A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the phased opening of the East Link Extension via the East Link Starter Line using funds authorized from the agency budget for the East Link Extension, inclusive of $6 million authorized by Resolution No. R2023-06.

WHEREAS, the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, commonly known as Sound Transit, was formed under chapters 81.104 and 81.112 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) for the Pierce, King, and Snohomish Counties region by action of their respective county councils pursuant to RCW 81.112.030; and

WHEREAS, Sound Transit is authorized to plan, construct, and permanently operate a high-capacity system of transportation infrastructure and services to meet regional public transportation needs in the Central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, in general elections held within the Sound Transit district on November 5, 1996, November 4, 2008, and November 8, 2016, voters approved local funding to implement a regional high-capacity transportation system for the Central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, in April 2015, the Board adopted Resolution No. R2015-04 to establish a baseline budget for the East Link Extension and a baseline schedule of June 2023; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of numerous factors including a concrete strike and COVID-19 delayed construction, including the East Link, Downtown Redmond Link, Lynnwood Link, and Federal Way Link Extensions; and

WHEREAS, the East Link Extension experienced construction impacts including construction quality and durability concerns about plinths, the raised concrete structures that support the tracks on the I-90 segment (except for the floating bridge), and issues with mortar pads and rebar placements and track fasteners; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the schedule delays and service impacts to East Link and to Lynnwood Link Extensions, the Board adopted Resolution No. R2023-06 to authorize the expenditure of an amount not to exceed $6 million from the East Link project budget (funded by the East King Subarea) to develop an option to open a portion of the East Link Extension from South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station (East Link Starter Line) without delaying the Lynnwood, Federal Way or Redmond Link Extension openings; and

WHEREAS, assuming sufficient additional resources are available if necessary to address unexpected contingencies, an option was developed in which the East Link Starter Line could be completed and tested in late 2023, and opened in Spring 2024 without delaying the Lynnwood, Federal Way or Downtown Redmond Link Extensions; and

WHEREAS, the East Link Extension scope and project budget includes budget for startup and opening expenditures and a portion of that budget will be used for the expenditures associated with this phased opening of the East Link Starter Line; and

WHEREAS, Board approval is needed to authorize the use of an expected amount up to $43 million from the adopted East Link Extension $3.68 billion budget to complete a phased opening of the East Link Starter Line; and
WHEREAS, operation and maintenance of the East Link Starter Line is estimated to cost approximately $34 million in 2024, which will be included in the 2024 annual operating budget for Board approval; and

WHEREAS, East Link Starter Line will not be impacted by construction activities such as the Washington State Department of Transportation’s Revive I-5 work; and

WHEREAS, the number of anticipated weekday boarding from Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace, and Shoreline is 25,000 to 34,000 and 6,000 weekday boardings on the Eastlink Starter Line; and

WHEREAS, the level of ridership from Snohomish County and North King County must be sufficiently resourced.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that:

Section 1. The chief executive officer is authorized to expend up to $43 million on all activities required for a phased opening of the East Link Extension from South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station (East Link Starter Line) to open in Spring 2024, and any unspent amount of $6 million authorized for additional East Link Extension project costs authorized by Resolution No. R2023-06.

Section 2. In managing Link operational resources, including vehicles and required staff, Sound Transit will prioritize maximizing peak-hour 1 Line service to and from Lynnwood to the greatest degree possible. Sound Transit will allocate staff and other resources to maintain 1 Line service and will urgently expedite the implementation of all feasible options for increasing service and capacity on Lynnwood Link Extension.

Section 3. In authorizing East Link Starter Line service to move forward before the full opening of the 2 Line, Sound Transit will also advance interim impact mitigation plans of 2 Line delays on 1 Line operations. Until the full 2 Line opening, Sound Transit will, to the greatest extent feasible, provide sufficient additional bus services to meet rider demand. Mitigation will include deferring components of the ST Express 2024 service plan associated with opening of Lynnwood Link, and instead focus those resources on providing additional passenger service and capacity in the corridor. Implementation of mitigation measures must account for impacts of Washington State Department of Transportation Revive I-5 construction work on bus operations and must serve the largest ridership base possible.

Section 4. Sound Transit will utilize internal or contracted resources to provide sufficient in-person customer support at stations and times when inadequate Link capacity may result in full trains, waits, overcrowding or confusion. On-site assistance, at a minimum, will include guiding customers safely and efficiently to bus alternatives. Given fleet and capacity challenges, Sound Transit will also consider mitigation through interim transportation management strategies such as temporary seating reconfigurations.

ADOPTED by not less than a two-thirds vote of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on ________________.

Dow Constantine
Board Chair

Attest:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator