



King County

1200 King County
Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Agenda Regional Transit Committee

Councilmembers:
Jorge L. Barón, Chair
De'Sean Quinn
Alternate:

Sound Cities Association:
Vice Chair: Barbara de Michele, Issaquah; Susan Honda, Federal Way;
Karen Howe, Sammamish; Ryan McIrvine, Renton; Katherine Ross, Snoqualmie;
Toni Troutner, Kent; Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., Covington

Alternates:
Neal Black, Kirkland; Paul Charbonneau, Newcastle;
JC Harris, Des Moines; Tarlochan Mann, Pacific

City of Seattle:
Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka
Alternate: *Robert Kettle*

Lead Staff: *Mary Bourguignon (206-263-3296)*
Committee Clerk: *Blake Wells (206-263-1617)*

3:00 PM

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Hybrid Meeting

Hybrid Meetings: Attend King County Council committee meetings in person in Council Chambers (Room 1001), 516 3rd Avenue in Seattle, or through remote access. Details on how to attend and/or provide comment remotely are listed below.

Pursuant to K.C.C. 1.24.035 A. and F., this meeting is also noticed as a meeting of the Metropolitan King County Council, whose agenda is limited to the committee business. In this meeting only the rules and procedures applicable to committees apply and not those applicable to full council meetings.

HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT: The Regional Transit Committee values community input and looks forward to hearing from you on agenda items.



Sign language and interpreter services can be arranged given sufficient notice (206-848-0355).
TTY Number - TTY 711.
Council Chambers is equipped with a hearing loop, which provides a wireless signal that is picked up by a hearing aid when it is set to 'T' (Telecoil) setting.



There are three ways to provide public comment:

1. In person: You may attend the meeting and provide comment in the Council Chambers.
2. By email: You may comment in writing on current agenda items by submitting your email comments to kcccomitt@kingcounty.gov. If your email is received by 1:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, your email comments will be distributed to the committee members and appropriate staff prior to the meeting.
3. Remote attendance at the meeting by phone or computer (see "Connecting to the Webinar" below).

You may provide oral comment on current agenda items during the meeting's public comment period. You are not required to sign up in advance. Comments are limited to current agenda items.

You have the right to language access services at no cost to you. To request these services, please contact Language Access Coordinator, Tera Chea at 206-477-9259 or email tera.chea2@kingcounty.gov by 8:00 a.m. three business days prior to the meeting.

CONNECTING TO THE WEBINAR:

Webinar ID: 824 1078 7866

By computer using the Zoom application at <https://zoom.us/join> and the webinar ID above.

Via phone by calling 1-253-215-8782 and using the webinar ID above.

HOW TO WATCH/LISTEN TO THE MEETING REMOTELY: There are several ways to watch or listen in to the meeting:

- 1) Stream online via this link: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/kctv>, or input the link web address into your web browser.
- 2) Watch King County TV on Comcast Channel 22 and 322(HD) and Astound Broadband Channels 22 and 711(HD)
- 3) Listen to the meeting by telephone – See "Connecting to the Webinar" above.

To help us manage the meeting, if you do not wish to be called upon for public comment please use the Livestream or King County TV options listed above, if possible, to watch or listen to the meeting.

1. Call to Order

To show a PDF of the written materials for an agenda item, click on the agenda item below.

2. Roll Call



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3. Approval of Minutes p. 4

April 16, 2025 meeting minutes

4. Chair's Report**5. Public Comment****6. General Manager's Report****Briefings****6. Briefing No. 2025-B0053 p. 6**

Free Youth Fare and Youth Ridership

Chris O'Claire, Director, Mobility Division, Metro Transit Department

Ina Percival, Section Manager, Market Innovation, Metro Transit Department

Melanie Mayock, Program Manager, Youth Mobility, Metro Transit Department

7. Briefing No. 2025-B0054 p. 28

Update on Service Recovery Plan: Ridership Recovery and Restructures

Chris O'Claire, Director, Mobility Division, Metro Transit Department

Other Business**Adjournment**

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Meeting Minutes Regional Transit Committee

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Federal Way;*

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Lead Staff: Mary Bourguignon (206-263-3296)

Committee Clerk: Blake Wells (206-263-1617)

3:00 PM

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Hybrid Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Barón called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present: 8 - de Michele, Ross, Troutner, Honda, Barón, Quinn, Black and Harris

Excused: 5 - Cimaomo Jr., McIrvine, Hollingsworth, Saka and Howe

3. Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair de Michele moved approval of the March 19, 2025 meeting minutes. There being no objections, the minutes were approved.

4. Chair's Report

Chair Barón provided an overview of the agenda.

5. Public Comment

The following people provided public comment:

Alex Tsimerman

6. General Manager's Report

Ernest Kandilige, Deputy General Manager, Metro Transit Department, briefed the committee on the King County Regional Transit Safety Task Force, fare enforcement, the Spring service change, and ridership.

Briefings**7. [Briefing No. 2025-B0050](#)**

Transit Safety & Security Update - RTC

Ernest Kandilige, Deputy General Manager, Metro Transit Department and Rebecca Frankhouser, Director of Safety and Security, Metro Transit Department, briefed the committee via PowerPoint presentation and answered questions from the members.

This matter was presented.

8. [Briefing No. 2025-B0051](#)

Metro ADA Transition Plan

Brian Mannion, Mobility Division Deputy Director, Metro Transit Department, Dion Graham, ADA Administrator, Metro Transit Department, and Taryn Farley, ADA and Universal Access Program Manager, Metro Transit Department, briefed the committee via PowerPoint presentation and answered questions from the members.

This matter was presented.

Other Business

There was no other business to come before the committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:17 PM.

Approved this _____ day of _____

Clerk's Signature



King County

Metropolitan King County Council Regional Transit Committee

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	6	Name:	Mary Bourguignon
Proposed No.:	2025-B0053	Date:	May 21, 2025

SUBJECT

Today's briefing will cover youth use of transit since the free youth fare was implemented in 2022.

SUMMARY

In 2022, the State Legislature passed, and the Governor signed the Move Ahead Washington transportation investment program,¹ which included \$3 billion in funding for transit programs and projects, including \$1.45 billion in transit support grants. Move Ahead Washington stipulated that a transit agency would only be eligible to compete for transit support grants, beginning with the 2023-2025 biennium, if it implemented a fare-free policy for youth 18 years and under for all modes provided by the agency and submitted documentation of this zero-fare policy by October 1, 2022.

In response, the RTC and Council approved legislation to set Metro fares for youth 18 and younger to zero as of September 1, 2022.²

Since the adoption of the free youth fare, youth are allowed to board transit with no fare card or by showing a middle school or high school student ID. However, Metro staff have indicated that they prefer that youth use a Youth Orca Card,³ both so that youth become familiar with tapping to pay for transit and so that Metro can better assess the number of youth using transit. Youth Orca Cards convert to adult Orca Cards when the cardholder turns 19.

During today's briefing, Metro staff will provide an update on youth use of transit and Metro's work to promote and distribute Youth Orca Cards.

¹ Chapter 47.66 RCW (per ESSB 5974, C 182 L 22)

² Ordinance 19474

³ My Orca Home, Youth Ride Transit for Free ([link](#))

BACKGROUND

King County Metro's fares are adopted by the King County Council and codified in the King County Code.⁴ Until September 2022, when Metro's free youth fare was implemented, children under six rode free on all Metro services and the youth fare (ages six through 18) was set at \$1.50 for Metro buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles, or streetcars (youth Access paratransit riders paid the full \$1.75 fare); \$3.75 for the West Seattle water taxi route; and \$4.50 for the Vashon Island water taxi route. To access this youth fare, Metro had created a Youth Orca card, which also offered youth fares on the services of the Orca partner agencies.⁵

During the 2022 legislative session, the Washington State Legislature approved Move Ahead Washington, a \$17 billion, 16-year transportation investment program. The plan included \$3 billion in funding for transit programs and projects, including \$1.45 billion in transit support grants.⁶

However, Move Ahead Washington stipulated that a transit agency would only be eligible to compete for a transit support grant, beginning with the 2023-2025 biennium, if it implemented a fare-free policy for youth 18 years and under for all modes provided by the agency and submitted documentation of this zero-fare policy by October 1, 2022. The transit agency would then be required to report to the state on the number of trips that were taken. At the time the Move Ahead Washington program was approved, the Washington State Transit Association estimated that Metro could potentially receive \$31.7 million each year during the 2023-2025 biennium in annual formula allocations through the transit support grant program.

In response to the requirements in Move Ahead Washington, the RTC and Council approved legislation⁷ amending the King County Code to set the transit fare to zero for youth from six to 18 years of age⁸ for all Metro's modes of transit. (Children under six would continue to be able ride Metro services for free.) The free youth fare took effect September 1, 2022.

When the free youth fare took effect, Metro staff noted that youth could continue to use Orca fare media when boarding transit to help Metro track ridership trends and to minimize fare disputes between youth customers and operators. However, Metro stated that no young person would be turned away if they did not have an Orca card, and that youth could show a student ID or board with no card. Metro staff noted at the time that the Orca system will eventually allow for mobile apps and other types of fare media, such as wristbands or stickers that could be affixed to a student ID.

⁴ KCC 4A.700.010 covers fares for buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles, and streetcars. KCC 4A.700.820 covers passenger ferry (water taxi) fares.

⁵ The Orca partner agencies are King County Metro, Sound Transit, Community Transit, Kitsap Transit, Pierce Transit, Everett Transit, and Washington State Ferries ([link](#))

⁶ Chapter 47.66 RCW (per ESSB 5974, C 182 L 22)

⁷ Ordinance 19474

⁸ As well as those over 18 who receive student passes under KCC 4A.700.450

During 2023 and 2024 (through August), Metro noted that approximately 23,000 Youth Orca cards were ordered online throughout the Orca region. In addition, Metro and its partners distributed 16,000 Youth Orca cards to schools and at public events.

In terms of youth ridership, Metro estimates that approximately 10% of riders are youth riding (although most youth riders do not use an Orca card), and estimates the following Metro youth bus boardings:

- 2023 (January through December): 7,002,000 (583,500/month)
- 2024 (January through August): 4,845,000 (605,625/month)

During today's presentation, Metro staff will provide an update on youth transit ridership, as well as the steps Metro and its partner Orca agencies have taken to distribute Youth Orca Cards. Specifically, Metro will discuss its efforts on:

- Outreach, including community partnerships and events
- Education, including class workshops and partnerships with schools
- Opportunities for paid internships and career pathways

INVITED

- Chris O'Claire, Director, Mobility Division, Metro Transit Department
- Ina Percival, Section Manager, Market Innovation, Metro Transit Department
- Melanie Mayock, Program Manager, Youth Mobility, Metro Transit Department

ATTACHMENTS

1. Metro presentation

Free Youth Fares, Youth Mobility Program and Youth Ridership

Regional Transit Committee
May 21, 2025



Presenters



Melanie Mayock

Youth Mobility Program Manager
(she/her)



Ina Percival

Market and Business Development
Supervisor (she/her)

How the Youth Mobility Program Fits Into Metro's Guiding Policies



- Create a sustainable pipeline to transit ridership



- Invest upstream where needs are greatest
- Improve access to mobility options

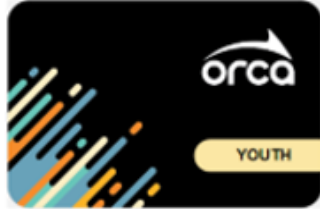
Background: Free Youth Transit

Free Youth Transit: Overview

- Began September 2022, statewide
- Riders 18 and younger can take transit for free
- Youth ORCA cards are highly encouraged
- Order online at FreeYouthTransitPass.com with proof of age
- Convert to Adult cards when the cardholder turns 19

Youth ORCA Card - Exp
Print (reduced fare -
requires proof of age)

\$0.00



- ORCA Youth cards are available to youth ages 6 to 18.

No added money or passes

Proof of age documentation is required before adding to shopping cart

UPLOAD DOCUMENT

ADD MONEY / PASS

ADD TO CART

Free Youth Transit: What we're hearing

Sample responses from 2024 high school student survey, when asked how free youth transit has affected them:

"It's gotten me to a lot of places. It is the only reason I can do so many activities."

– 10th grader, Shorewood HS

"It helps us get around a lot faster when our parents can't take us."

– 9th grader, Rainier Beach HS

"I was a sophomore when free youth transit was implemented, and the decrease in my stress levels has been substantial."

– 12th grader, Auburn HS

Metro's Youth Mobility Program:

Investing in transit riders of the future

Youth Mobility Program

Our goal: More young people have the skills to ride transit confidently.

Outreach

- Community partnerships
- Events

Education

- Class workshops
- Partnerships with schools

Opportunity

- Paid internships
- Career pathways

Focus on priority populations.

Outreach & Partnerships

Metro attends community events to:

- Educate about free youth transit
- Distribute Youth ORCA cards
- Understand community needs and barriers

In 2024 we:

- Interacted with **3,000** people
- Distributed **1,500** Youth ORCA cards

Recent partners: CoCreative Culture, Para Los Niños, Communities in Schools, and Best Starts for Kids



Classroom Transit Education

- Interactive class workshops
- Grades 2-12
- Topics include how to ride, safety, and sustainability
- 2024-25 school year:
 - **2000+** students
 - In 23 schools



"It's so important to share this info with our students so that they can be confident exploring their world." - Host teacher

Marketing free youth transit

- Partner with ORCA agencies
- Advertisements, influencer partnerships
- Spring 2023 campaign; new round starting this month
- Micro level: community marketing pilot at Highline High School



Youth Summer Internship

- Three-week program for high-school aged youth
- Youth are empowered to become peer ambassadors for transit and learn about local government and urban planning
- Metro also offers college/graduate internships, veteran fellowships, and apprenticeships



What we're hearing: youth travel & awareness

Fall 2024 survey in six high schools: Auburn, Juanita, Newport, Rainier Beach, Shorecrest, Shorewood. Over 1200 responses.



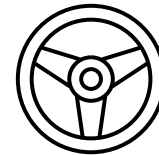
82% know transit is free



69% have ridden transit recently



Social activities are a key reason for using transit



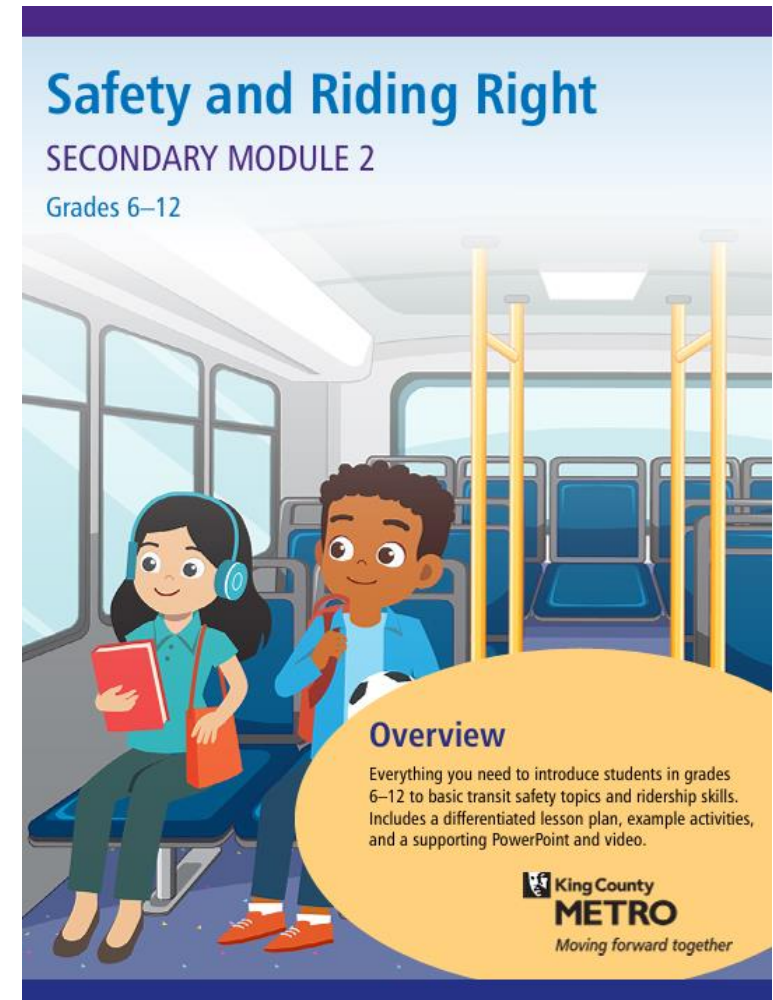
Older teens more likely to drive



Getting dropped off at school is common

What we're hearing: safety

- Survey responses:
 - 60% believe public transit is safe
 - Higher among riders (66%), vs non-riders (45%)
 - Riding together feels safer
- Classroom Transit Education
 - Module on safety and riding right
 - Tools to report concerns and ride respectfully



Ridership & Data

Youth ridership data and ORCA use

- Data on youth ridership is inconsistent
- Estimate: youth are about 10% of Metro bus riders
 - From on-board and video counts
- Most youth riders (~85-90%) do not use an ORCA card
- Barriers to ORCA use:
 - Youth unlikely to order a card online
 - Many prefer to use their phone; cards can be lost
 - May not understand why they should tap

Encouraging fare media use by youth

- Focus groups help understand barriers
- Partnerships with schools & CBOs on ORCA card distribution
- Gentle reminders by fare inspectors
 - No citations to youth; encourage youth to get a card
- Messaging: encourage ORCA card use, prominent in ads
- Working towards future fare media options

Resources

- Know someone who needs a Youth ORCA card? Send them to FreeYouthTransitPass.com
- Want to encourage young people riding transit? Watch for **Metro's new ads** and share to your networks
- Get updates on youth and transit through our newsletter: kingcounty.gov/metro/transiteducation



Closing and Questions



King County

Metropolitan King County Council Regional Transit Committee

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	7	Name:	Mary Bourguignon
Proposed No.:	2025-B0054	Date:	May 21, 2025

SUBJECT

Today's briefing will cover Metro's post-pandemic service recovery.

SUMMARY

Beginning in March 2020, Metro implemented a series of emergency service reductions to respond to the pandemic. The service reductions were designed to keep riders and employees safe, synchronize service levels with Metro's operational capacity, and respond to changing ridership patterns.

In March 2023, the Executive proposed and the Council adopted a Metro Service Recovery Plan,¹ which outlined a plan for Metro to restore County-funded transit service hours gradually over several biennia through a series of geographically focused mobility projects² that would require Council approval. These mobility projects were expected to restructure service to meet current conditions rather than restore it to pre-pandemic patterns.

Since the Service Recovery Plan was adopted in 2023, the Council has approved three of the service restructures described in that plan:

- Lynnwood Link Connections (implemented Fall 2024)³
- Madison Street / G Line (implemented Fall 2024)⁴
- East Link Connections (to be implemented when Sound Transit's 2 Line fully opens for service)⁵

Today's briefing will provide an update on Metro's current service and ridership conditions, as well as its plans for continued service recovery.

¹ Ordinance 19581

² The mobility projects identified in the Metro Service Recovery Plan (Ordinance 19581) were: East Link, Lynnwood Link (Ordinance 19751), South Link, Stride, Madison (G Line) (Ordinance 19750), Central Seattle, Queen Anne/Magnolia, North Seattle, West Seattle/Vashon Island, and other.

³ Ordinance 19751

⁴ Ordinance 19750

⁵ Ordinance 19899

BACKGROUND

Metro services and service restructure procedures. King County's Metro Transit Department (Metro) is the largest provider of public transit in the Puget Sound region. Metro operates fixed-route services, including bus and water taxi; accessible services, including Access paratransit and Community Access Transportation (CAT); and a variety of flexible and shared services, including Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART), Vanpool, Community Van, Community Ride, and Metro Flex. In addition to its own services, Metro also operates Regional Express bus service and Link light rail under contract to Sound Transit,⁶ and streetcar service under contract to the City of Seattle.⁷ Metro currently provides approximately 300,000 average weekday boardings on these mobility services.⁸

Metro's General Manager is authorized to make changes to Metro's services without Council review either in the case of an emergency or for administrative-level changes that affect a route's weekly service hours by 25% or less, move the location of a bus stop by ½ mile or less, or only change route numbers.

All other (non-emergency, non-administrative) changes are considered major service changes and require review and approval by the Council⁹ following the procedures outlined in the adopted King County Metro Service Guidelines.¹⁰ In recent years, Metro has typically implemented two service changes each year, in Spring and Fall.

The Service Guidelines describe **service restructures** as service changes that "make coordinated changes to multiple routes and services within a large area." Restructures can be initiated for a variety of reasons, one of which is to "better integrate with the regional transit network, including light rail and bus rapid transit expansions." Restructures may result in the modification, addition, or replacement of transit service.¹¹

Metro Service Recovery Plan. In response to the sudden drop in ridership at the start of the pandemic and to ensure safe operating conditions for its employees and riders, Metro began implementing emergency transit service reductions¹² in March 2020. These initial service reductions and suspensions,¹³ as well as ongoing cycles of restoration and reduction, were part of the county's pandemic response.¹⁴

In March 2023, as the emergency phase of the pandemic ended, but Metro was unable to return to pre-pandemic service levels due to ongoing staffing shortfalls and slow

⁶ Ordinance 19513

⁷ Ordinance 19035

⁸ Metro Strategic Plan Dashboard ([link](#))

⁹ KCC 28.94.020.B

¹⁰ Ordinance 19367

¹¹ Ordinance 19367, Attachment B, Service Guidelines, p. 18.

¹² KCC 28.94.020.B.2.a.

¹³ For the Service Recovery Plan (Ordinance 19581), a service reduction is defined as providing a lower level of service on a route and a service suspension as fully stopping all service on that route.

¹⁴ The Executive issued a proclamation of emergency on March 1, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council affirmed the proclamation through Motion 15610. The Executive terminated the proclamation of emergency on February 6, 2023 ([link](#)).

ridership recovery, the Executive proposed and the Council adopted a Metro Service Recovery Plan,¹⁵ which outlined a plan for Metro to restore County-funded transit service hours gradually over several biennia through a series of geographically focused mobility projects¹⁶ that would require Council approval. These mobility projects were expected to restructure service to meet current conditions rather than restore it to pre-pandemic patterns.

Since the Service Recovery Plan was adopted in 2023, the Council has approved three of the service restructures described in that plan. Metro summarizes these restructures as follows:

- **Lynnwood Link Connections**¹⁷

27 routes

Multi-phase implementation starting 2024

Phase 1 project highlights (Fall 2024)

- Restored ~68,000 suspended service hours
- Increased east-west connections
- Improved night and weekend service
- Increased frequent service
- Increased transit access for priority populations
- Overall daily boardings have increased since before the restructure was implemented (+6% weekdays, +9% Saturdays, +12% Sundays)

Later phases will include:

- Restoration of additional ~61,000 suspended service hours
- New route to connect to the Pinehurst Station once open (2026)
- Changes to Sound Transit 522 Express service on SR-522 and 145th Street
- Approximately 16,000 service hours funded by Seattle Transit Measure

- **Madison Street / G Line**¹⁸

G Line and 9 associated routes

Full implementation Fall 2024

Project highlights:

- Opened RapidRide G Line
- Restored ~4,000 suspended service hours
- Returned trolley bus service to Summit area
- Rebalanced service where demand was greatest based on community feedback
- Overall daily boardings increased for Madison Street area routes and G Line for all days of the week since before the restructure was implemented (+18% weekdays, +26% Saturdays, +23% Sundays)

Changes as of Spring 2025:

¹⁵ Ordinance 19581

¹⁶ The mobility projects identified in the Metro Service Recovery Plan (Ordinance 19581) were: East Link, Lynnwood Link (Ordinance 19751), South Link, Stride, Madison (G Line) (Ordinance 19750), Central Seattle, Queen Anne/Magnolia, North Seattle, West Seattle/Vashon Island, and other.

¹⁷ Ordinance 19751

¹⁸ Ordinance 19750

- Advanced Service Management implemented on G Line (to prevent bus bunching)
- Seattle funded trips to increase frequency from 40 to 30 minutes for all days of the week from midnight to 4:00 am
- **East Link Connections**¹⁹
 - 36 routes
 - To be implemented when Sound Transit's 2 Line fully opens for service
 - Highlights of full proposal
 - Later night service and new weekend service
 - More frequent service
 - Faster regional connections for Bellevue, Redmond, Issaquah, and Renton
 - 14% increase in access to frequent transit for priority populations
 - Greater reliability and new connections between cities and to Link light rail
 - Next steps:
 - May 2025: Connected to new Redmond Link light rail stations
 - Fall 2025: Invest approximately 65,000 service hours toward changes not reliant on Link 2 Line crossing I-90
 - 2026: Implement remaining network with a total project restoration of approximately 160,000 service hours
 - Routes 230, 231, and 255 will also see restorations

Metro describes its plans for the remaining projects as:

- **South Link Connections**
 - 22 routes
 - Currently in public engagement
 - In development, highlights from proposed Phase 2 Network include:
 - Restores ~76,000 suspended service hours
 - Improves local service using resources from removing low-performing and repetitive peak-only service
 - Revises existing service to serve new Link light rail stations
 - Replaces one-way routes with two-way transit service
 - Improves frequencies and spans on multiple project area routes
 - Creates new flexible service pilots in Auburn and Federal Way
 - Next steps:
 - Summer 2025: Phase 3 engagement will begin
 - Spring 2026: Ordinance to King County Council
 - Fall 2026: Implementation begins
- **Seattle, Vashon Island Service Recovery**
 - Project will focus on reinvesting suspended resources to respond to new and emerging mobility needs
 - Partnership with Seattle Department of Transportation for changes within Seattle, including for Seattle Transit Measure-funded service and capital needs

¹⁹ Ordinance 19899

- Timing of project still in development
- **Stride I-405 BRT Integration**
 - Opening of Stride S1 and S2 will include some changes to Metro bus service
 - Changes will address remaining suspensions on Routes 101, 102, 143

Metro notes that service hours are being restored over time via phased projects. Metro is using a set of service restructures that include a range of mobility services. Each project includes planning and engagement, with a proposal for Council action. As noted above, these service restructures are based on current conditions rather than restoring the service that was originally suspended. Metro notes that some changes could be implemented in advance of full project implementation.

In all cases, service hours stay in the project areas from which they were originally suspended. Project budgets include currently operating service, as well as suspended County-funded and partner-funded service.

Metro notes that ongoing service recovery projects will be implemented in multiple phases to best synchronize with workforce capacity (specifically bus operators and front-line supervisors) and other network changes (including Link light rail opening dates, Sound Transit Express Bus changes, and WSDOT ferry schedules).

In terms of ongoing ridership growth, as of March 2025, Metro experienced 277,687 average weekday boardings, an 8% increase over March 2024. Ridership patterns continue to be different from those prior to the pandemic, with ridership and service more spread throughout the day and the week. Specifically:

- Weekday ridership is 69% of March 2019 levels
- Saturday ridership is 89% of March 2019 levels
- Sunday ridership is 95% of March 2019 levels

Metro notes that most routes are gaining ridership. High ridership routes with high monthly growth (based on February 2025 ridership) include Route 60 (+16% from 2024), Route 106 (+12%), RapidRide B Line (+9%), and Route 28 (+15%).

The top five routes by average weekday boardings (from March 2025) are:

- E Line: 13,620 average weekday boardings (+5%)
- Route 7: 10,932 average weekday boardings (+5%)
- D Line: 9,895 average weekday boardings (+6%)
- A Line: 9,054 average weekday boardings (+7%)
- Route 40: 8,867 average weekday boardings (+10%)

Metro notes that trip purposes for transit have shifted from prior to the pandemic, with work commute trips declining from 53% of trips in 2019 to 48% in 2022-2023; fun/recreation/social trips increasing from 16% of trips in 2019 to 48% in 2022-2023; and special event trips increasing from 2% of trips in 2019 to 31% in 2022-2023.

Today's briefing will provide an update on Metro's current service and ridership conditions, as well as its plans for continued service recovery.

INVITED

- Chris O'Claire, Director, Mobility Division, Metro Transit Department
- Katie Chalmers, Transit Service Development Manager, Metro Transit Department
- Nicole Aguirre, Transportation Planner, Metro Transit Department
- Cristina Gonzalez, Communications Specialist, Metro Transit Department

ATTACHMENTS

1. Metro presentation

Metro Ridership & Service Recovery

Regional Transit Committee
May 21, 2025



Agenda

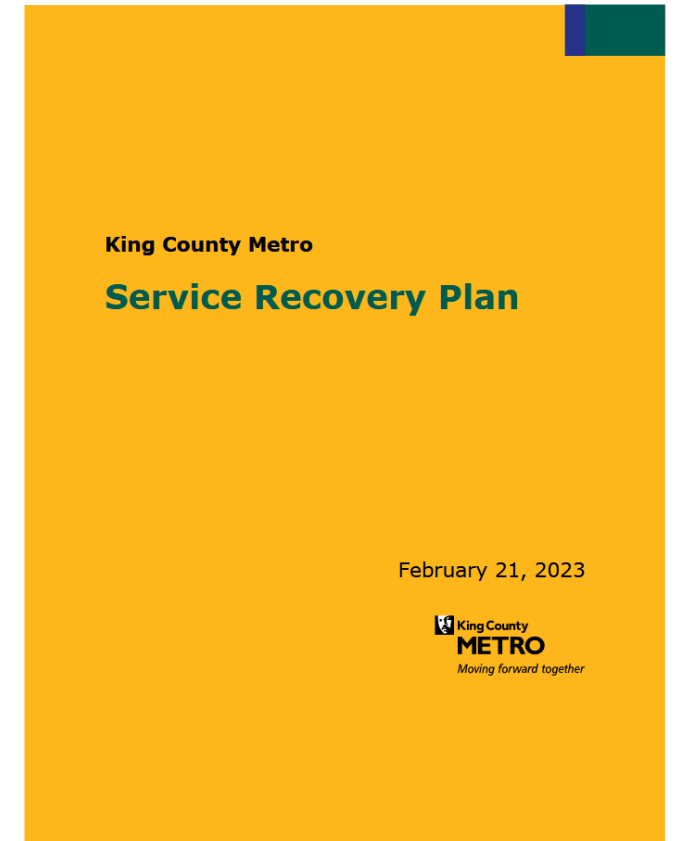
- Metro Service Recovery Plan
- Ridership Recovery Updates
- Mobility Project Status Updates
 - Lynnwood Link Connections
 - Madison Street/RapidRide G
 - East Link Connections
 - South Link Connections
 - Seattle / Vashon Service Recovery
 - Remaining Suspensions
- Next Steps
- Closing and questions



Metro Service Recovery Plan

Why Metro has a Service Recovery Plan

- Approval from King County Council to maintain service suspensions that exceeded Metro's administrative authority
- Formalizes Metro's approach to growing service and reinvestment of resources suspended during the pandemic emergency period.
- Uses updated Metro policies for service recovery, including the Metro Connects and Service Guidelines related to investments, reductions, restructures, partnerships and community engagement – guided and shaped by the Equity Cabinet.



How the Service Recovery Plan guides planning

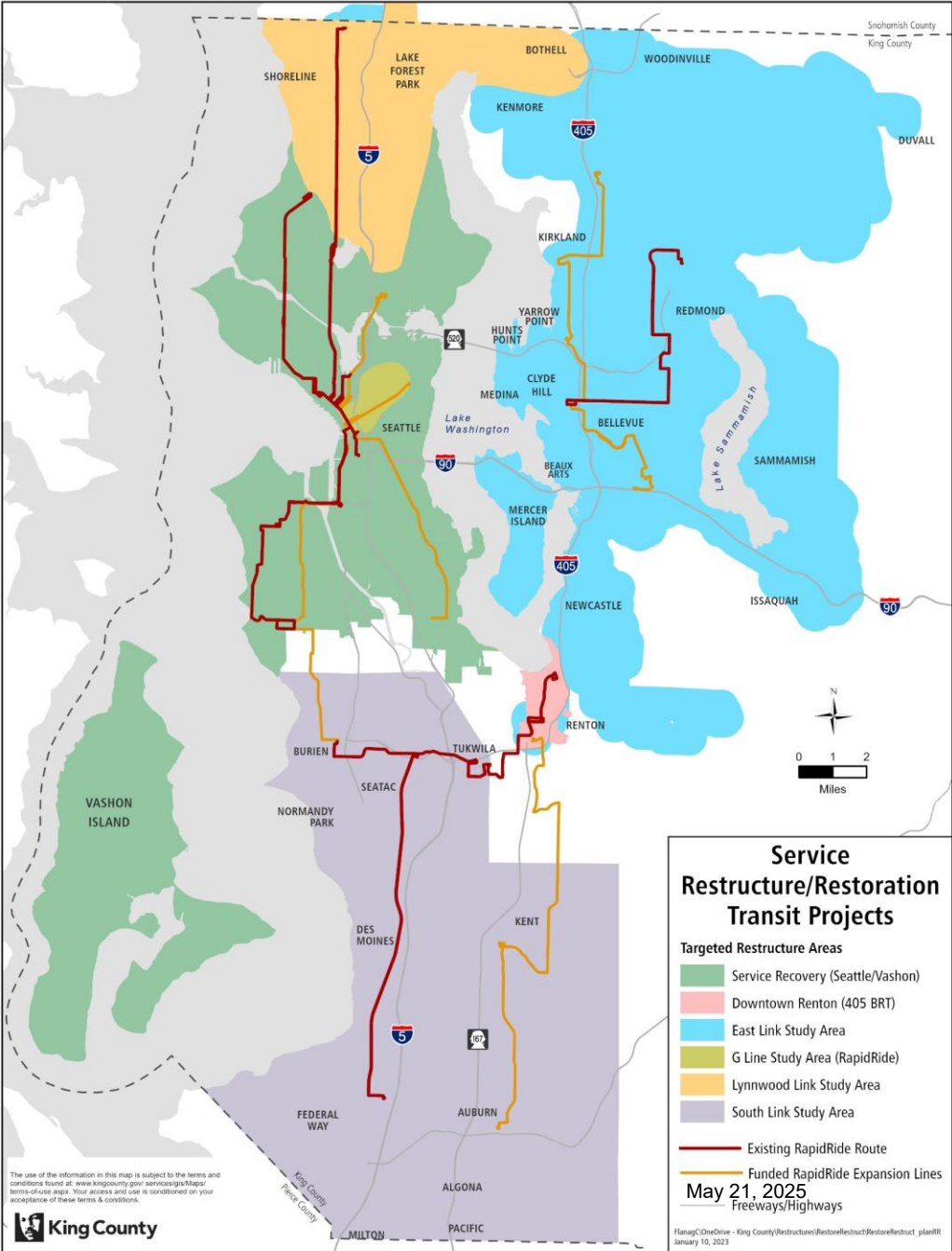
- **Service hours are being restored over time via phased projects**
 - Metro is using a of mobility projects (service restructures), that look at a range of mobility services
 - Each project includes planning and engagement, and proposals for King County Council action
 - Service proposals are based on current need, vs just restoring what was suspended
 - Selected changes could be implemented in advance of project implementation
- **Service hours stay in project areas from which they were suspended**
 - Project budgets include current, suspended and partner-funded service

Status of Mobility projects

- East Link
- Lynnwood Link
- South Link
- Seattle, Vashon Island
- Madison Street Area – Bus Service Change (G Line)
- Stride I-405 BRT Integration

King
County
Council

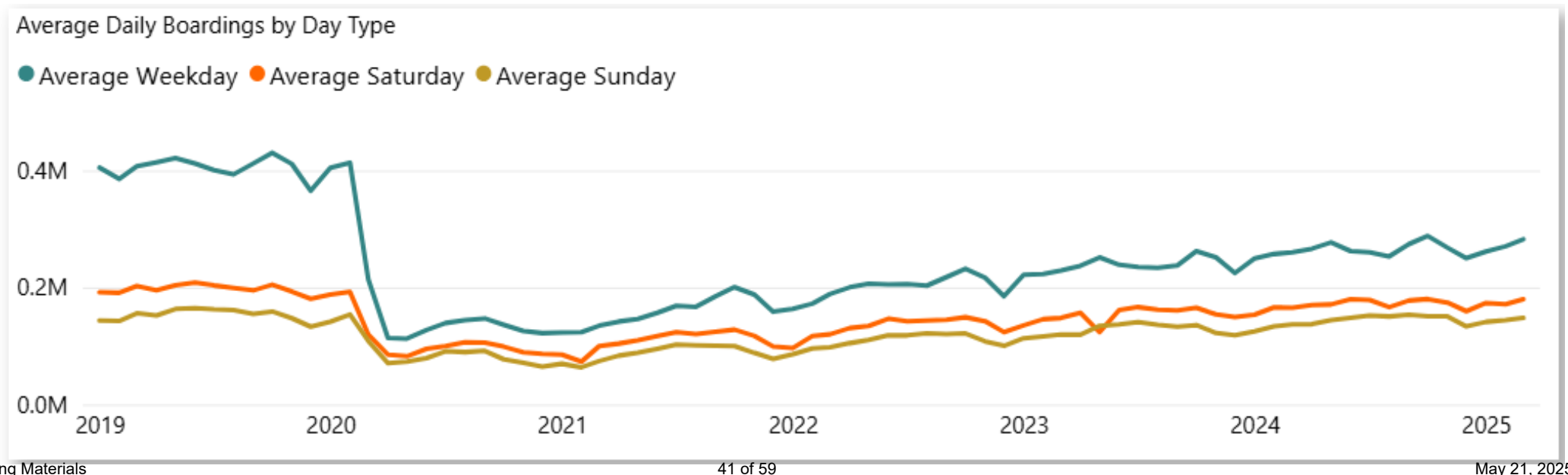
Partially
or fully
implemented



Ridership Recovery Updates

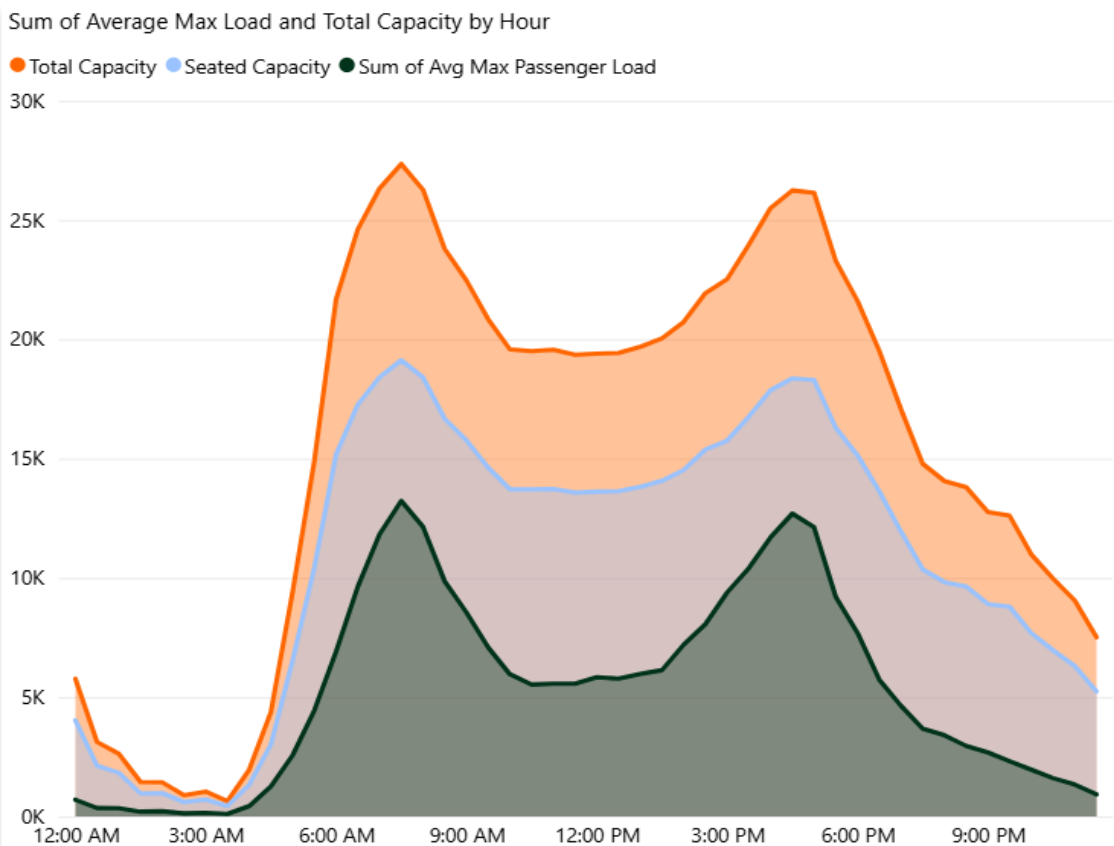
Ridership growth remains strong

- Average weekday boardings in March 2025 was 277,687; 8% increase over March 2024
- Ridership recovery:
 - Weekday – 69% of March 2019 level
 - Saturday – 89% of March 2019 level
 - Sunday – 95% of March 2019 level

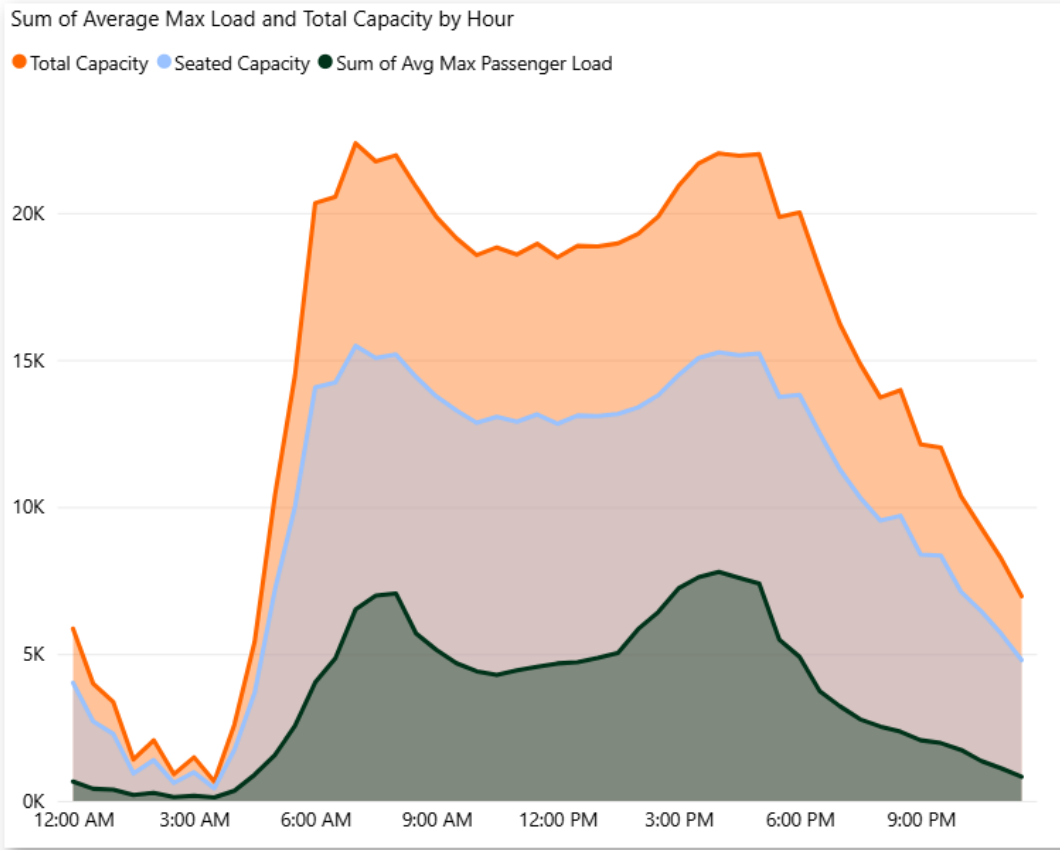


Ridership and service are now more spread throughout the day

Fall 2019



Fall 2024



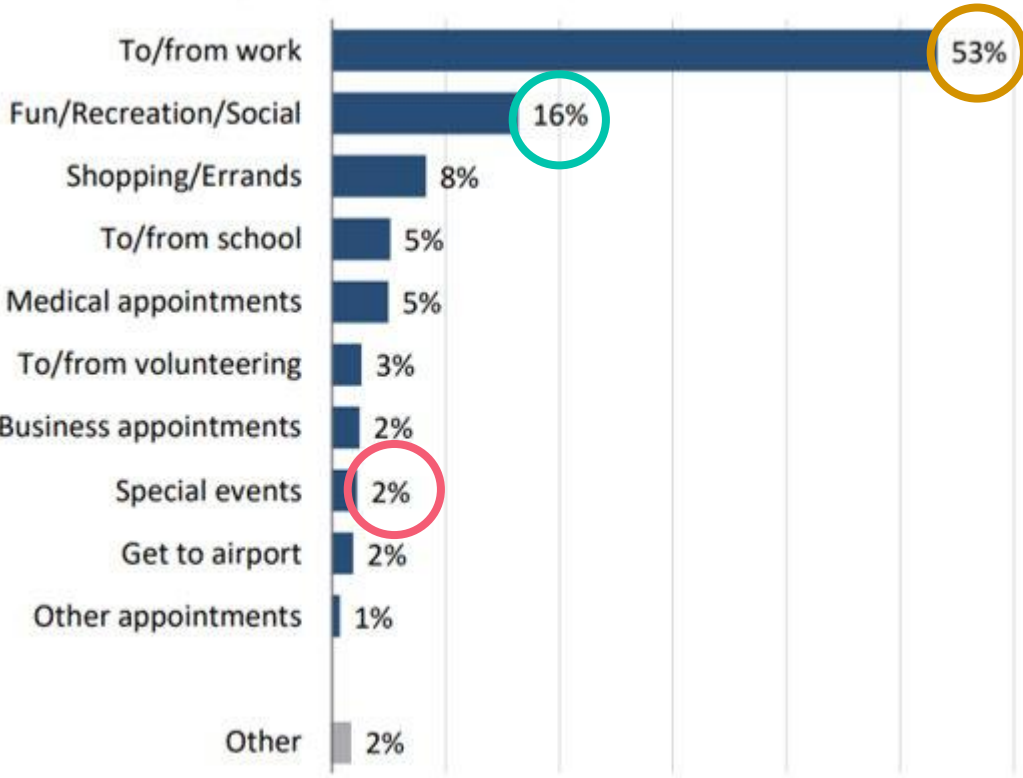
Most routes are gaining riders

- High ridership routes with high monthly growth (from February 2025):
 - Route 60 (+16%), Route 106 (+12%), RapidRide B Line (+9%), Route 28 (+15%)
- Top 5 routes by Weekday Boardings (March 2025)

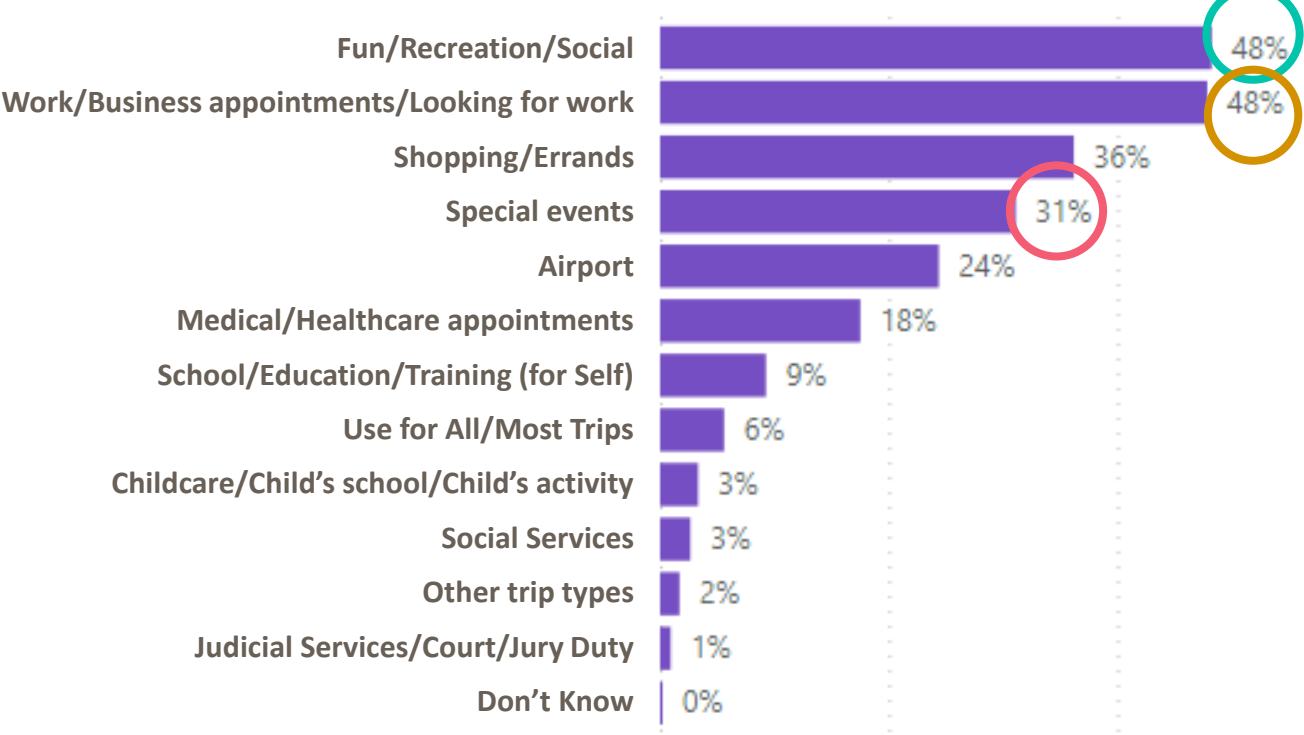
Route	Average Weekday Boardings	YoY % Change
E Line	13,620	5%
7	10,932	5%
D Line	9,895	6%
A Line	9,054	7%
40	8,867	10%

Trip Purposes have shifted

2019 RIDER NON-RIDER REPORT



2022/2023 RIDER NON-RIDER REPORT



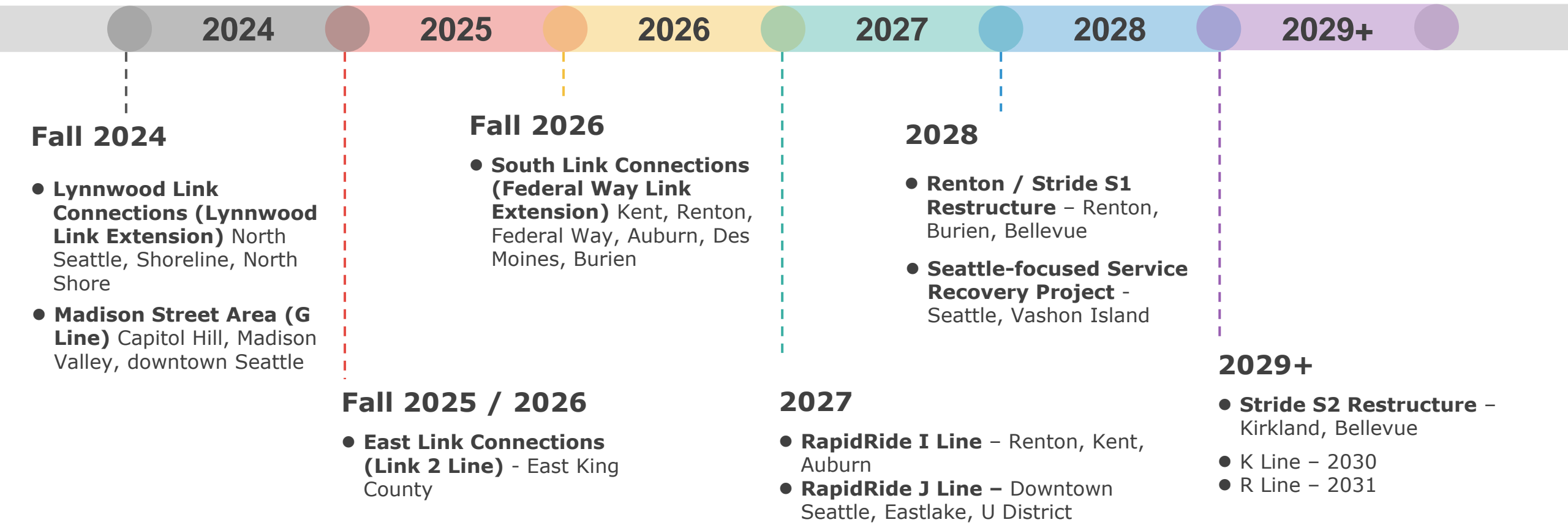
Mobility Project Updates

Multiple Influences on Ongoing Recovery

- Projects implemented in multiple phases to best match with workforce capacity and other network changes
- Workforce capacity
 - Bus operators
 - First-line supervisors
- Other network changes
 - Link light rail opening dates
 - Sound Transit Express bus change
 - WSDOT ferry schedules
 - Sound Transit Express bus

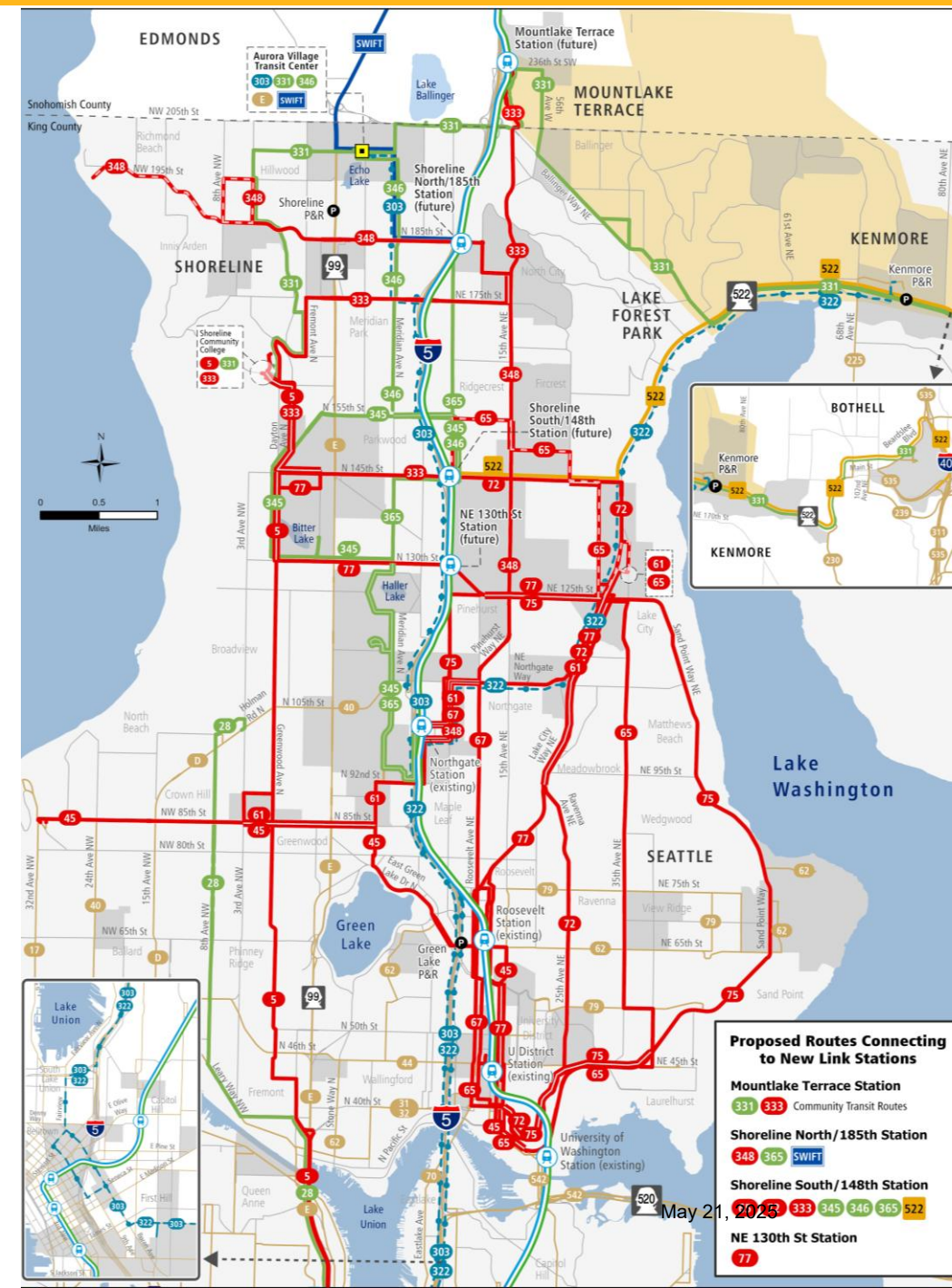


Major System Changes



Lynnwood Link Connections

- 27 Routes
- Multi-phase implementation starting 2024
- Phase 1 project highlights (Fall 2024)
 - Restored ~68K suspended service hours
 - Increased east-west connections
 - Improved night and weekend service
 - Provided more frequent service
 - Priority populations have more access to more places on transit



Lynnwood Link Connections: Preliminary Results & Next Steps

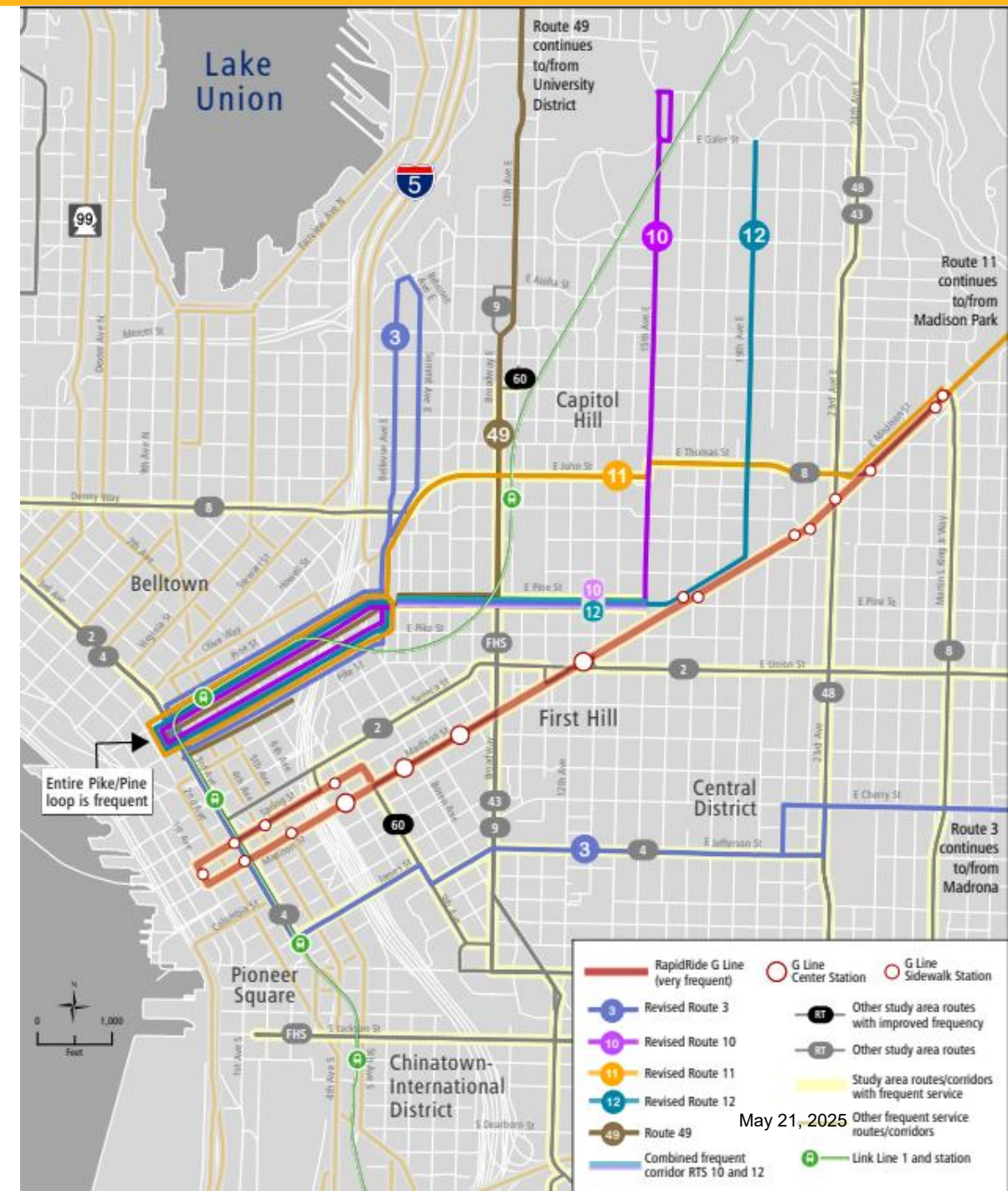
- Overall daily boardings increased
- Coming in later phases:
 - ~61K hours left to be restored
 - New route to connect to the Pinehurst Station once open (2026)
 - Changes to Sound Transit 522 Express service on SR522 and 145th St
- ~16K hours of STM investment tied to associated changes above

Overall Change in Daily Boardings between Fall 2023 and Fall 2024

	Absolute change	% increase
Weekday	2,311	6%
Saturday	2,310	9%
Sunday	2,449	12%

Madison Street/RapidRide G

- G Line and 9 routes
- Full implementation in Fall 2024
- Project highlights:
 - Opened RapidRide G line
 - Restored ~4K suspended service hours
 - Returned trolley bus service to Summit area
 - Based on community feedback, rebalanced service where demand and need is greatest



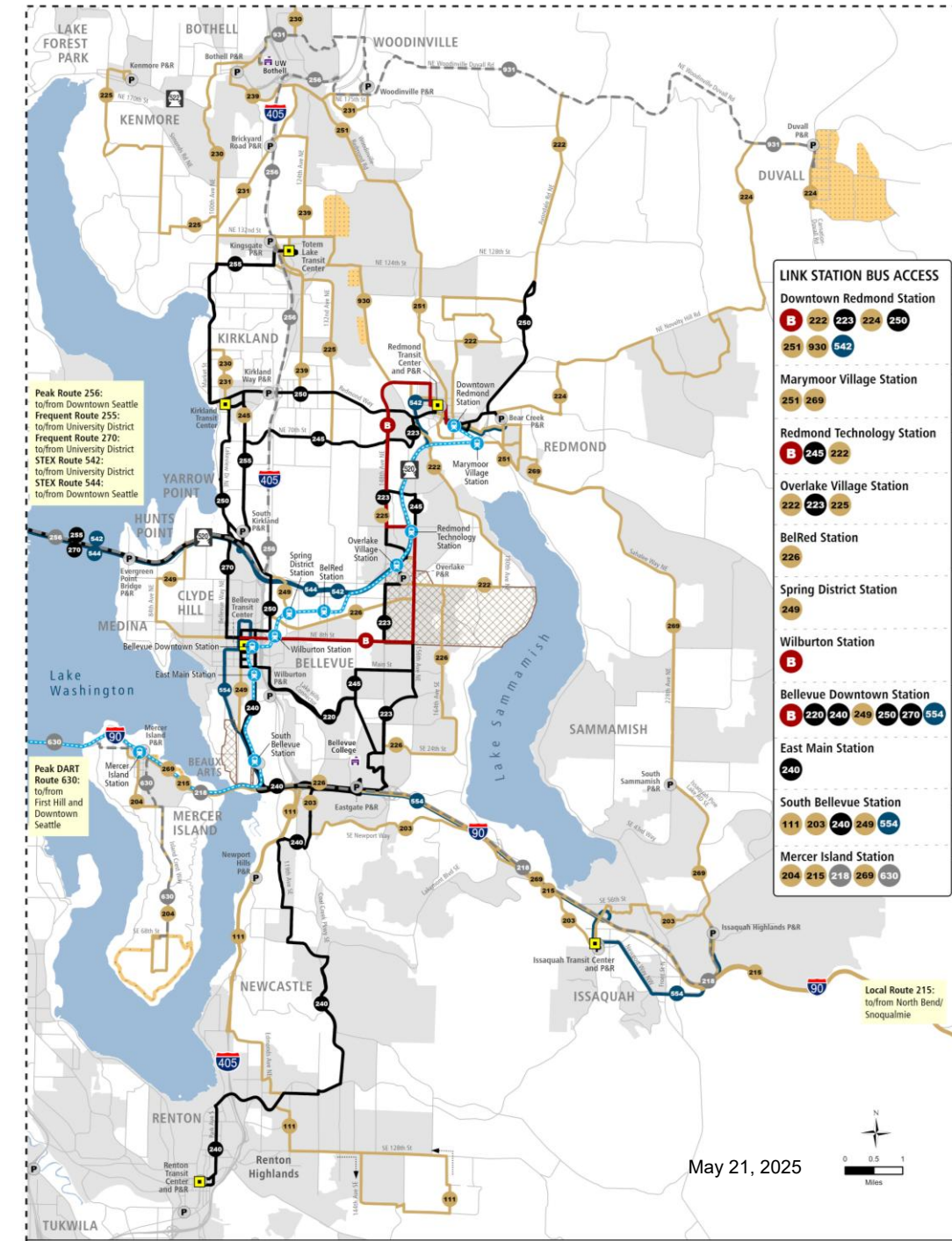
Madison Street/RapidRide G: Preliminary Results & Next Steps

- Overall daily boardings increased for Madison St Area routes and G Line for all days of the week.
- Changes as of Spring 2025:
 - Advanced Service Management implemented on G Line
 - Seattle funded trips to increase frequency from 40 minutes to 30 minutes for all days of the week from midnight to 4 a.m.

Overall Change in Daily Boardings between Fall 2023 and Fall 2024		
	Absolute change	% increase
Weekday	4,657	18%
Saturday	4,310	26%
Sunday	3,227	23%

East Link Connections

- 36 routes
- Phased implementation (2024-2026)
- Highlights of full proposal
 - Later night service and new weekend service
 - More frequent service
 - Faster regional connections for Bellevue, Redmond, Issaquah, and Renton
 - 14% increase in access to frequent transit for priority populations
 - Greater reliability, new connections between cities and to Link



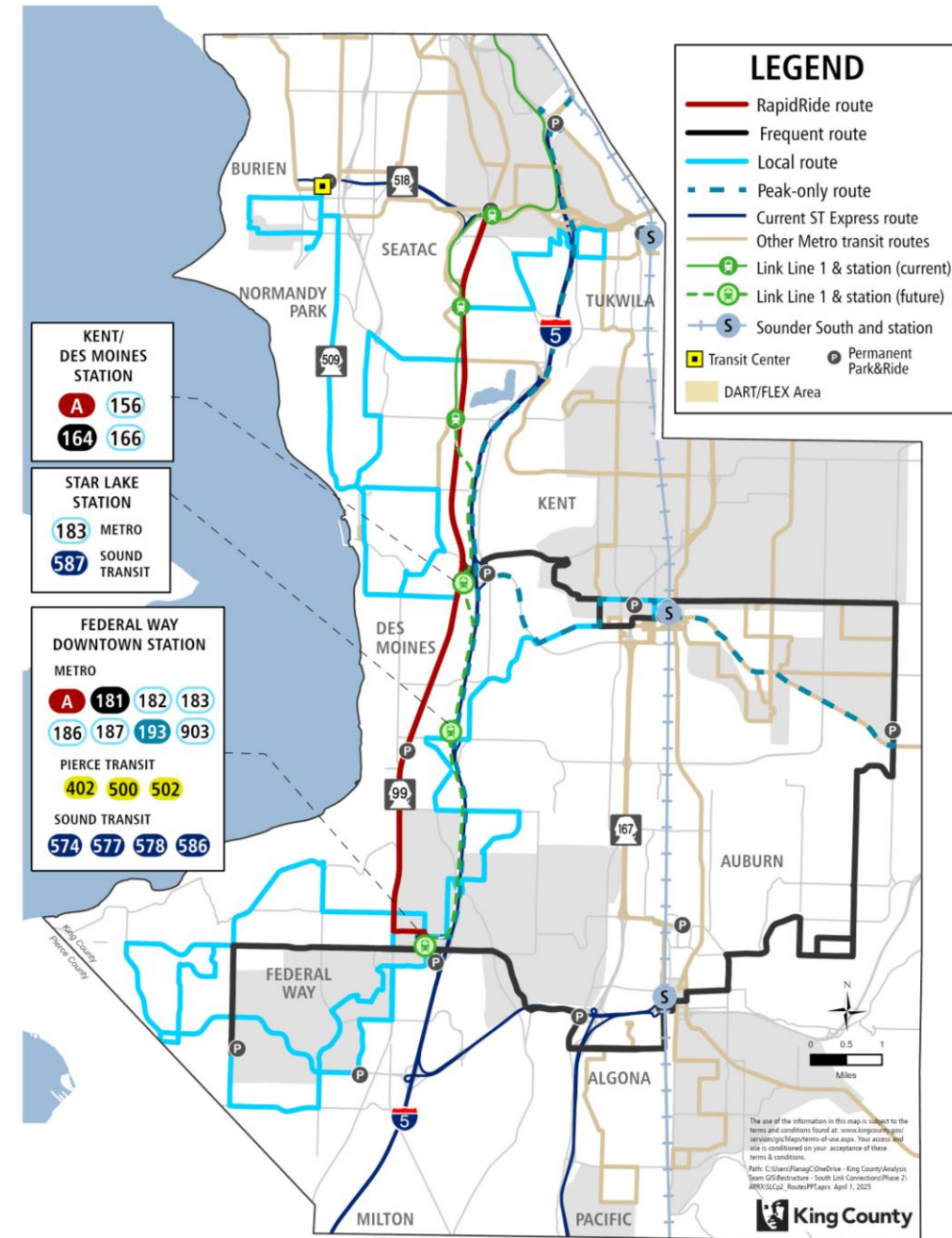
East Link Connections: Next steps

- May 2025 - Connected to Redmond Stations
- Fall 2025 - Invest approximately 65,000 service hours toward changes not reliant on Link 2 Line crossing I-90
- 2026 - Implement remaining network with a total project restoration of approximately 160,000 service hours
- Routes 230, 231, 255 will also see restorations



South Link Connections

- 22 routes
- Currently in public engagement
- In development, would Highlights of proposed Phase 2 Network:
 - Restores ~76K suspended service hours.
 - Improve local service using resources from removing low-performing and repetitive peak-only service.
 - Revise existing service to serve new Link light rail stations
 - Replace confusing and inefficient one-way routes with two-way transit service
 - Improve frequencies and spans on multiple project area routes.
 - Create new flexible service pilots in Auburn and Federal Way



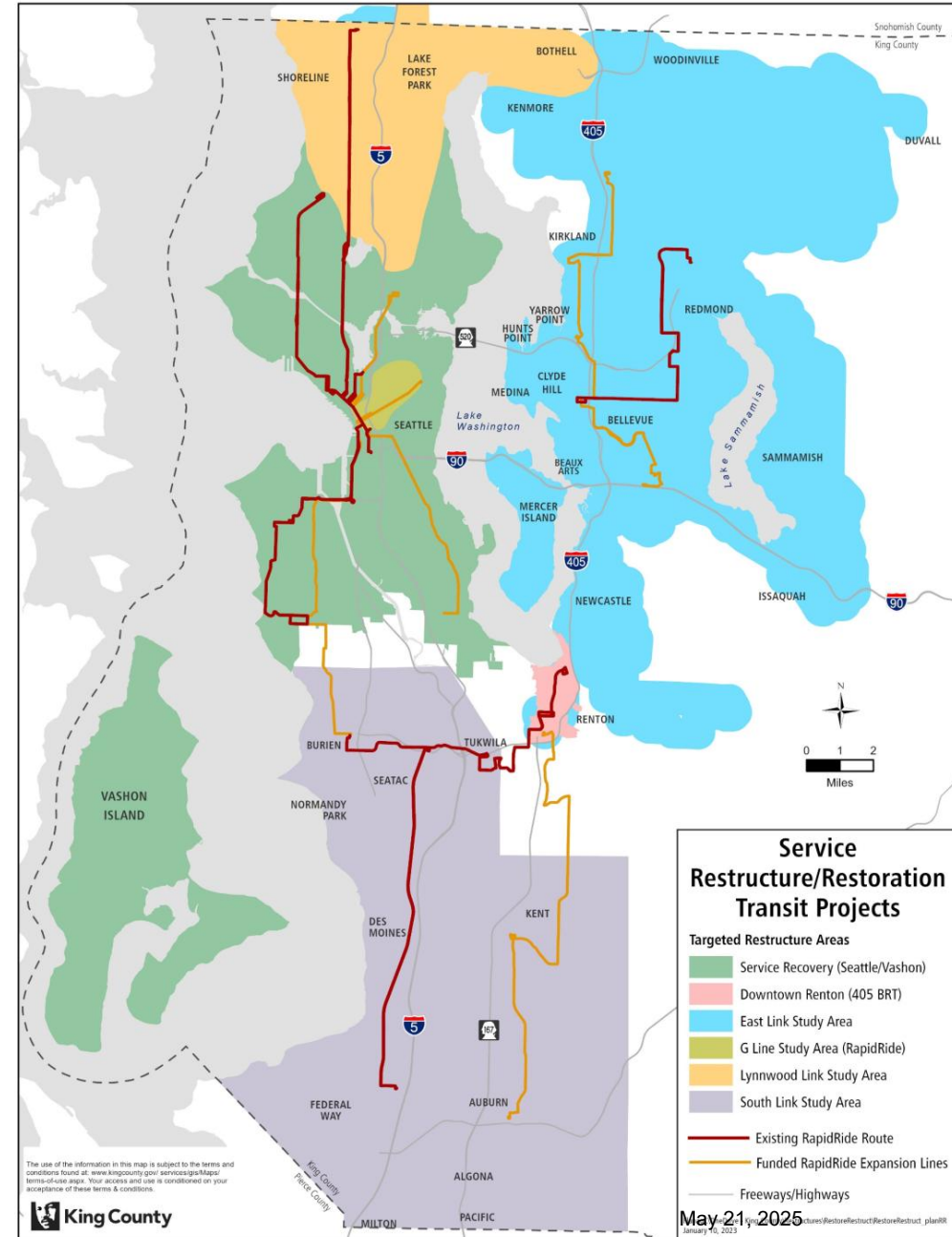
South Link Connections: Next steps

- Summer 2025 – Phase 3 Engagement
- Spring 2026 – Ordinance to King County Council
- Fall 2026 – Begin implementation



Seattle/Vashon Service Recovery

- Project to focus on reinvesting suspended resources to respond to new and emerging mobility needs
- Partnership with SDOT for changes within Seattle, including for both service (STM) and capital needs
- Timing of project still in development



Resolving Remaining Suspensions

- Opening of Stride S1 and S2 will include some changes to Metro bus service
- Changes will address remaining suspensions on Routes 101, 102, 143



Growing with Metro

- Transit services in King County are rapidly growing and changing
- Metro and County goals continue to point to need for more service
- Community and jurisdiction engagement and support are critical to success
- Metro will continue to review ridership and engage with customer and community feedback to improve the system



Closing and Questions