

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues

Mass Transit Expansion Proposal headed for fall ballot

The Sound Transit Board unanimously approved placing a 15-year transit expansion plan on the November 4 ballot.

The plan, on the ballot as Proposition 1, would add 17 percent more bus service beginning in 2009. The plan would also add 65 percent more Sounder commuter rail service capacity on the Tacoma-Seattle line.

In addition, the region would see 36 more miles of light rail, with trains eventually extending north to Lynnwood, east to Redmond's Overlake Transit Center and south to Highline Community College and Federal Way at Redondo/Star Lake.

The plan would be financed by a sales tax increase of 0.5 percent, or an additional five cents on a \$10 retail purchase.

New bus, train service begins

More Sound Transit train and bus service was up and running in September. The service additions included another round-trip Sounder train in the peak direction between Tacoma and Seattle, as well as an additional reverse-commute train for a total of eight round-trip trains running between Tacoma and Seattle each weekday. One more round-trip train was added on the Everett-to-Seattle line for a total of four round-trip trains in the north corridor each weekday.

To meet growing demand, ST Express added ten new buses to increase service between Everett and Bellevue and Everett and Seattle. ST Express also increased service on Route 522 from Woodinville to Seattle; 590 from Tacoma to Seattle; and 592 from DuPont/Lakewood to Seattle.

Sound Transit revises University Link baseline and federal grant application

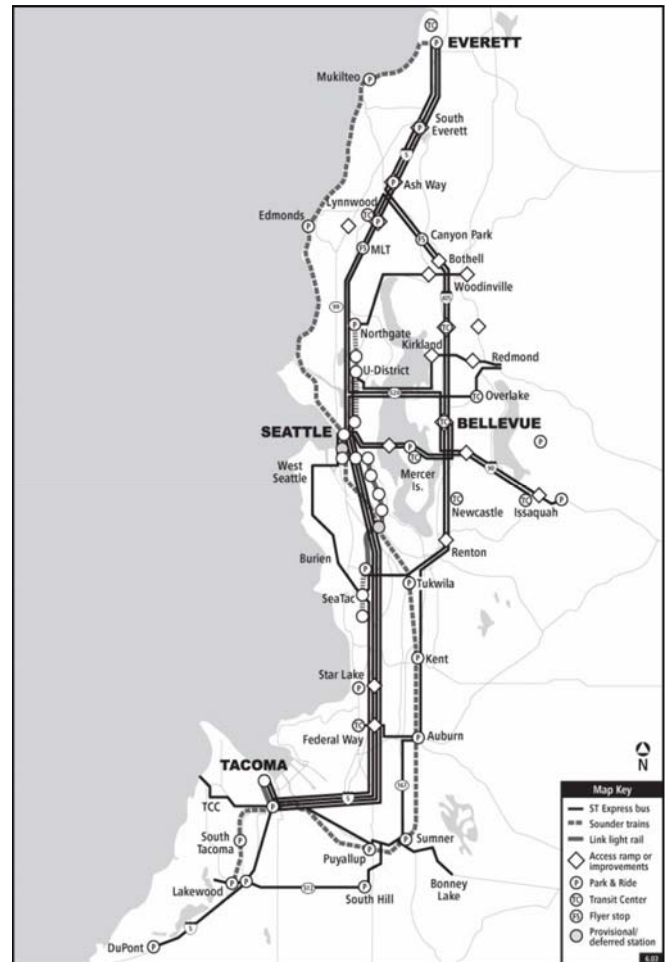
The Sound Transit Board approved a revised University Link baseline cost estimate of \$1.756 billion and a revised Federal Transit Administration contribution of \$813 million.

University Link is a 3.15-mile light rail extension that will run in twin-bored tunnels from downtown Seattle north to the University of Washington, with stations at Capitol Hill and on the University of Washington campus near Husky Stadium.

Sound Transit, BNSF Railway celebrate trackwork completion

Sound Transit, in partnership with the BNSF Railway Company, celebrated the completion of a major track and signal project from Tacoma all the way to Seattle.

This project, which began in 2000 and was completed under budget, included improving nearly every grade crossing from Tacoma to Seattle to enable Sounder, Amtrak and freight trains to move faster and more reliably. The work also included nine



new high-speed crossovers that allow freight trains to shift tracks so Sounder trains can pass easily – reducing the chance for delays. In addition, the train signal system was replaced with the highest quality Centralized Traffic Control, giving train dispatchers the advanced tools they need to move trains safer, faster and more efficiently through the region.

Issaquah Transit Center parking garage opens

The four-story Issaquah Transit Center parking garage opened for commuters during the third quarter of 2008. The parking garage gives Issaquah-area commuters more than 800 parking stalls.

The transit center is served by ST Express and King County Metro Transit buses.

South Everett Freeway Station opens

The new South Everett Freeway Station, the first park-and-ride in the state to be located in a freeway median, is open. The station, located on Interstate-5 in Everett, was com-

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pleted on budget and ahead of schedule.

The freeway station includes 400 new parking stalls and new north and southbound HOV on and off-ramps, which allow buses and vanpools to enter and exit the freeway without merging through three congested lanes of I-5. Sound Transit and Everett Transit buses use the new station.

Lakewood Station grand opening

The new Lakewood Station opened for bus service from ST Express, Pierce Transit and Intercity Transit of Thurston County. In addition, Sound Transit launched direct weekday bus-train connector service from Lakewood Station to Sounder trains at Tacoma Dome Station. ST Express Route 599 is timed to match Lakewood riders with Sounder trains leaving for Seattle.

The new station includes bus bay shelters, landscaping, bicycle storage and ticket vending machines where people can buy tickets for the Sounder connector Route 599. The new 600-stall parking garage will make it easier for Lakewood commuters to ride transit.

Light rail testing begins in Rainier Valley, Tukwila

Sound Transit kicked off a major safety education program for Link light rail trains, which began testing in the Rainier Valley and Tukwila. Light rail vehicles began initial test runs and gradually ramped up as the vehicles and new signal systems were tested.

In anticipation of the testing, Sound Transit began distributing safety education information and materials to schools and students and mailed safety information to about 67,000 households around the light rail line.

The agency's safety efforts emphasize the need to always look both ways, obey all signals and warning signs, cross only at designated crosswalks and never play around tracks or trains.

Rainier Valley Safety Street Fair

Sound Transit and the Rainier Valley community joined together for a Safety Street Fair celebration that helped the neighborhood get ready for the safe start of service in 2009. The fair included entertainment, food, prizes, speeches and hands-on opportunities. A Link car was parked at the Othello Station for people to inspect and walk through.

APTA seminar here

The American Public Transportation Association held a seminar and workshop in Seattle. The seminar, co-hosted by Sound Transit and King County Metro, was for transit boardmembers and support staff from across the country. Board Chair Greg Nickels and Boardmember Ron Sims spoke at the welcome session.

The program included a tour of the Sounder north line.

