



November 2024

2025 Service Revisions



Above: A Route 28 bus on Riverside Avenue

STA is seeking public feedback on its **proposed service revisions** for 2025. Input will help refine the proposed adjustments to better serve the community and ensure they align with local needs before changes are finalized and implemented.

STA regularly revisits and adjusts its system in order to offer the best service to riders while taking stock of available and anticipated resources. The service changes typically implemented in January, May, and September of each year are planned and decided in advance following a formal review process called “service revisions.”

“Service revisions affect every aspect of STA’s service as well as every department,” explained Emily Poole, STA Principal Transit Planner and Service Development Manager. “They provide a concrete view of what will change, what resources are required to implement those changes, how those changes will occur, and on what timeframe.”

Among the highlights is the proposed Route 7, a regional high-performance route connecting Liberty Lake Park & Ride to Spokane International Airport.

“This route will supersede the current Routes 60 and 74 and has already received positive feedback in early survey responses,” said Poole. To maintain local connectivity, STA will introduce a new Route 93 to provide service exclusively within Liberty Lake.

Another proposal includes optimizing Route 172, an express route between Liberty Lake and downtown Spokane. The revision would bypass STA Plaza and instead service the Monroe-Lincoln corridor, Spokane Courthouse campus, and the North Bank.

Cheney riders can anticipate double-decker buses on Routes 6 and 66 which will also increase seating capacity to fit up to 80 passengers.

Public participation remains critical to these decisions.

“We’ve reached out to jurisdictions, community stakeholders, and organizations like Lighthouse for the Blind and Eastern Washington University,” Poole said. “Every voice matters, and we want people to know their feedback is truly valued.”

Riders can review the proposed changes and share their input through STA’s public survey, available on STA’s website.

To fill out the survey, visit spokanetransit.com/survey/survey-2025-service-revisions. The survey ends Sunday, December 15, 2024.



Stay Up to Date on Snow Detours



Above: A Route 25 bus in front of STA Plaza during winter

STA is geared up to be your transportation choice on snowy days. While leaving the driving to STA, here are some important considerations to keep in mind while taking transit during snow events.

Many bus routes travel through areas prone to blockages during snow and ice storms, particularly on hills and narrow streets with parked cars. To tackle these challenges, STA has pre-planned detours that anticipate such conditions, allowing customers to know alternate routes and plan their journeys accordingly.

To keep riders informed, affected routes will be highlighted in red on the [routes page](#), with an “Alert” tab providing detailed information. Snow detours are also outlined on route maps, found in the printed bus schedules and PDFs on STA’s website through the routes page.

In order to stay up to date with regular bus route detours and cancellations, sign up for [STA Notifications](#). Riders can customize their alerts by selecting specific routes that they wish to be notified about. They also have the flexibility to choose their preferred notification method—text message, email, or both—and set the timing for receiving alerts.

For Paratransit services, unrestricted service will be provided under most conditions. As with regular route detours, Paratransit service is restricted only when conditions require it and for the shortest possible time to minimize inconvenience for passengers.

During adverse weather events, every effort is made to provide life-sustaining trips, such as dialysis or chemotherapy, if vehicles are able to safely reach a residence or destination. Sidewalks, driveways, and ramps must be cleared of snow, ice, and debris for operators to safely assist customers to and from the van.

Paratransit customers can log into their PassWeb portal to see an estimated time of arrival, and they will receive an automated call that notifies them when a van will arrive shortly. In extreme and critical snow conditions, an automated call to all Paratransit customers with scheduled rides will go out. The message will notify customers regarding the current snow event, provide ongoing updates, and inform customers when they can expect service to return to normal.

While STA works to ensure riders are promptly updated on detours and changes, it's essential for customers to stay tuned to traffic and weather reports that may impact bus service.

STA remains committed to providing reliable and safe transportation for the Spokane community during snowy days.

[Sign up for STA Notifications](#)

[View all route alerts](#)

[View snow detours and alerts](#)



Rider Tips for Winter



Above: A rider exiting a City Line coach

As winter approaches, riders can navigate the system more smoothly by keeping the following tips in mind:

- Riders should dress for the weather. Buses may run behind schedule in icy

conditions, so dress in a manner that will allow one to comfortably wait for its arrival.

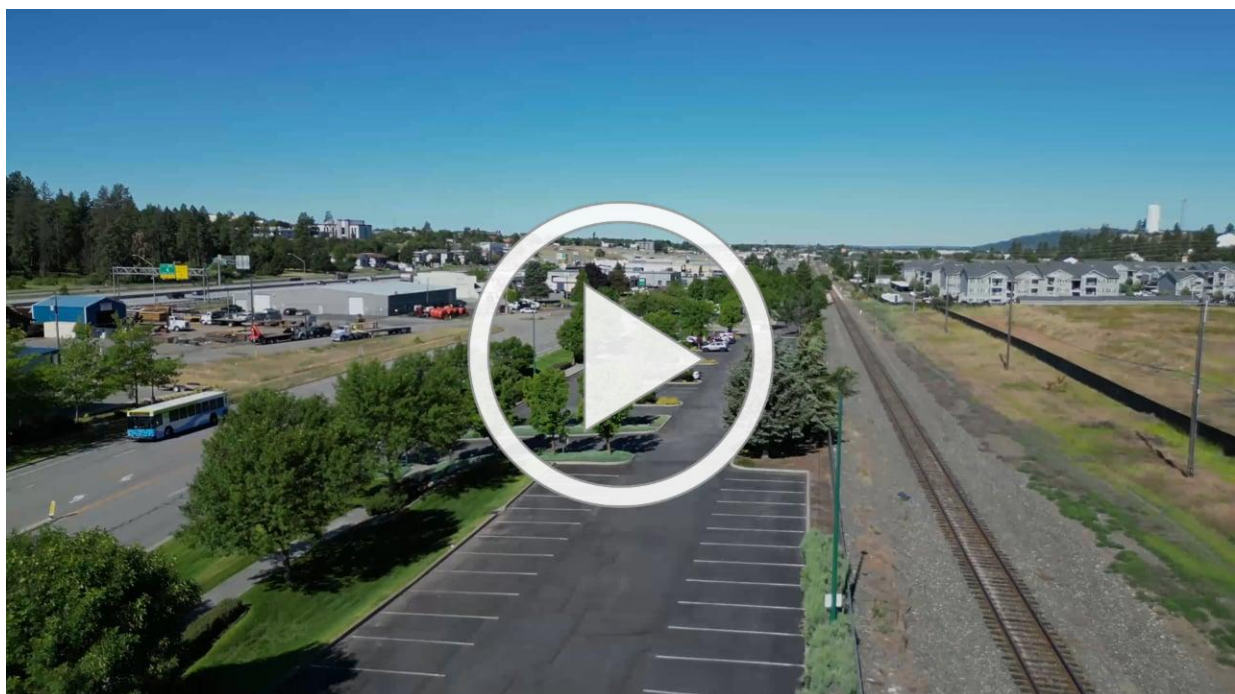
- Consider taking an earlier bus if possible. Allowing additional travel time will be well worth the effort if weather conditions could cause one to run late or miss appointments and meetings.
- Fog, glare, rain/sleet/snow, and darkness can affect a driver's ability to see riders waiting at a stop. Riders can ensure they are seen by stepping out of the shelter as the bus approaches. Waving, flashing a light from a cell phone, and wearing light colored clothing at night can also help the driver see waiting customers as they approach bus stops.

In addition to the above tips, here are three ways to stay informed about route detours, cancellations, or delays:

1. **STA Notifications:** Riders should sign up to receive texts or email notices when their route(s) go on snow detour or other circumstances arise that will affect trips. Alerts may be found here: spokanetransit.com/alerts.
2. **Snow Detours and Alerts:** This page lists which routes are on snow detour as well as other details of the detour routes. Paratransit customers can find up-to-date status reports on van service here as well. Visit spokanetransit.com/routes-schedules/winter-operations.
3. **Text Your Bus Stop Number to 99689:** Receive a text message that lists the next scheduled departure times for buses serving your stop. The four-digit stop code for each stop is found near the bottom of the STA bus stop sign or can be found online here: spokanetransit.com/plan-your-trip.



Construction Progresses for Mirabeau Transit Center



Above: Click the thumbnail to watch the drone hyperlapse video

Construction at the Mirabeau Transit Center is progressing steadily and smoothly. STA anticipates the facility will be ready for operations in early 2025.

Mirabeau Park & Ride has long been a focal point for passenger activity in Spokane Valley. To meet growing needs as well as commitments in the *STA Moving Forward* strategic plan, the facility is being transformed into a new transit center that will provide state-of-the-art rider amenities, increased capacity for transit vehicles, and additional parking for customers.

Construction has already been completed on internal platform work and surface improvements, including the concrete bus loop around the center and paving. Current efforts are focused on completing the roof framing. Interior building work will follow shortly after.

As the project has progressed, STA Capital Projects Manager Ryan Brodwater has captured the construction through drone hyperlapse photography, providing a dynamic look at the construction process. This technique, which stitches together images taken by the drone over time and on a consistent flight pattern, offers a time-compressed view of the work being done.

The drone flights give a unique perspective on the work and document its progress as the vision for the new transit center becomes a reality.

“Mirabeau Transit Center sets the stage for expansions to transit service and infrastructure in Spokane Valley and the surrounding areas,” commented Karl Otterstrom, Chief Planning & Development Officer at STA. “This includes the future Route 7, a High Performance Transit service that will operate between Liberty Lake and Spokane International Airport. We’re excited to offer the public a unique sneak peek at this project, and we’re especially looking forward to how it will improve service for riders throughout that corridor.”

The new transit center will serve Routes 32, 74, 97, and 771. During construction, the park & ride remains operational to STA customers.



Going Green



Above: An STA battery-electric bus being charged at an overhead pantograph charger at Moran Station Park & Ride

In June, STA's Board of Directors approved its Zero Emission Transition Plan, a comprehensive roadmap to replace its diesel bus fleet with zero-emission vehicles by 2045. The plan aims to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and align STA with state and federal sustainability goals.

"This plan reflects STA's commitment to environmental stewardship and preparing for the future," said STA Chief Operations Officer Brandon Rapez-Betty. "It's a measured, strategic approach to adopting zero-emission technologies while balancing infrastructure, cost, and operational readiness."

STA has already transitioned 25% of its regular bus fleet to battery-electric power, making a total of 40 buses. The next phase will focus on planning and implementing infrastructure to support additional zero-emission vehicles, such as charging infrastructure, and tackling challenges like workforce development.

"The industry is still young when it comes to zero-emission technology, and every agency is learning. Our focus is on ensuring the infrastructure is in place to support future fleet growth," said Rapez-Betty.

The goals of the transition plan align with Washington State's emissions reduction objectives and local sustainability initiatives. STA originally aimed for a full zero-emission fleet by 2040 but extended the timeline to 2045 after gaining operational insights from the initial fleet deployment.

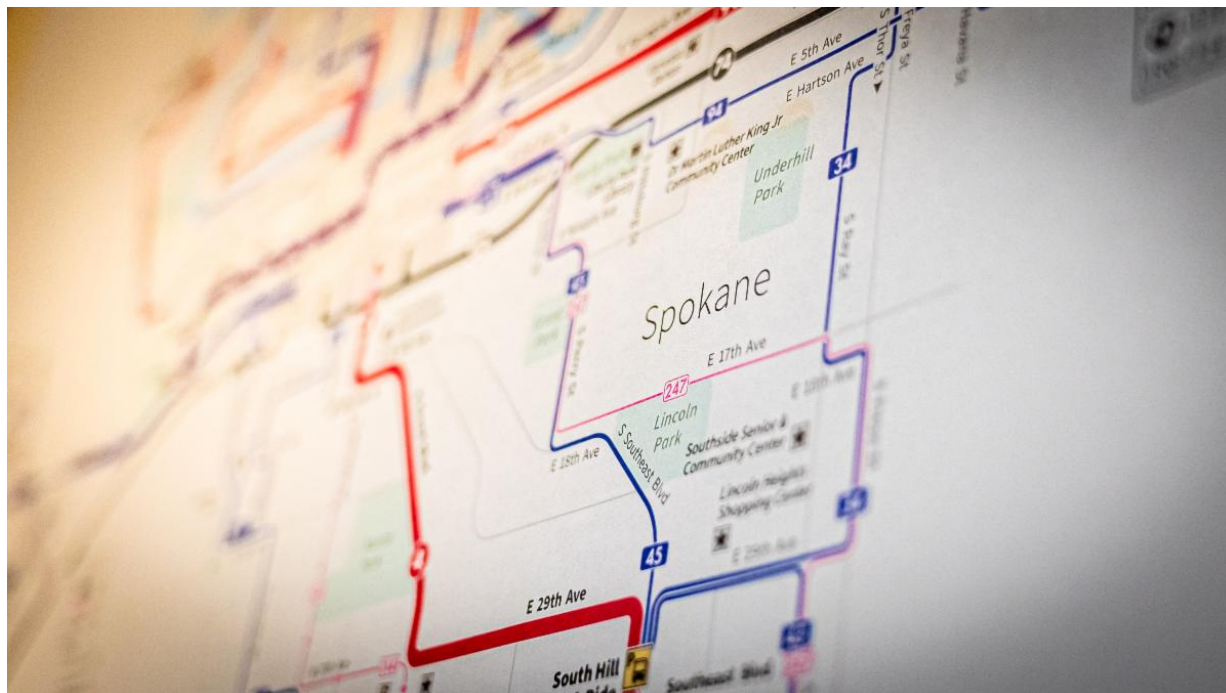
STA actively pursues grant funding to offset the higher upfront costs of zero-emission buses.

"Transitioning to zero emissions is an exciting but complex journey," Rapez-Betty concluded. "With our transition strategy in place, STA will contribute toward a

sustainable future for our community.”

For more details, visit spokanetransit.com/projects/zero-emission-transition-plan.

Route Frequency



Above: The STA System Map

Riders often wonder why certain routes have higher frequency than others or why the agency doesn't simply "add buses" to certain routes to bump up frequency. However, deciding route frequency involves a number of factors. STA adjusts how often buses run based on a mix of ridership needs, strategic considerations, available resources, and budget constraints. While popular routes tend to run more frequently, STA also carefully manages its bus fleet and schedules to make the most of what it has.

Routes operating on Division Street and Sprague Avenue have long provided higher frequency because more people use them. On the other hand, STA sometimes combines routes to improve frequency even if it costs more to run operationally. For example, resources for Routes 26 Lidgerwood and 28 Nevada were consolidated to increase frequency on Route 28 to every 15 minutes on weekdays and 30 minutes on nights and weekends. The change improved connections along Nevada Street and supports the increased housing density and demand along that corridor. The creation of Route 31 Minnehaha/Lidgerwood ensured continued coverage of areas formerly served by Route 26 while expanding service in the Minnehaha area and creating a new connection to SCC Transit Center.

The decision of how to allocate limited resources across the system plays a significant role as well. Increasing bus frequency isn't always as simple as adding

more buses. Each extra bus costs money, and STA's current budget limits the number of buses it can operate. Presently, STA is at its cap of approximately 537,000 revenue hours annually, which is the maximum the agency forecasts it can sustainably operate within projected resources.

When more buses are added to a longer route to increase frequency, they must be balanced within the annual revenue hours cap. For example, STA plans to introduce 15-minute frequency at peak hours for Route 61 in the September 2025 Service Change. In order to offer this more frequent service, three additional buses will be added to the route that need to be budgeted for.

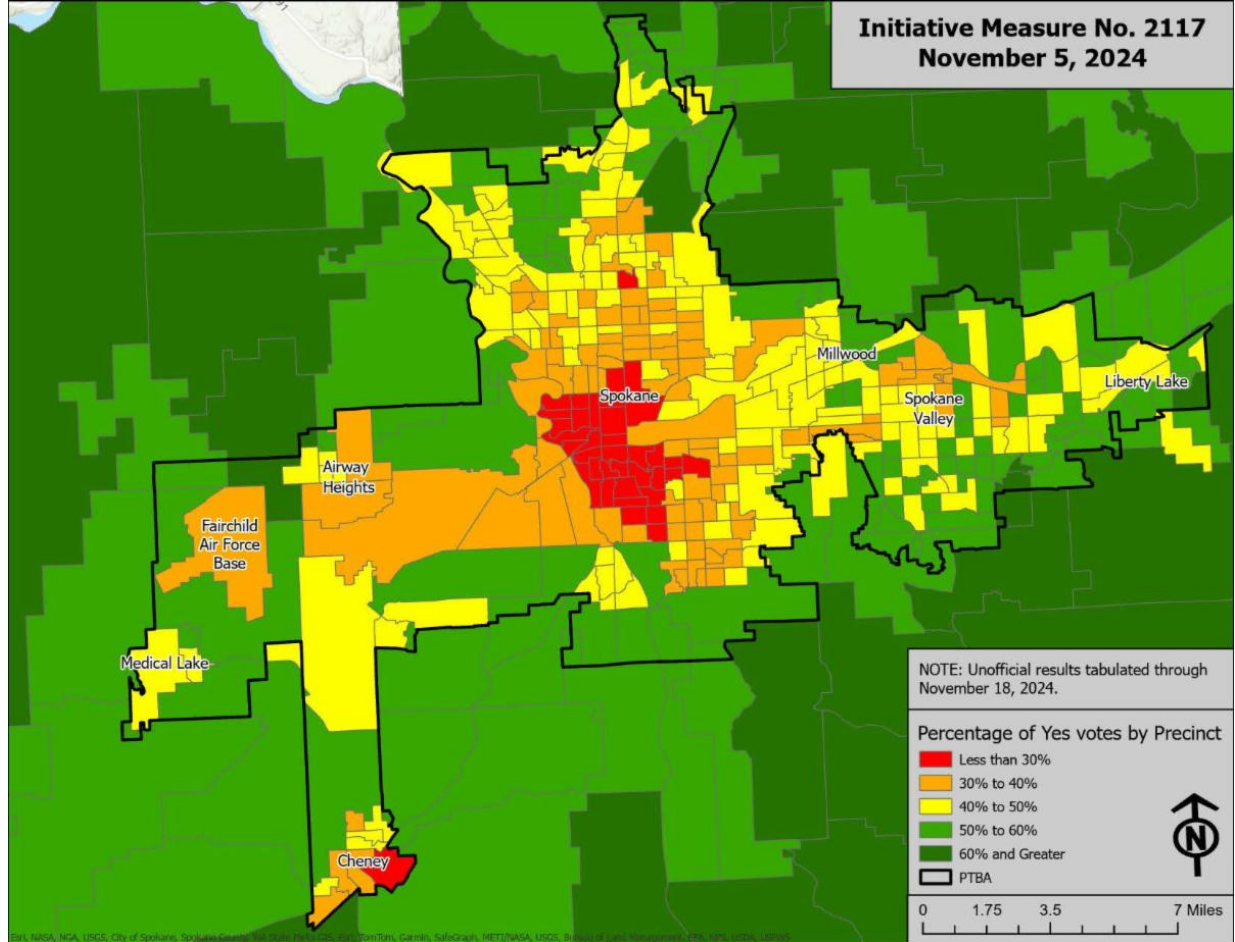
Thanks to its prudent use of taxpayer dollars, STA has consistently remained debt free for over a decade, ensuring overall stability despite challenges such as inflation.

However, STA also faces other practical challenges that impact considerations related to service frequency. For example, STA Plaza in downtown Spokane has limited space, making it harder to increase the number of buses coming and going at peak times.

STA's ability to maintain service within budget demonstrates the agency's commitment to fiscal responsibility. By carefully managing resources and focusing on the most efficient use of its buses, STA ensures that it provides high-quality service while being a good steward of taxpayer money.



Voters Reject Initiative 2117



Above: A map of Spokane County with a colored overlay depicting voter results for Initiative 2117

Washington State voters have rejected Initiative 2117, a measure that sought to repeal Washington State’s Climate Commitment Act. The outcome ensures continued funding for key STA projects, marking a significant victory for regional transit and statewide climate goals.

As of the ballot count accessed on Monday, November 18, the initiative failed with 53.9% of votes against it in Spokane County.

The Climate Commitment Act, passed in 2021, supports statewide efforts to significantly cut greenhouse emissions by 2050. The act also funds critical transportation initiatives under the Move Ahead Washington package, such as \$50 million earmarked for STA’s Division Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

“Had Initiative 2117 passed, STA would have faced a \$151 million funding shortfall over the next 14 years, jeopardizing projects like Division Street BRT, the Youth Ride Free program, and potentially many of the initiatives contained in STA’s next strategic plan, *Connect 2035*,” said Carly Cortright, STA’s Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer. “This outcome is encouraging as it indicates voters’ support for public transit and its role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.”

The measure saw strong rejection within the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA), the area serviced by Spokane Transit, particularly in areas with high-frequency transit service. In many of these precincts, fewer than 30% of voters supported the initiative, reflecting widespread recognition of transit’s value to the community.

Cortright emphasized that the decision will allow STA to move forward consistent with current plans and financial projections. Planning can continue for Division Street BRT and advancing initiatives that align with STA’s long-term vision for transit in Spokane County.

“We’re thankful voters rejected Initiative 2117, particularly those within STA’s service area. We believe this demonstrates they recognized the importance of the Climate Commitment Act in helping provide reliable, sustainable public transit for our region’s future,” Cortright said.

STA now looks ahead, confident in its ability to deliver transformative projects that support both community needs and climate goals.



Thanksgiving Day Service



Above: A Route 20 bus in downtown Spokane

STA will operate on Sunday/Holiday Service for Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 28, 2024. To view routes and schedule information, visit spokanetransit.com/routes-schedules.



Christmas Bureau Fair Shuttle



Above: STA Plaza during snowfall

STA is once again providing convenient shuttle service for community members attending the Christmas Bureau, an annual holiday assistance program that helps families in need.

The Christmas Bureau, coordinated by Catholic Charities Eastern Washington, Volunteers of America, and *The Spokesman-Review*, offers grocery vouchers, toys, and books to eligible households. Families can redeem vouchers at participating grocery stores and receive age-appropriate gifts for children aged 17 and younger.

To support access to this vital resource, STA's Route 343 Bureau Fair Shuttle will operate from December 12 to December 19, excluding December 15. The shuttle will run every 30 minutes, ensuring reliable transportation for attendees.

For more information on the Christmas Bureau, visit christmasbureauspokane.org.

Riders can find route information for the shuttle at spokanetransit.com/routes/bureau-fair-shuttle.



Santa To Visit STA Plaza



Families are invited to bring their children to meet Santa Claus at STA Plaza on Saturday, December 14 from 12 pm to 2 pm. Children can sit on Santa's lap to share their holiday wishes while parents snap photos with their own devices. STA will also provide a complimentary Polaroid photo and card for each family.

Santa will have a designated area within the Plaza featuring a festive setup, including a red carpet and a grand red chair. The experience will evoke the traditional holiday magic found in department stores and malls with the added benefit of being completely free.

While Santa has made past appearances at the Plaza to hand out candy canes, this marks the debut of an organized photo opportunity.

"Photos with Santa at STA Plaza are a wonderful way to celebrate the season, and we're proud to support our community with a no-cost option for families to enjoy holiday cheer," said Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer.

Mark your calendars and don't miss this special opportunity to meet Santa and capture a magical moment, all in the heart of downtown Spokane!



STA Veteran Employee Video



Above: Click the thumbnail to watch a video of Navy veteran and STA employee Tyler Halverson



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