

Motion No. M2022-66

Adopting the Title VI 2022 Service Monitoring Results

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
Rider Experience & Operations Committee	08/04/2022	Recommend to Board	Jonte Robinson, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer
Board	08/25/2022	Final action	Brian de Place, Director- System Planning Raj Cheriell, Director- Essential Data and Analytics Nicole Hill- Deputy Director, Equity & Social Responsibility

Proposed action

Approves the Title VI service monitoring results prior to the submittal of Sound Transit's 2022 Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration.

Key features summary

- As a recipient of federal financial assistance, Sound Transit is required to perform a Title VI service monitoring report at least every three years to be submitted to the FTA as part of its Title VI Program. One major component of this program is the Title VI service monitoring report, which identifies disparate impacts or disproportionate burdens on its service.
- Sound Transit has board-adopted Service Standards and Performance Measures to identify service levels and performance. This policy requires that any disparate impact or disproportionate burden be mitigated in some fashion.
- In its service monitoring report, Sound Transit analyzes passenger overcrowding rates, on-time performance, customer complaints, trips operated as scheduled, frequency and span of bus and rail service as well as vehicle assignment based on route. Service monitoring report also measures the distribution of transit amenities across modes including vertical conveyances, bike racks, bike cages/lockers, shelters, and seating/benches.
- Disparate impacts, or underperforming routes serving populations with a higher proportion of minority riders, were found in the following areas on Sound Transit services:
 - ST Express bus services: On-time performance, percent of trips operated, higher incidence of customer complaints, span of weekend service, frequency, elevator uptime and bike cage/locker distribution
 - Sounder Commuter rail: Bike rack, bike cage/locker and seating distribution; and
 - Link light rail: Shelter and seating distribution
- Disproportionate burdens, or underperforming routes serving populations with a higher proportion of low-income riders, were found in the following areas on Sound Transit services:
 - ST Express bus services: On-time performance, percent of trips operated as scheduled, higher incidence of customer complaints, weekday span of service, frequency and shelter distribution

- Link light rail: Elevator and escalator uptime, bike cage/lock distribution, shelter and seating distribution
- Mitigation strategies to address disparate impacts and disproportionate burdens will focus on near-future improvements (schedule adjustments, changes in vehicle allocation, trip additions, bus assignments) as well as medium term capital projects. As new high-capacity transit lines are implemented, dedicated rights-of-way will provide some relief around the region's congested highway system. The ST Express network will evolve to connect to new high-capacity transit stations, increasing access to the benefits of enhanced reliability.

Background

Sound Transit is required to measure the quality of service delivered to communities, and to demonstrate that resources are distributed in an equitable manner. The FTA is responsible for ensuring that federally supported transit services and related benefits are distributed by applicants and recipients of FTA assistance in a manner consistent with Title VI, Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Sound Transit gathers data from operating partners on a monthly basis in order to understand the degree to which service aligns with targets set forth in the established performance standards. Pursuant to rules established by the Federal Transit Administration, this data must be analyzed, presented to, and approved by Sound Transit's board of directors every three years in order to demonstrate the degree to which service and amenities are distributed equitably.

Service was analyzed based on board-adopted service standards and performance measures which identify the level and type of service that should be provided, as well as a process to implement any changes needed to meet established priorities.

Standards which services are measured against include passenger overcrowding rates, on-time performance, customer complaints, percentage of scheduled trips operated, frequency and span of bus and rail service, and vehicle assignment based on route. New data about the distribution of transit amenities across all modes is also included in this year's report. This report measures equity through current disparate impact and disproportionate burden policies adopted in 2013 as part of Sound Transit's Major Service Change Policy and Fare Change Policy. Subsequent reports will be analyzed through new thresholds found in the updated and combined Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden Policy, Resolution No. R2022-19. The new standards are subject to board approval and will be presented and considered for adoption at the July 28, 2022 Board meeting.

The reasons for performance findings include impacts of Covid-19 which resulted in service reductions, canceled trips and deferred implementation of planned service improvements due to operator shortages. Service reductions happened on more Title VI routes than non-Title VI routes because our operating model and the geographic distribution of our bus bases prevented us from evenly distributing service reductions across the entire system and instead was concentrated in South King and Pierce County, operated by Pierce Transit, where our operator shortages were most acute.

As a result, overall service quality and quantity suffered on more Title VI routes than non-Title VI routes. For each operating partner and bus base, significant efforts were made to prioritize service quality and quantity for Title VI routes. Additionally, our operating model has resulted in differences in how data is collected/monitored between operating partners which has led to some inconsistencies.

Sound Transit adopts an updated Service Plan annually, which sets service levels and approves changes to service consistent with the agency's annual budget. The next opportunity to make changes to scheduled service will occur with the March 2023 service change. The 2023 Service Plan is currently in development in coordination with the agency's 2023 Budget. The plan will establish priorities for

service restoration and improvements to mitigate service level findings in this report when operator staffing levels allow additional service.

Fiscal information

Not applicable to this action.

Title VI compliance

Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that:

No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Sound Transit receives federal financial assistance to design and build the regional transit system through grants primarily awarded and administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the U. S. Department of Transportation. As an FTA grant recipient, Sound Transit cannot, on the basis of race, color or national origin, either directly or through contractual means:

- Deny an individual any service, financial aid or benefit provided under the program to which he or she might otherwise be entitled;
- Make distinctions in the quality, quantity or manner in which the service or benefit is provided; or
- Segregate or separately treat individuals in any matter related to the receipt of any service or benefit.

As a part of its ongoing Title VI obligations, Sound Transit must continue to ensure that it complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin in any program receiving federal funds.

Included among the Title VI obligations, Sound Transit must submit a Title VI Program for FTA approval, every three years, which now requires that “the Title VI Program must be approved by the recipient’s board of directors...prior to submission to FTA.”

The Sound Transit Title VI Program is to be submitted to the FTA on or before October 1, 2022, and the current Title VI Program submitted in 2019, is set to expire on November 30, 2022.

Public involvement

Not applicable to this action.

Time constraints

A one-month delay would compromise meeting the required deadline and risk FTA not approving the Title VI Submittal prior to the November 30, 2022 expiration of the 2019 program. This document is required to be included with the 2022 Title VI Submittal, which is due to the FTA on or before October 1, 2022.

Prior Board/Committee actions

Resolution No. R2021-19: Adopted the 2022 Service Plan with major service changes for implementation in 2022.

Motion No. M2019-95: Approved the submittal of Sound Transit’s 2019 Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration.

Motion No. M2019-94: Approved the Title VI service monitoring results prior to the submittal of Sound Transit's 2019 Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration.

Motion No. M2014-20: Adopted the Sound Transit Service Standards and Performance Measures–2014 Edition as guidelines for the on-going evaluation of Sound Transit's express bus, commuter rail and light rail services, and replaced the Sound Transit Service Standards and Performance Measures–2010 Edition.

Resolution No. R2013-18: Established policies for conducting equity analyses of Major Service Changes impacting minority and low income populations, in accordance with Title VI requirements and guidelines for Federal Transit Administration recipients.

Environmental review – KH 7/25/22

Legal review – MT 7/29/22



Motion No. M2022-66

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority approving the Title VI service monitoring results prior to the submittal of Sound Transit's 2022 Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration.

Background

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Service was analyzed based on board-adopted service standards and performance measures which identify the level and type of service that should be provided, as well as a process to implement any changes needed to meet established priorities.

Standards which services are measured against include passenger overcrowding rates, on-time performance, customer complaints, percentage of scheduled trips operated, frequency and span of bus and rail service, and vehicle assignment based on route. New data about the distribution of transit amenities across all modes is also included in this year's report. This report measures equity through current disparate impact and disproportionate burden policies adopted in 2013 as part of Sound Transit's Major Service Change Policy and Fare Change Policy. Subsequent reports will be analyzed through new thresholds found in the updated and combined Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden Policy, Resolution No. R2022-19. The new standards are subject to board approval and will be presented and considered for adoption at the July 28, 2022 Board meeting.

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Motion

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority approving the Title VI service monitoring results prior to the submittal of Sound Transit's 2022 Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on August 25, 2022.



Dave Somers
Board Vice Chair

Attest:



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator