

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues

New Sounder south line trips begin

Sound Transit added two new roundtrips to its popular Sounder south line service between Seattle and Lakewood.

One train runs in the early morning between Lakewood and Seattle, helping ease congestion on the line's most crowded trains. The second train provides earlier service to Lakewood during the traditional afternoon peak. With the two new trips, the south line now offers commuters 13 daily roundtrips.

Link boardings soar

Ridership continued its strong growth during the second quarter, with a 14.5 percent increase compared to the same period last year. Ridership was also up on all Sound Transit trains and buses, with a 6.8-percent ridership increase system wide over the same period a year earlier. Link light rail drove the increase with more riders using the Link stations at Capitol Hill and University of Washington.

East Link tunnel excavation one-third complete

The Downtown Bellevue Tunnel construction is about a third complete, having advanced more than 700 feet of the total 2,000-foot length. When it's finished, the tunnel will be about one-third of a mile long, running between the future East Main and Downtown Bellevue stations under 110th Avenue Northeast, turning east near Northeast 6th Street.

The tunnel is being built using the Sequential Excavation Method (SEM) rather than a tunnel-boring machine or digging a large trench that is later covered (cut-and-cover tunnel construction). SEM removes soil in small sections or bites using an excavator and support equipment. The SEM method minimizes disruption to traffic and pedestrians, reduces noise, dust impacts to neighboring residents and businesses, and significantly reduces utility service relocation and its disruptions.



Current and future transit improvements

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues continued...**Angle Lake Station achieves LEED Gold certification**

The Angle Lake light rail station, which opened in September 2016, is the first Sound Transit facility to earn a Gold rating in Leadership Energy and Environmental Design from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Using the "Environment in Motion" theme, contractors who designed and built the station incorporated several environmentally sustainable features. A 60-panel, 14-kilowatt solar array on the platform canopy provides up to 18,000-kilowatt hours of power per year to the station. When not in use, escalators are slower from the platform to a plaza area to conserve energy. A pedestrian walkway covered by a 50-kilowatt solar array that leads to a garage enfolded in a blue, wave-like façade of anodized aluminum that requires little maintenance. Four charging stations for electric vehicles are housed in the garage and storage for 52 bicycles is available on site.

Station construction also incorporated regionally produced and recycled materials and LED lighting was used to reduce energy use.

Six light rail stations added to busker program

Sound Transit has expanded its street performer busker program. The busker program expanded from test sites at the University of Washington and Capitol Hill Link light rail stations now includes Beacon Hill, Mount Baker, Columbia City, Othello, Tukwila International Boulevard, and Angle Lake stations. The move came after months of study followed by a survey of transit riders and street performers that revealed wide support for expanding the busker program.

The goal of the program is to create a welcoming experience for light rail riders. Performance locations are marked with stainless steel stars to help prevent performers and audiences from blocking station traffic. Busking is not allowed during high-ridership events like University of Washington graduation and Husky football games.

Moving forward with West Seattle and Ballard projects

The Sound Transit Board established a \$285.9 million budget for preliminary engineering to move forward with extending light rail to West Seattle and Ballard, two of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the region. The Board also approved a \$24.4 million consultant contract with HNTB Corporation to begin project development services on those extensions.

The West Seattle and Ballard extensions are part of the Sound Transit 3 plan that voters approved last fall. The projects include extending light rail to West Seattle by 2030, building a second downtown tunnel in conjunction with the extension to Ballard, which will begin service by 2035. Sound Transit is starting technical work and in early 2018 will embark on a community engagement process to reach early consensus on a Preferred Alternative by early 2019.