

WSDOT Frequent transit service study

Technical advisory group meeting 3 summary
10:30 a.m. - noon, August 16, 2022

Attendees

TAG members

- Lisa Ballard (WSDOT)
- Melissa Gaughan (King County Metro)
- Brian Lee (PSRC)
- Justin Leighton (Washington State Transit Association)
- Steffani Lillie (Kitsap Transit)
- Lindsey Sehmel (Pierce Transit)
- Brad Windler (Skagit Transit)

Project staff

- Thomas Craig (WSDOT)
- Monica Gosh (WSDOT)
- Kate Gunby (PRR)
- Jade Henderson (PRR)
- Stan Suchan (WSDOT)
- Jenny Thacker (PRR)
- Emily Watts (WSDOT)

Discussion

Slide numbers included in this meeting summary refer to the [TAG meeting 3 presentation](#) saved on engage.wsdot.wa.gov/frequent-transit-service-study.

Slides 1 and 2 – Kate Gunby

Kate welcomed the TAG members and led them in a round of introductions

Slide 3 – Kate Gunby

Kate reviewed the meeting agenda:

Slide 4 – Kate Gunby

Kate shared that in the latest meeting with the Policy Advisory Group, PAG members

- Confirmed WSDOT's policy approach
- Confirmed that we will move forward with multiple levels of frequency
- Discussed different levels of service and different dimensions of frequency to consider

Slides 5 - 8 – Kate Gunby

Kate confirmed that, given this feedback, the project team would analyze multiple levels of frequency, and analyze those same levels of frequency across the state. The dimensions of frequency analyzed would include factors beyond just headway.

Slides 9 and 10 – Kate Gunby

Kate shared the six draft levels of service that the project team is considering and asked the TAG members to share their thoughts.

Draft levels of frequent transit

	Frequency eve	ea a a	O ea a	i t	Wee en d a	Days Service ini u
Group		minutes	2 minutes	2 minutes	2 minutes	days
	2	minutes	minutes	2 minutes	2 minutes	days
	3	minutes	minutes			days
Group 2						
	ltra frequent	minutes	minutes	minutes	minutes	days
	Dependable	3 minutes	3 minutes	minutes	minutes	days
	Lifeline	2 bidirectional trips day minimum				days



TAG members discussed frequency levels and came to an agreement that “ultra-frequent” was largely aspirational even in large metropolitan areas, the 30-minute headways shown in “Dependable” are important to services across the state, and levels 1, 2, 3, and “Lifeline” would also be important to show in the analysis.

Thomas confirmed that the project team would conduct the analysis at the route level, not at the stop level, but that the report would include a layer showing all of the fixed-route transit stops, and the project team would spot check to see if there were cases where a stop level analysis made sense, such as for routes that include spurs.

The TAG members pointed out that other public transportation services, such as on-demand transit, ferries, and inter-city bus routes are important for travelers. The project team said they likely fell outside the scope of the study but could be acknowledged in an addendum.

The TAG team discussed whether capacity was an element that could be included in the analysis. Thomas responded that currently the available data did not permit analysis on capacity, and that it was likely outside the scope of the study, but that if the available data improved, it could be included in the future.

One TAG member agreed with another TAG member that the 30-minute headway is an important level and pointed out that in urban areas riders do distinguish between 15-minute headways and 10-minute headways.

Kate summarized that 1) there was support for moving forward with levels 1, 2, “Dependable,” 3, and “Lifeline,” 2) a suggestion to adjust the levels to better align with Transportation Research Board definitions, and 3) a suggestion to develop a level that is between “Lifeline” and “Dependable.”

The TAG considered adding a category for service that only operates on the weekend and eventually recommended against it.

Slide 10 – Thomas Craig

Thomas introduced the TAG to the process the project team is proposing to analyze the number of residents within one-half mile of a frequent fixed-route transit stop.

Thomas described the data analysis process, referring TAG members to the “[Process: Estimate the number of residents within one-half mile \(draft\)](#)” document the project team had sent out before the meeting.

The important steps described are:

- Sort stops into frequency categories
- Overlay stop buffers on census tracts

The TAG members discussed the merits of using a network analysis based on the existing street network versus using buffers and concluded that the buffer analysis would be sufficient for the purposes of the study.

The TAG also recommended using the block level for the analysis, with the caveats that it would mean a larger margin of error in less dense areas, and it would not show Limited English Proficient populations at that level. The TAG also asked the project team to trim the buffers to account for bodies of water, and to avoid double counting.

Slide 11 – Kate Gunby

Kate summarized the takeaways from the meeting.

Frequency

- There was support for five levels of frequency, including “Dependable” and “Lifeline” and a level that is at least two trips per day
- The project team would consider how nights and weekends fit within these levels
- The analysis would not include transit that is not fixed route, recreational and seasonal transit, but those services could be acknowledged in an addendum

One-half mile analysis

- The team would be sure not to double count in areas where buffers overlap
- The block group level could work
- The TAG considered using the road network to analyze one-half mile but chose to use the buffer method instead because of data limitations
- The team would trim block to account for water

Slides 12 and 13 – Monica

Near term next steps include:

- Meet with the PAG on 8/23
- Present at the WSTA conference on 8/29 to get attendee feedback
- Begin analysis of frequency stop layer

- Hold one-on-one conversations about preliminary findings with TAG, PAG and other stakeholders
- Host a combined TAG and PAG meeting in October