when designing an effective public engagement and outreach strategy.



~~The following policies are intended to serve as a guide describing public outreach/input requirements for each action. In cases where there are federal or state requirements for public outreach/input, STA will meet the minimum requirements. In cases where STA has requirements in addition to those defined by the state or federal government, STA will follow both.~~

## CI 1.1 – Public Engagement: Service Activities

### 1.1.1 Service Changes

In addition to following Federal Transit Administration guidelines for public outreach for service reductions, STA will also comply with the policy found in the following table.

How to read the following table:

1. Determine cost and ridership impacts.
2. Consider exceptions.
3. The more severe cost or ridership impact determines the category (ex. Cost impacts fall into Category II but ridership impacts fall into Category I, follow the decision making and input/outreach process of Category II)

Any fixed-route adjustment or elimination which would change the paratransit boundary enough to eliminate service from at least one active customer<sup>1\*</sup> will trigger a Category II process.

~~\*Active customer is someone who has used paratransit services within a year of the public hearing date.~~

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<sup>1</sup> Active customer is someone who has used paratransit services within a year of the public hearing date.

Public Input Categories				
		I – Minor	II – Moderate	III - Major
<b>Determining Threshold</b>	<b>Cost Impacts</b>	Less than <del>+2.0%</del> growth or <del>less than a 1%</del> reduction in revenue hours of service <del>in any calendar year</del> <u>at any given service change</u>	1.0% up to 5.0% reduction or <del>+2.0%</del> - 10% growth in revenue hours of service <del>in any calendar year</del> <u>at any given service change</u>	More than 5.0% reduction or more than 10% growth in revenue hours of service <del>in any calendar year</del> <u>at any given service change</u>
	<b>OR</b>	OR	OR	OR
	<b>Ridership Impacts*</b>	Less than .5% of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of <del>route, trips, or</del> bus stop <sup>^</sup> , <del>trips or route</del> at any given service change	.5% up to 5.0% of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of <del>bus stop, trips or route</del> <u>route, trips, or bus stop<sup>^</sup></u> at any given service change	5% or more of annualized system ridership negatively impacted by loss of bus stop(s), trip(s) or route(s) at any given service change
	<b>Exceptions</b>	Construction-related or emergency changes necessary for a period not exceeding 180 days for changes that would otherwise be moderate or major	Changes that would normally be classified as minor changes, but require a higher classification because of significant public interest <del>(as directed by CEO)</del> or board involvement	None
<b>Resulting Actions</b>	<b>Input and Outreach</b>	Employee and customer input, etc. Documented informal outreach for feedback on changes; may include survey or other tools <u>and tactics</u>	Outreach activities including driver and rider input, surveys, meetings with community groups, or other tools <u>and tactics</u> . Report to Board on activities.	Public Outreach Plan approved by Board in advance of outreach, which may include outreach to affected community groups, employers, etc.
	<b>Decision-Making Process</b>	CEO or designee; staff report <del>summarizing</del> <u>detailing</u> changes submitted to the Board <del>prior to changes going into effect (except for exceptions that are reported at least 30 days after)</del> <u>no later than 30 days</u>	Public hearing prior to <del>Operations Committee</del> <u>and</u> Board action.	At least one public hearing. Board action following <del>Operations Committee recommendation</del> with Title VI report.

		<u>of changes going into effect</u>		
<b>Examples</b>		Running time adjustments Departure time adjustments Minor bus reroutes Changes to bus stop locations (Per CI 1.4)	Significant route changes Addition or deletion of service to a large area	A large service reduction A restructure of the network

\*Ridership impacts are calculated using best available data and is an approximate tool as it is a dynamic number

^ Route is proposed to be discontinued and there is no equivalent replacement within ¼-mile. Trip impact is the loss of a trip within a 15-minute window either side there is an actual impact. Bus stop refers to ridership impacts within 600 feet of a stop pair.



### 1.1.2 Fare Increases

*Fare increases of more than 10% in any three-year period shall be considered through the public outreach process as a Category III-Major Change as defined in Policy 1.1. For cumulative changes, the Category III-Major Change public process will only be applied to the increase which breaks the 10% threshold, not the previous increases.*

### 1.1.3 Title VI Reporting

*During major service reductions and fare increases, STA will conduct an analysis to verify that no discrimination of protected classes takes place.*

*Title VI provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”*

### 1.1.4 Stop Changes

*If the cumulative stop changes that take place within a calendar year affect the boardings of 10% of a route’s annual ridership, STA will use the tactics described in the beginning of this element to gather public input before a final decision is made.*

*A stop serves as the point at which a rider can access the transit service. The placement of this access is important for the rider, driver, and riders already on board. STA is continually evaluating stop locations along all transit routes by considering safety, stop spacing, and proximity to destinations.*

## CI 1.2 – Public Engagement: Planning Activities

### 1.2.1 Comprehensive Plan

*STA will undertake public outreach efforts for subsequent updates to the Comprehensive Plan and allow an opportunity for public testimony prior to any substantive amendments.*

*Any change which affects the substance of the Comprehensive Plan will require a public hearing and supporting public outreach.*

### 1.2.2 Strategic Plan

*STA will undertake public outreach efforts for subsequent updates to the Comprehensive Plan and allow an opportunity for public testimony prior to any substantive amendments.*

*Any change which affects the substance of the Strategic Plan will require a public hearing and supporting public outreach.*

### 1.2.3 Transit Development Plan

*STA will hold at least one public hearing while developing its program for each annual update.*

*As a public transportation benefit area authority in Washington State, STA is required to prepare a six-year transit development plan (TDP) and annual report. This document provides updated information to the Washington State Department of Transportation on the various activities of STA. The TDP can be found here: <https://www.spokanetransit.com/projects-plans/transit-development-plan>*

**1.2.4 HPT Corridor Planning**

*During any Alternatives Analysis for a High Performance Transit corridor, STA or its consultant will develop a public outreach plan to both gather input and provide information about the project being evaluated.*

**1.3-2.5 Grants**

*Public engagement in the grant application process provides the public with additional information on why the agency is seeking state or federal dollars for the project. Public engagement also provides the granting agency with additional information, including overall support of the proposed project. Public engagement for grants may occur at many different stages of the project.*

Grant Condition	Public Process
Grants in Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	Adoption of CIP <i>will serve as the is considered component of</i> public input
Grants applications less than \$1 million	Notice on STA’s website
Grants applications at least \$1 million <i>(and not in</i>	Adoption by Board of Directors
<i>Grant is for project that originates in Corridor Development Plan (CDP)</i>	<i>CDP’s have an associated public engagement framework. The grant opportunity might trigger additional public engagement</i>

*Also, many grant programs require the applicant to demonstrate public input into a project's development. Additional public input will be sought in connection with such applications.*

*\*If grant application project is not contained in the Capital Improvement Program*

**1.4 Stop Changes**

*If the cumulative stop changes that take place within a calendar year affect the boardings of 10% of a route’s annual ridership, STA will use the tools described in the beginning of this element to gather public input before a final decision is made.*

*A stop serves as the point at which a rider can access the transit service. The placement of this access is important for the rider, driver, and riders already on board. STA is continually evaluating stop locations along all transit routes by considering safety, stop spacing, and proximity to destinations.*

**1.5 Transit Development Plan**

*STA will hold at least one public hearing while developing its program for each annual update.*

*As a public transportation benefit area authority in Washington State, STA is required to prepare a six-year transit development plan (TDP) and annual report. This document provides updated information to the Washington State Department of Transportation on the various activities of STA. The TDP can be found here: <https://www.spokanetransit.com/projects-plans/transit-development-plan>*

#### 1.6 Comprehensive Plan

*STA will undertake public outreach efforts for subsequent updates to the Comprehensive Plan and allow an opportunity for public testimony prior to any substantive amendments.*

*Any change which affects the substance of the Comprehensive Plan will require a public hearing and supporting public outreach.*

### CI 1.3 – Public Engagement: Capital Development Activities

#### 1.3.19 Major Capital Projects

*During the annual Capital Improvement Program (See System Infrastructure Policy 4.0) update process, which identifies all major capital projects, appropriate public outreach and a public hearing shall take place prior to adoption. Amendments to the Capital Improvement Program will follow a similar process.*

*Any capital project requiring board approval and outside of the normal budgeting process shall be subject to a public hearing to receive public input and testimony.*

#### 1.3.12 NEPA/SEPA/Environmental outreach

*Where appropriate or required, STA shall incorporate public outreach and SEPA and NEPA evaluations, with the intent to exceed minimum requirements.*

#### 1.3.13 Major Construction Projects

*During any Major Construction Project over \$5 million, STA or its consultant will develop a public outreach plan to provide information about the project.*

#### 1.3.4.11 Budget

*STA shall hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of the annual budget.*

*Each year the Board of Directors adopts an annual budget that outlines how the agency intends to spend tax, fare, grant and advertising monies.*

#### 1.7 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)

*The DBE goals will be available on STA's website for no less than 15 days prior to adoption by the Board.*

#### 1.8 Title VI Reporting

*During major service reductions and fare increases, STA will conduct an analysis to verify that no discrimination of protected classes takes place.*

*Title VI provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”*

#### 1.9 Major Capital Projects

*During the annual Capital Improvement Program (See System Infrastructure Policy 4.0) update process, which identifies all major capital projects, appropriate public outreach and a public hearing shall take place prior to adoption. Amendments to the Capital Improvement Program will follow a similar process.*

*Any capital project requiring board approval and outside of the normal budgeting process shall be subject to a public hearing to receive public input and testimony.*

#### 1.10 HPT Corridor Planning

*During any Alternatives Analysis for a High Performance Transit corridor, STA or its consultant will develop a public outreach plan to both gather input and provide information about the project being evaluated.*

#### 1.11 Budget

*STA shall hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of the annual budget.*

*Each year the Board of Directors adopts an annual budget that outlines how the agency intends to spend tax, fare, grant and advertising monies.*

#### 1.12 NEPA/SEPA/Environmental outreach

*Where appropriate or required, STA shall incorporate public outreach and SEPA and NEPA evaluations, with the intent to exceed minimum requirements.*

#### 1.13 Major Construction Projects

*During any Major Construction Project over \$5 million, STA or its consultant will develop a public outreach plan to provide information about the project.*

## CI 2.0 – Service Communication

### 2.1 Branding

*All branding shall be part of a coordinated system-wide branding plan developed to better the customer experience.*

Effective branding can help the customer by conveying simple messages about frequency, span, destinations, and connectivity. By creating a larger branding plan, STA will be consistent with branding styles and purposes.

### 2.2 Technology

*Use improving technology to increase the amount of ridership information available to customers.*

By using new and existing technologies, STA can increase ridership by creating a more pleasant experience for transit riders. Technology can decrease wait time, improve decisions about mode choice, increase safety, etc.

### 2.3 Public Education

*Invest resources in educating existing and potential customers about travel options.*

STA offers a variety of transportation services (i.e. fixed-route, paratransit, rideshare) that assist in providing solutions to many different customer needs. By investing in education, STA can help customers ensure that they are best utilizing the transportation services which STA provides.

## Revenues and Fares

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STA maintains a convenient, reasonably priced fare structure aimed at increasing access to public transit within its service area. This fare structure is governed by a Board approved fare policy which is reviewed periodically.

A variety of methods exist for fare payment, designed to create the best value for STA's customers by ensuring they pay the right fare for the way they ride transit. These changes help address fare inequities and ~~reducing~~ **reduce** financial barriers.

Passenger fares are an important revenue source for Spokane Transit. ~~In its early days of mass transit, the cost of operating transit was covered primarily—if not exclusively—passengers through fares. More recently, STA has sought to cover~~ about 20% of the cost to provide transit service in the Spokane region **with customer fares**. Without them, simply put, the region would have less transit to serve those who need and want it. Other revenue sources exist for funding STA's operating costs. Tax revenues, both from Federal and State allocations and from taxes assessed within the Public Transportation Benefit Area, provide a significant proportion of STA's financial resources. Government grants and revenues from advertising and other sources further mitigate operating costs. These revenues should be used in a manner which upholds STA's role as a responsible steward of community funds.

### Revenues and Fares Goal

*STA's revenue structure should appropriately balance farebox, tax, grant, and ~~advertising revenues~~ **other revenue to** provide high-quality service.*

### Revenues and Fares Principles

The principles listed below define STA's fare structure. They provide guidelines to ensure that the fundamental ideas behind the fare structure are understood by all. These principles are unchanging and will continue to serve as guidance for new and existing fare policies.

#### 1. Fares Matter

*Ridership increases are achieved by making public transportation cost effective and simple to use.*

Depending on the operating environment, type of transit service, and current market demand, fare changes can play a role in the increase or decrease of ridership. The imposition of fares for most transit agencies means there is opportunity to provide more service to more people with the additional revenues.

#### 2. Perceived Value

*Fares and “local match” help avoid the pitfalls known to free commodities.*

Thomas Paine said, “What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly.” Fares provide the opportunity for riders to better appreciate the cost of service. This can facilitate better travel choices.

### 3. Revenues and Services

*The amount of revenue collected correlates with the potential amount of services able to be provided.*

The amount of service that STA is able to provide is tied to the amount of revenue from fares, taxes, grants, etc. that is available. When these revenue sources rise or drop, STA must make decisions about the services to provide to maintain a sustainable budget.

### 4. Diverse Ridership

*A range of fare options recognizes the diversity of trips measured in customer attributes, distance, travel times, and purpose.*

Many youth, college students, riders with disabilities, and low-income riders rely upon STA to serve their transportation needs. A fare structure which recognizes the diversity of customers' needs increases the use of STA services.

### 5. Other Revenues – Supplement Fares

*The collection of tax, funding from grants, and other non-fare-based revenues supplement revenue generated by customer-paid fares.*

Although transit agencies often desire to be more dependent upon fares, non-fare-based revenue sources help to keep service levels higher than would be supported by fares alone.

### 6. Fiscal Responsibility

*The fiscally responsible use of revenues increases the public's confidence in transit agencies.*

A large proportion of STA's revenues come from tax-based funding sources. To earn taxpayers' confidence, STA should be viewed as operating in a fiscally responsible way. STA should always strive to achieve its objectives with the greatest efficiency and minimal waste.

### 7. Alignment with Agency Priorities

*Revenue sources should support the priorities of an agency. A funding source (i.e. grant requirements) should not define the priorities of an agency.*

Some revenue sources, such as grants, often have specific stipulations which may not align with STA's stated priorities and goals. Ensuring that revenue sources support the agency's priorities reduces wasteful spending and improves STA's overall public image.

## Revenues and Fares Policies

### RF 1.0 – Revenues

#### 1.1 State and Federal Funding

*STA will work to maximize funding from state and federal sources as well as support efforts to increase such financial resources.*

State and federal funds are important for STA to be able to maintain a desirable level of service. By supporting efforts to increase the available financial resources, STA may find itself in a position to be better able to provide improved services to the customers throughout the region.

## 1.2 Pursuit of Grants

*STA shall pursue grants which align with the agency's priorities and the public good.*

Occasionally, grants are pursued simply for the attached dollars. Such grants have the potential to direct the agency's attention away from its stated goals and priorities. By pursuing grants which directly support STA's priorities, the agency helps to ensure the responsible use of revenues.

## ~~1.3 Advertising~~

~~STA shall consider future advertising mechanisms as a revenue opportunity consistent with jurisdictional and community standards. —~~

~~Advertising has the potential to provide an important source of income for STA. However, the negative impacts of advertising on STA riders and other community members can be notable. STA should recognize this and ensure that the attempt to secure revenue does not negatively impact public perception or ridership.~~

## 1.4~~3~~ Debt

*STA will not incur debt.*

STA operates on a pay-as-you-go basis. STA shall not incur debt or agree to other financial commitments beyond the balance of current or projected revenue.

## 1.5~~4~~ Non-Traditional Revenue Sources

*STA shall review the appropriateness and purpose of potential non-traditional revenue sources.*

Numerous non-traditional funding sources, ranging from corporate sponsorship to donations-in-kind to partnerships, could potentially support the achievement of STA's goals and policies. Prior to acceptance of such revenues, STA should ensure the legality and implications surrounding such revenue sources.

## RF 2.0 – Fares

The following fare policies articulate the guidelines for determining STA's fare structure and collection. Each policy contributes to specificity and provides guidance towards reaching the overall goal of fare collection. These policies together establish a framework for the determination and collection of fares.

### 2.1 Philosophy

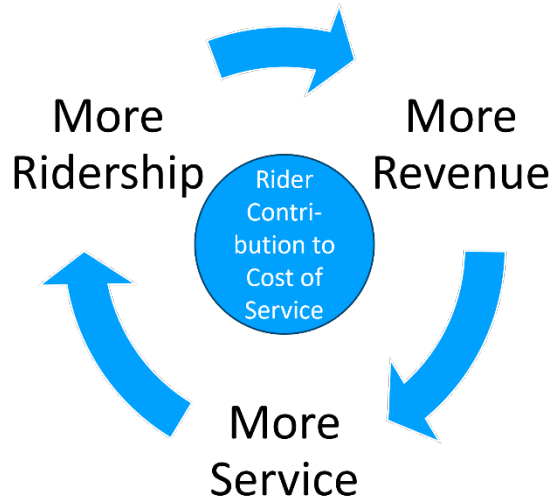
***STA's philosophy is to encourage increased ridership by providing a convenient and reasonably priced method for citizens to enjoy the advantages of public transportation.***

Fares are only one of many factors which influence ridership numbers. However, STA will encourage increased ridership by following the principles described earlier in this element and providing a sensible fare structure and payment method.

### 2.2 ~~Determination of Fixed-Route Fares~~ **Rider Contribution to Cost of Service**

***In establishing fare rates, Spokane Transit pursues a pro-ridership philosophy rooted in the recognition that more revenue allows for more and better transit service, which, when available for a reasonable rate to the passenger, attracts more ridership and therefore more revenue. While the fare structure will provide value to our riding customers, a fixed-route farebox return objective of at least 20% of the fully allocated costs of this service is maintained.***

Figure 9. The Virtuous Circle of a Pro-Ridership Philosophy



A farebox recovery of at least 20% for the standard fare at the average Fixed Route cost per passenger is the benchmark objective when setting the standard fare rate, providing for meaningful rider contribution and more service than otherwise possible.

Figure 10. Calculating Farebox Recovery Rate

$\frac{\text{Total Cost Fixed Route Operations}}{\text{Total Number of Passengers}} =$	Operating Cost per Passenger
$\frac{\text{Current Standard Fare Rate}}{\text{Operating Cost per Passenger}} =$	Standard Farebox Recovery (≥ 20% Benchmark Objective)

Spokane Transit has agreed to a pro-ridership philosophy in determining fares; that is, that ridership should be encouraged, even if that means that riders pay a small share of the actual cost of the service.

### 2.3 Complexity of Fare Structure

**Minimize complexity—emphasize a simple and easily understood system.**

- 3.4. Sustain a flat rate fare structure throughout the Public Transportation Benefit Area.
- 4.5. Customers use time-limited passes (two-hour, day, monthly, etc.) to accomplish multi-route/directional trips.
- 5.6. Utilize fare capping, providing customers with the best options for daily and weekly travel



## 2.4 Pre-Payment of Fares

### 2.4.1 Increase Pre-Payment of Fares

***Pre-payment of fares eliminates delays caused by on-board fare payment, increases the reliability of revenues, and encourages the use of transit for spontaneous trips.***

Increasing access to methods of pre-payment supports this policy. Examples of pre-payment media include mobile ticketing, smart cards, institutional bus pass programs, and day passes.

### 2.4.2 All Door Boarding

***All door boarding will be introduced on select lines to support the use of smart cards and the pre-payment of fares.***

All door boarding, in conjunction with the use of smart cards and the pre-payment of fares, helps reduce delay at stops and stations, increasing speed and reliability of the service. All door boarding may require fare enforcement to be successful for the agency.

## 2.5 Low-income Fares

~~STA supports opportunities for low-income individuals to use public transportation at a discounted cost. Opportunities for low-income individuals to use public transportation should be made available through community programs that subsidize the purchase of standard fare instruments rather than as direct STA discounts or special fare structures. This strategy helps manage eligibility challenges and supports other strategic objectives.~~

### **2.5 Business and Institutional Fare Programs**

**STA supports and pursues opportunities to partner with employers, universities, developers, and other interested parties to provide access to public transportation.**

Opportunities for individuals to take advantage of simplified fare programs provided through a partnership with their employer, university, or landlord/developer increase access and mobility for regular and part-time transit users.

### **2.6 Eligibility-based Fare Programs**

**STA supports opportunities for individuals to use public transportation at a discounted cost based on targeted eligibility criteria and rigorous due diligence.**

Opportunities for individuals to use public transportation should be made available through eligibility-based fare programs that offer customer-facing discounts. Eligibility determination and classifications will be made by the STA Board of Directors and identified in STA's existing fare structure. Prior to the creation and implementation of any eligibility-based fare program, the Board shall conduct an evaluation to determine if the proposed program can meet the following criteria:

- The program and the basis for eligibility is relatively simple to describe and understand, particularly for those who are prospective participants.
- The discount offered by the program considers proportionate costs and benefits relative to other eligibility-based fare programs, as well as other fare partnerships and rates

- ~~Insofar as possible, the program adheres to eligibility requirements that can be determined with verifiable public information without the creation of storage by STA of sensitive health or income information.~~
- ~~The program can be deployed without undue burden on STA operations or community partners.~~
- ~~The program provides safeguards against abuse.~~
- ~~The program has a method for reporting performance.~~
- ~~The estimated ridership and financial impacts of the proposed program have been estimated and reasonably understood as far as STA's commitment to community benefit and fiscal accountability.~~
- ~~Avoids collection of substantial information, including any sensitive information that puts additional burden on either customer or STA staff~~

### ***2.7 Community Access Programs***

***STA supports opportunities to partner with community-based organizations to provide access to public transportation at a discounted cost.***

~~Opportunities for vulnerable low-income individuals to use public transportation should~~ may be made available through community access programs that subsidize the purchase of standard fare instruments ~~rather than as direct STA discounts or special fare structures~~. This partnership strategy helps manage eligibility challenges, especially in addressing acute or transitory needs, and ~~supports other strategic objectives~~. ~~maximizes benefit of community partners in delivering transportation access.~~

# Regional Transportation, Land Use and Economic Development Coordination

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This Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation outlines long-term transit related goals and policies for the region. However, long-range transit planning requires the consideration of other jurisdictional plans that overlap the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA). Despite autonomy, coordination between agencies must occur to ensure seamless planning for local and regional improvements.

This section is devoted to the recognition that transit planning cannot be done independent of land use or general transportation planning; and land use or general transportation planning cannot be done independent of transit planning. The following text describes the relationship of the Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation with other regionally influential planning and policy documents.

## Regional Transportation and Land Use Coordination Goal

***STA will be an active partner in the development and coordination of regional transportation, ~~and~~ land use, and economic development strategies while leading the implementation of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the region.***

## Regional Transportation and Land Use Coordination Principles

The principles listed below identify the basic concepts of regional transportation and land use coordination. These unchanging principles serve as a guide to STA as it attempts to serve as a leader in shaping regional transportation and land use goals and policies.

### 1. Transit Disoriented Development

***There is no effective transit panacea for poor land planning and development.***

Too often transit is imagined as a singular solution to make up for poorly- positioned development decisions made over time. While transit helps connect people and places, a myriad host of location-based and design-based variables directly affect the ability of transit to be a meaningful transportation service, irrespective of transit mode or service design. As a result, there are locations that should never expect to be provided a basic level of transit service.

### 2. Paradox of New and Used

***Despite our inclinations for casting off the old for the latest and greatest, transit has the greatest opportunity for improvement and initial success in existing places rather than upstart developments.***

For over a century, transit has often been developed concurrently with new development as a marketing tool. Success of the transit investment is not always guaranteed, especially given the heavy ongoing operational costs transit demands. Transit will generally have greater success in and around existing strengths before it can be a powerful influence in travel patterns for new developments. Street grids and land uses established before the automobile heavily influenced land use decisions hold the greatest opportunity for near term transit success.

### 3. Be on the Way

***Development should be focused along or near existing public transportation corridors or in ways that transit can support due to providing for or achieving adherence within the Fixed-Route Design Principles.***

Transit service is most successful when it directly serves many places conveniently throughout the day. Land use and road patterns that require out-of-direction travel increase operating costs and inconvenience riders. Prospective property owners or developers who wish to have good transit service will most likely succeed if they locate along an existing transit route.

### 4. Density

***Land use density and the intensity allows for a mix of land uses. Coordination among stakeholders promotes a mix of uses that can support a greater share of trips made by the pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit customer.***

Transit is effective at serving trips with common origins and destinations or, at minimum, shared travel paths. This is only made possible if there is a level of density at which there is the possibility for a regular and sustained commonality in travel pattern. Density also means there are more destinations that will be within walking distance and facilitates more pedestrian activity. Pedestrian activity both supports and is supported by transit. Some studies have found four dwelling units per acre to be the minimum density to support local bus service. However, in most cases densities need to be two to three times that amount to support viable transit.

### 5. Design

***Infrastructure constructed by developers and municipalities should support the needs of pedestrians and transit facilities.***

Development patterns should support pedestrians and other non-motorized modes to gain easy access to transit. “Complete Streets” principles and design standards that promote a network of local streets and sidewalks, ADA-accessible improvements, and the placement of useful and inviting public spaces near transit support transit use and can reduce dependency on private auto ownership.

### 6. Partnerships

***Fostering partnerships with both public and private entities should be encouraged to cultivate coordinated land use and transportation throughout the region.***

No agency or person alone can ensure that land uses and transportation investments are made in such a way to be supportive of transit investments. Partnerships are critical to success of any endeavor, particularly those involving private property, public rights of way, and public transportation.

## Regional Transportation and Land Use Coordination Policies

### TL 1.0 – Leadership

#### 1.1 Proactively Educate **and Communicate**

***STA will ~~strive to educate decision-makers and other members of the community regarding the importance of efficient development to successful transit.~~ and value of transit to successful development in the region.***

## 1.2 Adherence to Service Design Guidelines

***STA shall promote the best practices of land use development, including supporting increased densities and reduced parking requirements on key transportation corridors, by strictly adhering to its adopted Service Design Guidelines.***

## TL 2.0 – ~~Coordination~~ Collaboration & Partnership

### 2.1 ~~Coordination with Other Agencies~~ Agency Collaboration

***STA shall ~~encourage two-way coordination~~ collaborate with jurisdictions and other agencies to move forward with planning and development including the creation of incentives for development that ~~benefits~~ strengthens the transit network and regional mobility.***

Numerous regional jurisdictions and agencies are stakeholders in the broader development and planning of the region. To encourage a positive partnership with these other groups, STA ~~should provide~~ shall collaborate with these stakeholders, providing with early and frequent information and opportunities to provide input. In return, STA should expect a similar courtesy to be extended.

### 2.2 Transit Oriented Development Support

***STA may make resources available to jurisdictions to do planning and development work in advancing Transit Oriented Development in the region.***

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is the creation of compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities centered around and supported by high quality transit. This makes it possible to ~~reduce dependence on a car~~ increase the use of transit for mobility for a variety of trip purposes. This is possible not only because of quality transit access, but by the collocation of other community and commercial services in walking distance to housing. STA shall find appropriate local and regional partners to actively develop TOD in appropriate locations within the region.

### 2.3 ~~2~~ Form Development Partnerships

***STA shall partner with private firms on transit-oriented development.***

~~Transit Oriented Development is the creation of compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities centered around and supported by high quality transit. This makes it possible to reduce dependence on a car for mobility for a variety of trip purposes. This is possible not only because of quality transit access, but by the collocation of other community and commercial services in walking distance to housing.~~ STA shall find appropriate local and regional partners to actively develop TOD in appropriate locations within the region.

### 2.4 ~~3~~ Collaboration ~~ordination~~ with Other Planning Documents and Regulations

***STA shall ~~encourage two-way coordination~~ collaborate with partner jurisdictions in developing planning documents and guidance that ~~when documents impacting STA's~~ sensures STA's service goals, principles, and policies are considered and enabled by adopted plans and policies. ~~are developed and adopted.~~***

Numerous documents created by municipalities and agencies, including this Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation, guide land use and transportation decisions throughout the region. To reduce the likelihood of competing plans or policies, interagency communication should be encouraged. Examples of documents impacting STA's operations are included below.

#### Comprehensive Plans of Municipalities

Cities within the PTBA who follow adopted comprehensive plans include Airway Heights, Cheney, Spokane, Millwood, Spokane Valley, and Liberty Lake. As a regional service provider, Spokane County also has an adopted comprehensive plan that works to coordinate land uses with cities and unincorporated areas among other purposes. STA holds some interest in most elements of every comprehensive plan adopted by jurisdictions within the PTBA. From housing and utilities to transportation and land use, the policies of each city have an impact on the level of service STA is able to provide now and in the future. Specific policies that are favorable to transit are always encouraged; however, just as each jurisdiction's plan was considered during the creation of this plan, STA expects that Connect Spokane be consulted during subsequent updates of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

### **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (~~Horizon 2045~~)**

Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) is the federally- designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Spokane County. This local intergovernmental agency encourages coordination and collaboration between planning and transportation departments across the region. SRTC updates the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) (also known as Horizon 2045) every four years, documenting the blueprint for an inter-modal solution to transportation needs brought about by continued growth and development. The 2013 MTP update calls for system enhancements aimed at increasing transit ridership. Future plan updates or visioning sessions should refer to this plan for guidance.

### **Spokane County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan**

Prepared jointly by SRTC and STA, the Spokane County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan attempts to create a “unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited income, laying out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizing services” per the requirements of Federal Transit Administration. STA will continue to work with SRTC on future updates of this document.

### **WSDOT Washington Transportation Plan**

At the state level, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) adopted the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) in 2007. The plan is designed to offer policy guidance for all jurisdictions statewide on matters related to the state's transportation system over the next 20 years. STA operates transit services on state highways and referenced the WTP during the creation of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Growth Management Act**

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was adopted because uncoordinated and unplanned growth posed a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the quality of life in Washington State.

All of the preceding plans fall under laws found in the Revised Code of Washington. The GMA requires state and local governments to identify and protect critical and natural areas by guiding urban growth through comprehensive plans, capital investments, and development regulations. STA's Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation supports this notion and works to enact the vision of the state while continually working with local jurisdictions. To jointly oversee this planning effort within the urban growth areas, Spokane County established a Steering Committee of Elected Officials charged with defining standards for urban growth area

delineation, minimum levels of service, distribution of future growth, and negotiating designations for urban growth areas in the form of a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

# Sustainability

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Spokane Transit’s definition of Sustainability is:

*Sustainability at Spokane Transit is about providing services in ways that optimize our ability to meet the needs of present and future generations through actions that balance the region’s economic, environmental, and social well-being.*

STA does its part to safeguard the community’s current and future quality of life by being socially responsible, preserving the natural environment, and ~~maintaining economic viability~~ contributing to a thriving economy. On a day-to-day basis, these guiding principles are a way for STA to become more resource efficient, engage more with employees and customers ~~and grow ridership~~ while improving access, market share and funding support.

More than any other element of this comprehensive plan, Sustainability is not a program or activity that can stand alone. By definition, it involves everything the organization does, and principles and policies that relate to sustainability are contained throughout Connect Spokane, and not isolated to this chapter alone. ~~It is not only~~ Sustainability is included in STA’s programs, policies, and business practices; it is also a foundation for STA’s role in our region.

## Sustainability Principles

### Framework

Research reveals several different frameworks that can be applied to the concept of sustainability. Some frameworks encompass broad concepts such as global warming or enabling national energy independence. Others are more narrowly focused on environmental management systems that address specific issues such as reducing an agency’s carbon footprint or energy consumption.

Through the work of its Citizen Advisory Committee, STA chose a conceptual framework for sustainability that could relate general concepts to specific applications within an organization or community. STA adopted the “Triple Bottom Line” framework.

The phrase was coined by John Elkington in 1994. It was later expanded and articulated in his 1998 book *Cannibals with Forks: the Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business*. Sustainability, itself, was first defined by the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations in 1987. The Triple Bottom Line is often abbreviated as “TBL” and referred to as the “3 E’s” (economic, environmental, and social equity) or the “3 P’s” (people, planet, and profit). More than some other sustainability frameworks, it captures the full spectrum of values and criteria for measuring organizational (and societal) success: economic, ecological and social.

This framework identifies sustainability as being about practices that make good environmental sense as well as good business sense. Sustainability is essentially responsible resource management: it draws on natural, human and financial resources to find strong, enduring solutions. It recognizes that environmental considerations are not an end in themselves. True sustainability is the intersection of not only what is good for the environment, but also what is economically feasible and results in benefits to our citizens/taxpayers.



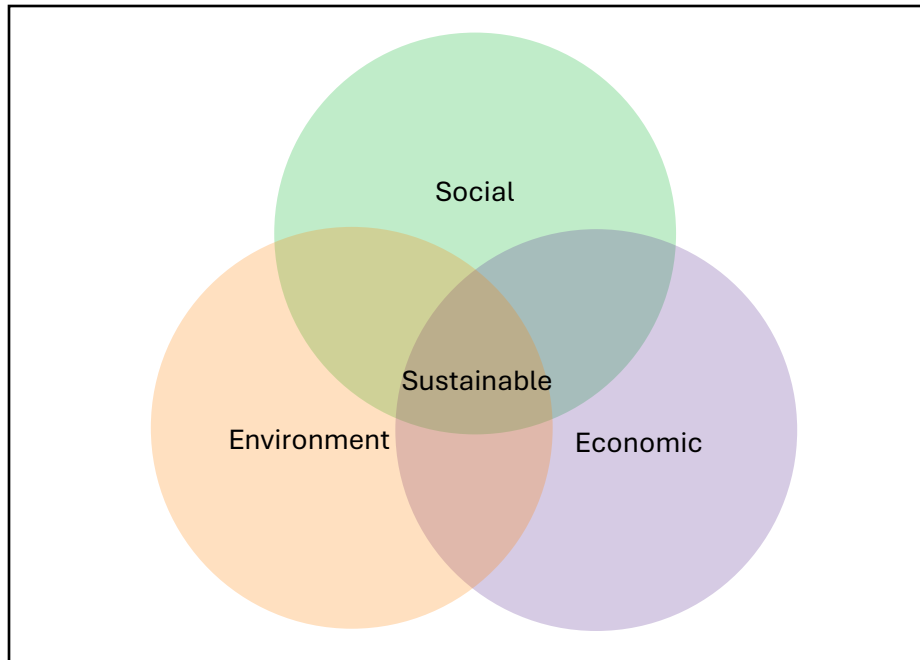


Figure 1 - "Triple Bottom Line" framework

## Sustainability Policies

Based on the principle of a Triple Bottom Line Framework, this section articulates policy that guides decision-making.

### SU 1.0 – Sustainable Practices Connecting People and Communities

#### 1.1 Sustainability in STA Services

*Manage STA services (Fixed Route, Paratransit, Flexible Services) to promote sustainability.*

Public transportation can play a significant role in achieving sustainability objectives for the region and each of the jurisdictions within the Public Transportation Benefit Area. However, the financial, natural and human resources dedicated to public transportation must be effectively employed and well used in order to achieve this objective.

- Maintain a high quality of service in order to attract maximum use by the public.
- Ensure basic bus service availability is balanced with emerging Paratransit eligibility requirements. The agency should not spread resources so thin so as to be overextended and unable to maintain quality service to neighborhoods and activity centers that have the highest potential for public transit use.
- Evaluate effectiveness of bus routes based on the social, environmental and financial impacts of STA's services. Existing standards are: Total ridership; energy use compared to passenger miles; and farebox return (see Annex 1: Fixed Route Performance Standards to this Comprehensive Plan)

- Encourage growth of the Flexible Services program. This adds flexibility and complements the fixed route system.
- Utilize long-range financial forecasts to continuously measure the level of service that can be maintained given anticipated revenue. The agency's goal is to provide stability and reliability of service.

### 1.2 Transportation Alternatives

Provide services that are an attractive transportation alternative compared to single occupant vehicles (SOVs).

Reliable and predictable service is perhaps the most important characteristic that defines a viable transportation alternative.

- Conduct route planning and scheduling to get people to destinations in a timely manner.
- Maximize convenience by enhancing route frequency as articulated in the Service Design Principles in this Comprehensive Plan (Part II: Services; Fixed -Route Service, Fixed-Route Service Design Principles).
- Pursue system enhancement technology that makes STA services easier for the public to understand and use.
- Provide transit services to community events to maximize access and use of its services (e.g., additional hours, special fee structure, special routing). This special event service effectively moves large numbers of participants with minimum use of energy resources.
- Take advantage of Washington State and Spokane County Commute Trip Reduction programs that incentivize use of STA services.

### 1.3.2-2 Connectivity

Serve as regional connection to neighborhoods/jurisdictions, places of employment, community events, and public services in a way that meets the needs of the service area.

STA is a major regional asset. Staff should be actively engaged in supporting and informing the land use planning and growth-management activities of the jurisdictions it supports. Educate the region's planners, developers, and decision makers on the characteristics of urban design that can best be supported by public transportation.

Examples include:

- Use the HPTN concept to communicate a vision of corridors where public transportation services will be consistent and prioritized for further investments (e.g. East Sprague Avenue and Division Street).
- The role of the "built environment" such as streetcars, electrified trolleys, or high-quality passenger shelters in helping shape development.
- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and the impact of residential and employment density on transit effectiveness.

STA should maintain a close relationship with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (SRTC) to ensure transit plans are integrated into overall long-range transportation plans and coordinate with Washington State Department of Transportation to facilitate the integration of public transportation into project planning and design.

#### 1.4 Multimodal Connectivity

*Increase interest in multi-modal connections.*

The ability to seamlessly transition between various modes of transportation helps expand the public's use of alternative transportation.

- Maintain strong connections to the airport and the intermodal center.
- Create accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian interfaces to STA services. These accommodations should be incorporated in bus stop design and locations as well as the design and capabilities of its vehicles.
- Strategically locate and serve park and ride facilities.

#### 1.5 Public Input

*Maximize public input and stakeholder engagement in STA's sustainability initiatives.*

The success of STA's sustainability initiatives depends on authentic and transparent efforts to engage all stakeholders. This element reinforces the public process policies as outlined in Part III: Activities and Programs; Communications and Public Input of this Comprehensive Plan.

- Define a stakeholder as anyone with an interest in STA; e.g., employees, riders, regulators, tax payers, neighborhood residents, activity center tenants and local governments, as well as those who provide services to STA such as suppliers, contractors, and professional services like banking and insurance.
- Strive at all times to balance the long-term perspective of sustainability- related issues against the more short-term needs that arise within our community.

## SU 2.0 –Sustainable Practices

### 2.1.2-1 Stewardship

*Build stewardship and service in STA operations.*

As a significant user of resources, stewardship must be an essential component of an organization that embraces sustainability. STA should strive to be a leader in conservation programs. The leadership of the organization should actively reinforce a culture that puts a high value on conservation of resources and service to the public. Stewardship also involves a respect for the people who serve and are served by STA.

#### 2.1.1 Fiscal Responsibility

*STA will use financial forecasts to make good use of tax dollars.*

#### 2.1.2 Zero Point Emission

*Guided by the Zero Emission Vehicle Transition Plan, STA will manage STA fleet procurement with an emphasis on zero-point emission vehicles and a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.*

#### 2.1.3 Resource Management

*STA will review and/or reduce consumption of natural resources against current levels with a goal of continuous improvement. This includes siting recycling capabilities as affordable and practical in all facilities.*

- ~~• Make good use of tax dollars through most efficient use of resources.~~
- ~~• Establish practices that minimize fuel use and reduce GHG emissions.~~
- ~~• Review and/or reduce consumption of natural resources against current levels with a goal of continuous improvement. —~~
- ~~• Include recycling capabilities as affordable and practical in all facilities.~~
- ~~• Evaluate opportunities presented by the development of alternate fuel sources.~~

#### 1.3.2.2 Purchasing

*Establish a sustainable purchasing policy.*

The agency should have a holistic decision-making process for purchasing equipment and services.

- Conduct cost/benefit that considers lifespan costs and replacement strategy. Lower initial capital outlays may not be the best value when operations, maintenance, and replacement cycles are also factored as costs of ownership.
- Establish procurement decision process that considers costs involved at each stage of the entire lifecycle of goods purchased; e.g., resource extraction, material processing, product design and manufacturing, transportation and distribution, purchase and use, and end of life disposal or recycling.
- Evaluate the impact of staff resources required to support equipment or new capabilities.
- The agency's fleet replacement plan will anticipate emerging alternate fuel options for its vehicles.

~~The agency's fleet replacement plan will anticipate emerging alternate fuel options for its vehicles.~~

- ~~• Aggressively integrate battery-electric bus technology into the Fixed Route fleet as those vehicles and supporting infrastructure meet the conditions of the purchasing policy.~~
- ~~• Evaluate other alternate fuels, such as propane, for the Paratransit fleet~~
- ~~• Monitor options for the agency's non-revenue vehicle fleet~~

#### 1.4.2.3 Capital Projects

*Integrate sustainability into facility design, construction, and demolition.*

The physical plant that supports the agency has a long-term effect on the agency's ability to operate efficiently and represents an opportunity to conserve natural and financial resources.

- Anticipate emerging requirements e.g., ADA.
- Integrate sustainable design criteria into facility design and construction decisions.
- Strive to achieve the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standard for facilities.
- Construct facilities to the highest defined energy conservation standard justified by net present value analysis of capital and forecast energy costs of at least 30 years.
- Maximize use of recycled building materials.
- Incorporate recycling (deconstruction practices) into the demolition of obsolete STA facilities.

## SU 2.0 – Connecting People and Communities

### SU 2.1 Transportation Alternatives

*Provide services that are an attractive transportation alternative compared to single-occupant vehicles (SOVs):*

Reliable and predictable service is perhaps the most important characteristic that defines a viable transportation alternative:

- Conduct route planning and scheduling to get people to destinations in a timely manner.
- Maximize convenience by enhancing route frequency as articulated in the Service Design Principles in this Comprehensive Plan (Part II: Services; Fixed-Route Service, Fixed-Route Service Design Principles).
- Pursue system enhancement technology that makes STA services easier for the public to understand and use.
- Provide transit services to community events to maximize access and use of its services (e.g., additional hours, special fee structure, special routing). This special event service effectively moves large numbers of participants with minimum use of energy resources.
- Take advantage of Washington State and Spokane County Commute Trip Reduction programs that incentivize use of STA services.

### 2.2 Connectivity

*Serve as regional connection to neighborhoods/jurisdictions, places of employment, community events, and public services in a way that meets the needs of the service area:*

STA is a major regional asset. Staff should be actively engaged in supporting and informing the land use planning and growth-management activities of the jurisdictions it supports. Educate the region's planners, developers, and decision makers on the characteristics of urban design that can best be supported by public transportation:

Examples include:

- Use the HPTN concept to communicate a vision of corridors where public transportation services will be consistent and prioritized for further investments (e.g. East Sprague Avenue and Division Street).
- The role of the “built environment” such as streetcars, electrified trolleys, or high-quality passenger shelters in helping shape development.
- The impact of residential and employment density on transit effectiveness.

STA should maintain a close relationship with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (SRTC) to ensure transit plans are integrated into overall long-range transportation plans and coordinate with Washington State Department of Transportation to facilitate the integration of public transportation into project planning and design.

### 2.3 Public Input

*Maximize public input and stakeholder engagement in STA's sustainability initiatives.*

The success of STA's sustainability initiatives depends on authentic and transparent efforts to engage all stakeholders. This element reinforces the public process policies as outlined in Part III: Activities and Programs; Communications and Public Input of this Comprehensive Plan.

- Define a stakeholder as anyone with an interest in STA; e.g., employees, riders, regulators, tax payers, neighborhood residents, activity center tenants and local governments, as well as those who provide services to STA such as suppliers, contractors, and professional services like banking and insurance.
- Strive at all times to balance the long-term perspective of sustainability-related issues against the more short-term needs that arise within our community.

### 2.4 Multi-modal Connectivity

*Increase interest in multi-modal connections.*

The ability to seamlessly transition between various modes of transportation helps expand the public's use of alternative transportation.

- Maintain strong connections to the airport and the intermodal center.
- Create accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian interfaces to STA services. These accommodations should be incorporated in bus stop design and locations as well as the design and capabilities of its vehicles.
- Strategically locate and serve park and ride facilities.

## SU 3.0 – Community Resilience and Socio-economic Health

### 3.1 Affordability

*Position transit to mitigate the effect of rising fuel costs on the increasingly large segment of population that is unable to afford other travel options.*

- Keep fares affordable in accordance with the fare policies as outlined in Part III: Activities and Programs, Revenues and Fares of this Comprehensive Plan.
- Regularly review opportunities presented by the development of alternate fuel sources.
- Improve the cost competitiveness of STA services compared with the use of Single Occupant Vehicles (both in terms of an individual's time and energy expended).

### 3.2 Supporting the Community

*Attend to the social and transportation challenges faced by groups within the community.*

- Include investments in plans and projects for passenger amenities and reduction of barriers that inhibit access to transit stops. The accessibility and utility of public transportation resources will become increasingly important in the future as our population ages.
- Support community efforts to develop a comprehensive set of alternatives to traditional Paratransit service delivery. Paratransit service will face increasing demands in the future as it competes for resources required by other modes.

- Participate in jurisdictions' land use planning, [in particular housing planning](#), and inform supporting transportation infrastructure plans to adapt to meet the changing demographics of our community.
- Make Vanpools available to a variety of groups to meet multiple needs.