

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues

System expansion begins

Sound Transit in April began implementing one of the most ambitious public transit system expansion program in the nation's history. The program, approved by voters last November, includes adding 62 more miles of light rail, establishing new bus rapid transit service and extending the Sounder south line. Sound Transit's staff along with input from local and national transit agencies, federal and state partners and trade organizations developed the implementation plan.

To meet the plan's expedited timelines; the agency will start projects sooner and collaborate with cities, stakeholders, and private citizens earlier and more intensively. The agency will focus on identifying preferred routes and station locations earlier, streamlining the number of alternatives studied, acquiring real estate sooner and developing early permitting plans with partner agencies.

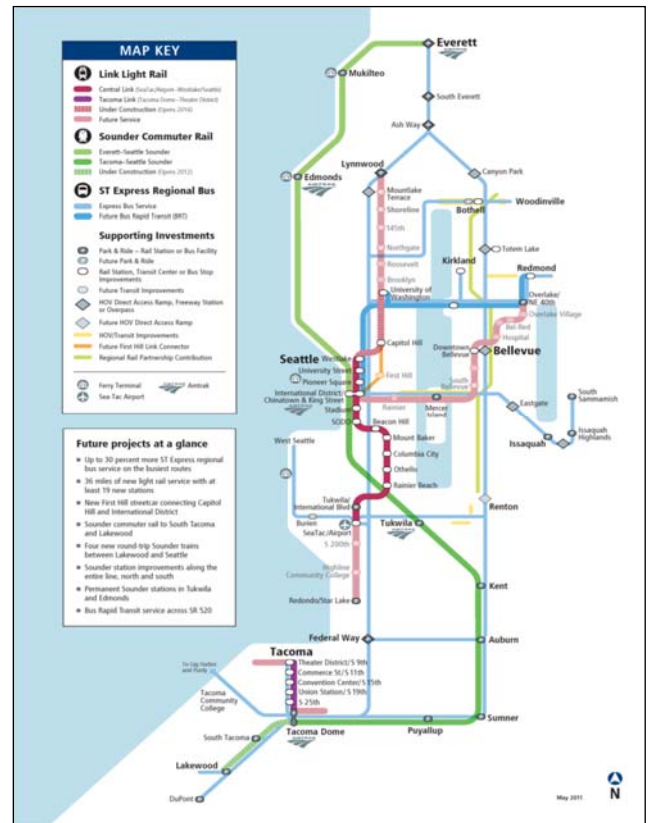
The plan will also guide significant internal process improvements that include project teams with a focus on integrating work functions across departments.

More light rail trains

The Sound Transit Board approved an order for 30 additional light rail vehicles from Siemens Industry, Inc. The vehicles will support the opening in 2024 of Sound Transit's Link extension projects to Federal Way and Downtown Redmond.

The \$131 million contract amendment with Siemens enables Sound Transit to exercise an option to procure additional low-floor light rail vehicles under an order placed last year. The first light rail vehicles from that order will be delivered in mid-2019, with subsequent vehicles arriving on a staggered schedule of two to three per month through the first quarter of 2024.

As originally planned, forty vehicles will be delivered and tested in time for the Northgate Link Extension opening in 2021; with the remainder arriving in time for deployment when testing begins on the Redmond and South King projects.



Current and future transit improvements

East Link construction underway on I-90 bridge

East Link light rail construction is underway in the center lanes of the I-90 floating bridge across Lake Washington.

Building light rail across a floating bridge is the first of its kind in the world and is possible because of innovative planning and engineering. Construction on the bridge will continue through 2020 and will include post-tensioning of the pontoons to strengthen the bridge, seismic retrofitting and installing the overhead power system, tracks, signals, and electric systems.

When it opens in 2023, East Link will run 14 miles between the International District Station in downtown Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue and to Overlake in Redmond. A year later, in 2024, trains will continue to downtown Redmond.

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues continued...

Running on clean energy

Sound Transit approved an innovative 10-year agreement with Puget Sound Energy (PSE) that will allow Link light rail trains to run on 100 percent clean energy starting in 2019. The agreement, the first of its kind in Washington State, will enable Sound Transit to purchase wind energy directly from PSE's Green Direct program.

Sound Transit is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, expanding the use of renewable energy and making all facilities and electricity carbon-neutral by 2030. Green Direct is a new program that allows customers to partner with PSE to achieve their environmental goals.

Loan for operations and maintenance facility

The U.S. Department of Transportation executed an \$87.7 million low-interest loan that will reduce regional taxpayers' costs in constructing a new light rail maintenance base in Bellevue.

The loan, with an interest rate of 2.73 percent, is the agency's second under a \$1.99 billion master credit agreement approved by USDOT last December through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA). This credit agreement supports four separate Sound Transit projects and is expected to yield regional taxpayers long-term savings of between \$200 million and \$300 million in reduced borrowing costs.

The loans allow the agency to borrow money at rates that are typically significantly lower than otherwise available.

Study of elevated light rail in downtown Redmond

Sound Transit is studying an elevated light rail route in downtown Redmond.

That possibility is among the potential refinements as Sound Transit begins building the 3.5-mile extension from Overlake to downtown Redmond in 2019. Service is scheduled to start in in 2024; one year after East Link opens from Seattle to Overlake through Mercer Island and Bellevue.

The proposed refinements will under go additional environmental review and engineering prior to the Board's scheduled 2018 adoption of the final project. The potential refinements were identified through intensive work with the City of Redmond, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, King County Metro Transit, and Washington State Department of Transportation.

Summer ORCA youth fares

King County and Sound Transit announced special summer fares for those riding with an ORCA Youth card. With the card, access to destinations across the county and region cost only \$.50 per trip on King County Metro's bus network and \$1 for Sound Transit's trains and buses. Metro will distribute free ORCA Youth cards to encourage more people to take transit.

The reduced fares will run from mid-June through Labor Day. All youth between the ages of 6-18 are eligible.