

## Ben Franklin Transit | Transit Development Plan 2026–2032 | Executive Summary

**625 sq mi**

Service Area

**290,240**

Population Served

**25 routes**

Fixed Routes

**~140K by 2045**

Projected Growth

### Transit Development Plan (TDP)

The Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) 2026-2032 TDP outlines a strategic roadmap to improve mobility, sustainability, and overall service quality throughout the BFT area. BFT aims to deliver efficient and equitable transportation solutions for the community. The plan details BFT's operational and capital initiatives for 2026-2032 and is developed in accordance with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) guidelines as well as broader regional transportation goals.

### Agency Overview

Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) serves Benton and Franklin counties in Washington's Tri-Cities region. Established in 1981, BFT is funded primarily by voter-approved local sales tax and FTA formula grants.

### Service Portfolio

- Fixed Route –M–F 6am–10pm, Sat 7am–10pm, Sun 8am–6pm serving 2.8 million passengers a year
- Dial-A-Ride (DAR) – ADA paratransit, mirroring fixed-route hours; transitioning from Trapeze to RideCo in summer 2026
- CONNECT – On-demand microtransit for first/last-mile connections
- Rideshare – Vanpool and carpool coordination
- The Arc of Tri-Cities – Contracted ADA paratransit for 2,000+ individuals with developmental disabilities

### Recent Service Improvements

- Launched Express 2X & 240X (June 2025) – 15-min peak frequency between Kennewick, Pasco & Richland
- Launched Express 27X (Dec 2025) – 20-min service to North Richland employment & education corridors
- 2026 expansions: Routes 66/67 (Aquatic Center), Route 61 (Veterans Center), Route 60 pilot (Flea Market on weekends)

### 2026–2032 Capital Investment Plan & Program of Projects

Planned capital investments cover vehicles, facilities, technology, and transit planning. Funding draws from Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants, WSDOT grants, and local sources. Federally funded projects within these categories are identified annually in the Program of Projects (POP), a subset of the Capital Improvement Plan required by the FTA.

- Vehicles – Fleet replacement & expansion (zero-emission transition)
- Facilities – Maintenance, administration, passenger amenities, park-and-ride improvements
- Technology – CAD/AVL systems, passenger information, fare technology
- Planning – Long-Range Transit Plan (LRTP) updates and corridor studies

### Financial Overview

Primary revenue: voter-approved local sales tax (economically sensitive). Supplemented by FTA formula grants and WSDOT Regional Mobility Grants. Multi-year financial plan projects revenue hour growth to fund service expansion.

### Strategic Priorities (2026 LRTP Directions)

- Expand frequency and coverage to meet 30% projected ridership growth by 2045
- Advance equity and accessibility across all service modes
- Strengthen regional connections (airport, Amtrak, intercity bus)
- Pursue zero-emission fleet transition and sustainable operations
- Support Tri-Cities population growth (est. +140,000 residents by 2045)

*Scheduled for Board Adoption: July 9, 2026*