

**RapidRide I Line**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
**Small Starts Project Development**  
**(Rating Assigned November 2021)**

Summary Description	
<b>Proposed Project:</b>	Bus Rapid Transit 17.0 Miles, 41 Stations
<b>Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):</b>	\$141.06 Million
<b>Section 5309 CIG Share (\$YOE):</b>	\$66.72 Million (47.3%)
<b>Annual Operating Cost (opening year 2025):</b>	\$18.09 Million
<b>Current Year Ridership Forecast (2019):</b>	6,300 Daily Linked Trips 2,139,500 Annual Linked Trips
<b>Horizon Year Ridership Forecast (2040):</b>	8,500 Daily Linked Trips 2,863,500 Annual Linked Trips
<b>Overall Project Rating:</b>	Medium-High
<b>Project Justification Rating:</b>	Medium
<b>Local Financial Commitment Rating:</b>	High

**Project Description:** King County Metro (Metro), proposes to implement bus rapid transit (BRT) between the cities of Renton, Kent, and Auburn. The project includes 23 diesel electric hybrid buses, 1.95 miles of exclusive bus lanes, level boarding stations, off-board fare payment, transit signal priority and queue jumps. On weekdays, service is planned to operate every 10 minutes during daytime hours, and every 15 minutes to 30 during evening periods. On weekends, service is planned to operate every 15 to 30 minutes. The service is planned to operate 20 hours each day during weekdays and weekends.

**Project Purpose:** Southern King County has some of the highest proportions of low-income and minority populations in the county. The project corridor is served today primarily by two of Metro’s most productive suburban bus routes; however, both bus routes experience delays and reliability problems due to roadway congestion. Metro is planning the BRT to provide more frequent, convenient, and higher quality transit service than exists today. The project provides connections to other high capacity transit services including Sounder Commuter Rail and other BRT routes in the area.

**Project Development History, Status and Next Steps:** The project entered Small Starts Project Development in May 2019. Metro selected the locally preferred alternative in December 2019, and got it adopted into the region’s fiscally constrained long-range transportation plan in May 2020. Metro completed the environmental review process with receipt of a Documented Categorical Exclusion from FTA in June 2021. Metro anticipates receipt of a construction grant agreement in August 2023, and the start of revenue service in June 2025.

**Significant Changes Since Last Evaluation (November 2020):** The project cost estimate increased from \$117.63 million to \$141.06 million based on higher construction costs, increased inflation assumptions, a longer project timeline, and increased professional service costs. The amount of CIG funding being requested increased from \$55.63 million to \$66.72 million, with the

CIG share remaining at 47.3 percent. The revenue service date changed from October 2023 to June 2025. This change was due to work slowdowns at Metro and its local jurisdiction partners because of COVID-19.

## Locally Proposed Financial Plan

<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds (\$million)</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
<b>Federal:</b>		
Section 5309 CIG	\$66.72	47.3%
FHWA Flexible Funds (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program)	\$6.00	4.2%
FHWA Flexible Funds (Surface Transportation Program)	\$0.99	0.7%
<b>State:</b>		
State Regional Mobility Grant Program	\$11.37	8.1%
City of Kent – State Regional Mobility Grant Program	\$8.00	5.7%
<b>Local:</b>		
Metro Sales Taxes and Fares	\$47.98	34.0%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$141.06</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**NOTE:** The financial plan reflected in this table has been developed by the project sponsor and does not reflect a commitment by DOT or FTA. The sum of the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

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***LAND USE RATING: Medium-Low***

The land use rating reflects population density within one-half mile of stations, employment along the line, and the share of legally binding affordability restricted (LBAR) housing in the station areas compared to the share in the surrounding county.

- Average population density within one-half mile of station areas is 4,300 persons per square mile, corresponding to a Medium-Low rating on FTA benchmarks. An estimated 45,000 jobs would be served by the project, which corresponds to a Medium-Low rating. Daily parking fees in the Renton central business district average \$6, which corresponds to a Medium-Low rating. The ratio of station area to county LBAR housing is 1.30, corresponding to a Medium-Low rating.
- Development along the corridor is moderately dense with residential, commercial, mixed-use, and industrial development throughout the three jurisdictions. Employment is clustered around the mixed-use and general commercial areas of downtown Renton, downtown Kent, and Auburn Way North. Housing along the corridor includes single-family and multi-family residences, and manufactured home parks.
- The pedestrian environment includes sidewalks along a majority of the project corridor. The presence of pedestrian crossings and signalization at intersections varies.

***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RATING: Medium***

**Transit-Supportive Plans and Policies: Medium**

- *Transit-Supportive Corridor Policies:* Policies are moderately supportive of transit-oriented development (TOD). Local plans encourage development at strongly transit-supportive densities in some station areas, but plan for lower density single-family development in other areas.
- *Supportive Zoning Near Transit Stations:* Station areas include strongly transit supportive zoning in the downtown, multi-family residential, and commercial areas. About one third of station area land is zoned as single-family residential, with densities mostly corresponding to Medium-Low.
- *Tools to Implement Land Use Policies:* The Washington State Legislature and City of Auburn each established property tax exemptions for multi-family housing development. The City of Kent runs the Main Street Tax Incentive program whereby eligible businesses can receive a tax credit worth 75 percent of their obligation the following year. The RapidRide I Line planning effort will develop station recommendations to encourage new development. King County is finalizing an initiative to encourage TOD within half a mile of the transit corridor.

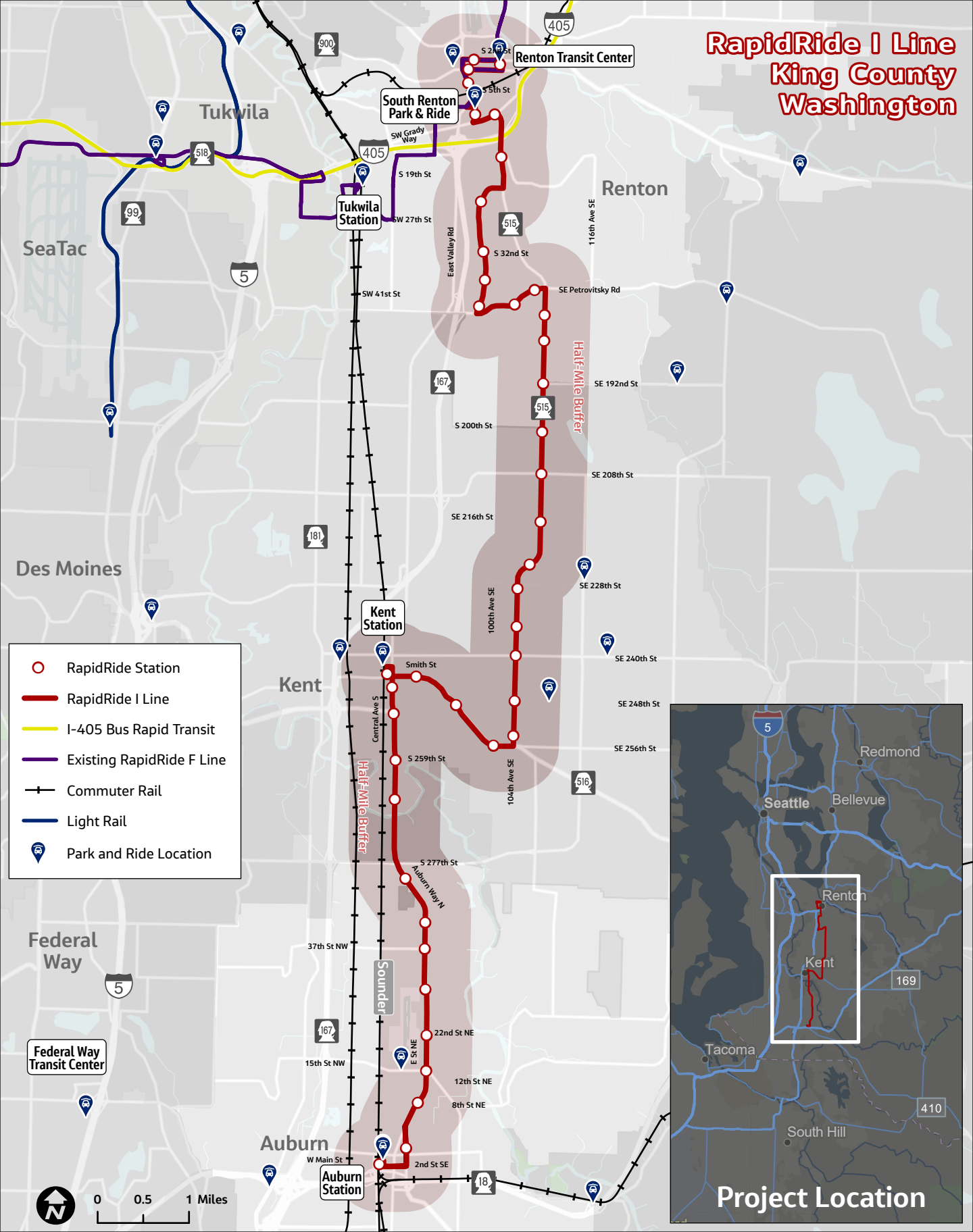
**Performance and Impacts of Policies: Medium**

- *Performance of Land Use Policies:* Several examples of recent TOD and station area development proposals were provided. These examples included dense housing and redevelopment as well as senior housing and retail space.
- *Potential Impact of Transit Investment on Regional Land Use:* Renton has 13.4 million square feet of re-developable land within one-half mile of the corridor. Kent is among the smallest of Regional Growth Centers in terms of total gross acreage (292 acres). It has a net developable acreage of 197 acres (67 percent of gross acres). Downtown Auburn has a net developable acreage of 161.5 acres. Details on zoning for this land were not provided.

## **Tools to Maintain or Increase Share of Affordable Housing: Medium - High**

- Corridor-specific affordable housing supply is documented. Comprehensive Plans for Renton, Kent, and Auburn within the past five years include goals and policies to preserve or increase affordable housing. Financing tools include housing subsidies, vouchers, density bonuses, property tax exemptions, sales tax allocation, and an interim loan program to provide low-cost financing for property acquisition to develop low-income housing. Limited information on long-term plans to increase and preserve LBAR housing in the corridor and on strategies to meet needs of very- and extremely-low income households. Ten developments (1,213 affordable housing units) show activity to preserve affordable housing in the corridor.

# RapidRide I Line King County Washington



- RapidRide Station
- RapidRide I Line
- I-405 Bus Rapid Transit
- Existing RapidRide F Line
- Commuter Rail
- Light Rail
- Park and Ride Location

