

Frequent transit service provision policy advisory group

WSDOT Public Transportation Division

July 11, 2022

Introductions

- Welcome!
- Quick introductions:
 - Name
 - Organization
 - **One word** that describes your motivation for this work



Why we're here today

By the end of this meeting, we will have...

1. Reviewed the role of the frequent transit proviso policy advisory group
2. Reviewed our shared goals based on the preliminary interviews conducted by WSDOT
3. Reviewed barriers to this work
4. Learned more about the approach proposed by WSDOT project staff
5. Discussed next steps

Project description

15(a) \$250,000 of the multimodal transportation account-state appropriation is provided solely for the department, in consultation with the joint transportation committee, **to conduct a study of statewide transit service benchmarks**. Elements of the study include:

- (i) **Development of definitions** of frequent fixed route transit and accessible frequent fixed route transit; and
- (ii) **Identification of, to the extent possible using existing data, current gaps** in frequent fixed route transit and accessible walking routes to frequent fixed route transit stops.

(b) An initial report is due by December 15, 2022, that **proposes a definition of frequent transit and documents how many people in Washington live within one half mile walk of frequent transit**. A final report is due by June 30, 2023, that identifies gaps in accessible frequent transit, analyzed for disparities in race, age, and disability, and develops funding scenarios to address the identified gaps.

Source: ESSB 5689

Roles

- **Stakeholders** – provide perspective, subject matter expertise, and input
- **Policy advisory group** – provide subject matter expertise and guidance; support stakeholder engagement; develop and vet recommendations (especially for mobility policy)
- **Technical advisory group** – provide subject matter expertise and guidance; support stakeholder engagement; develop and vet recommendations (especially for mobility and walkable/accessible data and analysis)
- **Joint Transportation Committee** (includes staff) – provide subject matter expertise and guidance; vet recommendations
- **WSDOT executives** – provide guidance; review and approve recommendations
- **WSDOT project team** (includes consultants) – project management; research and analysis; facilitation; stakeholder and public engagement; documentation

How we will work

- **Create more access** – use this project to spur productive public conversations that advance public transportation and improve mobility with an emphasis on the needs of vulnerable populations in overburdened communities and tribes.
- **Learning** – share what you know and learn from others.
- **Collaboration** – this study will involve multiple committees (i.e., policy group, technical group, Joint Transportation Committee, TDM Executive Board), ad hoc stakeholders, WSDOT staff, and others. All will influence the study.
- **Decision-making** – strive for consensus. If that's not possible, be prepared to use consent.

Vision and hopes

Better understanding
of those who lack
access

This leads to more
funding

Improve the
experience for riders

Develop shared
understanding of how
transit delivery works

Consider local
context

This leads to more
stability in funding

Sets realistic
standards

Concerns

Standards we can't meet are risky, money, labor shortages

Will this look like "greedy transit?"

Big \$\$\$ could scare policymakers away

Local agencies are largely responsible for accessibility

Timeline – "lots to do and not very much time"

This will be difficult

Descriptions of frequent transit may need to be flexible

What we heard from you

- **This is important and relevant work** – legislators and decision makers will use these reports
- **Frequency is context sensitive** – this work must address unique challenges and needs for a variety of providers
- **Coordination is important** – between transits, local jurisdictions, the state, legislators, advocates, and more
- **We need to move fast!**

Start with data

“live within one half mile walk of frequent transit”*

Census data ✓

GTFS data ✓

Roadway data ✓

Sidewalk/walkability data 😞

Major gaps in sidewalk data prevent answering this question directly in almost all the state.

*Source: ESSB 5689

Features of "accessibility" (1)

Within a reasonable distance

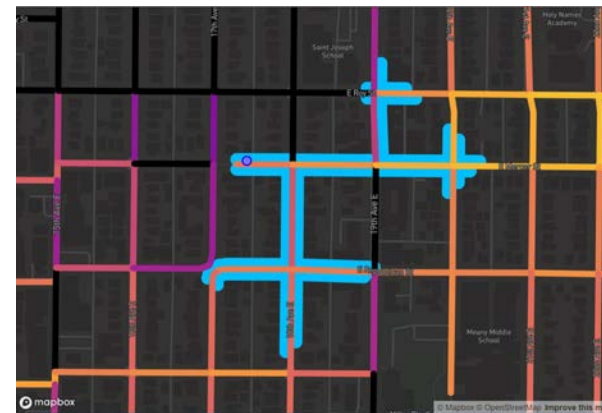
A well-connected multi-modal network

Well-maintained sidewalks or shoulders

Perception of "safety"

Curb cuts, crosswalks, signals and other features

Features of “accessibility” (2)



Discussion

We don't have data to analyze a half-mile walk to transit.

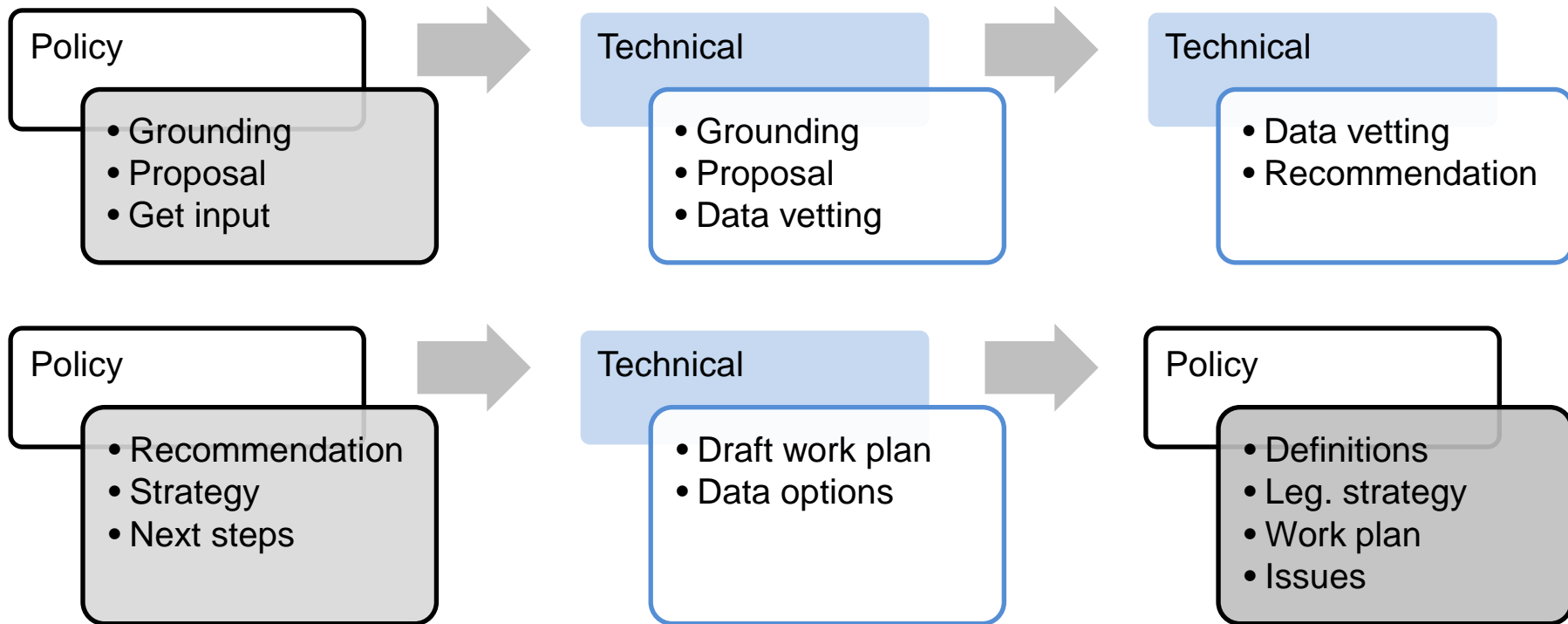
What does that mean?

Next steps

- Individual outreach to other stakeholders
- Project website & Next meetings
- Due diligence work by policy advisory group members:
 - Is there statewide data for walkability/accessibility?
 - Finalize recommendation for approach
- Technical advisory group meeting (July 14):
 - Confirmation of data sources
 - Finalize recommendation for approach

Meeting cadence

Advisory groups



Thank you!

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