

Executive Summary:

Every year since 1998, Sound Transit has prepared a Service Implementation Plan (SIP), an annual update on the development of its express bus, commuter rail and light rail services. The SIP describes service additions and revisions planned for the upcoming budget year, together with preliminary proposals and financial estimates for the subsequent 5-year period. The initial version of the 2008 SIP was issued as a draft. Following public outreach, the Sound Transit Board reviewed and approved the 2008 SIP on December 13, 2007. The final 2008 SIP was prepared and distributed after the Board action, incorporating changes made during the review process. Service changes approved by the Board are planned for implementation in June and September of 2008 except for the new Route 593, which may be delayed until February 2009.

The key elements of the 2008 SIP include plans to expand Sounder commuter rail service on both the North and south lines; changes and additions to ST Express bus service to serve new park-and-ride facilities; and later weeknight service on Tacoma Link light rail. It also includes a report on the status of each route and performance objectives for the upcoming year, including ridership and productivity targets.

ST Express Bus - 2008

Major changes to East King County ST Express service approved as part of the 2007 SIP have been delayed until February 9, 2008 to coordinate with a restructure of King County Metro service scheduled for that date. The approved ST Express changes are expected to reduce overcrowding and improve productivity. In the meantime, total boardings on ST Express buses have continued to increase even though service levels have remained largely unchanged during the past year. Total first Quarter 2007 bus boardings were up six percent compared with the same period in 2006.

A key priority of the 2008 SIP is to provide express bus service to three new Sound Transit park-and-ride facilities. These are the South Everett Park-and-Ride, with 420 parking stalls; the South Tacoma Station Park-and-Ride, with 213 stalls; and the Lakewood Station Park-and-Ride, with 620 stalls. These new facilities, together with expanded transit service, will begin to address pent-up demand for more park-and-ride space and help to take pressure off existing park-and-ride facilities along two of the region's most congested corridors.

To serve the new South Everett facility, route changes and additional peak period trips are planned for **Route 510 Everett-Seattle** and **Route 532 Everett-Bellevue**. The new South Tacoma Station Park-and-Ride will be served by a temporary peak period express bus route, **Route 593 South Tacoma-Seattle**, which will be discontinued when Sounder commuter rail service is extended to South Tacoma and Lakewood. To serve the new Lakewood Station, route changes and additional trips are planned for **Routes 592/594 Lakewood-Seattle**. Lakewood Station will also be served by a new express route, **Route 599 Lakewood-Tacoma** that will make direct connections with Sounder trains at Tacoma Dome Station. Like Route 593, Route 599 is planned as an interim route that will be discontinued when Sounder service is extended directly to Lakewood.

Chapter 1 summarizes the 2008 SIP service changes approved by the Sound Transit Board for implementation. A complete description and performance summary of all three transit modes and detailed background information for each service change is included in Chapter 2.

Since the 2007 SIP was issued last year, Sound Transit has made progress in securing additional bus base capacity for the ST Express fleet. The Sound Transit Finance Committee approved an agreement with Pierce Transit (PT) that allows expansion and improvements to PT's existing base to proceed. This agreement also permits Sound Transit to replace its oldest buses and increase the size of its high-capacity bus fleet operated by Pierce Transit. For King County and Snohomish County service, discussions are continuing with King County Metro and Community Transit to determine how additional bus base capacity can be developed in the near term. Staff expects to bring specific base development proposals to the Board for consideration in 2008.

Sounder Commuter Rail - 2008

Following record-breaking ridership growth in 2007, major additions to Sounder commuter rail service will occur in 2008. Continued progress on capital improvements, such as the King Street Station track and signal project and the "D" Street grade separation project in Tacoma, are helping to make these additional trains possible.

The specific additions include one new peak-directional round trip on the **north line** (Everett-Seattle), bringing the total number of daily round trips to four. This is the maximum service level allowed on the north line under Sound Transit's current service agreement with the BNSF Railway. The new North line round trip will begin operation during the third quarter 2008. The **Mukilteo Station**, now under construction, will provide additional riders for North line trains when it opens in mid-2008. On the **south line** (Tacoma-Seattle), up to three additional round trips will be added by the fourth quarter. One of the three new round trips may be a "reverse peak" service operating from Seattle to Tacoma in the morning and from Tacoma to Seattle in the afternoon, complementing the existing reverse peak round trip that started operation on Sept. 24, 2007.

A complete description of Sounder service changes for 2008 is included in Chapter 2.

Tacoma Link - 2008

Almost from the beginning of Tacoma Link service in 2003, Sound Transit has received requests for extended weekday evening hours. Currently, weeknight service on Tacoma Link ends at 8 p.m., with later service provided only on nights when major Tacoma Dome events are scheduled. Staff has developed a plan to extend service until 10 p.m. every weeknight on a regular basis. The extended weeknight service will be funded by reducing service levels on early weekday mornings and on Sundays. More details on this proposal are included in the Tacoma Link section of Chapter 2.

Preliminary Service Plans for 2009 - 2013

In addition to specific 2008 service proposals for Board consideration, the SIP describes preliminary 2009-2013 service plans, including the startup of Central Link. These “out year” plans were developed assuming no Sound Transit 2 program, and implementation is driven by completion of the final *Sound Move* capital projects, expected increases in transit demand and projected operations and maintenance funding available in each subarea. Service levels, ridership and fare revenue estimates shown in the SIP for 2009-2013 are used to develop the agency’s Long-Range Financial Plan. Here is a preliminary summary of service proposals during this time period:

2009

- Startup of Central Link light rail service between downtown Seattle and Tukwila International Boulevard Station, followed by an extension to Sea-Tac Airport Station later in the year.
- Full-time operation of the Bellevue-Seattle bus route in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, together with increased Saturday service levels.

2010

- Major improvements to bus service in the I-5 South corridor, including a frequent new full-time express route between Tacoma, Federal Way and Seattle and increased service between Federal Way and Sea-Tac Airport.
- West Seattle-Bellevue and Lakewood-SeaTac bus routes modified to connect with Central Link at Airport Station.

2011

- Sounder commuter rail service extended from Tacoma Dome Station to South Tacoma and Lakewood; temporary bus routes 593 and 599 will be discontinued.
- Everett-Seattle and Ash Way-Seattle bus routes modified to serve new Mountlake Terrace Freeway Station and park-and-ride garage.

2012 - 2013

- Work with King County Metro to implement the Bellevue-Redmond Rapid Ride service which could include enhanced service on the Redmond-Seattle route (545) and the Bellevue-Seattle route (550).

Additional details on preliminary “out year” plans are included in Chapter 3.

Accessible Services

Sound Transit will continue to plan and implement actions and programs United We Ride in Puget Sound, the Regional Special Needs Transportation Plan. The complete United We Ride in Puget Sound Plan is available at: <http://www.soundtransit.org/x1873.xml> or by e-mailing accessibility@soundtransit.org .

Sound Transit received two New Freedom Program grants from the Puget Sound Regional Council to implement two projects from the Plan. The Volunteer Transportation Programs was granted \$235,000 in federal funds. With the Sound Transit match, the total for this project will be \$470,000. The Bus Buddy/Travel Ambassador Programs was granted \$140,856 in federal funds. With the Sound Transit match, the total for this project will be \$281,712.

Sound Transit is continuing to implement the Remote Audible Infrared Signage program, which received an FTA grant of \$1.98M. Installation of the components is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2008. Testing and evaluation will begin in the second quarter of 2008.

Quick Guide to the 2008 SIP:

Chapter 1 summarizes the 2008 SIP service changes approved by the Sound Transit Board for implementation.

Chapter 2 includes a description and performance summary of Sounder, Tacoma Link and every ST Express route, with detailed background information for each 2008 SIP service change.

Chapter 3 describes preliminary plans for 2009-2013, including the startup of Central Link.

Chapter 4 includes estimates of ridership and fare revenue for all three transit modes through 2013, and a description of the modeling and assumptions used to develop the estim