

Meeting Notes

Date: 8/27/26

Attendees: Max Hendrix (Circuit), Mark Smutny (Civic Reinventions), Emilie Pelfrene (Sound Transit), Belen (SDOT), Shun-Jen Hsiao, Eileen Collins Turvey, TriMet Portland, Alan Bruckner (SVT), Kwapi (Sound Transit)

Staff Support: Erin Funk (Facilitator), Nicole Ross (Notetaker), Heather Clark, Lyn McCarthy, Aniya Beck, Maria Calderon

Announcements

Erin Funk facilitated the meeting in Ysabel Yu's absence.

The scheduled Sound Behavioral Health community spotlight on mobile crisis response was postponed. The presentation will be rescheduled.

Presenter 1: Max Hendrix, Circuit

Key Points

- Circuit provides on-demand microtransit in more than 50 markets and works directly with cities, transit agencies, and community partners to design services around local transportation needs.
- Circuit operates an all-electric fleet, with locally hired and trained drivers.
- **Bellevue:** Circuit has operated since 2023. The program is funded through a combination of City of Bellevue, Amazon, and tourism-related funding. Ridership is currently more than 6 passengers per vehicle hour, compared with an industry benchmark of approximately 2–4.
- Circuit recently expanded Bellevue service with a **fixed-route connection between the downtown Bellevue light rail station and downtown core**, using Volkswagen ID. Buzz vehicles.
- The new light rail connection is intended to complement **Bellhop**, which provides more flexible, on-demand transportation within downtown Bellevue.
- Circuit does **not** operate airport service; some drivers may work for other shuttle providers, which may have caused confusion about airport transportation.

North King County **MOBILITY**COALITION

- **Red Link:** Launched in Redmond in March 2026. The free, seven-day-a-week service provides point-to-point trips within its service area and is intended to complement existing transit, including DART, Community Van, and light rail.
- Red Link is funded through City of Redmond/lodging tax funding and a Washington State Regional Mobility Grant.

Funding & Planning Discussion

Variety of funding approaches communities can combine to support microtransit, including:

- Local government funding and lodging taxes
- State and federal grants
- Private-sector partnerships
- Sponsorships
- Advertising
- Passenger fares

Circuit is available to consult with communities at no cost and can assist with identifying funding opportunities and developing grant applications.

Service boundaries are generally determined by the relationship between **fleet size, geographic coverage, and desired wait times**, rather than funding restrictions alone.

Circuit has also expanded its vehicle types to address speed and capacity limitations associated with smaller GEM vehicles.

Accessibility

Circuit offers low-step and wheelchair-accessible vehicles, including vehicles with wheelchair securements. Riders can indicate accessibility needs through the app so that an appropriate vehicle and trained driver can be assigned.

Data & Pilot Opportunities

Circuit's dashboard provides data on ridership, wait times, on-time performance, demand patterns, destinations, and greenhouse gas reductions. Data can be exported for grant reporting and compliance.

- Discussion: Nicole raised the possibility of using a **microtransit pilot as a planning tool in the Snoqualmie Valley**, allowing the community to collect real-world travel data and identify demand patterns. Max confirmed that Circuit has used pilots in this way and offered to discuss the idea further.

Roundtable Discussion and Updates

NKCMC Work Plan & Downtown Bothell

Downtown Bothell Workgroup

- The City of Bothell is developing a downtown plan and is accepting written comments through **August 31**. Coalition members were encouraged to review the plan and participate in the City's engagement process.

FY 2026–27 Work Plan

- The coalition is exploring a **speaker series on transportation funding**, with a focus on public-private funding models and creative approaches to supporting flexible transportation services.
- Coalition members are encouraged to suggest speakers or topics of interest

Transit Video Project

- Ysabel is developing a social media video series documenting real transit trips and the rider experience. The pilot follows a trip to Bothell and highlights navigation, wait times, transfers, infrastructure, and service challenges.
- Partners and coalition members can suggest destinations or transit experiences for future videos.

Sound Transit Update — Ballard Link Extension, Kwapi, Sound Transit

- **The Ballard Link Extension has not been canceled.**
- Sound Transit's updated ST3 plan continues to move all planned extensions forward while addressing increased project costs and available funding.
- The Ballard Link Extension will run from **SODO to the Seattle Center**.
- Construction is funded through the Seattle Center, and the project is currently fully funded through the design phase.
- The anticipated opening date is **2042**, compared with the previous 2039 target.
- Sound Transit continues to explore cost savings, design refinements, grants, and third-party funding that could help advance the project.

Environmental Review & Community Engagement

Sound Transit is continuing the environmental review process. The next major milestone will be publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), followed by a

North King County **MOBILITY**COALITION

public comment period. The publication date is pending confirmation from the Federal Transit Administration.

Kwapi encouraged coalition members to share opportunities for Sound Transit to participate in community meetings and events.

SDOT Update — ADA Transition Plan, Belen Herrera

SDOT is conducting public engagement to update its ADA Transition Plan.

- The online survey is available through **September 15, 2026**.
- The survey is available in English, Traditional Chinese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- Alternative formats, including large print and Braille, are available upon request.
- SDOT will provide an update at the **Pedestrian Access Advisory Committee meeting on November 3, 2:30–4:00 PM**, which will be held in a hybrid format.
- Future steps include continued regional engagement, recruitment of local districts, and publication of the final analysis/results in late 2026 or early 2027.

Next Meeting

October 22nd, 2026

10:30am-12pm

Zoom

Contact

Ysabel Yu, North King County Mobility Coordinator | yyu@hopelink.org | 425-516-5418

Heather Clark, Program Manager of Coalitions | hclark@hopelink.org | 425-625-6784