



# TRANSIT ACCESS FUNDING MATRIX & KEY FINDINGS

There are many kinds of transit access improvements, ranging in scale from small to significant. Some of these improvements are standalone investments while others are embedded in larger capital projects. Furthermore, multiple agencies may implement several different access improvements to benefit one major site of transit service. This reality can create funding complexity and challenges for providing transit access improvements throughout the region. The Transit Access Funding Matrix describes how transit access improvements are typically funded at various governmental scales, the key findings of which are identified below. In addition, the primary funding sources for transit access improvements are documented.

## Key findings.

- 1. Improving access involves multiple agencies using a variety of funding sources.** In most contexts, improving access involves multiple discrete projects serving different purposes, oftentimes with improved access as a secondary or tertiary outcome. Ensuring alignment between many agencies and sources is complex.
- 2. The passage of ST3 created the first dedicated funding source for transit access projects.** However, these funds alone cannot meet regional transit access needs, especially outside of Sound Transit's service area. There currently is not an approach for prioritizing projects based on the access value added in the process for other potentially appropriate funding sources.
- 3. Large-scale projects (primarily associated with Sound Transit) create opportunities to maximize access in specific areas.** The resources and focus brought to bear on specific locations through Sound Transit-related projects may make it easier to align priorities and leverage resources.
- 4. However, large-scale projects that are not primarily associated with Sound Transit projects are challenging to fund and therefore more complex to implement.** Projects of a certain scale that do not have an accompanying revenue source associated with them can be very challenging to fund.
- 5. Timing of access investments matter,** but there is not a consistent approach for ensuring that access investments within a larger capital development process are aligned.



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Implementer	Short description	Types of transit access improvements implemented	Sources for funding these access improvements	Funding issues
<b>Local Jurisdictions</b>	<p>Local jurisdictions are the primary land use authority and owner of street and nonmotorized right of way.</p> <p>Local jurisdictions play a significant role in both the regulatory and physical environment—particularly as it relates to private land development—surrounding major sites of transit service and thus have a considerable impact on transit access.</p>	<p><b>Lead Implementer.</b> Can be lead on street network changes that improve transit speed and reliability. Typically lead on nonmotorized improvements (e.g. sidewalks, bicycle facilities) particularly those outside a station footprint.</p> <p><b>Secondary Implementer.</b> Contributes to development of transit operational and capital investment planning and implementation, including new transit parking.</p> <p><b>Regulatory Lead.</b> As the land use authority, has large influence over TOD. Has authority over traffic speed and operations, on-street parking, and emerging shared mobility options.</p>	<p><b>Local Sources.</b> Local jurisdictions transportation budgets include local levies in support of specific transportation improvements, bonds, general funds, fees and taxes raised, and the city share of the state gas tax. In some cases, private development will fund access improvements as well.</p> <p><b>State Sources.</b> Local jurisdictions can compete for state funding for transit access improvements, including the Regional Mobility Grant Program, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Program, and the Safe Routes to School Program.</p> <p><b>Regional/Federal Sources.</b> Local jurisdictions may apply for regionally managed federal transportation funding to make transit access improvements. The most likely funding sources are the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Program.</p>	<p>As the scale of a project increases, so does the number of funding sources.</p> <p>Local jurisdiction size matters: bigger jurisdictions have an easier time funding access improvements than smaller ones do.</p> <p>Timing issues: ensuring access investments that support large transit capital and operational improvements are funded in time to align with these projects can be tricky.</p> <p>How to leverage private development to provide access improvements for specific projects where public benefits may need to be provided as mitigation.</p>
<b>Local Transit Agencies</b>	<p>Local transit agencies—as distinct from Sound Transit—deal primarily with the planning and operation of local transit networks, specifically the frequency, span, and coverage of service.</p> <p>In addition, they play a primary role in maintaining the physical infrastructure at bus stop and at the major sites of transit service they own and/or operate.</p>	<p><b>Lead Implementer.</b> Have influence over where, when, and how frequently service operates given overall service hours available. Provide maintenance/preservation of vehicles, stops, transit centers, and park and rides. Makes nonmotorized investments at facilities that the agency owns and/or operates.</p> <p><b>Secondary Implementer.</b> Outside of King County Metro, local transit agencies defer to local jurisdictions for in-road transit speed and reliability improvements. Contributes to local jurisdiction comprehensive and sub-area planning processes.</p> <p><b>Regulatory Lead.</b> Develops and implements long range plans and six-year transit development plans. May have other policy documents indicating service and capital priorities. Parking management at facilities they own and that are without WSDOT or FHWA-related issues.</p>	<p><b>Local Sources.</b> The primary local sources of funding for local transit agencies are transit-specific sales tax revenues (which range from 0.6% to 1.2%) and farebox revenues.</p> <p><b>State Sources.</b> Local transit agencies can compete for state funding to implement a variety of transit access improvements, specifically from the Regional Mobility Grant Program.</p> <p><b>Regional/Federal Sources.</b> Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding is a significant part of local transit agency funding, with the majority of FTA funding passed directly to local transit agencies based on their operating characteristics. A portion of FTA funds are held aside for a regional competition, and local transit agencies can apply for FHWA STP and CMAQ funds as well. Local transit agencies can apply for FTA New Starts and Small Starts funding as well.</p>	<p>The volatility of local transit agency's primary funding source can impact resource availability.</p> <p>The large difference in operating characteristics means that some agencies are better resourced to make access investments than others.</p> <p>As such, expectations of local jurisdictions served by local transit agencies can vary widely.</p> <p>Timing issues: ensuring access investments that support large transit capital and operational improvements are funded in time to align with these projects can be tricky.</p>



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<b>Sound Transit</b>	<p>Sound Transit, as authorized under Sound Move, ST2, and ST3, is making large capital investments in fixed route high capacity transit.</p> <p>The scale of this investment is distinct from other transit agencies and have implications for transit access within the footprint of Sound Transit property, in the surrounding station area, and for other key connections to the station/station area.</p>	<p><b>Lead Implementer.</b> Development, construction, and operation of various high capacity transit projects and services. Typically includes everything access-related within a particular station footprint, including TOD, nonmotorized, local transit/drop-off, and parking elements.</p> <p><b>Secondary Implementer.</b> May support certain investments outside the station footprint, depending on the scope of the specific project.</p> <p><b>Regulatory Lead.</b> Ultimately determines specific alignments, station locations, parking, and other access elements as part of official project.</p>	<p><b>Local Sources.</b> Sound Transit's local sources are voter approved and consist of sales tax, rental car sales tax, motor vehicle excise tax, and a property tax. ST3 established an access allowance for each new station area as well as a System Access Fund, though it is uncertain as of early 2017 how these will be applied in practice.</p> <p><b>State Sources.</b> Sound Transit is ineligible from using state funding sources per enabling legislation for ST3.</p> <p><b>Regional/Federal Sources.</b> Federal funds are an important part of Sound Transit projects, having been successful in FTA's New Starts program, which has provided a significant share of some projects. Other FTA sources are used by Sound Transit, which can also apply for FHWA STP and CMAQ funds.</p>	<p>Despite the scale of some Sound Transit projects, the agency is not able to fund all supporting investments.</p> <p>For access improvements outside of Sound Transit property, key factors include the clear benefits for transit riders, demonstrable public support for specific investments, and the availability of matching funds from local jurisdictions and other partner agencies.</p> <p>Timing issues: given the long timelines for large transit capital and operational improvements, certain decisions regarding potential connections to transit happen during project scoping, which are solidified during the design phase. It is important for stakeholders to identify potential access improvements during these timeframes. Timing issues can also be mitigated if jurisdictions and partner agencies incorporate desired access improvements in local plans in advance of construction.</p>
<b>WSDOT</b>	<p>As opposed to local jurisdictions and transit agencies, WSDOT plays more of a secondary role when it comes to transit access investments.</p> <p>WSDOT is most influential from a regulatory and investment standpoint on state projects that may influence transit operations or when projects occur on state facilities.</p>	<p><b>Lead Implementer.</b> Typically only on projects that WSDOT is constructing, which may only have ancillary transit access benefits.</p> <p><b>Secondary Implementer.</b> Any issues that involve state facilities, right of way, or other property interests will implicate WSDOT.</p> <p><b>Regulatory Lead.</b> Certain HOV, toll, and parking management policy issues require WSDOT/Washington State legislative action.</p>	<p><b>State Sources.</b> State investments in transit access are typically identified within budgets of specific projects (e.g. increasing park and ride capacity in the 405 Master Plan) or are allocated as part of WSDOT's biennial budgets. Since these are ultimately approved by the State Legislature, WSDOT's influence is variable.</p> <p><b>Regional/Federal Sources.</b> WSDOT is able to compete for regionally managed FHWA STP and CMAQ funds, but are limited to only two applications in the regional competition, which makes internal competition for these applications very competitive and unlikely to be focused on transit access investments.</p>	<p>There is some uncertainty for how and by when to identify access elements as part of discrete project budgets to ensure their implementation.</p> <p>Timing issues: ensuring access investments that support large transit capital and operational improvements are funded in time to align with these projects can be tricky.</p>

Funding Source	Description	Eligible Projects and Entities	Next Available
<b>Sound Transit System Access Fund</b>	Provides \$100M allocated equally among ST's subareas to fund projects such as safe sidewalks and protected bike lanes, shared use paths, improved bus-rail integration, and new pick-up and drop-off areas that provide convenient access so that more people can use Sound Transit services.	Funds will be allocated based on an evaluation of the needs of customers using Sound Transit existing and planned bus and rail stations and connectivity with other modes. Sound Transit will partner with cities, counties, transit and state agencies and other stakeholders to leverage grants and matching funds. Projects that leverage funds through funding partnerships will receive strong consideration.	Additional information about the administration of these funds will be available in spring 2017.
<b>Sound Transit Access Allowance</b>	Project-level cost estimates for ST3 light rail and BRT projects based on the type of station area for projects that create safe, direct walking and bicycling routes to surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and community gathering places. Cost estimates amount to approximately \$270M.	The access allowance will fund a variety of projects at every light rail and bus rapid transit station area as part of ST3 based on the type of station (i.e. suburban, urban).	Additional information about the administration of these funds will be available in spring 2017.
<b>Sound Transit Bus-Rail Integration Allowance</b>	ST3 includes approximately \$100M in allowances to facilitate convenient passenger transfers between modes and to build off-street facilities at key stations for buses to lay over and maintain consistent schedules.	The bus-rail integration allowance will fund a variety of projects at specific locations where large amounts of passenger transfers are expected.	Additional information about the administration of these funds will be available in spring 2017.

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<b>FHWA STP + CMAQ (PSRC)</b>	FHWA STP and CMAQ funds are administered in a regional competition and four separate countywide competitions with the funds pooled and project sponsors indicating their preferred source of funding. The policy framework for administering these funds is premised on projects that support centers and the corridors that connect them, with projects funded in the regional competition benefiting regional centers/corridors and projects funded in the countywide competition benefiting countywide centers/corridors.	STP funds are flexible for a wide variety of transportation projects while the purpose of the CMAQ program is to fund transportation projects or programs that will contribute to attainment or maintenance of the national ambient air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter. Kitsap County is outside of the region's maintenance area so is ineligible for CMAQ funds, but does receive additional STP funds to compensate.	There will a competition for 2020-2022 FHWA STP and CMAQ funds in 2018. Approximately \$80M was available in the 2018-2020 competition held in 2016, with approximately \$48M available through the regional competition and approximately \$33M through the countywide processes.
<b>FHWA Nonmotorized Set-aside (PSRC through Countywide Process)</b>	As part of PSRC's policy framework, 10% of the combined FHWA STP and CMAQ funding allocations are taken off the top for nonmotorized projects. These funds are awarded through the countywide processes. A total of approximately \$20M was available specifically to nonmotorized projects in the 2018-2020 funding competition.	These funds are administered in the countywide process, so the entities eligible to compete in the countywide process can submit a variety of bicycle and pedestrian projects for consideration for this funding source.	There will be a competition for 2020-2022 FHWA STP and CMAQ funds in 2018. Approximately \$20M was available in the nonmotorized set-aside in the 2016 project selection process.
<b>FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program (PSRC)</b>	The Transportation Alternatives Program provides funding for projects and programs including on-street and off-street pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects that improve non-driver access to public transportation, community improvement activities such as historic preservation and vegetation management, recreational trails projects, and safe routes to schools projects.	Local governments, transit agencies, other public agencies (e.g. tribes, school districts), as well as nonprofit entities that are responsible for implementing traffic safety programs.	There will be a call for projects for the next round of TAP funding in the summer of 2017. There was approximately \$17M available in the previous process held in 2013.
<b>FTA Regional Process (PSRC)</b>	The intent of the FTA Regional Process is to select a limited number of regional, high-priority to receive the regional share of the PSRC-administered FTA funds (approximately 86% of FTA funds in the region are distributed to the agencies based on an earned share formula, which relates directly to the operating characteristics of each transit agency).	Transit agencies are the eligible entities. Projects are evaluated based on how well they serve centers and the corridors that connect them.	The next FTA regional competitive process will occur in 2017 with a call for projects expected in early 2017.

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<b>Complete Streets Grant Program (TIB)</b>	<p>Flexible money given to any city or county that has an adopted complete streets ordinance and shows an ethic of planning and building streets that use context sensitive solutions to accommodate all users, including pedestrians, transit users, cyclists, and motorists. Awards typically range between \$250,000 and \$500,000.</p>	<p>Any city or county that has an adopted complete streets ordinance may be nominated by an established nominating partner. Eligible entities must be nominated by an established nominating partner, which includes TIB-approved state agencies and non-profit organizations that have an interest in transportation or complete streets (current approved nominators can be seen here).</p>	<p>These funds are anticipated to be awarded on a biennial basis as part of the State biennial budget process. The next call for applications is expected to occur in 2018.</p>
<b>Pedestrian and Bicycle Grant Program (WSDOT)</b>	<p>The purpose of this program is to aid public agencies in funding cost-effective projects that reduce bicycle and pedestrian related collisions, and work to increase walking and biking. \$18.38M available in the 2017-2019 funding process.</p>	<p>Two types of eligible projects: construction project may include preliminary engineering, and design only projects that allow agencies the opportunity to engage with communities and stakeholder groups to develop and design projects that are supported and appeal to a wider range of users and stakeholders.</p>	<p>A call for project is typically held every other even-numbered year, with funding decisions made as part of the State biennial budget process in the year following the competition. The next call for projects is expect to occur in 2018.</p>
<b>Safe Routes to School Program (WSDOT)</b>	<p>The purpose of this program is to aid public agencies in funding cost-effective projects that increase the number of children walking and biking to school safely. \$20.6M available in the 2017-2019 funding process.</p>	<p>Funding for infrastructure projects within two miles of a school serving children K-12 as well as education and encouragement activities.</p>	<p>A call for project is typically held every other even-numbered year, with funding decisions made as part of the State biennial budget process in the year following the competition. The next call for projects is expect to occur in 2018.</p>
<b>Regional Mobility Grant Program (WSDOT)</b>	<p>The purpose of this program is to deliver mobility projects that are cost-effective, reduce travel delay for people and goods, improve connectivity between counties and regional population centers, and are consistent with local and regional transportation and land use plans. There is typically approximately \$60M available each biennium.</p>	<p>Capital construction, equipment acquisition, and operating projects are funded through this program. All public agencies except for Sound Transit are eligible to apply for regional mobility grants.</p>	<p>A call for project is typically held every other even-numbered year, with funding decisions made as part of the State biennial budget process in the year following the competition. The next call for projects is expect to occur in 2018.</p>

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<b>Small Starts (FTA)</b>	<p>This discretionary program requires projects (specifically, new fixed guideway projects, extensions to existing fixed guideway systems, or corridor-based bus rapid transit projects with a total estimated capital cost of less than \$300 million and that are seeking less than \$100 million in Section 5309 CIG program funds) to proceed through a multi-step, multi-year process to be eligible for funding with FTA evaluation and rating required at various points in the process. The first step is called Project Development and the second is a construction grant agreement.</p>	<p>State and local governments as well as transit agencies are eligible for Small Starts funding, which can be used for design and construction of new fixed guideways or extensions of existing fixed guideways, as well as design and construction of corridor-based bus rapid transit projects.</p>	<p>Instead of an annual call for applications and subsequent selection of awardees, projects seeking Small Starts funding must complete a series of steps over several years. For Small Starts projects, the law requires completion of one phase (Project Development) in advance of a receipt of a construction grant agreement.</p>
<b>New Starts (FTA)</b>	<p>This discretionary program requires projects (specifically, new fixed guideway projects or extensions to existing fixed guideway systems with a total estimated capital cost of \$300 million or more, or that are seeking \$100 million or more in Section 5309 CIG program funds) to proceed through a multi-step, multi-year process to be eligible for funding with FTA evaluation and rating required at various points in the process. The first step is called Project Development, the second Engineering, and the third a Full Funding Grant Agreement for construction.</p>	<p>State and local governments as well as transit agencies are eligible for New Starts funds, which can be used for design and construction of new fixed guideways or extensions to existing fixed guideways.</p>	<p>Instead of an annual call for applications and subsequent selection of awardees, projects seeking New Starts funding must complete a series of steps over several years. For New Starts projects, the law requires completion of two phases (Project Development and Engineering) in advance of receipt of a construction grant agreement.</p>
<b>TIGER (US DOT)</b>	<p>The TIGER discretionary grants program seeks to award projects that advance US DOT's strategic goals for the nation's transportation system, and typically supports multimodal and multijurisdictional projects which are difficult to fund through traditional federal programs. Successful TIGER projects leverage resources, encourage partnership, catalyze investment and growth, fill a critical void in the transportation system or provide a substantial benefit to the area in which the project is located.</p>	<p>State, local, and tribal governments as well as transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations, and other subdivisions of State or local governments are eligible.</p>	<p>TIGER awards are typically made every year depending in recent years on specific Congressional authorizations. Information about the 2017 call for TIGER applications is not available at this time.</p>