



# 2019 Strategic Plan

Board Approved October 18, 2018

## INTRODUCTION

The 2019 strategic plan is the road map for the third year of wise investments in expanded service, along with the infrastructure and amenities to support them, consistent with the commitments in the *STA Moving Forward* plan and voter approval of its funding. Our efforts are focused on making transit a convenient, easy to use and affordable transportation option for travelers, which will support economic growth and address growing traffic challenges.

## 2019 GOAL & STRATEGY OVERVIEW

**Goal:** Increase Ridership

### Strategies

1. Add more and better bus service
2. Design and deliver core infrastructure
3. Advance and implement High Performance Transit (HPT)
4. Improve outreach and communication

## PLAN BASIS

The 2019 Strategic Plan provides a focused view of the specific activities Spokane Transit will take in the coming year. The strategy elements represent the agency's highest priorities, and are guided by its vision and mission statements, as well as publicly vetted and Board-approved plans including: STA's comprehensive plan, *Connect Spokane*, the six-year *Transportation Development Plan* (TDP), and the 10-year implementation plan, *STA Moving Forward*.

## PLAN CONTEXT

While this plan focuses specifically on the priority strategies for 2019, it is important to acknowledge they are enabled by the foundational work performed by STA and our partners in the region to address transportation challenges, as well as population and employment growth estimates.

## VISION

Spokane Transit aspires to be a source of pride for the region.

## MISSION

We are dedicated to providing safe, accessible, convenient, and efficient public transportation services to the Spokane region's neighborhoods, business and activity centers.

We are leaders in transportation and a valued partner in the community's social fabric, economic infrastructure and quality of life.

## PLAN FUNDING

Operating and capital funding for new investments, as well as maintaining the already robust regional system, is provided by three major sources: fares paid by passengers, federal and state grant support, and local, voter-approved sales tax. A rate increase approved by voters of 0.1% will occur on April 1, 2019, bringing the dedicated sales tax rate for transit to 0.8%.

## NATIONAL & REGIONAL CHALLENGES

As noted above, the strategies in the 2019 plan originate from a variety of documents approved by STA’s Board of Directors, composed of elected officials appointed by their jurisdictions in the Public Transportation Benefit Area. Those plans provide conceptual and specific solutions that aim to address challenges at the local and national levels:

- ☞ Traffic congestion and shifting employment centers create challenges for transit usage throughout the country.
- ☞ Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft provide a transportation alternative, but add to traffic challenges and are not affordable to many low-income travelers.
- ☞ Significant growth in Spokane County has and will continue to strain the region’s transportation infrastructure.
- ☞ Congestion mitigation efforts must include a multi-modal approach to maximize transportation investments.

## GOAL & STRATEGIES

### Goal: Increased Ridership

- ☞ **Fixed-Route Bus** – STA’s goal is to increase fixed-route bus ridership by 2% above 2018 levels. While significant new and improved services were added in 2017 and 2018, it can take 18 to 36 months for higher ridership to develop.
- ☞ **Paratransit** – STA projects a 1.5% increase in Paratransit ridership over 2018. Mobility Training efforts will continue to encourage and enable fixed-route bus ridership, reserving Paratransit service for those whose disabilities prevent them from regular bus service.
- ☞ **Vanpool** – In light of worksite challenges and economic variables like gas prices, STA’s modest goal is to increase Vanpool ridership by 1%.

## PRIORITIES

Ensure Safety

Earn and Retain  
the Community’s Trust

Provide Outstanding  
Customer Service

Enable  
Organizational Success

Exemplify  
Financial Stewardship

### Strategy 1: Add More and Better Bus Service

- ☞ **Additional West Plains Service** – Ahead of the *STA Moving Forward* project schedule, STA will introduce a new route with service between the West Plains Transit Center and Airway Heights via the Spokane International Airport, ensuring service to the new Amazon Fulfillment Center and other job centers.
- ☞ **South Commuter Express** – To better serve commuters in south Spokane, STA will introduce a new, limited-stop express route with service between the to-be-built Moran Station Park & Ride (near 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Palouse Highway) and downtown Spokane.
- ☞ **Other Service Improvements** – New HPT service and capital projects will enable other improvements throughout the transit network. These improvements are outlined in the September 2019 Service Revisions Preliminary Proposal.

### Strategy 2: Design and Deliver Core Infrastructure

- ☞ **Boone Northwest Garage** – Necessary for additional fleet storage, including electric buses, this 65,000 square foot building is scheduled to be complete in June 2019.
- ☞ **Fare Collection System** – A significant overhaul of the 2006 fare collection system will improve ease of use and convenience for customers. The project is scheduled to be under contract in 2019, and completion is expected by 2021.
- ☞ **Plaza Operations** – In pursuit of STA’s commitment to contain bus-boarding activity to the curb space around The Plaza, initial recommendations from the 2018 operational study are expected to be implemented in 2019.
- ☞ **Facilities Master Plan** – This plan will update the previous version and address future system-wide requirements for maintenance, operations, and administration.
- ☞ **Upriver Transit Center** – In partnership with Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS), construction of this project will increase transit capacity at Spokane Community College (SCC), improve regional connectivity, and serve as the Central City Line’s eastern endpoint.
- ☞ **Spokane Falls Transit Station** – Also in partnership with CCS, the construction of this project will improve passenger and pedestrian safety near Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC).

### Strategy 3: Advance and Implement High Performance Transit (HPT)

- ☞ **Central City Line** – Dependent on federal approval, STA anticipates executing a \$54 million Small Starts Grant agreement with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the new 5.8-mile corridor-based Bus Rapid Transit route. The local match and operating funding for this transformational project is secured. Construction could begin in 2019.
- ☞ **Cheney Line** – Still in the early phase of the overall project, the Four Lakes Station will be constructed to improve access and safety in that location on State Route 904.
- ☞ **Division Line** – In addition to ongoing bus stop and sidewalk improvements along Spokane’s longest commercial corridor, STA, in a multi-agency partnership, will launch an in-depth Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) study to define future elements of the Division Line.

**Strategy 3: Advance and Implement High Performance Transit (HPT) (continued...)**

- ☞ **Monroe-Regal Line** – Construction will begin on the Monroe-Regal Line and the Moran Station Park & Ride next year for opening in fall 2019. Consideration of electric vehicles along the 11-mile route will also occur in 2019.
- ☞ **Sprague Line** – Ahead of the *STA Moving Forward* project schedule, the City of Spokane is advancing work along Sprague between Division Street and the Hamilton Street Bridge that will include HPT stations.
- ☞ **I-90/Valley Line** – In preparation for future implementation, design work on stations and park and ride improvements along I-90 will begin in the second half of 2019.

**Strategy 4: Improve Outreach and Communication**

- ☞ **Explore Mobility Management** – STA will explore how the agency can efficiently meet customers' evolving needs through a wide range of transportation options and services.
- ☞ **Focus Marketing and Communication Efforts** – Customers value transit in different ways. Marketing and communication efforts will highlight specific transit improvements and how they create practical value to various audiences.
- ☞ **Expand Pass Sales Outreach** – STA will resource an effort to increase participation in the Employer Sponsored Bus Pass program, the to-be-rebranded City Ticket pass program for downtown workers, and to increase group pass sales throughout the region.

Additional information about ridership goals and each project are available in other supporting plans and documents.

**CONCLUSION**

Two thousand nineteen will see the next phase of growth in mobility in the greater Spokane region. We re-dedicate ourselves to being a strong collaborative partner with the cities and Spokane County, whose residents we are privileged to serve. The strategies outlined in this document reflect our commitment to bringing the *STA Moving Forward* vision to life.