

Enhanced Bus *UPDATE*



A variety of factors led to the Board's decision.

Economic Impact

Original Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) design unaffordable due to inflation, property impacts, other requirements

No Transit-Exclusive Lanes

Reimagined BRT design would have operated curbside with no transit-exclusive lanes or treatments

FTA Policy Change

Due to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) policy change requiring use of 2022 ridership figures, project's "medium" rating (needed for FTA funding) is at significant risk

Lack of Investment

Corridor has not seen significant investment in decades; modeling shows intersections begin to fail by 2030

Planned Improvements

WSDOT and City of Tacoma are planning improvements along Pacific Ave/SR-7

Enhanced Bus service was recommended as an interim solution to BRT

3 Major Risks to BRT Funding

1

**Use of post-COVID
ridership numbers**

2

**Lack of speed and
reliability improvements
in the design that
Pierce Transit can afford**

3

**Likely delays associated
with formalizing scope,
schedule and budget**

Formally accepting FTA funds knowing that additional delays are likely would result in being required to return the federal funding and could negatively affect future funding opportunities.

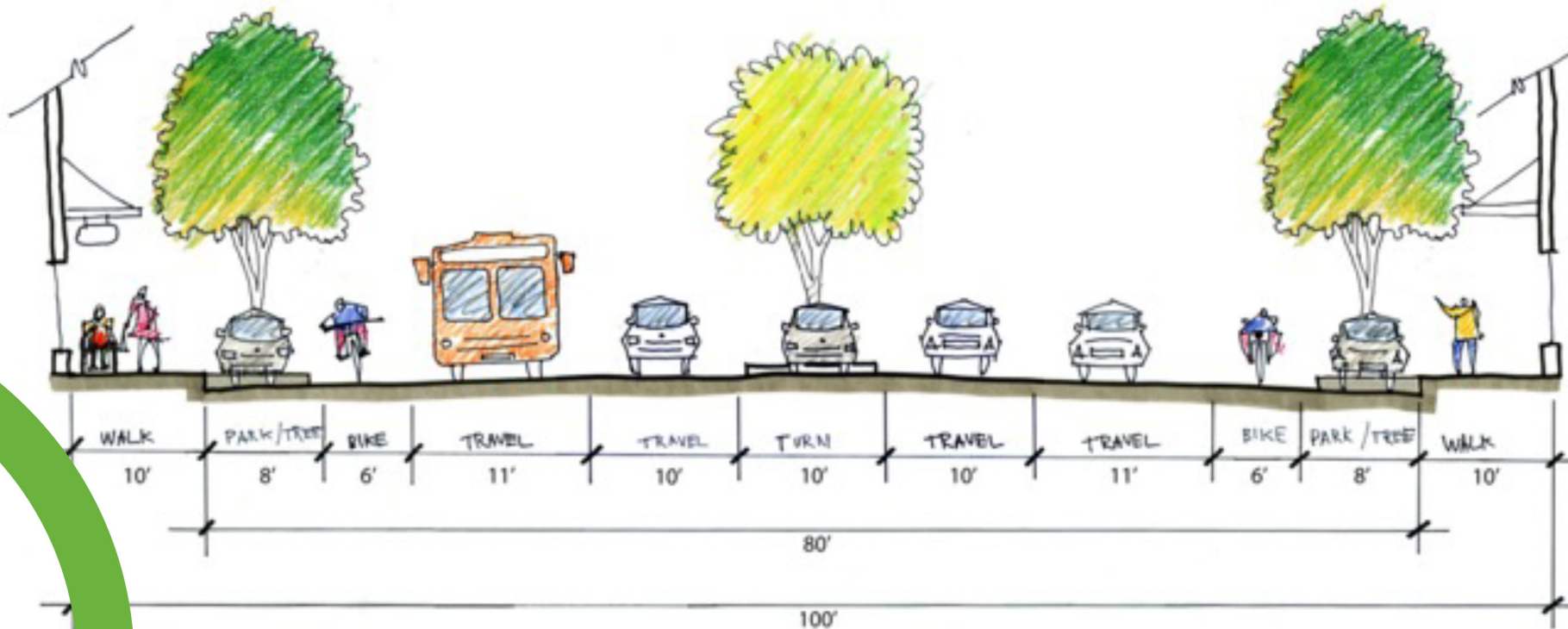
Other Plans in the Original BRT 1 Area

WSDOT

State Route 512 Corridor Study: Underway
Complete Streets: Pending Funding

City of Tacoma

Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan: Underway



Are there opportunities to coordinate our planning efforts?

- It makes sense to wait to implement BRT until WSDOT and Tacoma complete their corridor planning, ensuring a coordinated approach and avoiding multiple rounds of construction
- As WSDOT and City of Tacoma undertake corridor improvements, Pierce Transit would work with them to incorporate BRT as part of the overall plans for the area
- We anticipate future joint BRT/Complete Streets grant opportunities
- The FTA will only provide funding for the corridor once

The Enhanced Bus Plan

Spanaway Transit Center
to Tacoma Dome Station

Peak commute-hour service
(weekday mornings
and afternoons)

Connections to local
and regional services at
east/west corridors

Timed Sounder
connections

Service operates in addition
to existing Route 1

Stops at 14 major bus stops
(saving 28 minutes
travel time round trip)

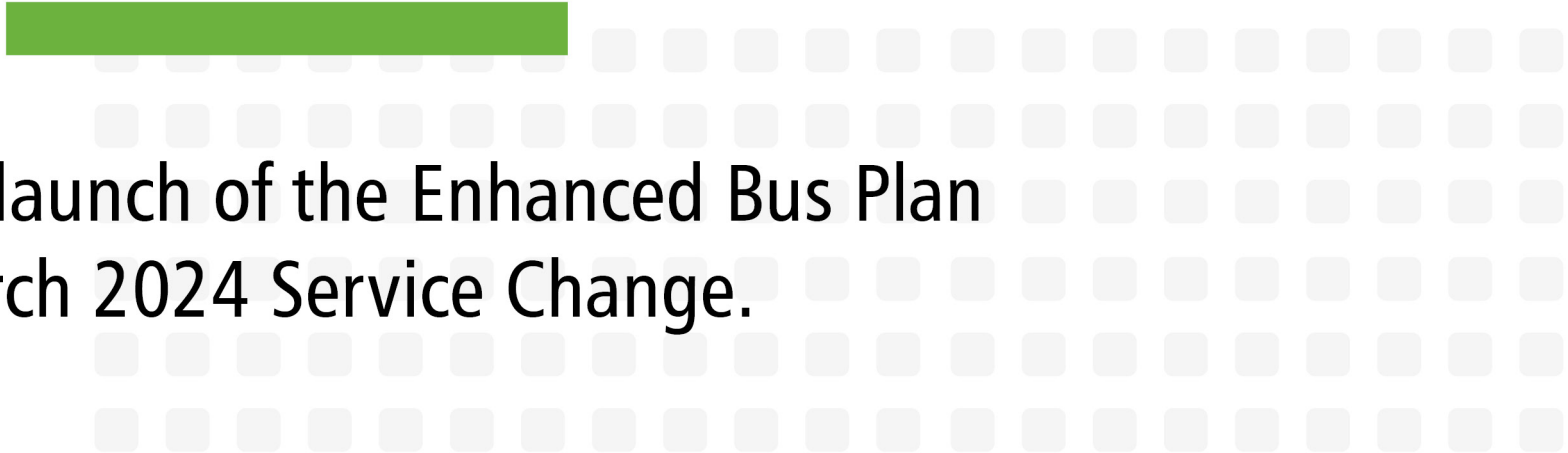
The Enhanced Bus Plan (continued)

Uses existing bus stops
(all will have shelters)*

Utilizes existing
40 ft bus fleet

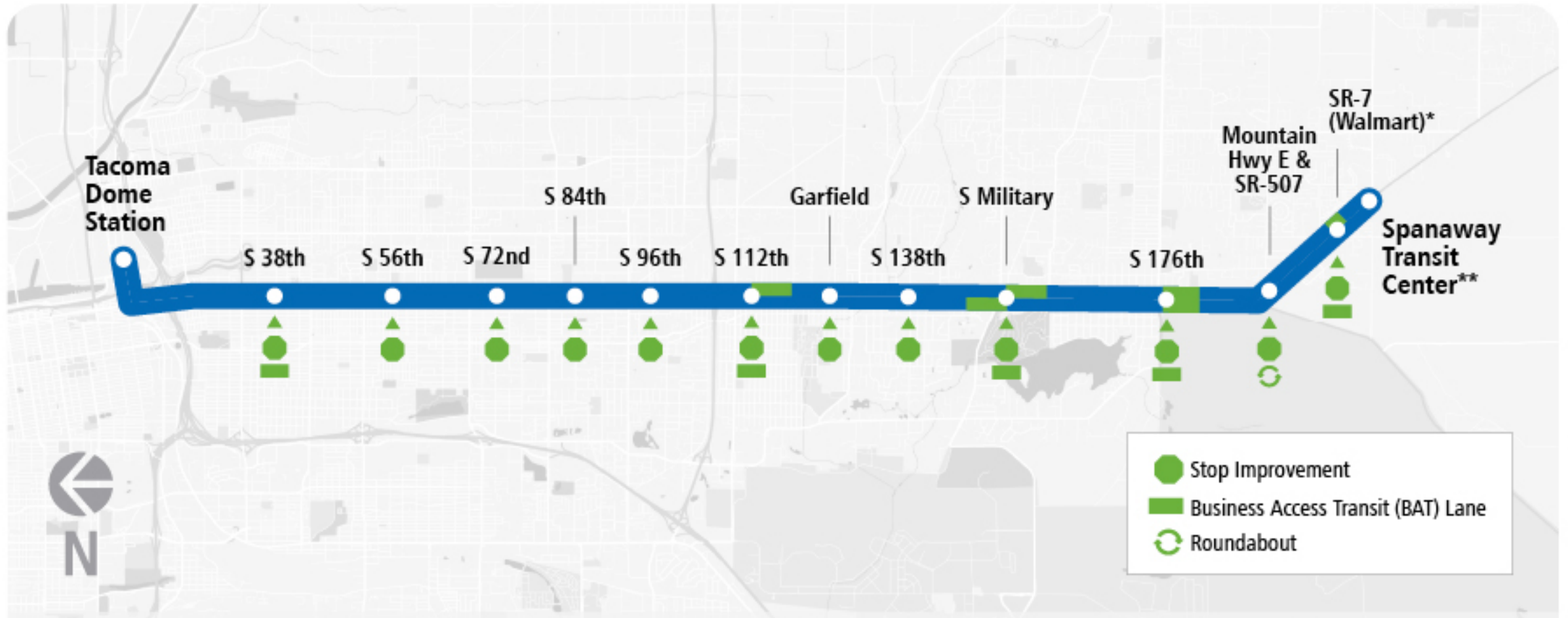
Completes
Transit Signal Priority

**2 bus stops require upgrades*



The targeted launch of the Enhanced Bus Plan
is March 2024 Service Change.

Enhanced Bus Route Map



Transit Signal Priority (TSP): Installed at key signalized intersections along the Enhanced Bus route. Mtn Hwy E & SR-507: Stop improvements are associated with WSDOT roundabout.

**SR-7 (Walmart) is a Northbound stop only, there is no Southbound stop. **Spanaway Transit Center only serves as a turnaround for buses until its construction is complete.*

Benefits of Pivoting to Enhanced Bus

- Provides improved service at least four years sooner
- Significantly reduces impacts on property owners and businesses
- Provides opportunities to coordinate future planning efforts with WSDOT and Tacoma
- Coordinated future construction, reducing impacts to businesses
- Allows for significantly better future improvements in line with Complete Streets vision
- Allows FTA funding to be available in the future



Next Steps

Plan for implementation of Enhanced Bus service
March 31, 2024

Execute outreach plan focused on educating stakeholders on Enhanced Bus program

Work with grantors on retaining eligible grant funding for Enhanced Bus Speed and Reliability Improvements

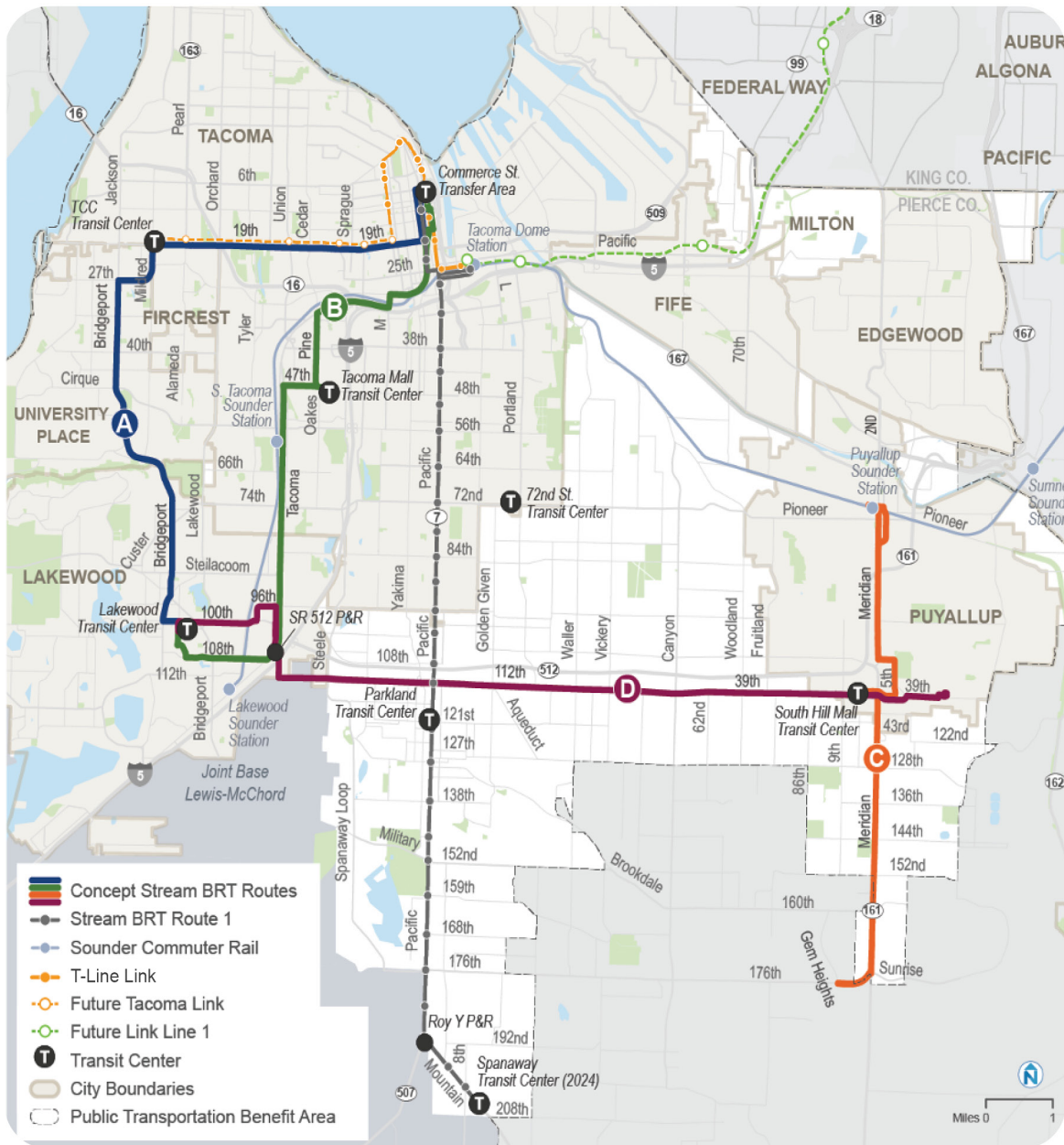
Develop scope of Enhanced Bus capital project (speed and reliability improvements, shelter upgrades)

Phase in speed and reliability improvements as funding is available, ensure elements are forward compatible for future BRT

Raise awareness regarding long-term corridor needs to support partner efforts

Close BRT contracts

Enhanced Bus Expansion



- Enhanced bus is a frequent high capacity transit service serving as a launching pad toward future BRT
- BRT network is maintained in Pierce Transit's Long Range Planning focus
- Introduces transit speed and reliability elements in a phased approach that support enhanced bus and future BRT:
 - Transit Signal Priority (TSP)
 - Select bus stop improvements
 - Business Access Transit (BAT) lanes

Contact Us

Ryan Wheaton

Executive Director Planning & Community Development

rwheaton@piercetransit.org

Tina Lee

Planning Manager

tlee@piercetransit.org

