

## Construction Update: M Street to Lakewood Track and Signal

This spring construction will begin to upgrade seven miles of existing track and street crossings in the Lakeview Subdivision rail corridor from South M Street in Tacoma to Bridgeport Way SW in Lakewood. The project is one part of the Sounder commuter rail extension of service from Tacoma to Lakewood.

The track and signal project will result in all new track and signal systems, as well as upgrades to 13 existing railroad crossings to meet current passenger rail safety standards. Crossings will have improved crossing arms and safety equipment to ensure motorist and pedestrian safety when trains are traveling through the area. The crossings will be upgraded with new crossing panels and lane markings to improve the driving surface when cars are crossing the tracks. In Lakewood, an additional set of layover tracks will be added for train storage adjacent to the tracks and north of Lakewood Station.



*The crossing at S. Wilkeson St. will be improved*

In 2008, Sound Transit worked cooperatively with WSDOT Rail and the Point Defiance Bypass project to design the shared section of track between South 66th Street and Bridgeport Way SW that allows space for a future track for Amtrak passenger rail service. To minimize future disruption to local traffic and the community, Sound Transit will construct street crossings for two tracks during the M Street to Lakewood upgrades, and a second set of tracks can be added later as state funding becomes available.

Construction on these projects will begin this spring and be completed fall 2010. Prior to the start of Sound Transit's construction, private and public utility owners will relocate and protect communication and utility lines near the tracks in support of this project.



*Workers relocate rail tracks*



*M Street to Lakewood Track and Signal route map*

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## New Lakewood Station offers riders more options

The new station in Lakewood is open for bus service. As part of Sound Transit's plans to expand Sounder service to South Tacoma and Lakewood, a new commuter rail station with bus service and parking for more than 600 vehicles was built to serve Pierce County riders traveling in the region.

Lakewood Station includes a side platform for future Sounder passengers, a full transit center, and shelters and kiosks to purchase tickets. A new parking garage near the station provides more than 600 parking spaces for commuters. On September 21, 2008, the station began service as a bus transit facility for regional and local bus service. Sound Transit coordinated the station project with the City of Lakewood's street improvements along Pacific Highway Southwest near the station.

The new Express Bus 599 takes riders from Lakewood Station directly to the Tacoma Dome Station to meet the daily departures of the Sounder train. In addition, the ST Express Route 592 from DuPont serves the Lakewood Station and provides a direct route to Seattle.

Sounder commuter rail is expected to begin service to Lakewood Station in 2012.



*Lakewood Station*

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## South Tacoma Station opens for bus service



*South Tacoma Station rendering*

South Tacoma Station is nearly completed and is now open for bus service. New ST Express Route 593 started service in February 2009 between South Tacoma Station and downtown Seattle with a connecting stop to Sounder trains at Tacoma Dome Station.

When Sounder commuter rail service is fully operational to South Tacoma Station in 2012, trains will operate approximately every 30 minutes during peak periods on weekdays. Construction on the new station started in January 2008 and the shelters and platform are expected to be completed this summer.

The station will consist of a long passenger platform alongside the tracks with shelters to provide cover for commuters, kiosks to purchase tickets, landscaping and public art. The parking lot holds approximately 215 vehicles.

## D-to-M Streets Track and Signal Improvements

The critical link to expanding Sounder commuter rail service to South Tacoma and Lakewood is the D-to-M Streets Track and Signal Improvements project. This project will build a 1.2-mile section of new track connecting the Tacoma Dome Station to existing rail right of way near South M Street. In 2007, after an extensive review of safety concerns, future expansion possibilities, design challenges, and community and City of Tacoma input, the Sound Transit Board endorsed a new route that includes a railroad overpass at Pacific Avenue.

The City of Tacoma formed a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to provide citizen input as the design is developed for the new project and route, including bridge design, street crossings, pedestrian amenities, development opportunities and construction staging. PAC membership is composed of local residents, business and property owners, and representatives from neighborhood and community groups.

The PAC's work with the project team helped develop community priorities for the D-to-M Streets corridor alignment and the new bridge. The project team, incorporating PAC input, is designing a safe and pedestrian friendly rail corridor. Where Pacific Avenue passes under the rail bridge, the team is working with urban designers to ensure



*Project Advisory Committee*

that the project enhances surrounding buildings and landscape features. The placement of the rail line requires the closing of A Street to vehicles, and the design team is working on a pedestrian and bicycle friendly underpass that will connect the neighborhood north and south of the line. The PAC is currently discussing how the rail crossing at South C Street can be designed to be safe for pedestrians, rail passengers, and motor vehicles using the street.

Existing funding is sufficient only to complete design and property acquisition; additional funding must be secured to complete the project. Final design will be completed in fall 2009, and the improvements are projected to be completed and ready for service in 2012.

## WSDOT's Point Defiance Bypass Project

The Point Defiance Bypass Project is designed to improve passenger rail travel times, ease rail congestion, and allow increased freight rail service around Point Defiance and along southern Puget Sound by eliminating passenger trains from the BNSF Railway main line south of Tacoma.

Passenger trains, including Amtrak *Cascades*, currently must slow down due to curves and single track tunnels on the BNSF main line tracks near Point Defiance and along southern Puget Sound. This project will reroute passenger trains to an inland route. The improvements will allow Amtrak passenger trains to use the bypass route without being delayed by freight or Sounder trains.

Part of the proposed route of this WSDOT project is the same route that Sound Transit will use to extend Sounder commuter rail to Lakewood. Sound Transit will administer the construction of the improvements. WSDOT and Sound Transit are working together to save time and money by ensuring that construction only has to be done once in any one location.

Construction is scheduled to begin in fall 2009, with completion scheduled for summer 2012. Work will start between M Street in Tacoma and the new Sounder station in Lakewood.

For more information: Kevin Jeffers, Project Manager  
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*Point Defiance Rail map*

## Have you heard the news?

- South Tacoma and Lakewood stations open for bus service
- Construction set to start on M Street to Lakewood improvements
- D-to-M Streets rail project begins final design

For more information on these or other Sound Transit projects, please contact Roger Iwata at [roger.iwata@soundtransit.org](mailto:roger.iwata@soundtransit.org) or 206-689-4904

For information in alternative formats call 1-800-201-4900 / TYY Relay: 711 or e-mail [accessibility@soundtransit.org](mailto:accessibility@soundtransit.org).

Para averiguar más detalles en español acerca de los proyectos de Sound Transit entre Tacoma y Lakewood, por favor llame al 1-800-823-9230 durante horas normales de oficina.

Tacoma와 Lakewood구간의 Sound Transit 프로젝트에 관한 상세한 안내를 한국어로 원하실 경우, 정규 업무 시간 중 1-800-823-9230 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

## Expanded Service for South Sound commuters

- New ST Express Route 593 began in February between South Tacoma Station and downtown Seattle with a connecting stop to Sounder at Tacoma Dome Station
- ST Express Route 599 between the new Lakewood Station and Tacoma Dome Station
- ST Express Route 592 from DuPont to Lakewood Station and direct to Seattle
- Ninth and final round-trip train will be added to Sounder service summer 2009
- Two additional Sounder trains were added between Tacoma and Seattle last September

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