SOUNDTRANSIT

Motion No. M2025-64

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority directing the chief executive officer to (1) conduct a fare gate retrofit implementation study; (2) if study findings support further action, develop a fare gate retrofit pilot proposal; and (3) report the fare gate retrofit implementation study findings to the Board and provide a staff recommendation that may include a fare gate retrofit pilot proposal based on the study findings.

Background

Fare gate systems are prevalent in North America. Documented benefits include increased fare recovery, improved safety, and a reduction in staffing and maintenance needs. Retrofitting existing Link stations may present unique engineering and operational challenges but would also provide an opportunity to test targeted installations before executing broader system-wide fare gate implementation. A fare gate retrofit implementation study will inform the agency regarding fare gate effectiveness and future station design integration.

Additionally, fare gates may further Sound Transit's broader Enterprise Initiative (EI) to strengthen system performance, rider experience, and long-term financial sustainability because fare gates have emerged as an effective strategy to enhance fare compliance, reduce operating costs, and improve overall passenger experience. The EI encourages evaluating operational tools that may deliver long-term value for the region.

Motion

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the CEO is directed to complete the following:

1. Conduct a fare gate retrofit implementation study that includes:
    a. An assessment of the benefits of installing fare gates at select 1 Line and 2 Line stations.
    b. Strategic rationale, including cost and return on investment considerations for potential pilot locations.
    c. An explanation of why certain stations are stronger candidates than others, with recommendations based on feasibility, complexity, and station type (at-grade, below-ground, above-ground).
    d. Lessons from peer systems that successfully operate with fare gates at select, but not all, stations.
    e. Ancillary benefits observed in other systems, such as improved fare compliance, improved safety, and lower maintenance costs.
    f. Opportunities for all Link stations, including key metrics the pilot will help define and any design refinements needed for future stations.
    g. Potential impacts and opportunities for Fare Ambassadors, including:
        i. Expanded customer assistance roles at gated stations.
        ii. Continued compliance work at ungated stations.
        iii. Enhanced support during service disruptions and system monitoring.

2. If the fare gate retrofit implementation study supports further action, prepare a fare gate retrofit pilot proposal that includes:
    a. Scoping and preliminary design work necessary to facilitate implementation of the pilot proposal in late 2026, if authorized.
    b. Identification of metrics and evaluation criteria to assess pilot effectiveness.
    c. Coordination with relevant departments and jurisdictions to ensure constructability and compliance.
3. Report the fare gate retrofit implementation study findings to the Board and provide a staff recommendation that may include a fare gate retrofit pilot proposal based on the study findings.

The CEO must return to the Board no later than Q2 2026 with the study findings, and if applicable, a proposed fare gate retrofit pilot proposal, for Board consideration.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on _____.

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Dave Somers
Board Chair

Attest:

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Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator