
# Intercity Transit
# Olympia Planning Commission Update

January 7, 2019

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# Update Topics

- Short and Long Range Plan Adoption – Prop. 1 Implementation Plan
- Update on Recent Service changes (2018)
- Project updates
- Ongoing outreach

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# Chronology of Planning Effort

- By 2015 – Identified current funding would not sustain existing service levels – Request Legislative support for additional sales tax authority.
- Summer 2015 – Prioritized "Community Conversation" and grant awarded for public process support.
- Fall 2016 – Initiate S&LRP – Begin Outreach, Data collection, route profiles and existing conditions report
- Initial Public Outreach – "IT Road Trip" Summer/Fall 2017
- Steering Committee Review – November 2017 thru April 2018
- Local options Bill passed by Legislature (additional sales tax authority)
- Develop Long Range Plan Projects and cost estimates – May 2018
- IT Road Trip – 2.0 – Project Prioritization and Costs Report back to Community and new survey – June 2018.
- Independent polling of community (Elway Poll) to confirm results of the Road Trip Survey as part of the Long Range Plan July 2018.
- ITA considers and puts forth Fall 2018 Ballot Measure – Proposition 1

# Short & Long Range Plan Purpose

- Listen to priorities set by community (IT Road Trip)
- Short Range – Address short-term issues cost effectively
  - On-time performance
  - Improve operation of Olympia Express
  - Expand into NE Lacey
  - Provide more crosstown service connections

- Long Range - Develop sustainable plan for PTBA
  - Land use and market assessment
  - Outline improvements and costs of community mobility improvements
  - Implementation plan
  - Capital and operating plan

# Short Range Changes implemented in September 2018

- Most routes had a change
- Schedule tweaks are planned to address customer feedback
- Very preliminary results (which may change with more data):
  - On-time performance has improved
  - Olympia Express is tracking positively

# Long Range Plan Elements Address Community Priorities

- Long Range Plan started 2 years ago
  - Budget projections
  - Development of long-term strategies to enhance mobility
- LRTP Informed by Road Trip Process
  - Community outreach
  - Stakeholder meetings
  - Surveys
  - Thousands of responses

# Extended Span of Service

An extended span of service means more bus routes start earlier in the morning and continue to run later at night, on weekdays and weekends.

As a result, extended service helps get you where you need to go, regardless of your schedule. This helps to accommodate early or late work schedules, as well as shopping, visiting friends, or going out at night.

**4**

*Number of bus routes that currently run until 11 PM on weekdays*

**15**

*Number of bus routes that would run until 11 PM with an extended span*

## What are the benefits?

- Support for irregular and late work schedules
- Span is consistent for multiple routes
- Later service is a community priority

## What are the costs?

**$1.6M**
Annual operating costs (additional)

**7%**
Increase in service relative to 2017 levels

**None**
Capital costs

## Where are the opportunities?

Routes that run until 11 PM now:

12 41 62B 66

Routes that would run until 11 PM with an extended span of service:

13 21 45 47 48 60 62A 64 67 68 94

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# Improved Frequency

Improved frequency means buses come more often, all day. In other words, buses arrive at a stop every 15 or 30 minutes depending on the route.

When buses come more frequently, you don't need to plan your day around the schedule. For the most frequent routes (13, 41, 62A/B), buses would come every 15 minutes, seven days a week.

*Minimum 30-minute frequency all day*


*Three routes with all-day, 15-minute service*

*Same frequency all-day, seven-days-a-week*

*Simpler bus schedules*

## What are the benefits?

- Better accommodates your schedule
- More flexibility for off-peak trips
- Bus schedules that are easier to remember

## What are the costs?

**$4.5M**
Annual operating costs (additional)

**21%**
Increase in service

**2**
New vehicles required

## Which routes would have more frequent service?


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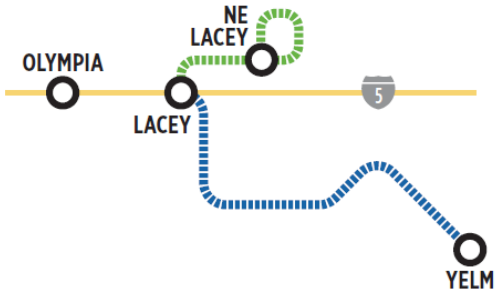
# Service to New Areas

Service to new areas would include routes to NE Lacey, Yelm, and possibly Innovative Service Zones for other less densely populated areas.

Growth in Thurston County is adding new destinations that are unserved by the current transit network. For NE Lacey, new service would be an all-day, standalone route between the Lacey Transit Center and job centers in NE Lacey. Service to Yelm would be an express route during rush hour to and from Lacey Transit Center. Innovative Service Zones could serve less densely populated areas until they can support bus service. Potential zones could be in Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, and Yelm.

## Potential NE Lacey and Yelm route alignments




## What is an Innovative Service Zone?

*Gets you connected into the broader system*

*On-demand*

*Smaller vehicles*

## What are the benefits?

- Better access to jobs, schools, appointments, and shopping
- More flexibility for off-peak trips

## What are the costs?

- **$2.6M** Annual operating costs (additional)
- **4** New vehicles required

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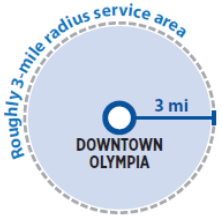
# Night Owl Service

Night Owl Service is a weekend, on-demand, late night service to and from downtown Olympia.

It would include three small buses leaving the Olympia Transit Center hourly. Each bus would make pickups and drop-offs in a different zone that reaches up to three miles away from downtown Olympia. Night Owl service would not replace the existing weekend service to The Evergreen State College.

*On-demand*

*Weekend nights*




*Three-mile radius*


*Maintains late night service*

## What are the benefits?

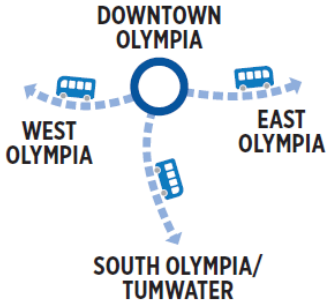
- Supports new trip purposes
- Provides employment transportation during peak "entertainment" times
- Promotes safety for riders and non-riders

## What are the costs?

**$400,000**
Annual operating costs (additional)

**None**
Capital costs

## Where are the opportunities?

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# Maintain On-Time Performance

It's critical to keep buses running on time despite changes in traffic. This requires setting aside 0.5% of the operating budget to periodically adjust schedules.

Increasing traffic congestion in the future will lead to increasing delays, and increasing costs associated with those delays, for everyone including transit vehicles.

Intercity Transit can plan ahead for slowing travel times by setting aside a specified percentage of the operating budget each year for one-or-two schedule adjustments. This would allow Intercity Transit to put additional buses into service on busy routes and reduce wait times for riders.

***Allocates 0.5% of operating budget***

***Adjusts schedules periodically***

***Keeps buses on time***

***Accommodates changing traffic***

***Plans ahead***

## What are the benefits?

Establishes a savings account for on-demand service additions

Provides flexibility for changing operating conditions

## What are the costs?

**0.5%** Annual operating costs

**None** Capital costs

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# Enhanced Commuter Service

Enhanced commuter service means better express service between Olympia, Lacey, Lakewood, and Tacoma. It would make service easier to understand, faster, more comfortable, and more frequent.

Commuter service is fast service over long distances, designed to transport suburban workers to downtown jobs. This is important because Thurston County anticipates approximately 43,000* commuters traveling out of Thurston County to work by 2025, an increase of 22%. Many of these commuters will be going to Pierce and King Counties.

* Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) Countywide Employment and Commute Forecast, January 2018

***Consolidates existing express routes***

***Increases service levels***

***Improves speed and reliability***

***Upgrades to coach vehicles***

## What are the benefits?

- Avoids delays.
- Provides flexibility for changing operating conditions
- Reduces congestion on I-5

## What are the costs?

**$1M** Annual operating costs (additional)

**$3.0M** Capital costs for new buses

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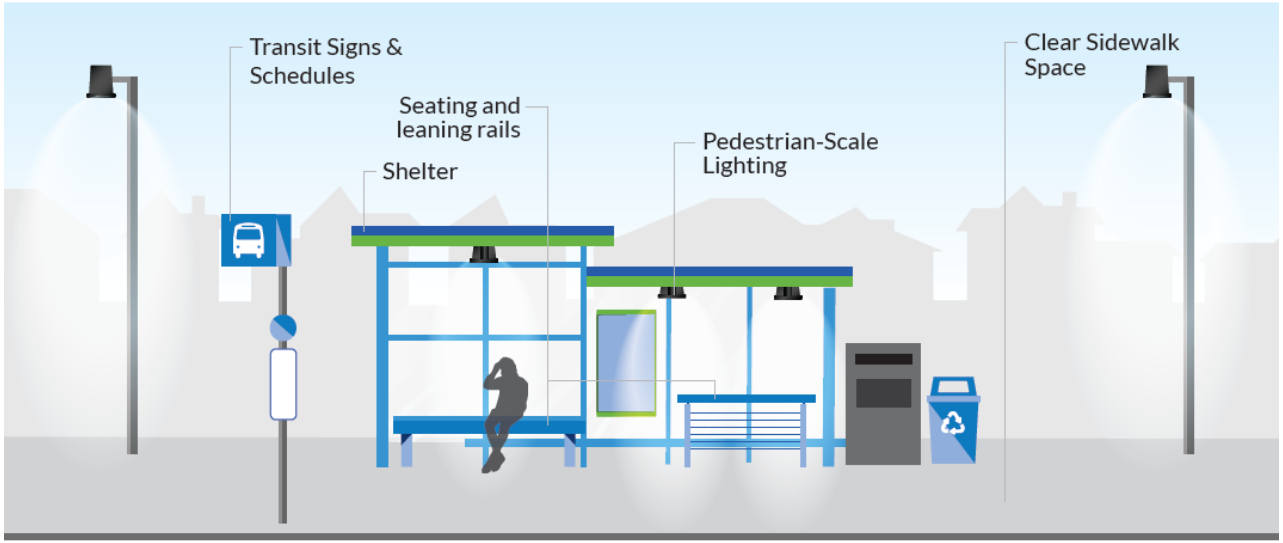
# Enhanced Capital Facilities

Enhanced capital facilities mean better bus stops, with features like shelters, benches, and lighting. Together, these improve the overall customer experience while waiting for the bus.

Intercity Transit would invest in bus stop enhancements throughout its service area. Priority would be given to stops with more ridership.




## What are the benefits?

- Better passenger experience
- Attracts and retain riders

## What are the costs?

**None** Annual operating costs

**$260K** Annual capital costs

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# Bus Rapid Transit

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a high-frequency bus-based transit system that delivers fast, direct, comfortable, and cost-effective service.

Because BRT contains features similar to rail service. It is much faster, more reliable, and more convenient than regular bus services. With the right features, BRT avoids the causes of delays that typically slow regular bus services, like being stuck in traffic and paying on board.

*Smarter traffic signals*

*A distinct look and feel*


*Simpler fare payment*

*Vehicles with more room*

*Comfortable stations*

## What are the benefits?

- Faster service that arrives on time
- Buses that come more often, all day long
- Service that supports economic development

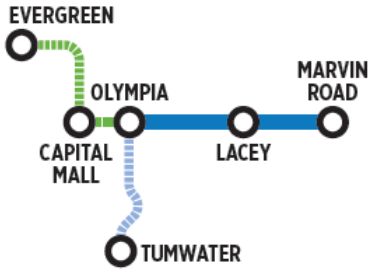
## What are the costs?

**Martin Way corridor:**

**$2.5M**
Annual operating costs (additional)

**$23M–$30M**
Capital costs

## Where are the opportunities?

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# Continue Investigating Fare Payment Options

Changing the way fares are paid means different things to different people, and can address several challenges identified by the community. There are options and opportunities that, with some additional study, can help meet our shared goals.

*Get where they are going faster*

*Make it easier to pay*

*Make it more affordable*

*Encourage people to ride the bus*

*Reduce fare hassles and uncertainty*

Implementing new fare technology and introducing an alternative fare structure are two options which could be considered.

## New Fare Technology

The existing fare collection system takes cash only and is failing. There are many new technology options to consider. Part of the consideration is the cost associated with purchasing and maintaining a fare collection system, and processing the money collected.

## Alternative Fare Structure

An alternative fare structure means removing the collection of fares on the bus from individual riders and replacing that fare revenue with funds generated through public/private partnerships. About 10% of transit revenues come from fares. There are several communities, like Chapel Hill NC, Missoula MT, Corvallis OR, and Cache Valley UT, that have implemented a similar alternative fare structure. They have found it:

***Promotes social equity***

Riders least able to afford fares are currently paying them

***Increases ridership***

Systems report an increase of 30–40% ridership

***Makes bus service faster***

3–7% speed improvement without fare collection waiting time

***Lowers operating costs***

eliminates costs for fare collection, fare equipment, ticket management, and administration

***Removes barrers***

Increases convenience and removes the hassle of finding cash to ride the bus

***Reduces traffic congestion***

gets more people riding the bus leaving fewer cars on the road

***Environmentally friendly***

gets more people riding the bus leaving fewer cars on the road

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# Tentative Service Improvements Implementation

| Implementation Year | Improvement |
|---|---|
| 2019 | • Improve span of service<br>• Keep Buses On Time (Schedule Maintenance) |
| 2020 | • Improve Frequency<br>• Expand Bus Service to NE Lacey (post I-5 work) |
| 2021 | • Innovative Service Zone (first zone)<br>• Night Owl Services |
| 2022 | • Express Service to Yelm (post Yelm by-pass)<br>• Enhance Commuter Services (pending HOV lanes) |
| 2023 | • Innovative Service Zone (second zone) |
| 2026 | • Innovative Service Zones (Add third zone)<br>• Bus Rapid Transit |

# Implementation Summary

- Span of Service –
  - Additional Annual Service Hours - 15,000 Annual Hrs.
  - Estimated new operators for service 13
- Frequency Of Service
  - Additional Annual Service Hours – 41,000 Annual Hrs.
  - Estimated New Operators for Service - 35
  - Express Service (Hours and Buses)
- New Routes
  - NE Lacey Hours 6,400 / 5
  - NE Lacey New Buses – 2 new
  - Yelm Peak Service Buses 3,600 Hrs. / 3
- Bus Rapid Transit – Light – 23,000 annual hours 20
- Dial –A-Lift – 25-35% increase expected
  - Forecast Hours and Span
  - New Operators – demand growing

About 80,000 Annual Service Hours (40%)

BRT Concept would provide an additional 20,000 hours

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# Implementation Schedule Must be Finalized

- Hard work is just beginning
- Implementation priorities are flexible
- Desire for immediate improvements
  - Span of service is prioritized – as it needs only new operators
  - Weekend Service – Sundays
- Start-up time for many improvements should be expected
  - Up to 2 year delivery time for any new buses
  - Operator training lead times
  - Cash flow
  - Planning/Operations staff availability for big service changes
  - Maintenance base capacity
- Financial Plan assumes 8 year implementation

# Olympia Transit Center Expansion

- Total Funds Secured For OTC Expansion
  - $4,292,582 - Federal Funds – Design & Construction ($5.8 local)
  - $10.1 Million – Total Project (Grant and Local funding)
  - Construction Start - November 2018

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# Pattison: Next Phase

## Secured Project Fund Summary:

### Local:

| | |
|---|---|
| Committed in 2018 budget | $4,100,000 |
| Additional local to meet Federal Match requirements | ($4,341,908) |

### State:

| | |
|---|---|
| Regional Mobility (2017-2019) | $2,000,000 |
| RMG Approved subject to 2019-2021 budget | $3,900,000 |

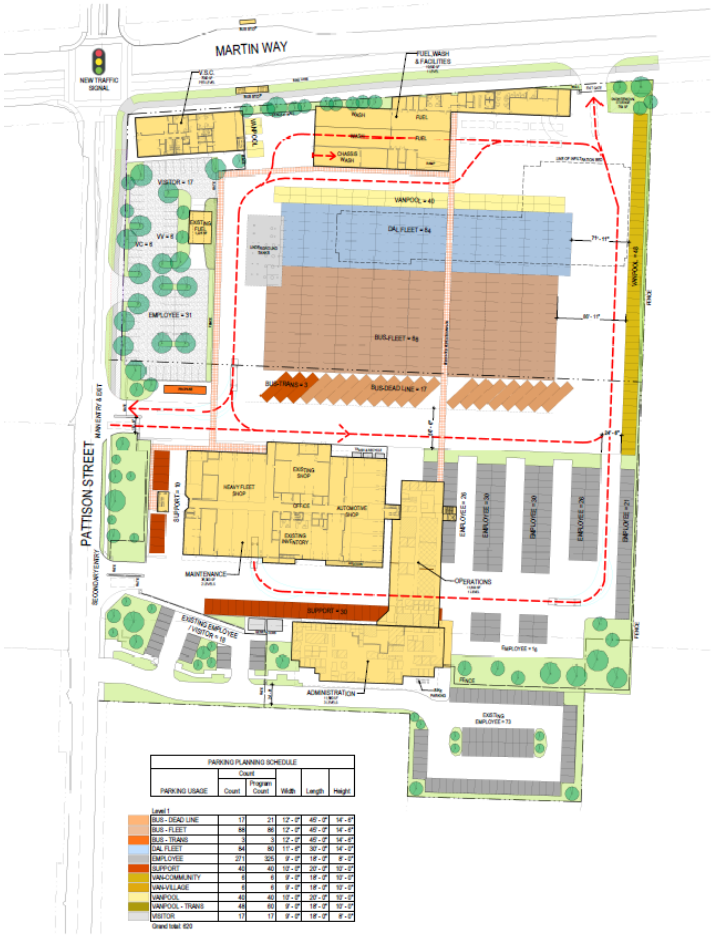
### Regional:

| | |
|---|---|
| TRPC (Federal – STP ) | $922,846 |

### Federal:

| | |
|---|---|
| Earned Share 5307&5339 Formula | $6,289,630 |
| FFY 2017 5339 Competitive | $1,375,000 |
| FFY 2018 5339 Competitive | $9,703,000 |

**Total Funds For Project: $32,632,384**




**OPTION B4**

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# Ongoing Outreach and Communication

- Work with our Community thru existing channels
  - Planning Commissions
  - IT Community Advisory Committee
  - City Councils / BOCC
  - Neighborhood Associations
  - Chambers / Business Organizations
- Use local outreach opportunities
- Report on plan progress
- Respond to changing financial conditions

# Questions?


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