



Whatcom Transportation Authority

August 7, 2024 CTAG Meeting



WTA Rapid Transit Study



What is Rapid Transit or “BRT”?

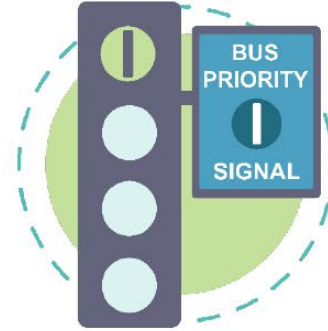
- High-frequency bus service that provides a fast, reliable and convenient transit experience
- “Rail on Wheels”
- Innovative and unique to each community and context
- Significant infrastructure improvements to improve speed and reliability



Typical Rapid Transit Elements



Advance fare collection



Transit spot improvements



Enhanced stations



Custom buses



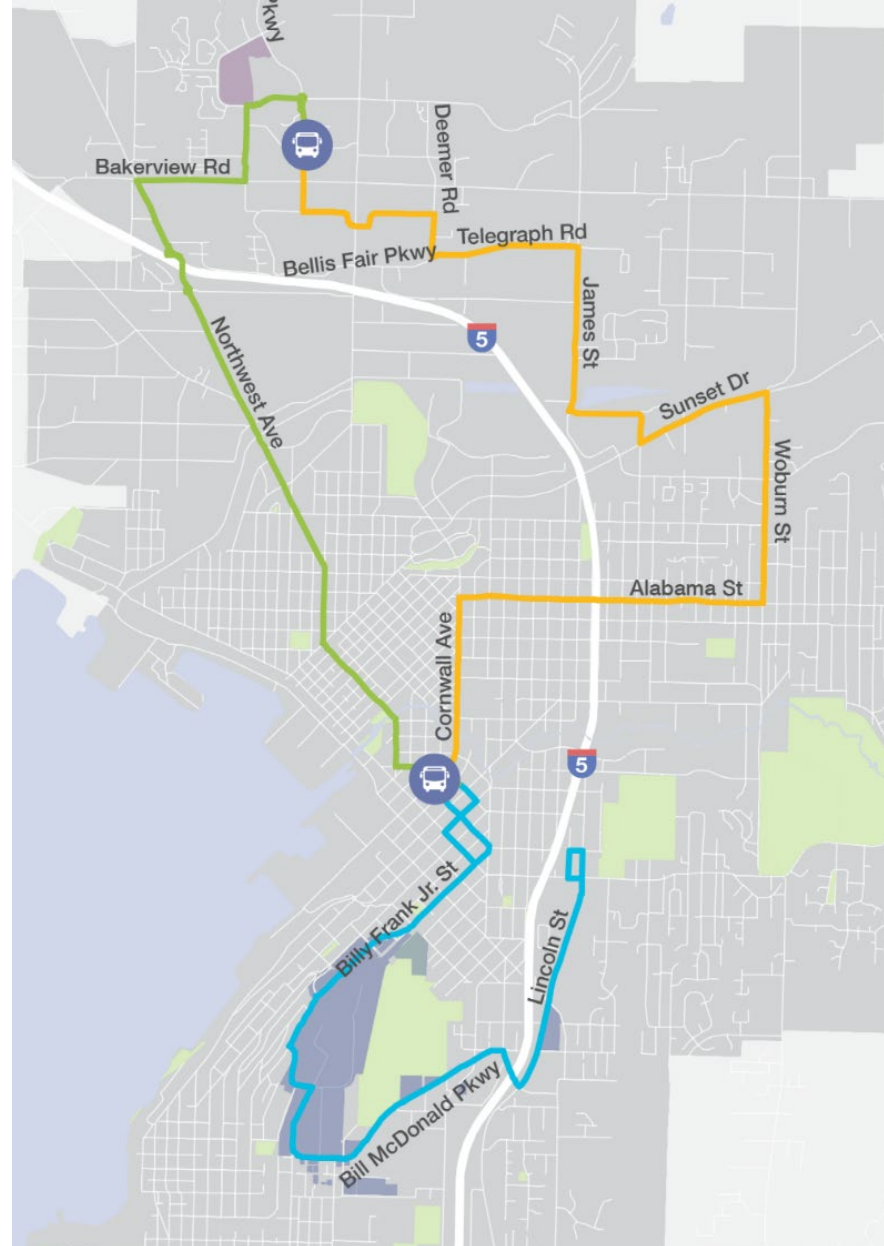
Dedicated lanes



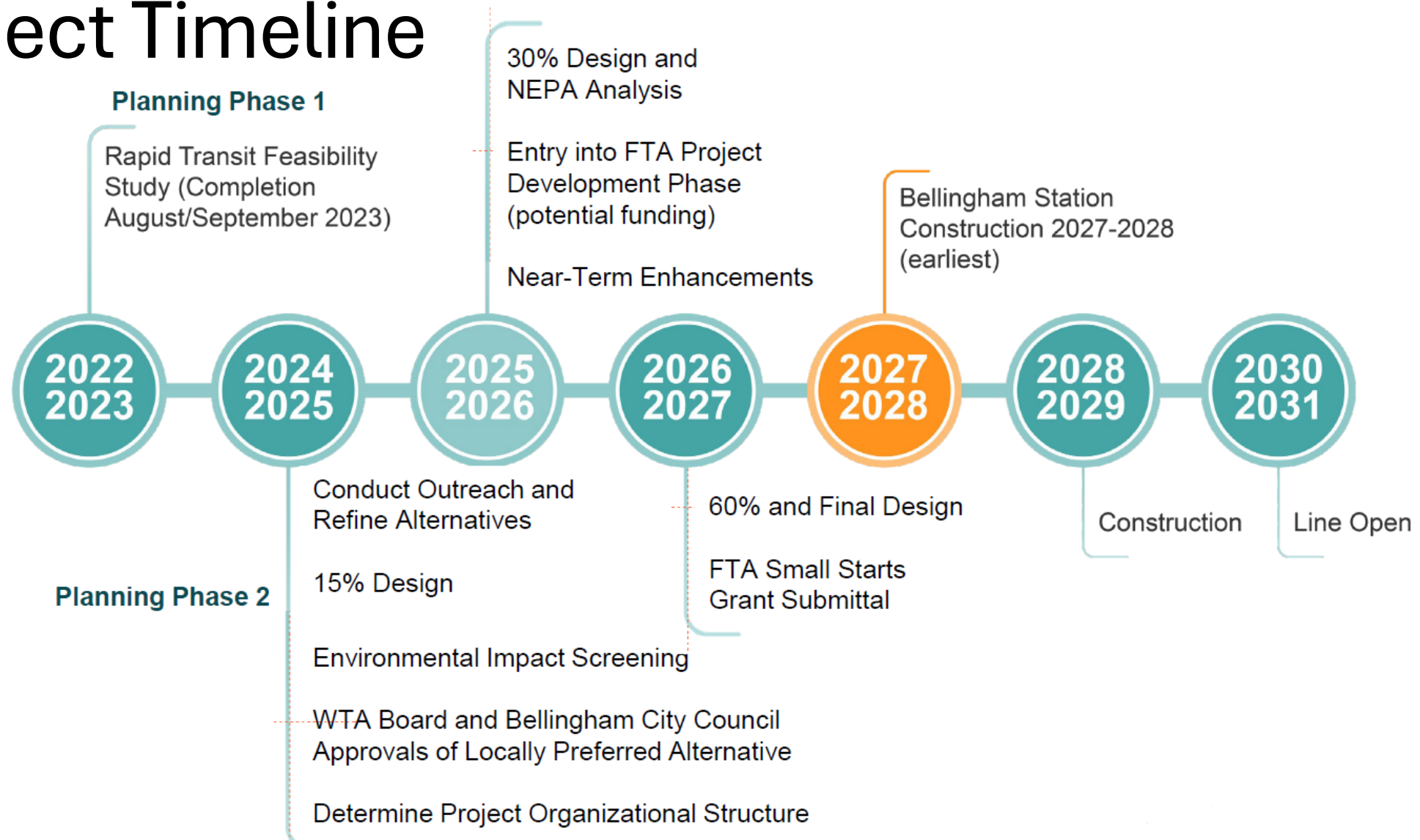
Unique branding

WTA Rapid Transit Study Alternatives

- Green/Blue corridor:
 - Limited ROW
 - More direct alignment
 - Major constraint is thru WWU
- Gold corridor:
 - Limited ROW
 - Transit supportive development opportunities
 - Will need substantial street improvements



Project Timeline

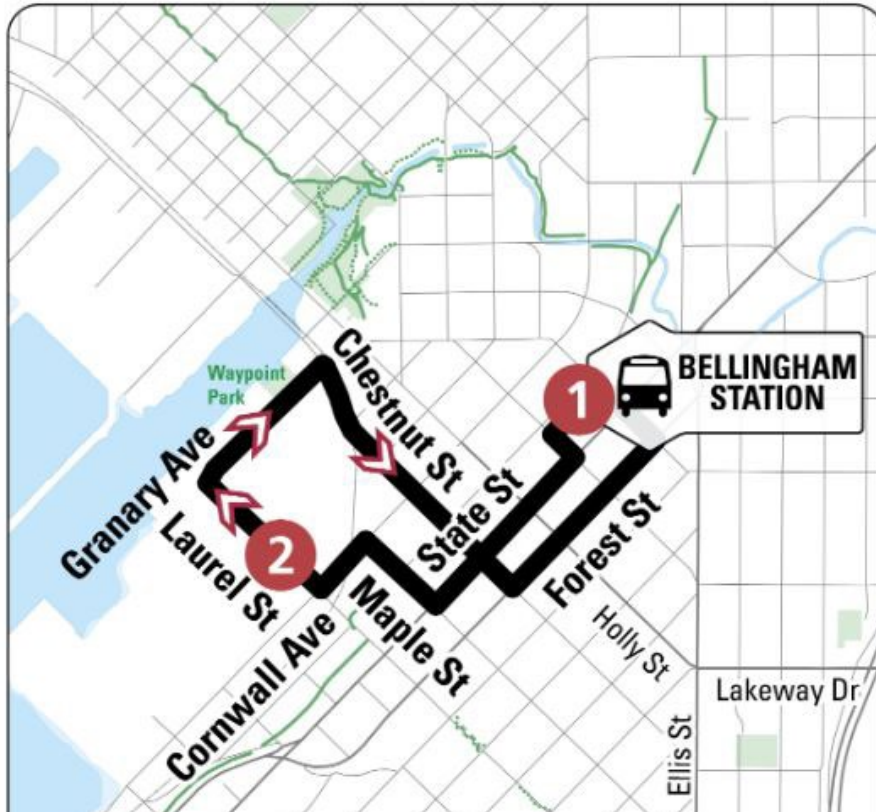


CTAG Opportunities to Participate

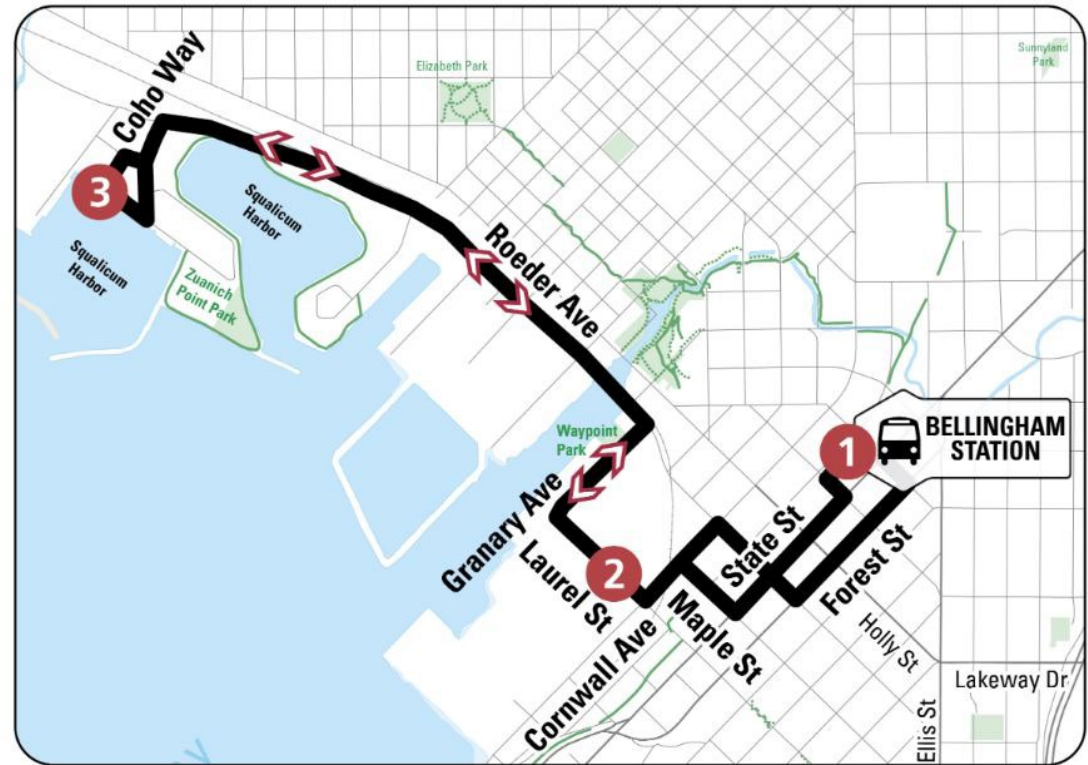
- Phase II of the Rapid Transit Study includes Stakeholder input and interviews prior to selecting a Locally Preferred Alternative
- WTA Staff and consultants will provide more detailed information and discussion questions during the next CTAG meeting
- More information about Phase I and Phase II of the study can be found at www.engage.ridewta.com/rapid-transit-study

September 2024 Service Changes

46 GRANARY

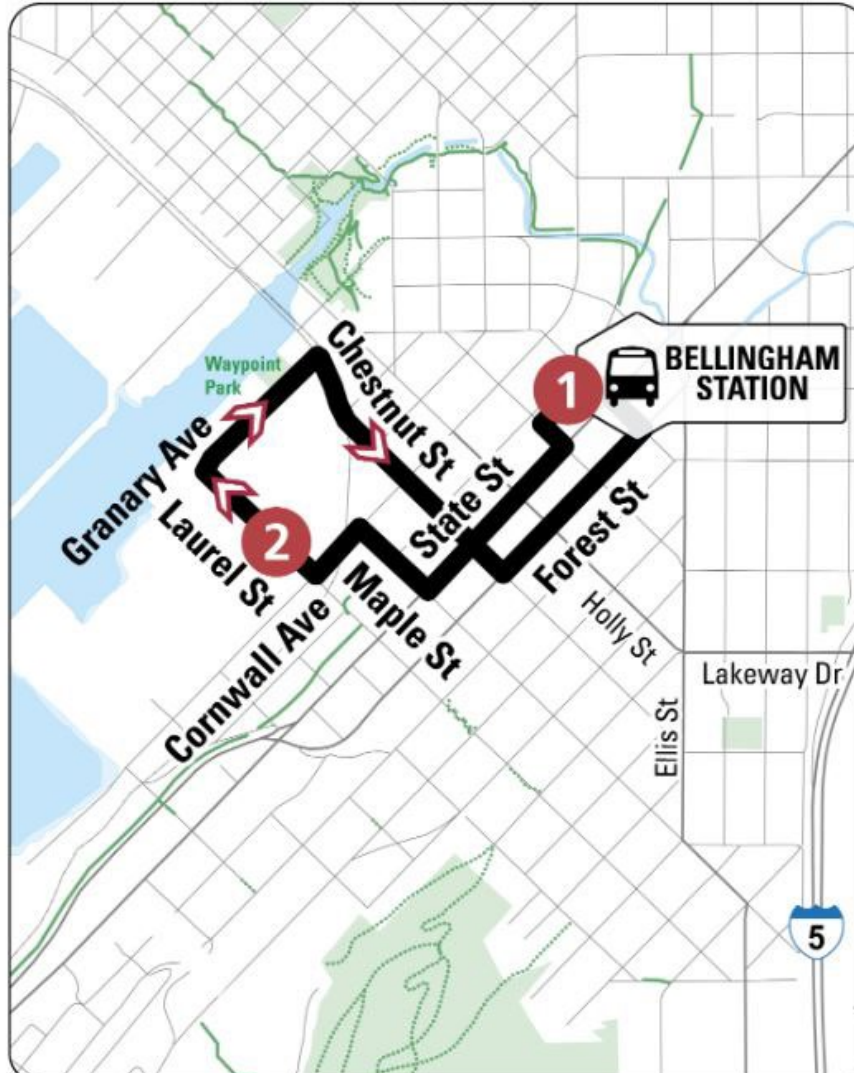


47 HARBOR DOWNTOWN



46 GRANARY

- WTA is proposing interim service to the Downtown Waterfront and Squalicum Harbor areas
- Route 46 proposes hourly service from BTS to Millworks



46 Granary

WEEKDAYS

LEAVE B'ham Station ①	Millworks ②	ARRIVE B'ham Station ①	Bus Continues as Route
7:00	7:06	7:16	47 Harbor
8:00	8:06	8:16	47 Harbor
9:00	9:06	9:16	47 Harbor
3:00	3:06	3:16	47 Harbor
4:00	4:06	4:16	47 Harbor
5:00	5:06	5:16	47 Harbor

46 Granary

SATURDAYS

LEAVE B'ham Station ①	Millworks ②	ARRIVE B'ham Station ①	Bus Continues as Route
8:00	8:06	8:16	47 Harbor
9:00	9:06	9:16	47 Harbor
10:00	10:06	10:16	Out of Service
3:00	3:06	3:16	47 Harbor
4:00	4:06	4:16	47 Harbor
5:00	5:06	5:16	47 Harbor

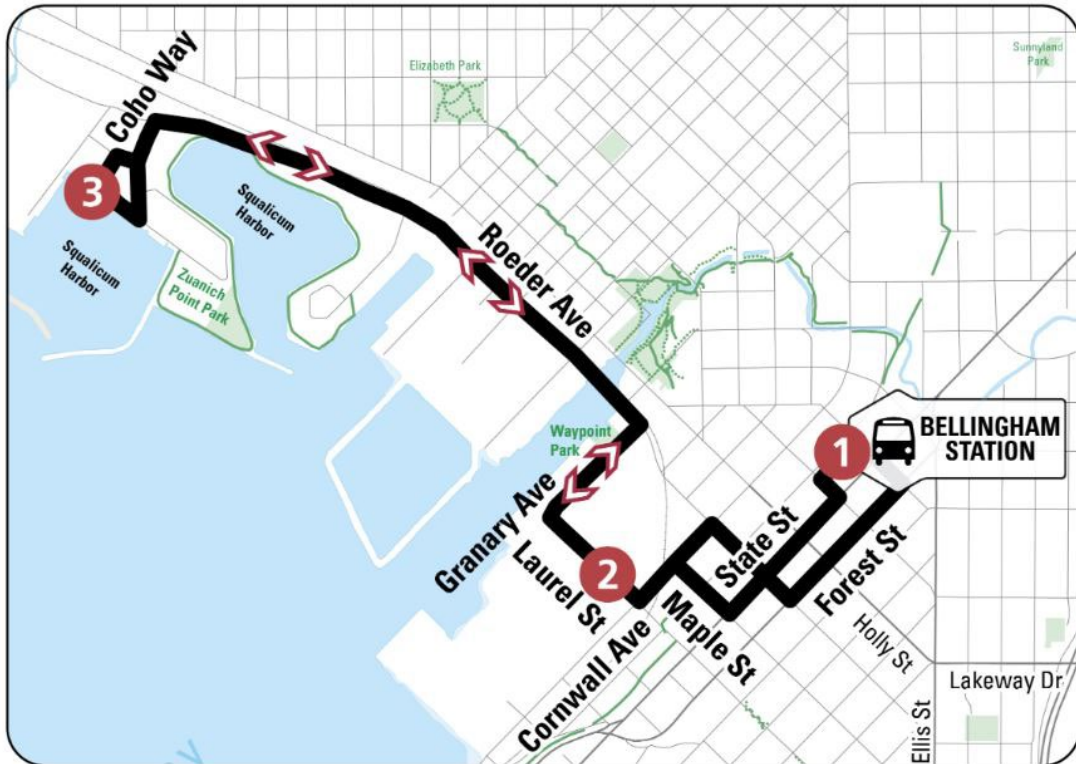
46 Granary

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- Proposed Route 47 would provide service from BTS to Squalicum Harbor through the Downtown Waterfront

47 HARBOR DOWNTOWN



WEEKDAYS	47 Harbor			47 Downtown			Bus Continues as Route
	LEAVE B'ham Station 1	Millworks 2	Squalicum Harbor 3	Squalicum Harbor 3	Millworks 2	ARRIVE B'ham Station 1	
7:25	7:31	7:38	7:38	7:48	7:58	46 Granary	
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Public Hearing Information

- A Public Hearing will be held by the Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) Board of Directors during their meeting at **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 15**, 2024 at WTA, 4011 Bakerview Spur, Bellingham, WA.
- For more information please visit www.engage.ridewta.com/waterfront



2025 BUDGET AT A GLANCE

WTA | CONNECTING
PEOPLE TO
OPPORTUNITY



Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) provides public transportation services throughout Whatcom County. Services include fixed routes, paratransit, zone service and a rideshare program. WTA provides more than 3.7 million rides per year on fixed route buses, and more than 170,000 paratransit trips per year.

To learn more, visit engage.ridewta.com

WTA BOARD MEMBERS



Chair Ali Hawkinson
Ferndale City Councilmember



Vice-Chair Jennifer Lautenbach
Everson City Councilmember



Dan Darwin
Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 843



Todd Donovan
Whatcom County Councilmember



Scott Korthuis
Mayor of Lynden



Michael Lilliquist
Bellingham City Councilmember



Kim Lund
Mayor of Bellingham



Satpal Sidhu
Whatcom County Executive



Mary Lou Steward
Mayor of Blaine



Skip Williams
Bellingham City Councilmember



Les Reardanz
General Manager

WTA's budget is a strategic implementation tool. It demonstrates how we align our resources with our mission and priorities while maintaining financial sustainability. Our budget reveals how we deliver value to our riders and community through the transportation services we provide.

Intended Outcomes

- Better access to education, jobs, medical care, shopping, services, and recreation for all
- Lower greenhouse gas emissions
- Alleviated congestion as population grows
- Support for economic growth and opportunity
- Increased affordable housing and neighborhoods accessible by walking, biking, and transit
- More places where people can live independently, including seniors and people with disabilities

Strategic Priorities

- Safe, reliable, efficient, and friendly service
- Community and stakeholder outreach
- Environmental sustainability
- Developing our employees
- Strong community partnerships
- Maintaining vehicles and facilities in a state of good repair
- Positioning for our future

A photograph of a middle-aged man with a goatee, smiling warmly. He is wearing a maroon long-sleeved shirt under a dark grey jacket. He is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking out a window. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with greenery and a building.

***At WTA, our mission is to
enhance our community by:***

**Delivering safe, reliable,
efficient, and friendly service**

**Offering environmentally
sound transportation choices**

**Providing leadership in
creating innovative
transportation solutions**

**Partnering with our
community to improve
transportation systems**

WTA

**CONNECTING
PEOPLE TO
OPPORTUNITY**

326 FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES IN 2025



Operation support

This workgroup includes dispatchers, operations supervisors, terminal expeditors, and transit safety officers.

Customer service

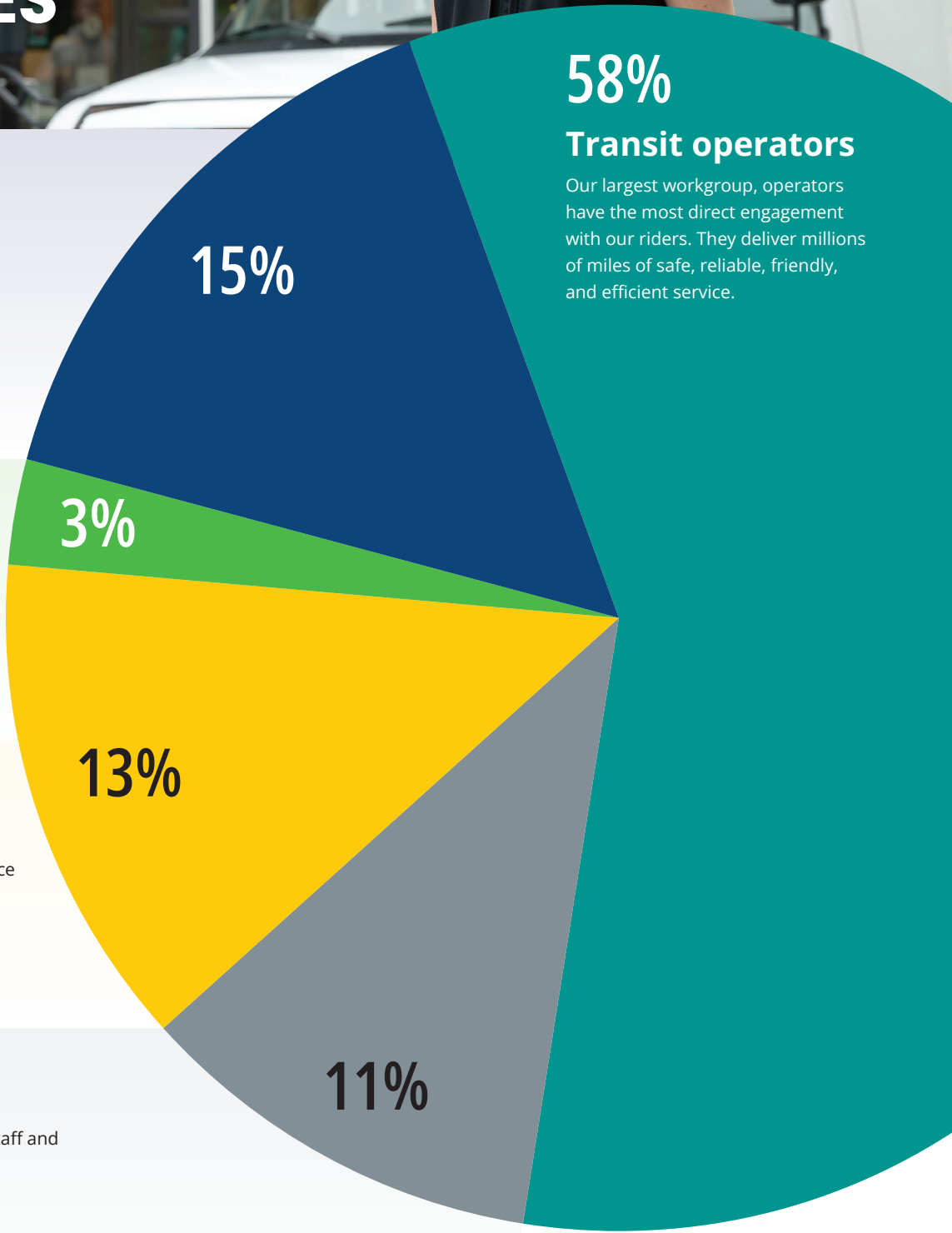
Ten friendly customer service representatives help people plan trips on fixed route, book their rides on paratransit, sell passes, and answer questions.

Maintenance

Our fleet technicians, facilities workers, warehouse team, and route maintenance staff keep our fleet and facilities safe, clean, and in a state of good repair.

Administration

This workgroup includes professional staff and agency leadership.



58%

Transit operators

Our largest workgroup, operators have the most direct engagement with our riders. They deliver millions of miles of safe, reliable, friendly, and efficient service.

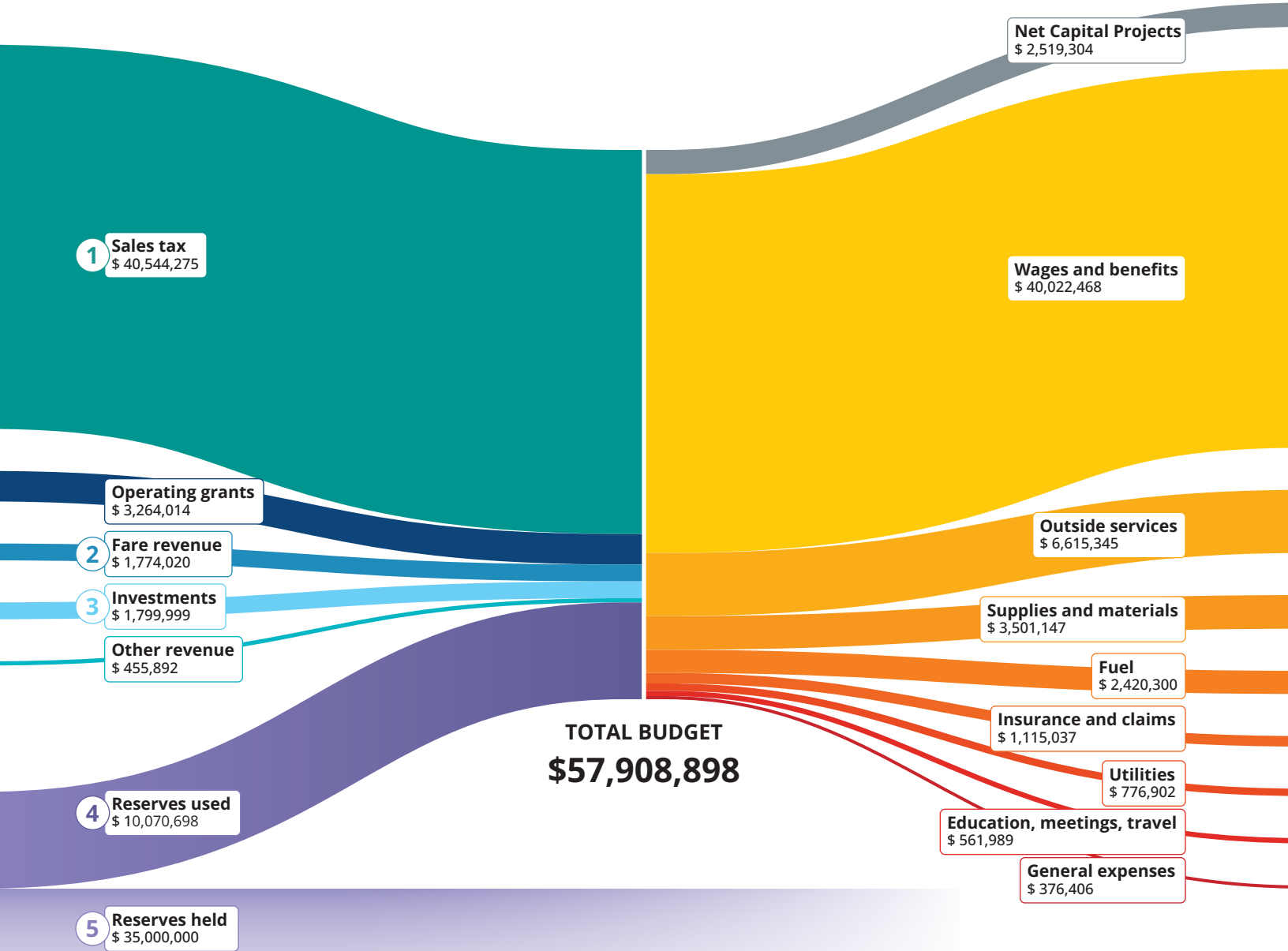
15%

3%

13%

11%

REVENUES AND EXPENSES



- 1 **SALES TAX REVENUES** are expected to remain flat in 2025.
- 2 **FARE REVENUES** are expected to remain flat in 2025.
- 3 **INVESTMENT INCOME** is expected to decrease due to declining cash balances and lower interest rates.
- 4 **\$10 MILLION FROM CASH RESERVES** will be used to fund capital projects and additional service. This is responsive to our board's direction to spend down reserves while enhancing service to our community.
- 5 **APPROXIMATELY \$35 MILLION IN RESERVES** will be carried into 2026 despite the net loss for 2025. This will support continued operations and maintain a foundation for future strategic investment.

2025 MAJOR PROJECTS



INTRODUCE NEW SERVICE to Lummi Nation, Bellingham Technical College, St. Joseph Hospital, the Waterfront District, and Old Town, plus new service to King Mountain. In these latter three destinations, significant multi-family development is underway. Our 2025 service expansion provides a one-time opportunity to offer service before residents establish transportation behaviors.



PLAN FOR RAPID TRANSIT and identify the most efficient methods for moving people as population and congestion grow.



INSTALL PASSENGER COUNTERS and use boarding and deboarding data to inform future service planning.



HELP PARTNER JURISDICTIONS advance multimodal projects through an innovative technical assistance grant program.



CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY of our riders and community.



REPLACE HR INFORMATION SYSTEM and complete a classification and compensation study.



DEVELOP A FINANCIAL MODEL to ensure financial sustainability and inform our decision-making.



IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY at multiple bus stops.



2025 AND BEYOND

Long-term improvements to the transportation network



TRANSIT ACCESS FUND

The Transit Access Fund improves the transportation network by helping to fund multi-modal projects near bus stops. On the heels of successful 2024 projects with Lummi Nation and City of Nooksack, in 2025 the fund will allow the City of Lynden to include pedestrian, bicycle, and bus stop improvements to an existing road reconstruction project.

LYNDEN STATION

WTA's non-profit partner, Catholic Community Services (CCS), will advance the development of our Lynden Station Park and Ride into a transit-friendly affordable housing community. By leasing this land to CCS (through a long-term, low-cost lease) this project significantly increases the convenience of transit while turning an underutilized public property into homes people can afford.



DECARBONIZING THROUGH FLEET AND FUELS

In addition to the four electric buses already in service, eight new electric buses and 11 hybrid-electric buses will enter service in 2025. We'll also begin using renewable fuel to power our hybrid-electric and diesel fleet.




BELLINGHAM STATION


In addition to adding needed capacity to our bus gates, and including infrastructure for zero-emission vehicles, WTA will explore the potential of Transit Oriented Development at Bellingham Station. This could include housing, improvements to multimodal facilities, and other community services.

DECARBONIZING THROUGH CARBON OFFSETS

As WTA works to lower its own emissions, and to help lower emissions throughout our community, we are offsetting carbon emissions by purchasing forest land to be held in trust by Whatcom Land Trust.

WTA

 4011 Bakerview Spur
Bellingham, WA 98225

 (360) 676 7433

 ridewta.com

 facebook.com/ridewta

 instagram.com/ridewta

 linkedin.com/company/ridewta

We welcome your questions and your input. To engage with WTA, please visit
engage.ridewta.com

All WTA board meetings are open to the public. You are welcome to attend in person or via Zoom. For the board meeting schedule and agendas, visit
ridewta.com/board-meetings