

**SOUND TRANSIT
STAFF REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO. R2003-07

September 2003 ST Express Bus Service Changes

Meeting:	Date:	Type of Action:	Staff Contact:	Phone:
Executive Committee	5/1/03	Discussion/Possible Action to Recommend Board Approval	Agnes Govern, Regional Express Director	206-398-5037
Finance	5/1/03	Discussion/Possible Action To Recommend Board Approval	Gloria Overgaard, Deputy Director, Regional Express	206-689-4909
Board	5/8/03	Action	Mike Bergman, Project Manager, Regional Bus	206-398-5358

OBJECTIVE OF ACTION

Approval of ST Express bus service changes for September 2003.

ACTION

Authorize staff to revise ST Express bus service effective with the September 2003 service change.

KEY FEATURES

- Deletes two existing routes, adds one new route, and revises service on five existing routes effective September 2003.
- Service changes would be implemented within the adopted bus program budget for 2003.
- Service changes will become baseline for proposed 2003 Service Implementation Plan (SIP), which will be submitted to the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and full Board in September 2003.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Budget for the proposed action is included within the operations and maintenance phase of the bus program budget. The 2003 Adopted Budget and lifetime budget contains sufficient funds for this effort and committing these funds does not endanger any other project elements that are to be funded out of the overall project.

REVENUE, SUBAREA, AND FINANCIAL PLAN IMPACTS

The proposed action is consistent with the current Board-adopted budget and is affordable within Sound Transit's current long-term financial plan and the subarea financial capacity.

SUMMARY FOR BOARD ACTION

The following table shows the budget impact for each subarea. No service changes are proposed for the Pierce subarea in September 2003.

Subarea	Adopted 2003 Budget¹	Proposed Plan	Budget Impact
Snohomish subarea	\$ 5.2	\$ 5.2	\$ 0
South King subarea	\$ 4.8	\$ 4.2	\$(0.6)
East King subarea	\$20.7	\$20.3	\$(0.4)

All figures shown are in year of expenditure (YOE\$) in millions.

1. The amount shown is the 2003 adopted budget for direct service costs.

M/W/DBE – SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

Not Applicable

HISTORY OF PROJECT

Each year, staff prepares an annual Service Implementation Plan (SIP) which provides a detailed update on the development of the ST Express bus system through 2006. This process was developed so that service could be implemented in a systematic way based on actual transit operating experience and the completion dates of Regional Express capital projects. The SIP is generally presented to the Board for action in May of each year and provides direction for system development starting with service changes the following September.

Planning for the 2003 SIP began last fall with an analysis of the “build out” 2006 service and funding needs. However, staff felt that there were significant near-term improvements and efficiencies that could be implemented with currently budgeted resources as early as September 2003. Following discussions with the Executive Committee and individual boardmembers, it was decided to divide the 2003 SIP process into two phases:

1. Proposed service changes for September 2003, which are being submitted to the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and full Board with this proposed action.
2. Service changes proposed for 2004 through 2006, which depend on programming a portion of the Regional Mobility Fund and the 10% Reserve Fund for expanded service and the acquisition of additional buses. The 2004-2006 service changes and the proposed funding mechanism will be submitted to the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and full Board in September 2003.

At this time, staff is asking for direction only on the September 2003 service changes, which can be implemented with currently budgeted resources. The changes would improve productivity, expand service where ridership is growing, and make more efficient use of the limited ST Express bus fleet. The following paragraphs describe each of the proposed September 2003 service changes.

Proposed Deletion of Everett-Lynnwood-Northgate Express (Routes 505/506):

These peak period commuter routes were implemented in June 2000 and are wholly financed by the Snohomish subarea. The routes have the lowest ridership of any ST Express bus service and they rank second lowest in terms of productivity (an average of 6.8 boardings per trip and 5.2 boardings per revenue hour). Sound Transit conducted a promotional campaign in fall 2002 but ridership has remained low. Staff recommends that these routes be deleted and the resources reinvested in expanded service on the Everett-Seattle and Ash Way-Lynnwood-Seattle routes.

Proposed Improvements to Everett-Seattle (Route 510) and Ash Way-Seattle (Route 511):

These peak period routes were implemented in September 1999 and are wholly financed by the Snohomish subarea. During off-peak periods, they are combined into one "all stops" route, Route 512, which serves both Lynnwood and Everett. In contrast to the Everett-Northgate service, Routes 510 and 511 are very productive, with an average of 27.4 boardings per trip and 17.5 boardings per revenue hour. Some trips carry standees for over 20 minutes, which exceeds our Sound Transit's service standards. Deletion of the Everett-Northgate service would free up buses to address this situation. It would also provide bus hours that would allow Routes 510 and 511 to operate middays, evenings, and weekends, replacing the much slower Route 512 all-stop service between Everett and Seattle.

Proposed Deletion of Alaska Junction-International District segment of Route 570:

The Westside Express (Route 570) began operations in September 1999 and is wholly financed from the South King subarea. The route segment between the Alaska Junction and the International District Station duplicates several King County Metro routes. The staff proposal would delete this segment and improve service levels on the remaining portion of the route between the Alaska Junction and Sea-Tac Airport. At the airport, the route would be combined with existing Route 560 and continue to Bellevue. The combined route would be designated Route 560 and the Route 570 designation would be dropped. These changes would reduce route duplication, enhance service levels, and provide direct "one seat ride" service to more destinations.

Proposed Bellevue-Area Revisions to Bellevue-SeaTac Service (Route 560):

This route currently serves the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride Lot near Bellevue Way and I-90. The lot is over capacity and Route 560 serves no other park-and-ride lots in Bellevue. Staff recommends a revised routing that would allow Route 560 to serve the Wilburton Park-and-Ride Lot while continuing service to the South Bellevue lot. The Wilburton Park-and-Ride Lot is located adjacent to I-405 at SE 8th Street and has available parking capacity. However, because of traffic disruption caused by I-405 construction work, staff recommends that this change occur in September 2004 rather than September 2003, when construction is expected to be complete.

Proposed New Bellevue-Auburn Service (Route 564):

Sound Move included a route connecting Puyallup and Bellevue, with intermediate stops in Auburn, Kent, and Renton. Budget constraints within the South King subarea have delayed the start up of this service. In the meantime, a companion route (Route 565) was implemented between Federal Way and Bellevue serving the same intermediate stops. Route 565 is jointly financed by the East King and South King subareas. Ridership on Route 565 has increased to the point where additional service can now be supported. The new Route 564 will augment current Route 565 trips between Auburn and Bellevue, providing a 15-minute combined service between these points. Route 564 will not serve Puyallup initially because of limited parking

capacity there and budget constraints in the South King subarea. However, the option remains to extend the route into Pierce County at a future date with Board approval.

Proposed Improvement to Federal Way-Bellevue Service (Route 565):

The 2002 SIP calls for the addition of hourly weekend service on Route 565 starting in September 2003. The public outreach survey asked respondents to rate this improvement against expanded midday service on weekdays (increasing midday service from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes). The survey tally slightly favored the weekend service option. However, ridership projections for either alternative are similar and the midday improvements have been endorsed by the Eastside Transportation Partnership (ETP) and the South County Area Transportation Board (SCATBd). The staff recommendation is to implement the midday improvement in September 2003 and defer the weekend service.

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAY

Under Sound Transit's service agreements with King County Metro, Pierce Transit, and Community Transit service changes for September 2003 need to be confirmed by May 15, 2003. If approval of the proposed service changes is delayed, the next opportunity to implement them would be in February 2004. The proposed service changes shift buses to more heavily-used routes; until the changes are approved, Sound Transit's ability to respond to passenger overloads on these routes will be limited due to lack of buses during peak periods.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION

Sound Transit has worked closely with Everett Transit, Community Transit, King County Metro, the City of Bellevue, the City of Seattle, and the City of Renton in developing the September 2003 service change proposals. In addition, the Eastside Transportation Partnership (ETP) and South County Area Transportation Board (SCATBd) have reviewed and endorsed the proposed service changes.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Approximately 79,000 copies of the Regional Transit News were produced describing the proposed service changes. Of these, approximately 72,000 were distributed by direct mail to households and businesses and the rest were handed out on buses, at key bus stops and at public open houses. The Regional Transit News included a survey questionnaire and 700 were returned. Staff also conducted public open houses in Everett, Lynnwood, Northgate, Renton, West Seattle, Auburn, and Bellevue.

PRIOR BOARD/COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Motion or Resolution Number	Summary of Action	Date of Action
M2003-01	Authorizing the Executive Director to proceed with the 2003 SIP public outreach process assuming that \$21.2M (YOES) from the Regional Mobility Fund and the 10% Reserve Fund is available for expanded service and the purchase of additional buses; follow through with the 2002 SIP and COA by developing service alternatives in the I-5 North and I-405/SR-167 corridors; and identify service alternatives that can be implemented by September 2003 using available funds and resources.	Jan. 9, 2003

LEGAL REVIEW

MB 4-17-03

SOUND TRANSIT

RESOLUTION NO. R2003-07

A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the Executive Director of Sound Transit to implement changes to ST Express bus service effective September 2003.

WHEREAS, a regional transit authority ("Sound Transit") has been created for the Pierce, King, and Snohomish County region by action of their respective county councils pursuant to RCW 81.11.030; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 1996, Central Puget Sound area voters approved local funding for Sound Move, the ten-year plan for regional high-capacity transit in the Central Puget Sound Region; and

WHEREAS, Sound Move called for new high-speed regional express bus routes to offer frequent two-way service throughout the day, serving major regional centers and destinations and providing connections to other transportation components of Sound Move; and

WHEREAS, Sound Move included \$506M (YOES) to fund regional express bus service and associated capital investments; and

WHEREAS, on January 9, 2003, the Executive Committee of the Sound Transit Board of Directors adopted Motion No. M2003-01, authorizing the Executive Director to proceed with the development and public outreach process for the 2003 Service Implementation Plan (SIP), and directing staff to identify the service alternatives that can be implemented by September 2003 using available funds and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Sound Transit Board has determined it is in the best interest of the citizens of the region to implement changes to ST Express bus service in September 2003 that will improve productivity, expand service where ridership is growing, and make more efficient use of Sound Transit's limited bus fleet.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority hereby adopts and authorizes the Executive Director of Sound Transit to implement changes to ST Express bus service in September 2003, as follows:

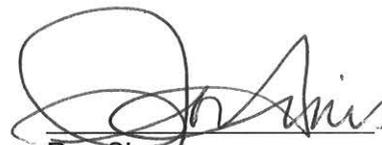
Snohomish Subarea:

- Delete all service on Everett-Northgate Express (Routes 505/506) due to low ridership.
- Expand Everett-Seattle Express (Route 510) to all day, 7-day-a-week service; operate service every 30 minutes during weekday peak periods and every 60 minutes midday, nights and weekends.
- Expand Ash Way-Lynnwood-Seattle Express (Route 511) to all day, 7-day-a-week service; operate service every 30 minutes during daytime hours on weekdays and every 60 minutes nights and weekends.
- Delete Everett-Lynnwood-Seattle Express (Route 512) due to expanded service on parallel Routes 510 and 511.

East King Subarea/South King Subarea

- Combine Bellevue-SeaTac Express (Route 560) and Westside Express (Route 570) into consolidated Route 560. Delete route segment between the Alaska Junction (California Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street) and the International District Station. Operate combined route every 30 minutes during weekday daytime hours and every 60 minutes nights and weekends. Add stops at Wilburton Park-and-Ride Lot when construction of the Bellevue Access Project is completed.
- Operate new Auburn-Bellevue Express (Route 564) every 30 minutes during peak periods, supplementing current Route 565 service provided between these points. Route 564 will operate northbound during the morning peak period and southbound during the afternoon peak period.
- Improve midday service on Federal Way-Bellevue Express (Route 565) from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes. This change replaces 2002 SIP improvement that provided new 60-minute service on weekends.

ADOPTED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on May 8, 2003.



Ron Sims
Board Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator

Attachment A

September 2003 ST Express Service Changes

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