Seoul's 2004 Bus Reform — Median Bus Lanes, Trunk-and-Branch Routes and Integrated Fares, With Rush-Hour Speeds Up 26% and Subsidies Roughly Tripled

City Innovation Library · Good practice · South Korea

Quality score: 67/100

Evidence strength: Moderate

Summary

In July 2004 Seoul restructured its private bus system into a city-managed network with median bus lanes, colour-coded trunk and branch routes and distance-based integrated fares. Rush-hour bus speed rose 26%, but the operating subsidy roughly tripled.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of impact / measured results	2/3
Transferability / demonstrated replication	2/3
Scalability	3/3
Sustainability / continuity	1/3
Innovation	2/3
Inclusiveness / equity	2/3
Multi-stakeholder collaboration	2/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

C-NAPSE web research — accessed 2026-10-28

Seoul Metropolitan Government — accessed 2026-10-28

Development Asia: Fixing a city's broken public bus service — accessed 2026-10-28

Seamless Bay Area: How bus reforms and fare integration transformed Seoul's transit — accessed 2026-10-28

Cite this — Evidoria. *Seoul's 2004 Bus Reform — Median Bus Lanes, Trunk-and-Branch Routes and Integrated Fares, With Rush-Hour Speeds Up 26% and Subsidies Roughly Tripled*. Persistent ID: 6e5ccc4f-db90-47a7-b51f-1bb4e0f1883e.