

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

No major Sound Transit service changes are proposed for 2014, and as a result, no public outreach process or Title VI Impact Analysis is included in the 2014 Service Implementation Plan (SIP).

In recent years, Sound Transit has implemented new services or major service changes in nearly all of the corridors it serves, as shown in the following summary of the SIP changes approved by the Sound Transit Board since 2009:

2009: Central Link light rail opened from downtown Seattle to SeaTac Airport.

2010: Light rail and restructured ST Express bus service replaced Metro Route 194 service to SeaTac Airport and Federal Way; New off-peak ST Express bus service to Sounder South Line stations started; New Redmond-University District ST Express route implemented to mitigate SR 520 bridge tolls.

2011: Service reductions and efficiencies implemented due to the recession, including reduced service levels on six ST Express routes and the elimination of all service on one route. Central Link trains converted to single-car operation at nights and on weekends.

2012: Sounder trains extended to South Tacoma and Lakewood; ST Express bus service to South Tacoma discontinued; Seattle-Lakewood-DuPont ST Express service streamlined with fewer Seattle stops and reduced service levels.

2013: Additional Sounder South Line round trip implemented; off-peak ST Express routes between Seattle and Everett consolidated to generate savings for increased peak period service; service to downtown Everett discontinued; new Route 567 implemented with non-stop express service between Kent and downtown Bellevue; midday Route 566 service between Renton and Overlake discontinued.

In contrast to previous years, no major transit capital projects, such as new park-and-rides or light rail extensions, are scheduled for completion during 2014. Transit capital improvements are often a key driver of new or restructured service. ST Express ridership is expected to increase but at a slower rate than previous years, while existing capacity exists on Sounder and Link light rail to absorb growth. The operating budget for service is expected to remain stable. No major transit incentives, such as bridge tolls, are planned for implementation during 2014.

As in previous years, the 2014 SIP includes a detailed performance analysis of each bus and rail route, along with performance objectives for the coming year and an updated 5-year ridership forecast. In a change from past SIP's, ridership and operating data for the last full calendar year (2012) is used in the analysis to eliminate the effect of seasonal variations. The data has been reformatted to be easier to read and understand, helping to provide readers with a clearer picture of how individual services are performing compared with past years.

Chapter 4 provides a look into preliminary plans for Sound Transit service between 2015 and 2019. During this period, Link light rail will be extended north to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington, and south to Angle Lake/South 200th Street. On Sounder, construction of track and signal improvements will help to accommodate three additional round trips on the South Line by 2017, providing a total of 26 weekday trains.

Chapter 4 also includes preliminary discussion of East Link construction. While East Link is not scheduled to open for service until 2023, construction work begins to impact the I-90 corridor starting in 2015. Keeping bus service moving reliably on I-90 during the construction period will be challenging, requiring a high level of coordination and cooperation between Sound Transit and its partner agencies. The 2014 SIP provides a preview of what to expect with this and other major construction projects, including the SR 99 tunnel and the Seattle side of the SR 520 project.