



SAMMAMISH TRANSIT PLAN

FUTURE CONDITIONS TRANSIT GAPS ANALYSIS

OCTOBER 2023

PREPARED FOR:

CITY OF SAMMAMISH



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present transit-related gaps in the City of Sammamish under future conditions. This will start with a summary of the planned future year growth, anticipated travel patterns, the planned transit network, and the future transportation network, including Capital Improvement Projects that may impact access to transit. With an understanding of the planned future conditions, this report will highlight gaps related to transit service and access to transit service. Additionally, this report will present strategies to improve transit access and service. The findings from this report will serve to inform the Capital Improvements Project list and planned updates to the transit-specific goals and policies in the City of Sammamish Comprehensive Plan.

AVAILABLE DATA

Data used to analyze planned growth, travel patterns, and walksheds, bikesheds, and drivesheds came from the Puget Sound Regional Council 4k travel demand model. This model assumed completion of the Kirkland to Issaquah Link light rail extension for the future year.

The travel pattern data from the PSRC 4k trip-based travel demand model includes a base year and a future year. The base year is used to represent existing conditions, while the future year represents 2044. A select link analysis was completed for zones within the City of Sammamish to get origin-destination data for both base year and future year during the PM peak hour. This data was interpreted to represent typical evening travel data for residents of Sammamish.

Some data used for existing conditions analysis is not available for the future conditions analysis. This includes demographic data on race, vehicle availability, and income. The City of Sammamish has not yet adopted growth targets for 2044. Accordingly, this report uses high-level assumptions for where increases in population density are expected.

Data for future year transit service is limited to routing and anticipated frequencies. By 2025, King County Metro will revise service in Sammamish under the “East Link Connections” project, scheduled along with the opening of the Link Light Rail 2 Line connecting Downtown Seattle to Downtown Redmond through Mercer Island and Bellevue. The only major change to routing expected for service in Sammamish is the removal of Route 216 and increased frequency (including weekend service) of Route 269. Route 269 will be modified slightly outside of Sammamish City limits to connect to Mercer Island Station and Marymoor Village station in Redmond. Modification of bus stop locations within the City limits is possible, but are not known at this time.

PLANNED GROWTH

The City of Sammamish is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan which includes future land use designations. As part of this update process, there are several areas near the existing transit alignment along 228th Avenue that have been identified by the City for urban residential and mixed-use development. These land use types have higher housing and commercial densities than neighborhood residential and therefore are more supportive of frequent fixed-route transit service.

Urban residential and mixed-use locations are planned along 228th Avenue between Issaquah-Pine Lake Road SE and NE 8th Street, particularly surrounding the Town Center near the intersection with 4th Street or near the South Sammamish Park & Ride. Higher-density land uses along the 228th Avenue corridor can be expected to increase the city's transit ridership.

EXISTING AND FUTURE TRAVEL PATTERNS

Understanding existing and future travel patterns can help identify gaps in transit service. Existing and future travel patterns were analyzed using the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) 4k travel demand model. To simplify travel pattern analysis, the Puget Sound region was divided into the following subareas:

- Sammamish
- Issaquah
- Bellevue
- Renton
- Redmond Microsoft
- Other Redmond
- North Bend and Snoqualmie
- Downtown Seattle
- Other Seattle
- Eastside North
- Eastside South
- South
- East
- North
- West

These regions are displayed in Figure 1.

TAZ PARTITIONS

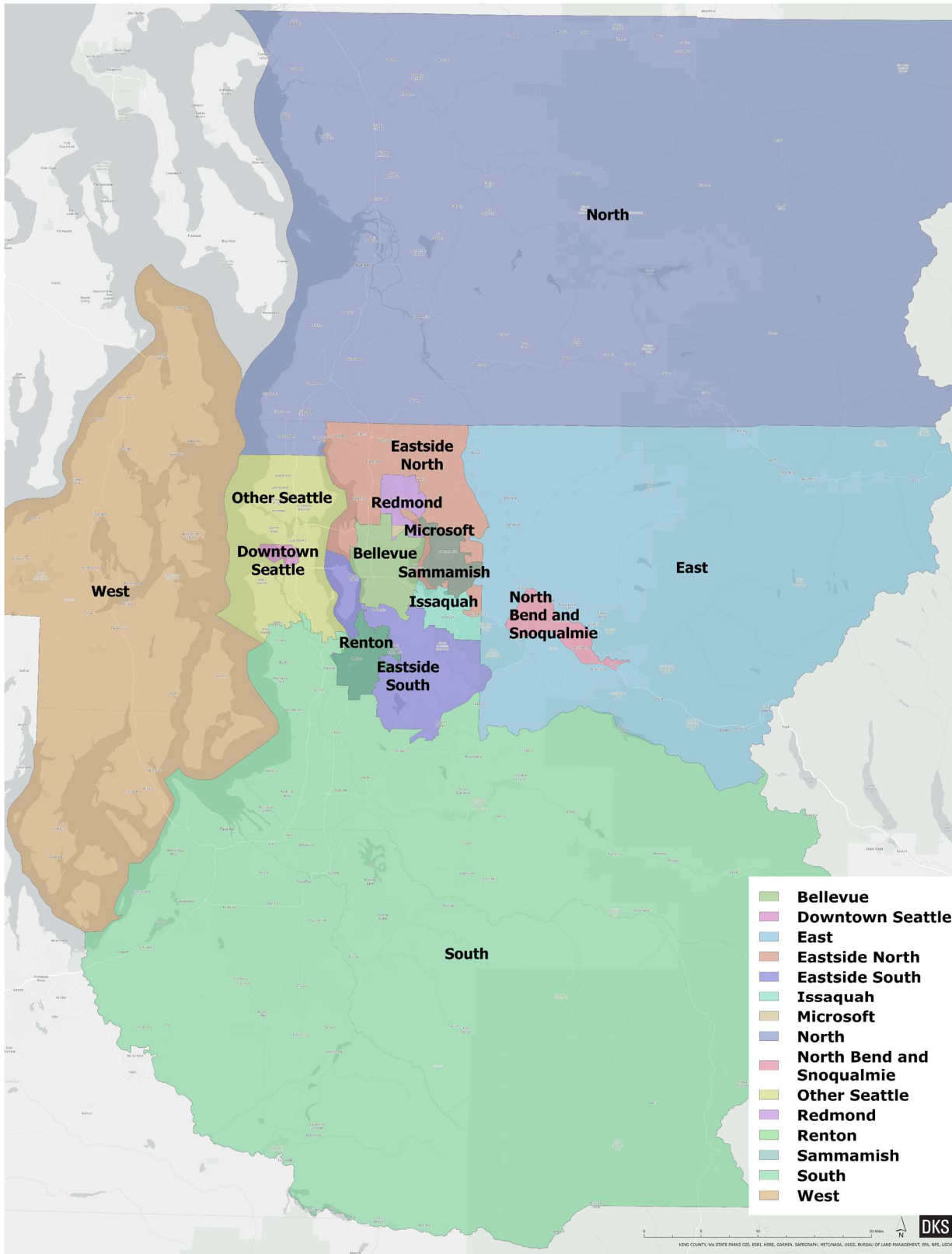


FIGURE 1: TRAVEL PATTERN SUBAREAS

Existing and future travel patterns are displayed in Figures 2 and 3. This analysis was completed for the model base year and future year. These years represent existing conditions and 2044 conditions, respectively. The maps display the origin of trips ending in the City of Sammamish during the PM peak hour. The displayed travel patterns are meant to represent typical evening weekday travel patterns for Sammamish residents.

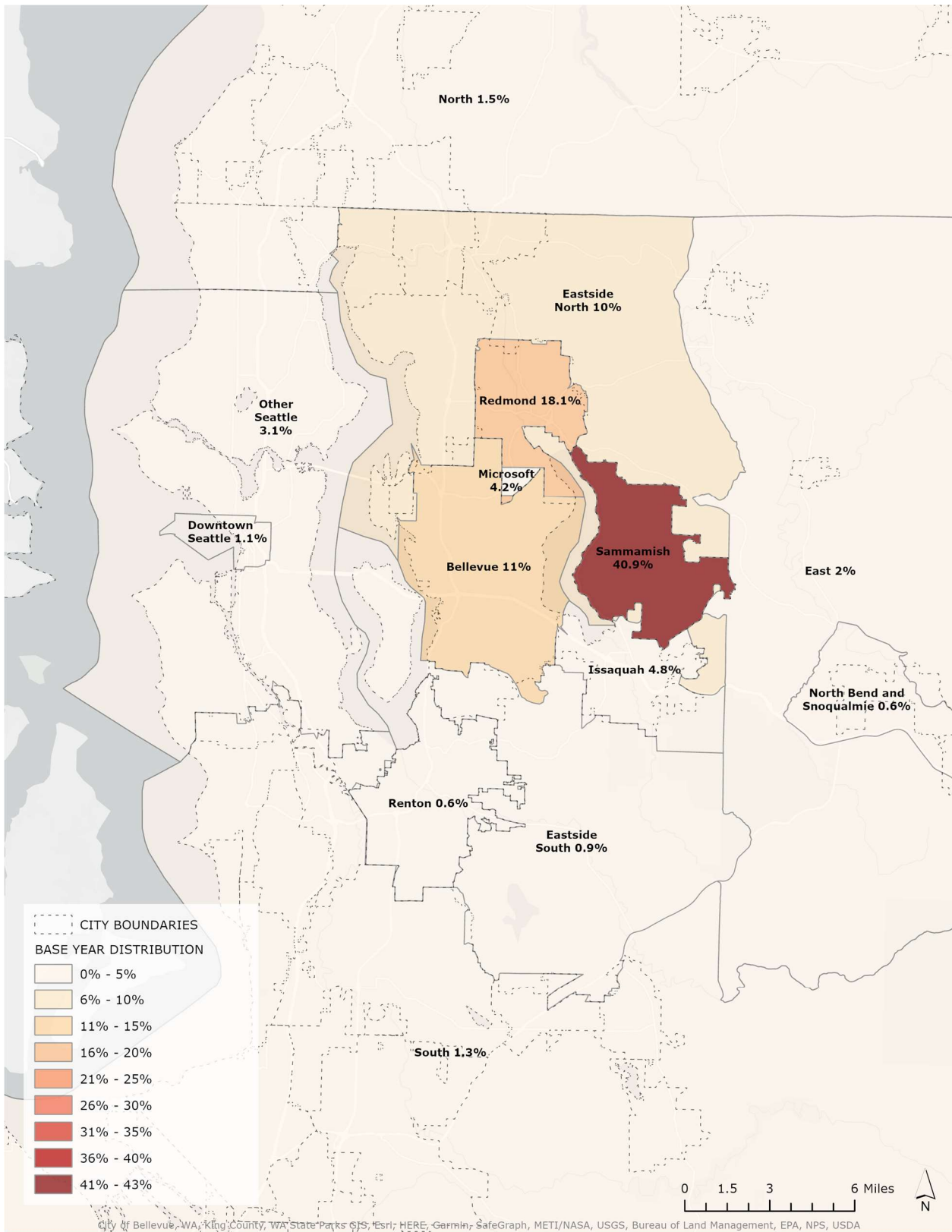


FIGURE 2: BASE YEAR PSRC MODEL PM TRAVEL PATTERN – SUBAREA ORIGINS DESTINED FOR SAMMAMISH

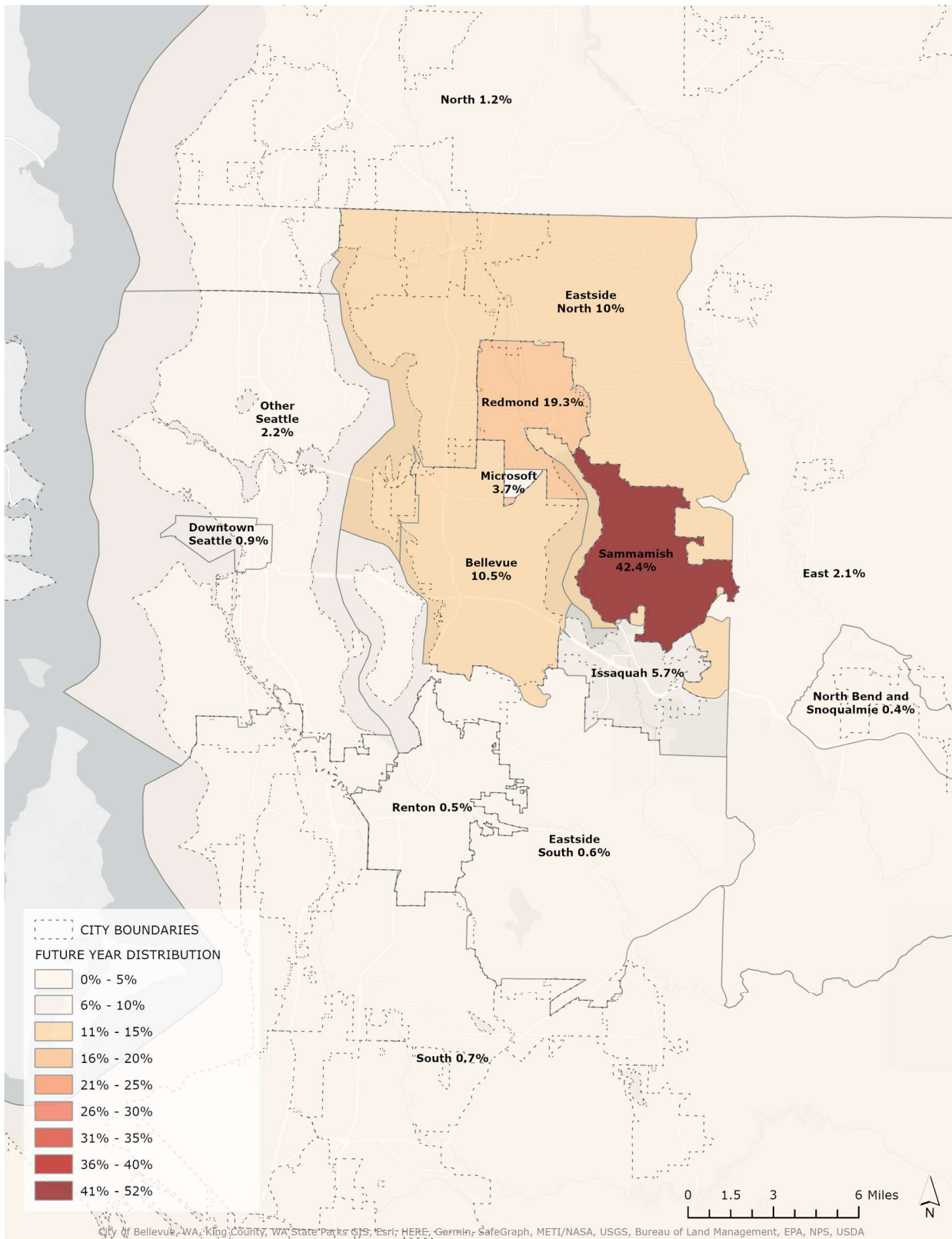


FIGURE 3: FUTURE YEAR PSRC MODEL PM TRAVEL PATTERN – SUBAREA ORIGINS DESTINED FOR SAMMAMISH

The base year and future year travel patterns are similar, with the majority of PM peak hour trips occurring within Sammamish. Outside of Sammamish the most popular trip origins are Redmond, Bellevue, Eastside North, and Issaquah. Eastside North includes Kirkland, Bothell, Kenmore, Woodinville, and unincorporated King County north of Sammamish. The future year travel patterns from the PSRC travel demand model can be used to approximate the anticipated travel patterns in 2044, which is the horizon year for Sammamish’s Comprehensive Plan update. A summary of these trips is also shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: BASE YEAR AND FUTURE YEAR PM PEAK TRAVEL PATTERNS- SHARE OF TRIPS DESTINED FOR SAMMAMISH

Origin	Base Year % of Total Trips	Future Year % of Total Trips
Sammamish	41%	42%
Redmond Other	18%	19%
Bellevue	11%	11%
Eastside North	10%	10%
Issaquah	5%	6%
Redmond Microsoft	4%	4%
Other Seattle	3%	2%
East	2%	2%
North	2%	1%
South	1%	1%
Downtown Seattle	1%	1%
Eastside South	1%	1%
North Bend and Snoqualmie	1%	0%
Renton	1%	0%
West	0%	0%

PLANNED TRANSIT SERVICE

Existing transit service, including walksheds, bikesheds, and drivesheds, is summarized in the Existing Conditions Report, which also includes an equity analysis based on low-income and zero-vehicle households. This analysis cannot be fully duplicated for the future conditions due to limited data availability for future land use and future demographics. This section focuses on the planned transit network in the short term (2025) and long term (2044) and identifies anticipated deficiencies in transit service based on planned growth and forecasted travel patterns.

PLANNED TRANSIT NETWORK CHANGES – NEAR TERM (2025)

REGIONAL

King County Metro is finalizing their recommended service network for the East Link Connections project prior to the opening of the Link 2 Line. The Link 2 Line will connect light rail from Seattle to Downtown Redmond with stops in Mercer Island, Bellevue, and Redmond Technology Center. The associated East Link Connections Project includes re-routing many of the existing bus routes serving eastside communities as well as the addition of several new routes and the elimination of others. Several other routes are planned for increased frequencies to enhance overall transit service.

LOCAL

Although the transit will run along the same alignment within Sammamish (Issaquah-Pine Lake Road SE, 228th Avenue, and Sahalee Way NE), there are two significant changes to transit service in Sammamish included in the East Link Connections project. The first is the elimination of Route 216, which is already planned for removal in September 2023. The second is an increase in frequency of Route 269, which will run along I-90 and terminate at Mercer Island Station. It will also connect to Marymoor Village Station in Redmond. This route is planned to run with 15-minute headways during the weekday peak, 30-minute headways during the rest of the weekday, and weekend service with 30-minute headways from 5am to 7pm. Route 269 will connect to the Marymoor Village light rail station and to Mercer Island Station through Sammamish and Issaquah. Route 554, operated by Sound Transit, will continue to operate with limited service in Sammamish. Figure 4 shows the planned 2025 transit network in Sammamish.

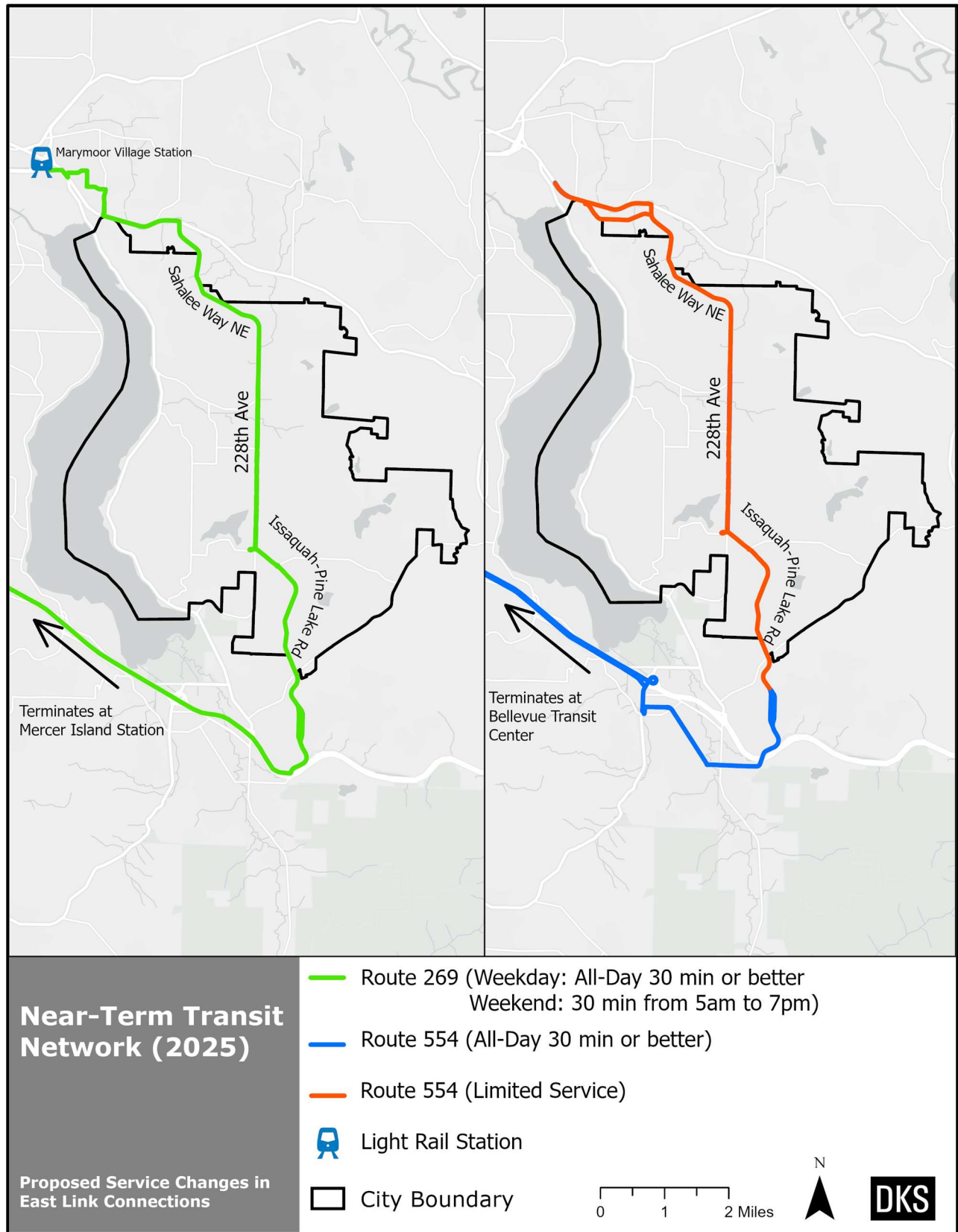


FIGURE 4: PLANNED 2025 TRANSIT MAP

PLANNED TRANSIT NETWORK CHANGES – LONG TERM (2044)

The Link Light rail 4 Line, which connects Kirkland to Issaquah, generally following the alignments of I-90 and I-405, is currently expected to be complete in 2041 or 2044, depending on funding availability. For the purposes of this document, we will assume an opening year of 2044. This new light rail service is planned to serve Issaquah with six-minute headways during peak periods and a single station in Central Issaquah which would serve as the end of the line.

With the light rail opening, some service changes to King County Metro and Sound Transit operated bus routes are anticipated with the intent to improve transit connections to the new light rail service. However, the extent of these service changes and details such as the stop locations and potential rerouting are unknown at this time. It is expected that residents of Sammamish will be able to access the new light rail station in Issaquah via a bus or driving to the proposed park & ride. According to Sound Transit’s ST3 Plan, the new station is expected to have 500 parking spaces.

BEYOND FIXED-ROUTE TRANSIT

Options beyond fixed-route transit that are available today are still anticipated to be available in both the near term (2025) and long term (2044). Today, Sammamish residents have access to Metro Flex and vanpools. Metro Flex is an on-demand neighborhood transit service that allows community members to ride anywhere in their service area for the same cost as a bus trip. Beginning in October 2023, King County Metro will initiate a pilot expansion of Metro Flex which will connect to the existing Sammamish service and extend into Issaquah. The pilot expansion will be evaluated at a later date to determine if the expansion will continue after 2025. For those who qualify under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), Metro also provides the paratransit service known as Access Transportation.

These services are anticipated to continue to support residents in the future, though funding availability is a consideration. More information on each of these services is available in the Existing Conditions Report.

ANTICIPATED DEFICIENCIES IN TRANSIT SERVICE

NEAR-TERM 2025

Travel pattern data shows that Redmond and Bellevue, along with other Eastside communities such as Kirkland, Kenmore, and Bothell are the most common origins of travelers to Sammamish in the evening peak hour.

The added link light rail service with connections via Route 269 will improve regional transit accessibility from Sammamish. Link light rail will run every 8 minutes during peak hours. Many Sammamish trips come from and go to Redmond and Bellevue. This connection may allow these trips to be made via public transportation.

While parts of Kirkland, Bothell, and Kenmore may be accessible via bus, two or more transfers will be required. This may be considered a deficiency in transit service for Sammamish.

LONG-TERM 2044

The opening of Link Light Rail Line 4 in 2044 will provide Sammamish residents options for reaching Bellevue or Seattle. Bellevue will be accessible via the light rail from Issaquah, or via the light rail from Redmond. Seattle will be accessible via the light rail from Redmond, or via a transfer from the light rail line in Issaquah. The light rail station in Issaquah is anticipated to be accessible from Sammamish via bus or driving to the park & ride.

Three Sound Transit Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines, which is bus service typically characterized by high frequencies, increased stop spacing, and transit priority infrastructure such as bus lanes, are planned to open in 2028 and 2029 connecting Bellevue to Lynnwood and Shoreline to Bothell. A transfer to these BRT routes can take riders to Kirkland, Woodinville, Bothell, Lynnwood, Burien, Tukwila, Renton, Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, Seattle, and Kenmore. However, depending on destination and the availability of a vehicle to use the park & rides, these trips may require two to three transfers. While the new service provides a benefit to Sammamish, the requirement for multiple transfers may still be considered a service deficiency for Sammamish.

TRANSIT ACCESS

Non-motorized forms of transportation, such as walking and cycling, play a critical role in providing first and last-mile connections to public transit, but often face access gaps in the form of inadequate pedestrian crosswalks, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities. To address these gaps, an analysis was conducted to identify potential areas for improvements for non-motorized infrastructure elements, with a focus on enhancing accessibility to existing and future public transit stops. Access to transit also includes park & ride availability, capacity, and occupancy. Many commuters who do not have easy non-motorized access to transit stops opt to drive to a park & ride instead.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The City of Sammamish's Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) identifies some projects that will improve access to transit. One TIP project is the Sidewalk Gap and Non-Motorized Program. The program is funded at \$200,000 per year. Projects are prioritized based on several criteria, one being proximity to a transit stop. The program's intent is to provide or enhance pedestrian and multi-modal connectivity within the community. Identified projects near the transit routes include paving a gravel path on the north side of SE 30th Street from 228th Avenue SE to 224th Avenue SE and constructing a sidewalk and bike lane on the south side along NE 22nd Street from 228th Avenue SE to 229th Avenue NE.

Some additional projects identified in the TIP that will improve access to transit are the following:

- Sahalee Way NE: City Limits to 28th PI / 223rd Ave NE (TR-115(05)): will improve Sahalee Way NE from the City Limits to 28th PI / 223rd Ave NE to a three-lane road section with a bike lane, curb, gutter, and sidewalk on the west side and shoulder on the east side. Bus pullouts and sidewalk for transit stops are also planned.
- Issaquah-Pine Lake Rd: SE 44th – SE 32nd, PH. 1 (TR-02): will aim to improve traffic flow, non-motorized uses, and safety for all users along Issaquah-Pine Lake Road SW from SE 32nd Way to SW 44th St.

A separate deliverable for this Transit Study will supplement this list with potential transit-supportive CIP projects with specific locations and planning level cost estimates. This list will include both access to transit and speed and reliability projects. Recommended projects for the CIP list deliverable will be informed by the analysis completed in this report.

While not directly related to transit access, potential TIP projects can also improve transit speed and reliability. Some of these project types may include installing roundabouts and improving intersection capacity. These additional projects identified in the TIP that are expected to improve transit speed reliability are the following:

- [WSDOT] SR202 / Sahalee Way NE Intersection (TR-19): will install a metered roundabout at the SR202 and Sahalee Way NE intersection to manage traffic congestion.
- [Issaquah] Issaquah-Pine Lake Road (IPLR) Ph. 3-48th to Issaquah-Fall City Road (IFCR) (TR-27): will improve capacity of the corridor and intersection along Issaquah-Pine Lake Rd between SE 48th St to SE Issaquah-Fall City Rd.
- [King County] Sahalee Way – SR202 to North City Limits (TR-48): will widen Sahalee Way from SR202 to North City Limits to improve capacity.

Please note that the three projects listed above are regional improvements that will not be funded by the City. Partnerships and coordination with several agencies and stakeholders will be required to develop and construct these projects.

CROSSINGS

Appropriate street crossings play a vital role in ensuring safe and convenient access to public transit. Pedestrian infrastructure such as crosswalks and signals improve pedestrian safety and reduce the time required for passengers to access transit stops, promoting transit ridership and improving access to essential services. Therefore, investment in appropriate street crossings is critical for promoting equitable and sustainable transit service.

The assessment of crossings along existing and future transit corridors was based on three key criteria: distance from transit stops, length of crossing across corridor right-of-way, and sight distance for oncoming vehicles. Distances exceeding 300ft from a transit stop were deemed excessive and closer crossing locations are recommended. Long crossings across wide arterial streets can create unsafe conditions for pedestrians and require protection from vehicular traffic. Vehicular sight distance is critical in ensuring drivers have enough time to yield to pedestrians

using marked crosswalks. Based on these criteria, the analysis identified the following locations as transit stops that are missing marked pedestrian crossings:

- Issaquah-Pine Lake Road SE at Bus Stops 81735 and 81737 (no crosswalk pavement markings and no curb ramps on the northbound side)
- Issaquah-Pine Lake Road SE at Bus Stops 81847 and 81738 (no crosswalk pavement markings)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stop 81714 (midblock stop more than 300 feet from a crossing location)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stop 81678 (no pedestrian crossing on the south leg of the intersection with SE 20th Street)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stop 81674 (no pedestrian crossing on the south leg of the intersection with SE 16th Street)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stop 81703 (no pedestrian crossing on the south leg of the intersection with SE 10th Street)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stop 81687 (no pedestrian crossing on the north leg of the intersection with SE 8th Street)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stops 81672 and 81724 (no pedestrian crossing on the north leg of the intersection with SE 4th Street / Crusader Way)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stops 81670 and 81726 (no pedestrian crossing on the south leg of the intersection with E Main Street)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stop 81677 (midblock stop more than 300 feet from a crossing location)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stops 81880 and 81760 (no pedestrian crossing at NE 14th Street)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stops 81870 and 81871 (no pedestrian crossing at NE 18th Place)
- 228th Avenue SE at Bus Stops 81825 and 81861 (no pedestrian crossing at NE 22nd Street)
- Sahalee Way NE at Bus Stops 81840 and 81842 (no pedestrian crossing at NE 28th Place)
- Sahalee Way NE at Bus Stops 81810 and 81852 (no pedestrian crossing at Sahalee Drive E)
- Sahalee Way NE at Bus Stops 81800 and 81790 (no pedestrian crossing at NE 36th Street)

These locations should be further studied to determine if a crossing is appropriate. The locations of these missing crossings are shown in Figure 5.

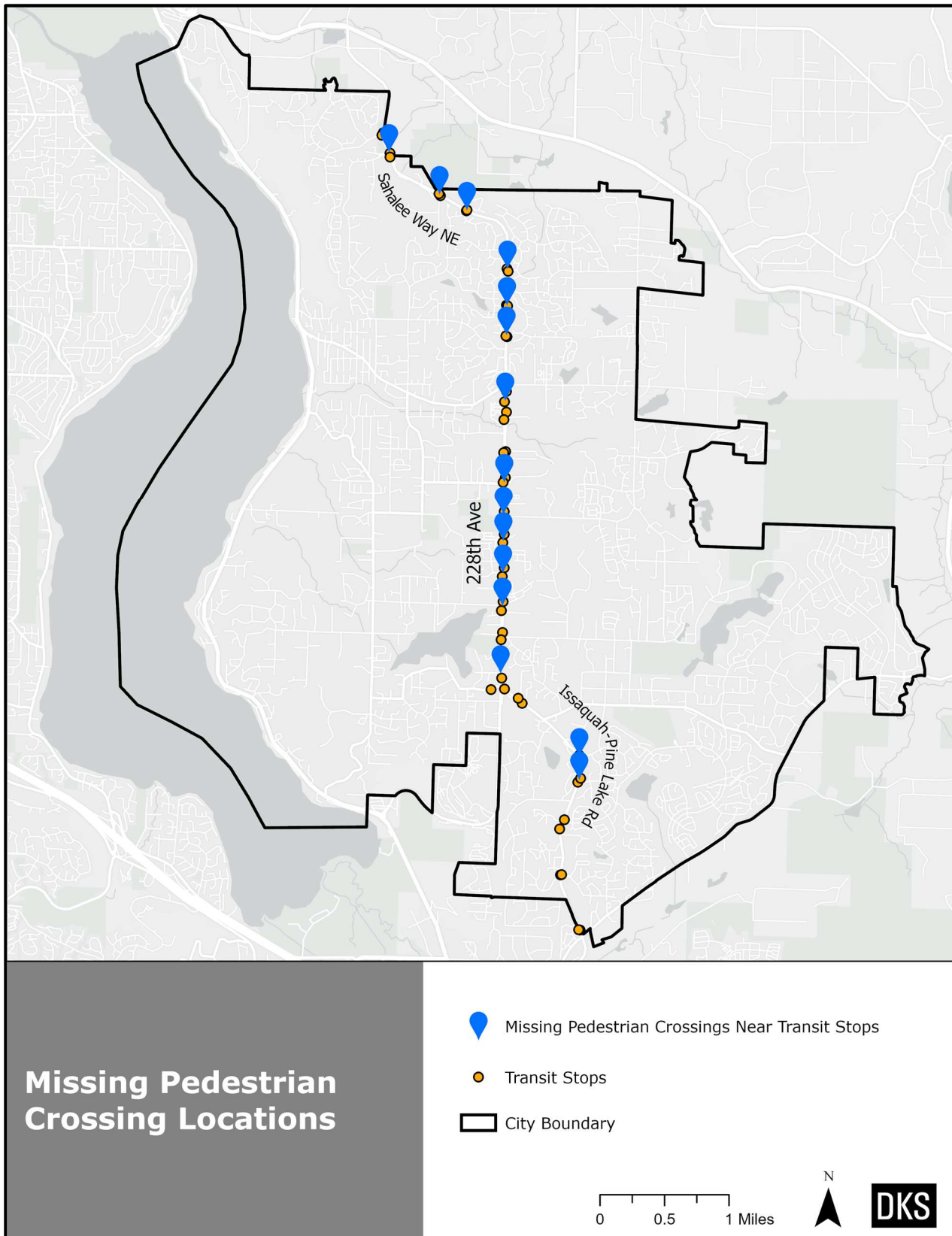


FIGURE 5: EXISTING BUS STOPS WITH MISSING PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are crucial in facilitating transit service, as they can provide a safe non-motorized route to the transit stop. They offer a safe and convenient way for residents to reach transit stops, leading to increased ridership and improved accessibility. They also provide a waiting zone for riders waiting for the bus. The speed limit along Sammamish’s transit corridor ranges from 35-45 miles per hour, a speed that would make most pedestrians uncomfortable standing in the shoulder. Therefore, investing in sidewalks is essential for ensuring equitable access to transit and fostering healthy and vibrant communities.

The arterial that carries the transit route In Sammamish, Sahalee Way NE/ 228th Ave NE/ Issaquah-Pine Lake Road, has sidewalk on at least one side of the road south of NE 25th Way. It is completely lacking sidewalks on Sahalee Way north of NE 25th Way. Some bus stops are in a location with a narrow shoulder and no amenities, see Figure 6. South of NE 25th Way, some areas have narrow sidewalks lacking a full pedestrian access area, see Figure 7. Some areas have comfortable sidewalks with an amenity area, see Figure 8.



FIGURE 6: NO SIDEWALK AT THE BUS STOP AT SAHALEE WAY AND NE 28TH PL/223RD AVE NE



FIGURE 7: NARROW SIDEWALK AT THE BUS STOP AT 228TH AVE NE/NE 25TH WAY



FIGURE 8: SIDEWALK ON ONE SIDE OF THE ROADWAY AT THE BUS STOP AT 228TH AVE NE/NE 14TH STREET

On 228th Ave NE north of NE 11th PI and on Issaquah-Pine Lake Road, south of SE 32nd Way, sidewalk is only present on one side of the roadway. The CIP TR-02 covers the area of Issaquah-Pine Lake Road. The existing condition can be seen in Figure 7, where the northbound bus stop has no waiting area. Generally, between NE 11th PI and SE 32nd Way, the transit route has good quality sidewalks on both sides of the street. Much of this route also has a landscaped buffer area separating the pedestrians from the roadway.

Sidewalk improvements are planned for Sahalee Way from the City Limits to NE 28th PI, but only for one side of the roadway. Additionally, this project will not address a sidewalk gap on Sahalee Way between NE 28th PI and NE 25th Way. Figure 9 shows existing and planned sidewalks along the transit corridor. Details of the planned sidewalks, such as which side of the roadway, are not known at this time.

In addition to sidewalk gaps on the transit route, many local roadways are missing sidewalks that could provide a convenient and safe way to access transit.

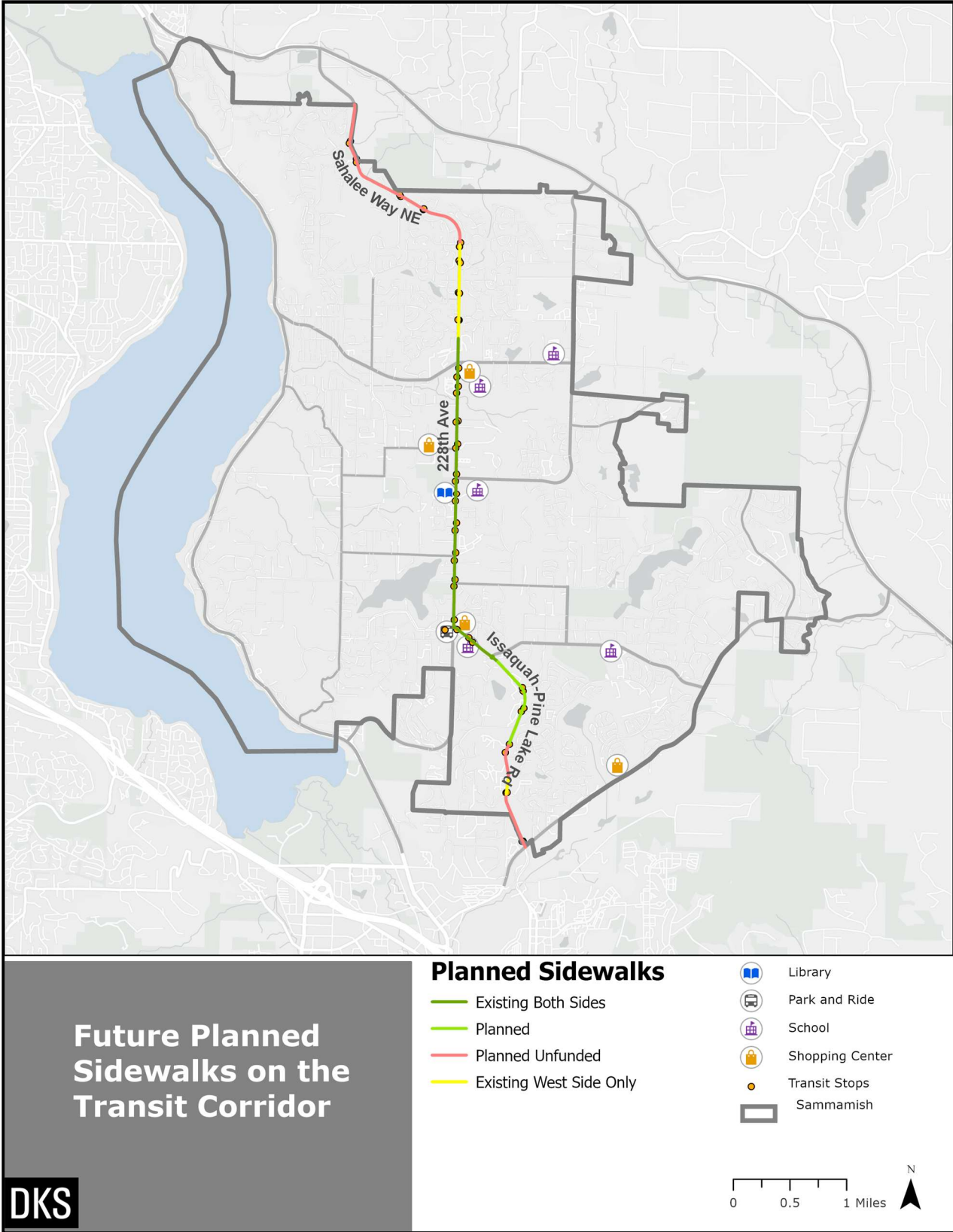


FIGURE 9: EXISTING AND PLANNED SIDEWALKS ALONG THE TRANSIT CORRIDOR

BIKE FACILITIES

Improving bicycle access to transit stops is important in enhancing last-mile connections and promoting sustainable transportation. One major barrier to biking is Sammamish’s mountainous geographical location. In Sammamish, there are significant grades on many streets that may discourage commuters from biking. Although roadway grades are unlikely to change, it is important to consider when analyzing the bike network. The Existing Conditions Report has more information on Sammamish topology. Bicycles which are partially powered by electric motors, referred to as ebikes, can help mitigate the barrier to biking posed by steep grades. Many jurisdictions across the country are implementing ebike rebate programs to accelerate their adoption. Washington State Legislature recently approved up to \$1,200 for ebike rebates for qualifying individuals based on income. The proposed law also grants \$2 million for municipalities, businesses, tribes, and nonprofits to create ebike lending programs¹. This is a strategy which the City may consider to facilitate bike-to-transit trips and to generally improve mobility.

Most of Sammamish’s local, collector, and arterial streets lack bicycle facilities. While there are bike lanes on some sections of 228th Ave SE, the high speeds and high traffic volume can be stressful for the average rider.

In addition to roadway infrastructure such as bicycle lanes, parking facilities for bicycles are important for supporting bicycle to transit connections. Currently, King County Metro provides four on-demand BikeLink lockers for secure bicycle storage at the South Sammamish Park & Ride, as shown in Figure 9. BikeLink is a bike parking company which allows transit users to electronically reserve a bike storage locker on-demand on a first come, first served basis. As Sammamish adds density along the 228th Avenue corridor, additional lockers may be needed at South Sammamish Park & Ride and a new locker facility may be warranted near Town Center. These additions would require coordination between City of Sammamish and King County Metro.

¹ <https://wabikes.org/index.php/2023/04/26/electric-bike-rebates-coming-to-washington-state/>



FIGURE 10: BIKELINK BICYCLE STORAGE AT THE SOUTH SAMMAMISH PARK & RIDE

PARK & RIDE

With increased higher density planned along the transit route, it can be expected that a higher percentage of Sammamish residents will be within a reasonable walkshed of a transit stop by 2044 when compared with today. However, most Sammamish neighborhoods will not have the high density that may warrant frequent transit, and many residents will not be within a reasonable walking distance to a transit stop. One option to access fixed route transit is to drive to a park & ride. The Existing Conditions Report documented existing park & ride capacity and peak hour occupancy at the South Sammamish Park & Ride. Occupancy at the park & ride is currently very low but was significantly higher prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Park & ride occupancy should continue to be monitored in order to understand if expansion is necessary.

Sound Transit plans to construct a second park & ride with up to 200 parking spaces in the northern part of Sammamish. Originally this facility was expected to be open in 2024. However, the project has been postponed as part of Sound Transit’s ST3 realignment which was adopted in 2021. The ST3 realignment set the new target year for this project as 2045.

Sound Transit is also planning a new park & ride for Issaquah with the 2044 Link light rail extension. The exact location of this 500-stall facility is unknown at this time.

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE TRANSIT ACCESS

Improving transit access may result in an increase in ridership. Many Sammamish neighborhoods lack easy access to transit. This section will provide some high-level strategies for improving access to transit. A separate deliverable will identify specific goals and polices for incorporation into Sammamish's Comprehensive Plan, as well as capital projects that will improve accessibility, speed, and reliability of transit to be included in the CIP.

FIRST AND LAST MILE MOBILITY

One option to improve access to transit is providing additional first and last mile mobility options. This could be bikeshare or scootershare options. The City of Seattle partners with Lime and other private motorized bike and scooter companies to provide free floating last mile solutions. These micro-mobility options are motorized to provide hill-climb assist. This decision would need a study and policy adoptions before implementation. In addition, the success of a micro-mobility solution would depend on the continued development of the City's bike and trail network.

For the lower density neighborhoods that lack easy access to transit, a neighborhood circulator may provide improved connection to transit stops. A circulator may also provide an improved option for travel within the city which was identified as the most common PM peak travel pattern. These circulating shuttles could be partnered with transit agency or City operated.

MetroFlex is popular with Sammamish residents. However, it covers a limited part of the City. Expanding MetroFlex to include more of the City could allow for accessibility for all residents. However, MetroFlex service cannot be expanded through City investment alone as it primarily depends on meeting the requirements of King County Metro.

TRANSIT STOP AMENITIES

While transit stop amenities will not improve access to transit, they can make riding transit more comfortable for users. These amenities may include:

- Bus shelters
- Seating at bus stops
- Real time bus arrival data
- Lighting

Typically, these amenities are provided by King County Metro, and they have policies around where to provide them, including a minimum of 25 daily boardings.

Sammamish may be able to work with King County Metro and fund some of these amenities through the City's Capital Improvement Plan, such as lighting or benches. The City may opt to install bus shelter footings, which may increase the likelihood of Metro installing a bus shelter.

Additionally, the City may consider stop consolidation, which would increase the chances of an individual stop meeting the minimum boardings requirement.

INFORMATION SHARING

Some Sammamish residents, visitors, and employees might avoid riding transit due to lack of information. The City and transit agencies can work together to spread the word about transit options. These programs could be advertised in schools, at farmers markets, at the Senior Center, in Senior housing, in low-income housing, and at neighborhood pop-ups. Some options that are already available that would benefit potential riders are:

- Youth Ride Free: This is a program funded by the Move Ahead Washington transportation funding package that allows those aged 18 and younger to ride transit for free. This includes all King County Metro and Sound Transit routes in Sammamish.
- ORCA LIFT: ORCA LIFT is a transit card that provides low-income users a reduced fare.
- Regional Reduced Fare Permit: This program allows those over 65 years old and those with certain disabilities to ride transit at a reduced fare.

INTERAGENCY PARTNERSHIPS

The City of Sammamish does not have full control over the location of transit stops. However, the City could work with King County Metro and Sound Transit to ensure bus stops are located at key destinations. These may include shopping, education, medical or social services. King County Metro typically has goals regarding the spacing of transit stops but is open to input from Cities and transit riders around the locations. Additionally, partnering with other jurisdictions in King County can help with coordinating transit improvements. This will be particularly important with the expanding transit service in the near- and long-term future. Furthermore, engagement with King County, Sound Transit, PSRC, WSDOT, and FHWA can help Sammamish understand available grants. For example, a Local Road Safety Plan can help the City qualify for safety grants which can fund sidewalks and crossings.

CONCLUSION

The City of Sammamish is planning for some areas of increased housing density around the transit network, with mixed-use and urban development planned along 228th Ave NE between NE 8th Street and SE 8th Street and around the intersection with Issaquah-Pine Lake Road. However, without specific land use targets adopted, a detailed walkshed analysis cannot be completed around transit stops. It can be expected that with higher density housing near the transit route, there will be an increase in the share of the City's households within a comfortable walking distance of a transit stop.

In the future, regional changes to transit will result in Sammamish being a more transit-friendly community. In 2025 during the peak hours, 15-minute bus service will provide Sammamish

residents access to Mercer Island Station and Marymoor Village Station, which will both connect to Bellevue and Seattle via 8-minute headway light rail service. In 2044, along with higher density housing and mixed-use development planned for Sammamish, another option for transit service will open with Issaquah light rail line, which will connect to South Kirkland. The Issaquah line is expected to be accessible via bus or driving to the park & ride.

However, despite these improvements, some transit related gaps and barriers will still exist within Sammamish:

Access related to distance to a stop, steep grades, and lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities

- Most of the City is made up of neighborhoods and communities of residential development that do not have easy access to transit. These communities are more than a half mile away from a transit route, lack sidewalk and bicycle facilities, and may have significant grades that create a barrier. These communities also lack the density that may warrant transit routes. Even if sidewalks were to be completed in these areas, the distance and grades would be a barrier for most to walk to transit. Instead, a robust network of first and last mile solutions, including completed sidewalks, bike- and scooter-share options, expanded MetroFlex options (dependent on coordination with King County Metro), and neighborhood circulators, could create opportunities for transit access in these areas.

Comfort and access at transit stops due to lack of safe crossings, amenities, sidewalks, and waiting areas

- Even with the planned CIP projects, some areas of Sahalee Way NE, 228th Ave NE, and Issaquah-Pine Lake Road will still be missing sidewalk on at least one side of the street, or have a narrow sidewalk lacking necessary pedestrian access area. Sidewalks provide a comfortable waiting area for transit riders and allow the potential for benches and shelters. The speed limit along transit route ranges from 35-45 miles per hour, a speed that most pedestrians would feel unsafe standing in the shoulder. Additionally, most of the transit stops in Sammamish lack safe crossings within 300 feet.
- Currently a very small proportion of the City's roadway network, including its transit route, has dedicated bicycle lanes, which may discourage bicycle-to-transit trips. King County Metro currently provides a secure locker with space for four bikes at the South Sammamish Park & Ride. Increasing the number of lockers at this location and at other candidate locations within the city can make biking to transit a more feasible option.

Improvement, but potential gaps in service

- Analysis using the PSRC 4k travel demand model showed that the most common trip locations outside of Sammamish include Redmond, Bellevue, and other eastside communities such as Kirkland, Bothell, Kenmore, and Woodinville. In 2025 and 2044, there will be high-frequency transit service to Redmond and Bellevue, where riders can transfer to Seattle and other regional destinations. However, even with the added BRT routes planned for 2028-2029, two or more transfers will be required to reach the served areas of Kirkland.

Transit access to the other eastside communities could be considered a transit gap in the future.

Several strategies to improve transit access have been identified. Sammamish should explore expanding policies to support these strategies. As part of this project, a separate deliverable will identify goals and policies for the Comprehensive Plan around improving access to transit. Additionally, this project will explore specific CIP projects to improve access to transit and speed and reliability of transit.