



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 1

COUNCILMEMBER LISA HERBOLD

February 16, 2018

Goran Sparrman, Interim Director
Seattle Department of Transportation

Dear Director Sparrman,

I am writing to request that SDOT explore opportunities to improve off-peak transit service on Route 56, which connects the Alki and Admiral neighborhoods to Downtown. As District 1 Councilmember, I regularly hear from residents of the Admiral and Alki neighborhoods about the lack of daytime and evening bus service to and from Downtown.

Out of 30 Urban Centers and Urban Villages in Seattle designated for increased growth, the Admiral Urban Village is the only one with no off-peak bus service to Downtown. Improved connections to the Alki and Admiral neighborhoods were recommended in the 2016 Transit Master Plan for "Priority Upgrade to Frequent" as part of the Frequent Transit Network.

I am requesting you do an assessment of the costs associated with adding 60-minute off-peak service to Route 56, and inform me of the City's funding capacity to meet this need with Seattle Transportation Benefit District funds passed by Seattle voters in Proposition 1 in late 2014, which directly funds bus service in Seattle. I would also like to know the timeline for making decisions on the September service changes.

I understand that King County Metro is exploring potential September 2019 service changes for West Seattle, Burien, and Vashon Island routes. I will be asking them to consider adding Alki and Admiral off-peak service in light of that work.

Background:

After the State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act in 1990, to stop regional sprawl and direct growth into designated areas, the City of Seattle adopted the Urban Village Strategy in its passage of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan. By 1999, the City had completed passage of neighborhood plans throughout Seattle, to implement the state Growth Management Act, and to direct growth into areas with enhanced services to match the growth.

Seattle has of six Urban Centers, six Hub Urban Villages and eighteen Residential Urban Villages. Of those 30 areas targeted for growth in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, only Admiral lacks off-peak transit service to Downtown.

Figures from the Seattle Transit Master Plan illustrate the unique status of the Admiral Urban Village. Figure 3-1 (attachment 2) shows the City Capacity Transit Vision for High Capacity Transit Corridors. Figure 1-2 (attachment 3) shows how these current and planned corridors align with the Urban Centers, Hub Urban Villages, and Residential Urban Villages adopted in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan.

All of Seattle's six Urban Centers and six Hub Urban Villages are included in a corridor—nearly all of which go to Downtown. In addition, 16 of Seattle's 18 Residential Urban Villages are included in a corridor. The only ones that aren't included in one of the transit corridors for RapidRide, Light Rail, Priority Bus Corridors, and the Streetcar are 1) Admiral and 2) South Park.

Figure 4-1 (attachment 4) shows the status of the Frequent Transit Network as of March 2016; it notes a few areas on the map for "Priority Upgrade to Frequent", including the Admiral Urban Village.

The Frequent Transit network included in the Transit Master Plan is designed to provide service every 15 minutes or better, 18-24 hours a day, seven days a week. Attachment 5 shows bus routes that meet the frequent transit service level for land use purposes (SMC 23.84A.038), i.e. 15 minutes or less for at least 12 hours per day, 6 days a week, and transit headways of 30 minutes or less for at least 18 hours every day.

The current Frequent Transit Network serves 29 of the 30 areas targeted for growth, but not Admiral.

Attachment 6, from the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan, shows the Planned Frequent Transit Network, which includes SW Admiral Way through the Urban Village.

It appears that among Seattle's 30 Urban Centers and Urban Villages, the Admiral Urban Village is one of only two not included the High Capacity Transit Network, and uniquely 1) is not served by the current Frequent Transit Network, and 2) has no off-peak bus service to Downtown. In addition, it saw a decrease in bus service to Downtown, with the 2012 elimination of off-peak service to Downtown on bus route 56. No buses leave for Downtown after 9 a.m., and return buses from Downtown operate only during evening rush hour.

Given the geographic distribution of jobs and work patterns, direct access to Downtown is important. Unless we are able to provide sufficient bus service to the Admiral Urban Village, it is less likely it will be able to accommodate its share of growth.

I understand that Metro Service prioritizes crowding, schedule reliability and service frequency. Proposition 1 noted that revenues would be used for these purposes, consistent with the Seattle Transit Master Plan and Metro's Service Guidelines.

However, I believe we are missing an important element of equity in not considering how we can increase ridership in areas with low ridership and minimal options available to improve ridership. The lack of off-peak service to Downtown for an Urban Village also does not seem consistent with our approach to managing growth.

While King County Metro's Service Guidelines target a minimum service level of at least every 60 minutes, even an exception for less frequent off-peak service would be an improvement.

Sincerely,



Lisa Herbold

Seattle Urban Centers and Urban Villages

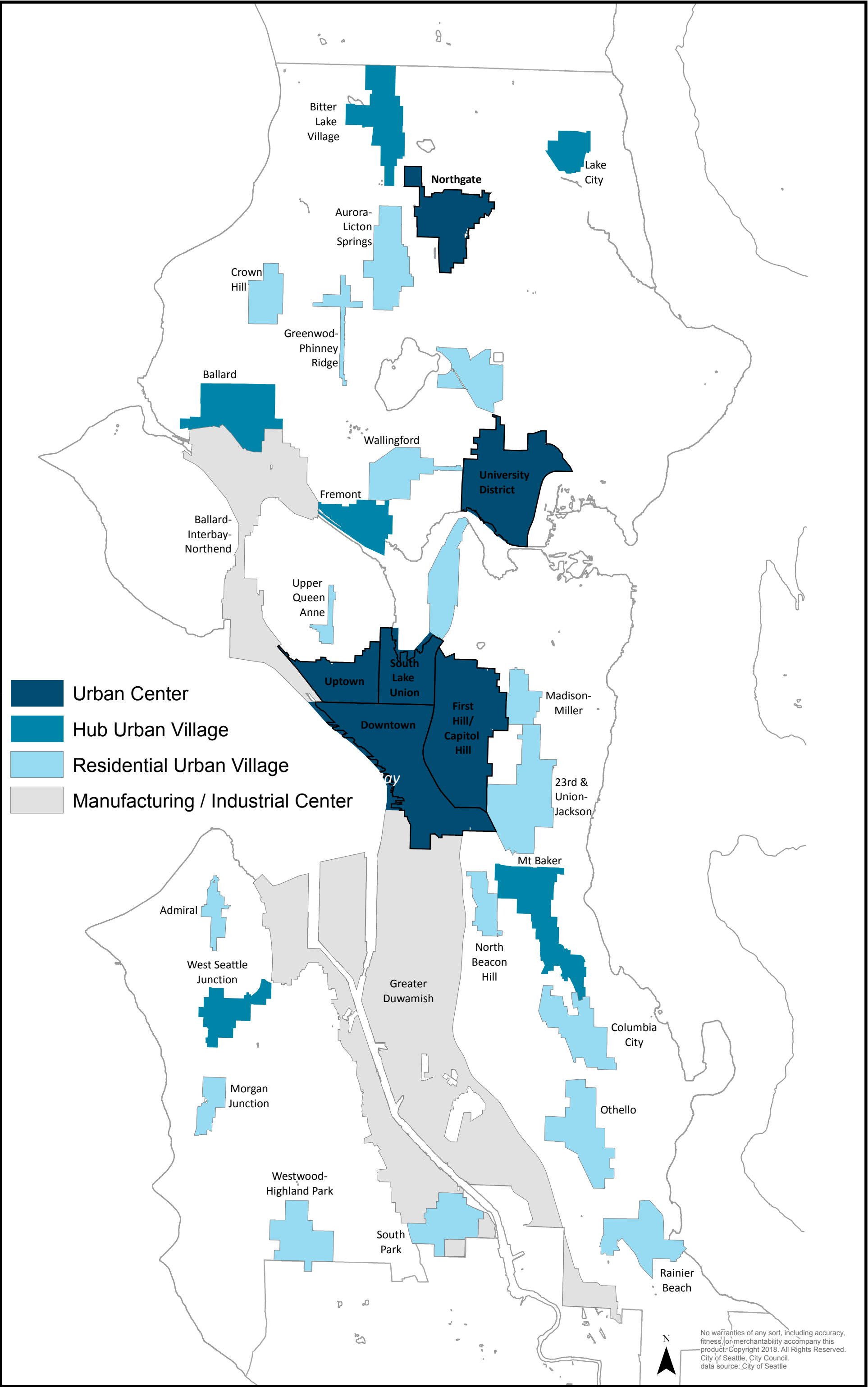
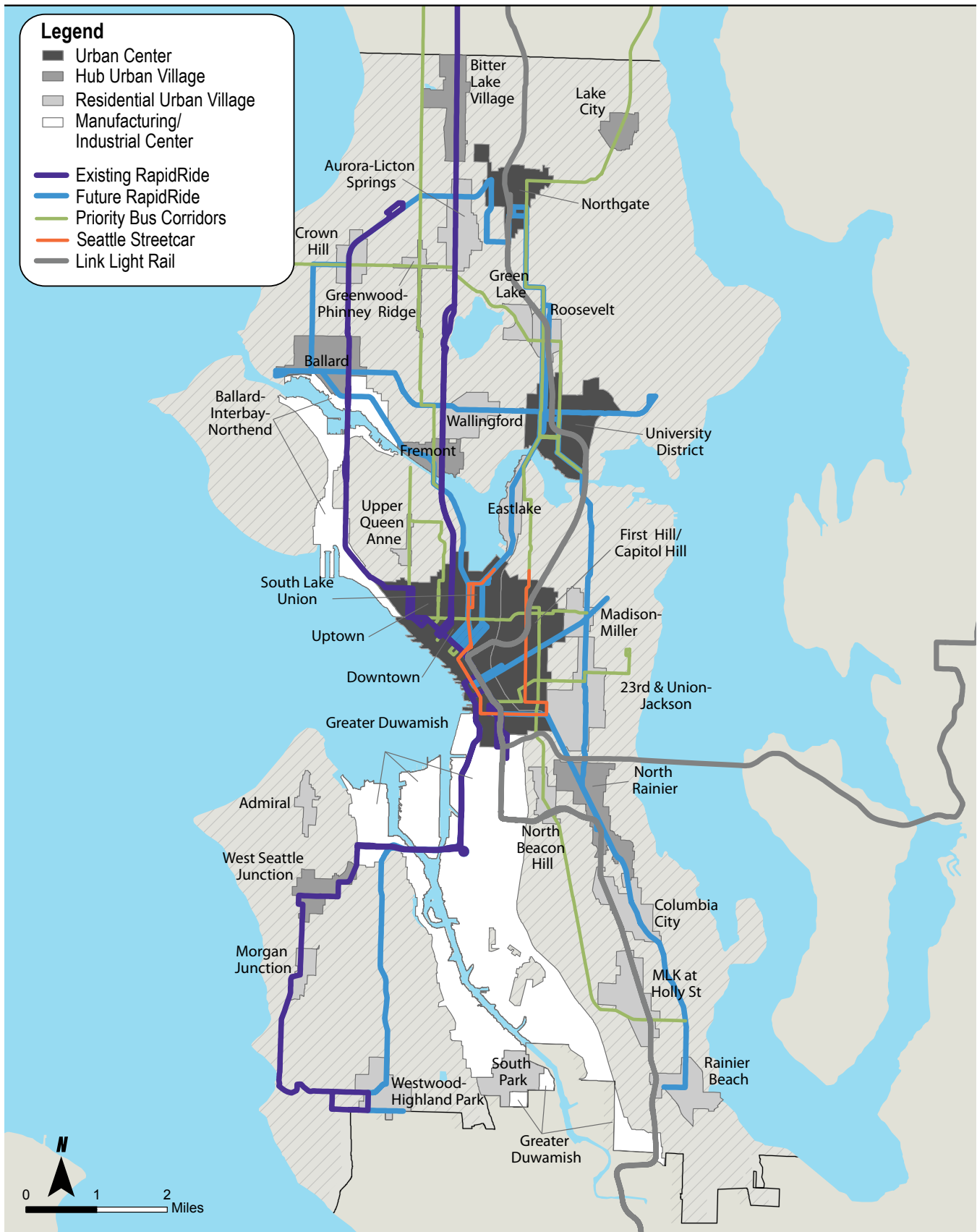


FIGURE 3-1 SEATTLE LONG-RANGE HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT VISION



FIGURE 1-2 PROJECTED GROWTH IN SEATTLE URBAN CENTERS AND VILLAGES, 2008-2030



44% of population growth and 63% of job growth between 2008 and 2030 is expected to occur in the Center City and adjacent neighborhoods including Uptown, First Hill/Capitol Hill, and South Lake Union.



Attachment 5

Seattle Bus Routes Providing Frequent Transit Service

Route	End 1	End 2	Which Urban Center does the route serve?
2	SPU	Madrona Park	Downtown, First Hill
3&4	SPU	23rd & Jackson	Uptown, Downtown, First Hill
5	Shoreline CC	Downtown	SLU, Uptown, Downtown
7	Rainier Beach	Downtown	Downtown
8	Seattle Center	Mt. Baker	Uptown, SLU, Downtown, Capitol Hill
10	Capitol Hill	Downtown	Capitol Hill, Downtown
21	Westwood Village North Queen	Downtown	Downtown
31&32	Anne	University District	U District
36	Othello	Downtown	Downtown
40	Northgate	Downtown	Northgate, SLU, Downtown
41	Lake City	Downtown	Northgate, Downtown
44	Ballard	UW	U District
45	Loyal Heights	UW	U District
48	Mt. Baker	UW	U District
49	U District	Downtown	U District, Capitol Hill, Downtown
60	Westwood Village	Broadway	1st Hill/Capitol Hill
62	Sand Point	Downtown	Downtown
65	Jackson Park	U District Children's Hospital	U District
67	Northgate	Hospital	Northgate, U District
70	U District	Downtown	U District, SLU Downtown
75	Northgate	U District	Northgate, U District
131&132	South Park	Downtown	Downtown
C	Westwood Village	SLU	Downtown, SLU
D	Crown Hill	Downtown	Uptown, Downtown
E	Aurora Village	Downtown	Downtown

Transportation Figure 5
Planned Frequent Transit Service Network

