MEMORANDUM

Date: March 1, 2017
To: Neil Jensen, City of Lake Forest Park
From: Sarah Saviskas and Kendra Breiland, Fehr & Peers
Subject: Safe Streets: Existing Conditions, Opportunities, and Challenges

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The Comprehensive Plan identifies the following vision for Lake Forest Park: "*Our neighborhoods are safe and connected to each other and to community gathering places by well-designed paths, sidewalks, and bike lanes."* In order to realize this vision, it is important to understand challenges with Lake Forest Park's streets today and opportunities for improving safety and access. Several prior efforts have explored these issues, so Fehr & Peers reviewed existing plans, policies, and research studies to provide context for the Safe Streets public outreach event on March 21, 2017 and final report. The main sources of our research included:

- 2035 Comprehensive Plan (2015)
- Legacy 100-Year Vision Report (2008)
- Metro Connects - King County Metro Long Range Plan (2016)
- Police Department Survey Results (2016)
- Sound Transit 3 (ST3) Project List (2016)
- Strategic Plan (2016)
- Comprehensive Plan Telephone Survey Results (2014)

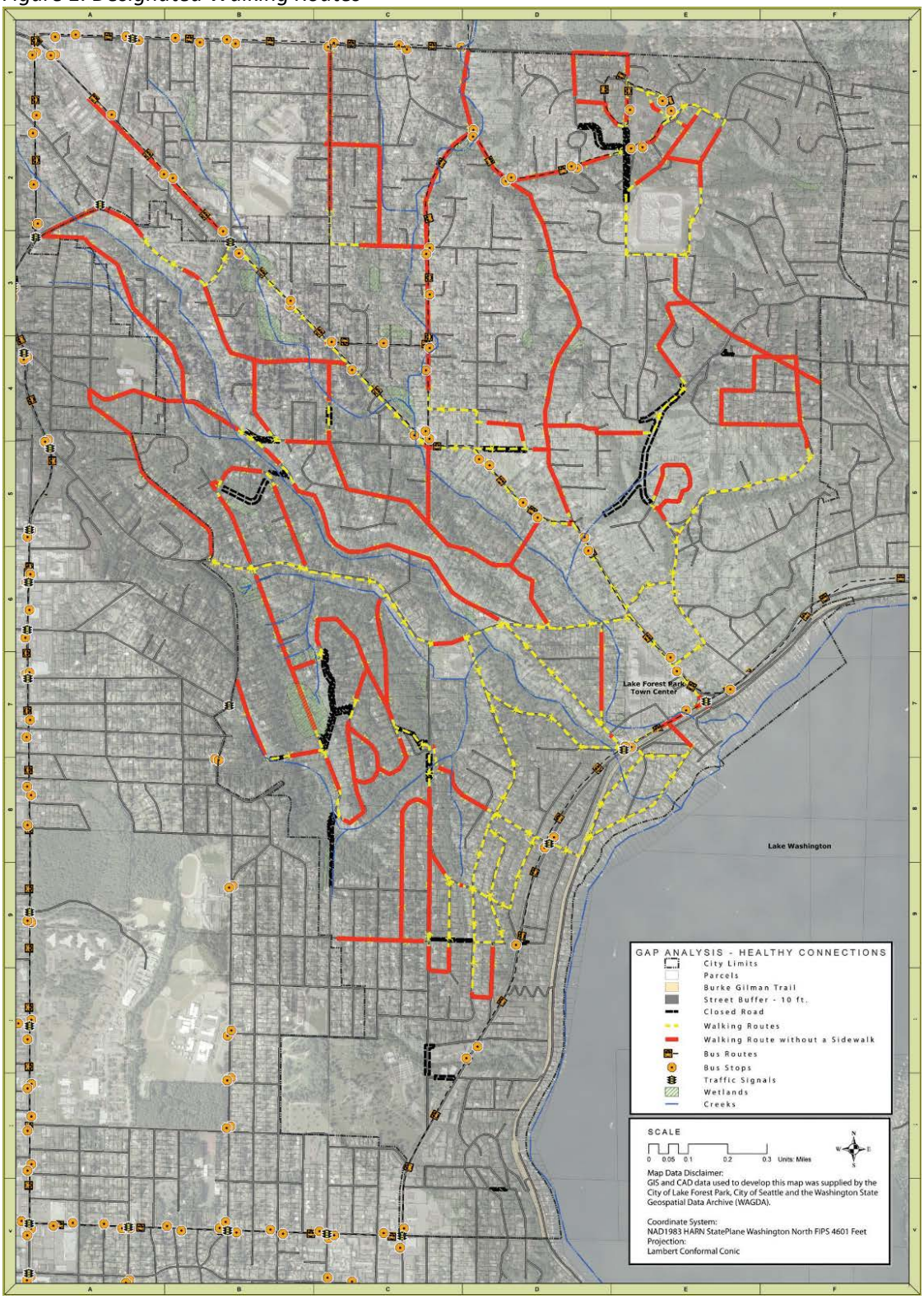
Fehr & Peers also conducted 8 interviews with key stakeholders in early 2017, which informed this memorandum. The following sections describe public realm and transportation conditions in Lake Forest Park, organized by pedestrian, bicycle, auto, and transit transportation modes. A figure at the end of this document summarizes high-level findings from this outreach.

Pedestrian Environment

There are designated walking routes throughout Lake Forest Park, but many routes do not have a completed sidewalk on one or both sides of the street. Pedestrian facilities range from sidewalks with curb ramps to paved roadway shoulders with extruded curbs to dirt paths along roadway shoulders. The 2008 *Legacy 100-year Vision Report* inventoried all walking routes, which is shown in **Figure 1**. All routes without a sidewalk are in red, and all routes with sidewalks on one or both sides of the road are dashed yellow. This map is outdated, but it begins to paint the picture of Lake Forest Park's pedestrian environment. Gaps in the pedestrian network provide a starting point for discussion about which projects should be prioritized.

The Comprehensive Plan Telephone Survey revealed that residents rated "sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian walkways" as the most important transportation improvement to fund over the next 10 years, with 79 percent of residents rating these facilities as very or somewhat important. In response to an open ended question about services that should be increased or added, a desire for increasing the number of sidewalks and bike lanes was among the most common responses.

Figure 1. Designated Walking Routes



Source: City of Lake Forest Park Legacy 100-Year Vision, 2008.

Interviewees pointed out that residents have conflicting visions for Lake Forest Park's pedestrian environment. Some residents were drawn to Lake Forest Park because of the quiet, residential character of its streets. They do not necessarily want sidewalks and streetlights. Other residents want a safe place to walk their dog, ride a bike, or push a stroller, and are comfortable with some change in character if it accomplishes these goals. For example, many Lake Forest Park streets are not well lit, which many residents view as an asset. However, in certain locations, such as intersections and along pedestrian routes, lighting is a potential safety issue. It will be important to find common ground among these different, equally valid visions.

Safe Routes to School are a priority for many Lake Forest Park residents, yet most of the streets serving Lake Forest Park Elementary, Brookside Elementary, and Briarcrest Elementary lack sidewalks or shoulders with extruded curbs. Speeding has also been reported as an issue on many of these same streets. Another top priority is providing better pedestrian access to popular amenities like the shopping center, Burke-Gilman trail, public transit stops, parks, and more. Lake Forest Park's winding streets and hilly topography make this difficult, but it is critical to have designated routes connecting destinations with adequate lighting, pedestrian amenities (such as sidewalks or trails), and carefully considered crosswalks. Lake Forest Park has many cul-de-sacs and dead end streets, such as 35th Avenue NE, which may provide opportunities for pedestrian and cyclist trail connections paired with quiet residential streets.

When developing potential solutions, it will also be essential to consider accessibility for all, including cyclists, kids going to school, and individuals with disabilities. It is hard for people in wheelchairs and parents pushing strollers to navigate Lake Forest Park streets, and even if there are sidewalks, many are narrow and hard to maneuver. This should be addressed.

Bicycle Environment

The Burke-Gilman Trail and Interurban Trail are two key amenities that Lake Forest Park cyclists access. As noted in the *Comprehensive Plan*, the Burke-Gilman Trail is a well-traveled, separated bicycle and pedestrian facility that runs parallel to the Lake Washington shoreline in Lake Forest Park. The trail connects Seattle with North Shore and Eastside communities (including Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, and Bothell). The North Interurban Trail is a north-south bicycle route that starts in Downtown Seattle, passes through Shoreline, and continues to Everett. From Lake Forest Park, cyclists often access the North Interurban Trail via NE 180th Street/NE Perkins Way as well as NE 155th and 156th Streets to the south.

Several bicycle routes have been identified to help connect cyclists to these trails and other key amenities from Lake Forest Park's residential streets. **Figure 2** shows the designated bicycle routes within the City in green. However, there are no painted bicycle lanes, and cyclists must share the road with automobiles. (Note: Phase 2 of the NE 178th Street Improvement Project is adding a bicycle lane on NE 178th Street from Brookside Boulevard to 33rd Avenue NE.) Further, the bicycle routes also lack wayfinding signage.

The Comprehensive Plan Telephone Survey revealed that 60 percent of residents rated "bike lanes and bike paths" as very important or somewhat important to fund over the next 10 years. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan has an explicit goal to "improve signage and safe walkways, including pedestrian sidewalks, to Lake Forest Park trails such as the Burke-Gilman and between the Burke-Gilman and Interurban Trail."

It is particularly challenging for cyclists (and pedestrians) to cross Bothell Way NE to access the Burke-Gilman Trail, so this is a crucial area for improvement. Also, NE Perkins Way is frequently used by cyclists because it is the north connection street to the Interurban Trail. However, it does not have a shoulder despite its many blind curves and hidden drives. Cars (and cyclists) often speed due to the topography, creating a potentially dangerous condition.

Figure 2. Designated Bicycle Routes.

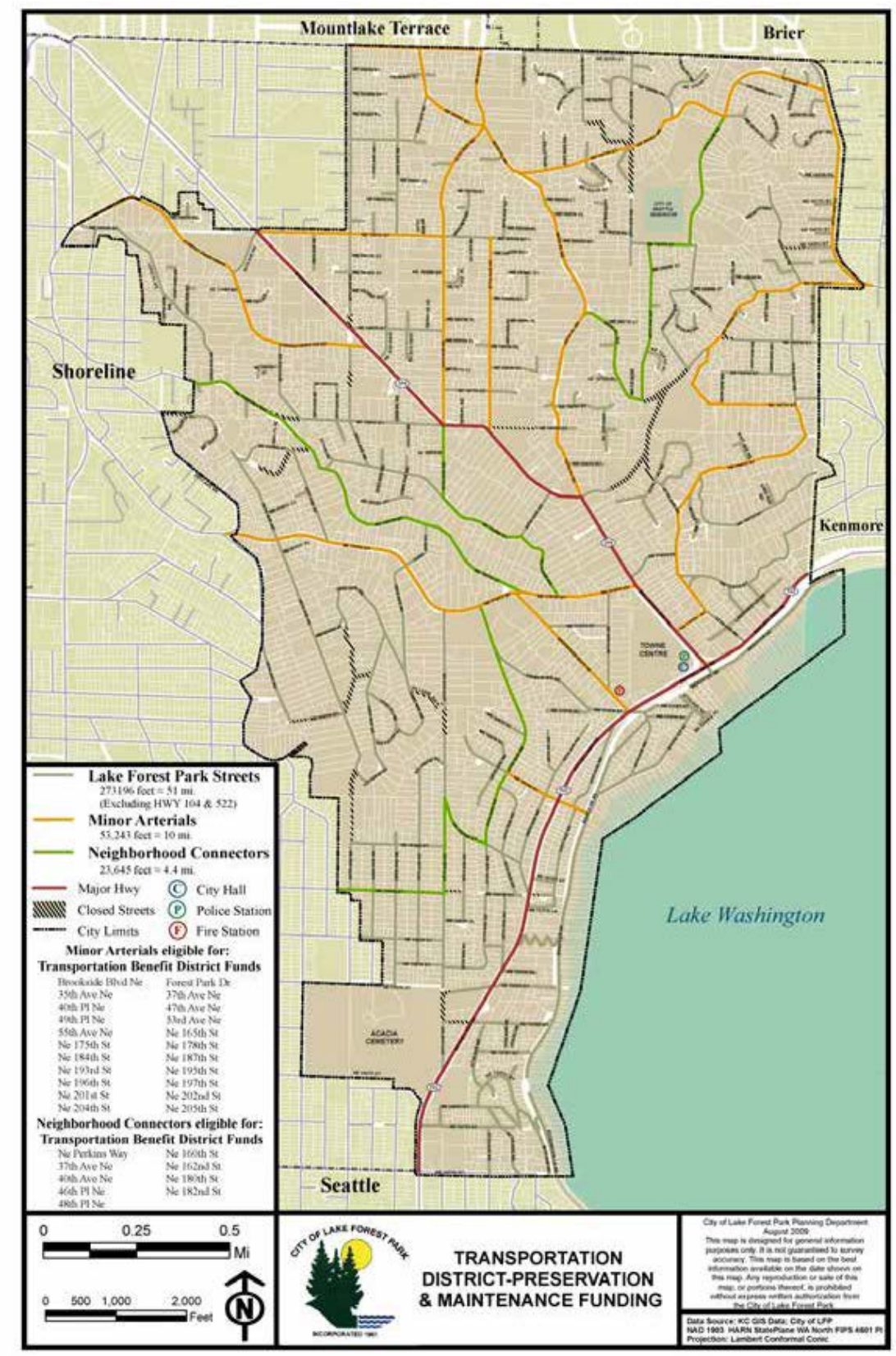
Auto

As the Puget Sound region continues to grow, traffic passing through Lake Forest Park will increase. Therefore, speeding, cut through traffic, and traffic enforcement are primary concerns for Lake Forest Park citizens, mainly on the arterial roads and neighborhood connector streets. See **Figure 3** for an overview of Lake Forest Park's street classifications.

Speeding is currently a key issue on NE 178th Street, Perkins Way NE, NE 197th Street, 40th Place NE, 55th Avenue NE, and the southern portion of 37th Avenue NE. While the Police Department does not view speeding as a chronic issue on NE 160th Street, vehicle speeds are a key concern for many community members, especially after a pedestrian was killed on 160th between 34th and 35th Avenues in 2016. One challenge is that the Police Department is understaffed. Their traffic enforcement officer serves as a general patrol officer, which takes away from the time he can devote to his traffic enforcement duties.

Most interviewees expressed an interest in implementing traffic calming projects in targeted locations. Some of the ideas mentioned include: reducing speed limits (citywide or in strategic locations), converting two-way streets to one-way streets, chicanes, speed bumps, and blocking off certain streets to through traffic. Further discussion is needed to determine which traffic calming measures are appropriate for specific locations.

Figure 3. Roadway Functional Classification System



Transit

As noted in the *Comprehensive Plan*, public transit service in Lake Forest Park is operated by King County Metro and Sound Transit. Transit service operates on Bothell Way, Ballinger Way, and 35th Avenue NE/NE 197th Street north of Ballinger Way. There is generally frequent transit service north-south from Lake Forest Park to large employment and shopping centers such as Downtown Seattle, University of Washington, and Northgate. On Bothell Way, there is a continuous Business Access Transit (BAT) lane in the southbound direction, but there is a gap in the northbound BAT lane from just north of NE 145th Street to 41st Avenue NE. Transit service also operates along SR 104, 35th Avenue NE, NE 190th Street, and NE 197th Street through the city, though service is more limited. **Figure 4** shows public transit currently serving Lake Forest Park**,** and **Table 1** shows the transit service area and service hours.

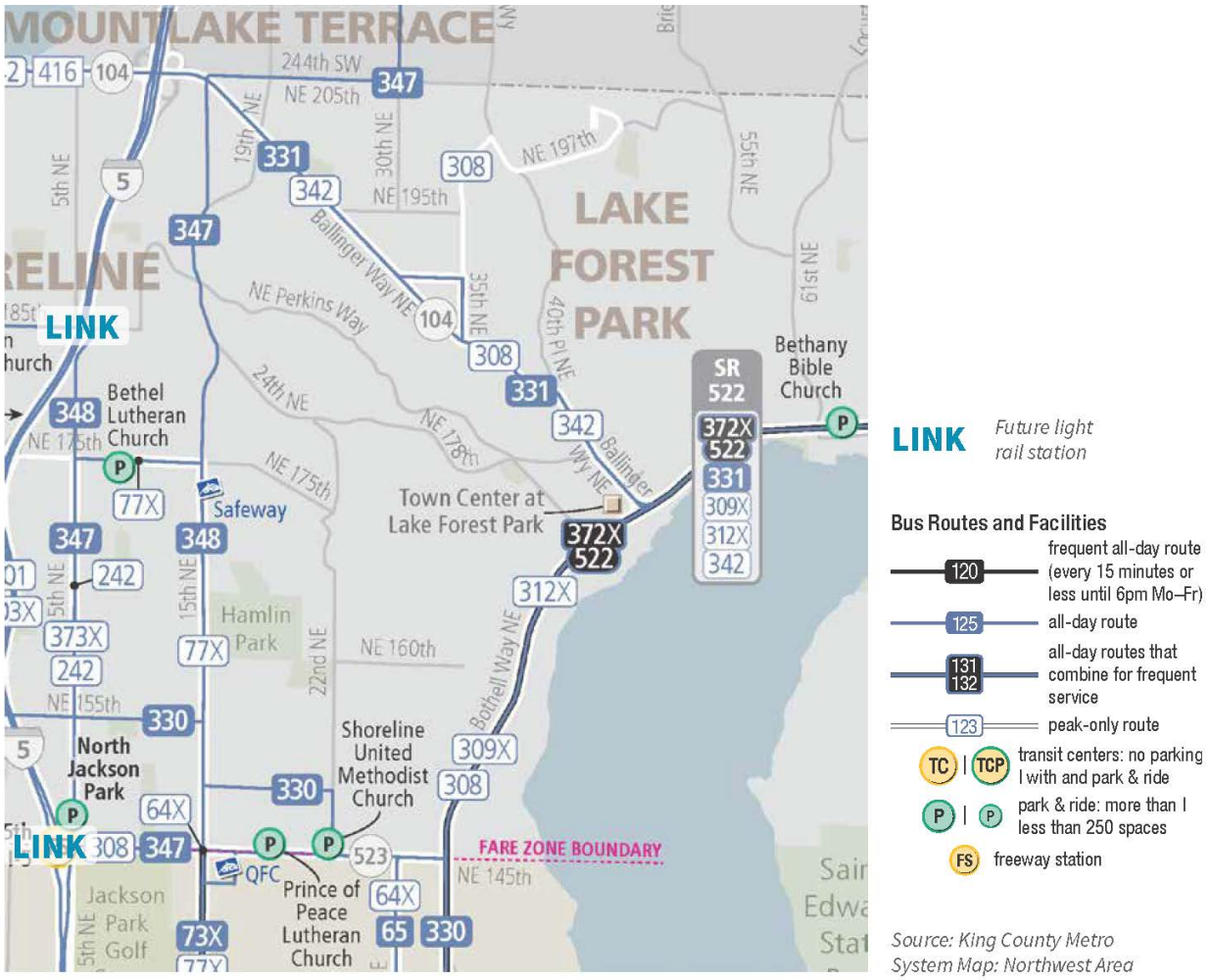
The *Comprehensive Plan* points out that transit demand is high in Lake Forest Park. Many residents commute via bus to employment centers in Seattle and the Eastside, and peak hour buses operate at capacity. Community members have called for expanded transit service and Park & Ride facilities to serve future high capacity transit along SR 522. The Comprehensive Plan Telephone Survey revealed that 73 percent of residents think that increased access to public transportation is very important or somewhat important. Residents in South Lake Forest Park were more likely to feel that increased access to public transportation is "very" important than those in North Lake Forest Park (55 percent compared to 28 percent). Lake Forest Park residents want to see direct, safe bicycle/pedestrian access to transit stops. There is also a need to improve bus stop comfort and safety by providing shelters.

The Town Center transit stops see the city's highest daily transit boardings (390 boardings, based on the average spring 2014 transit data). Many transit riders use the Town Center parking lot as an unofficial Park & Ride. A 300 space Park & Ride is planned for the Town Center and is anticipated by 2024.

Given current demand and projected growth in the region, significant transit changes are planned that will impact Lake Forest Park:

- New Link Light Rail stations will open at NE 145th Street and NE 185th Street near I-5 in Shoreline by 2023.
- By 2024, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service will operate between the NE 145th Street station to UW Bothell, with service continuing at lower frequencies to Woodinville. This will include completion of BAT lanes along SR 522.
- A Rapid Ride will operate on SR 522 from Woodinville to the U District by 2025.
- An Express Bus from Woodinville to the Roosevelt Light Rail Station, South Lake Union, and First Hill in Seattle is planned for the 2025 network.
- Frequent bus service from Kenmore to the NE 185th Street Light Rail Station via SR 522 and SR 104 is planned for the 2025 network.
- By 2024, BRT service will operate from the Lynnwood Transit Center to the Burien Transit Center via I-405 and SR 518. While this project will not run through Lake Forest Park directly, it will influence travel patterns.

Figure 4. Public Transit Currently Serving Lake Forest Park



Source: King County Metro System Map: Northwest Area

Table 1. Transit Routes Currently Serving Lake Forest Park

Route	Service Area	Service Hours
308	Downtown Seattle–Horizon View	Weekdays, Peak hour/direction only
309	Downtown Seattle–Kenmore	Weekdays, Peak hour/direction only
312	Downtown Seattle–Cascadia Community College	Weekdays, Peak hour/direction only
331	Shoreline Community College–Kenmore P&R	Weekday & weekends, all day
342	Shoreline P&R–Bothell–Renton	Weekdays, Peak hour/direction only
372	University District–Woodinville P & R	Weekday, all day
522	Downtown Seattle–Woodinville P&R	Weekday and weekends, all day

Overall Findings

Figure 5 provides a high-level overview of major stakeholder input, as they relate to providing safe streets in Lake Forest Park.

Figure 5. Overview of Initial Safe Streets Concerns