

**SOUND TRANSIT
STAFF REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO. R2004-15

2005 Service Implementation Plan

Meeting:	Date:	Type of Action:	Staff Contact:	Phone:
Finance Committee	10/21/04	Deferred	Martin Minkoff, Director, Transportation Services	(206) 398-5111
Finance Committee	11/4/04	Discussion/Possible Action to Recommend Board Approval	Mike Bergman, Program Manager, Transportation Services	(206) 398-5358
Executive Committee	11/4/04	Discussion/Possible Action to Recommend Board Approval		
Board	11/18/04	Action		

ACTION

Approves the proposed 2005 Service Implementation Plan (SIP) authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to implement Sounder commuter rail and ST Express bus service improvements in 2005.

KEY FEATURES

- Includes proposed 2005 – 2010 service plans for all three Sound Transit modes (ST Express bus, Sounder commuter rail and Link light rail). Board action is requested only for proposed 2005 service plans at this time.
- Implements one additional weekday round-trip on Sounder's Everett-Seattle (North) Line, modifies three existing ST Express routes, adds significant new service on one ST Express route, and defers previously planned changes to two ST Express routes. No changes are proposed for Tacoma Link service.
- Proposes service changes and additions are consistent with ridership projections and subarea equity and are coordinated with the development of Sound Transit's capital projects.
- Sounder operating and maintenance costs are expected to increase from \$16.8 million in 2004 to \$22.1 million in 2005, and ST Express operating and maintenance costs are expected to increase from \$54.1 million in 2004 to \$61.5 million in 2005. Tacoma Link operating and maintenance costs are expected to increase from \$2.6 million in 2004 to \$3.3 million in 2005.

BUDGET IMPACT SUMMARY

There is no action outside of the Board-adopted budget; there are no contingency funds required, no subarea impacts, or funding required from other parties other than what is already assumed in the financial plan.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Consistent with the process discussed with the Board earlier this year, the 2005 Service Implementation Plan (SIP) will provide the basis for the 2005 transit operations budget. Upon adoption, the financial implications of this SIP will be fully reflected in the Adopted 2005 Budget. Note that while the SIP includes financial projections through the year 2010, only the first year of the planning horizon is actually included in the adopted budget. 2006 through 2010 financial implications are provided in the SIP for planning purposes only and are subject to change.

For 2005, the amount budgeted in the agency transit operations budget is as follows:

Operating Budget	Proposed 2005	Proposed 1997 - 2009
Tacoma Link	\$ 3,292	\$ 23,888
Sounder Commuter Rail	\$ 22,068	\$ 206,570
Regional Express	\$ 61,480	\$ 559,016
Total	\$ 86,840	\$ 789,474

\$000's, these figures do not include depreciation costs. 1997-2009 included for planning purposes only.

REVENUE, SUBAREA, AND FINANCIAL PLAN IMPACTS

The proposed actions are consistent with the current Board-adopted budget and are affordable within Sound Transit's current long-term financial plan and subarea financial capacity. No new revenues to Sound Transit are associated with this action.

BUDGET TABLE

Not applicable to this action

M/W/DBE – SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

Not applicable for this action.

HISTORY OF PROJECT

Prior Board or Committee Actions and Relevant Board Policies

Resolution Number	Summary of Action	Date of Action
R2003-18	2003 ST Express Service Implementation Plan	12/11/03

Revisions to SIP Scope

Each year since 1998, staff has produced a draft Service Implementation Plan (SIP) for Board consideration, containing proposed service changes and operating information on the ST Express bus system. For the first time, the Draft 2005 SIP includes proposed service plans and operating information for all three Sound Transit modes- ST Express bus, Sounder commuter rail and Link light rail. Projected service hours, ridership forecasts and costs included in the Draft SIP will be adjusted so they are consistent with the agency budget and the Long-Range Financial Plan. The Draft 2005 SIP contains proposed service changes for 2005 and

preliminary service changes for 2006 through 2010; Board action is being requested only for the proposed 2005 service changes at this time.

Proposed Service Changes for 2005

Over the past year, staff has worked closely with our transit partners, local jurisdictions and other stakeholders to develop the Draft 2005 SIP. Staff-recommended service changes for 2005 are:

- An additional second weekday round-trip on Sounder's Everett-Seattle (North) commuter rail line, subject to issuance of necessary permits related to capital improvements by 2nd quarter 2005.
- Adding a weekday service on ST Express Route 545 (Redmond-Seattle), improving peak period service from every 15 minutes to every 10 minutes in both directions (Alternative 1). No changes to routing are recommended. Details on the staff recommendation are discussed in the Route 545 section below.
- Modifying ST Express Route 555 (Issaquah-Northgate) to serve the University District on A.M. westbound and P.M. eastbound trips.
- Modifying ST Express Route 560 (Bellevue-West Seattle) to serve the Wilburton Park-and-Ride lot.
- Extending ST Express Route 565 (Bellevue-Federal Way) from downtown Bellevue to the Overlake Transit Center at NE 40th.
- Deferring service changes included in the 2003 SIP for ST Express Route 532 (Everett-Bellevue) and ST Express Route 535 (Lynnwood-Bellevue). Temporary closure of the Kingsgate Freeway Station is expected to limit ridership growth on Route 532 until the replacement Totem Lake Freeway Station opens in early 2007, so it is recommended that planned service improvements to this route be deferred. For Route 535, staff recommends that a planned route extension from Bellevue to Eastgate be deferred so that the extension can be evaluated in the context of a large scale study of service along the I-405 corridor.
- Temporary operation of ST Express Route 550 (Bellevue-Seattle) on surface streets in downtown Seattle while the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel is retrofitted for light rail. Surface operation is expected to last from September 2005 to September 2007. This change has been added to the proposed 2005 service package since the Draft SIP was issued August 20.
- No changes are proposed for Tacoma Link service at this time.

ROUTE 545 STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Proposed service changes for ST Express Route 545 (Redmond-Seattle) have generated the largest amount of discussion and controversy in the Draft 2005 SIP. During the past nine months, staff has been evaluating two proposals for Route 545 improvements: **Alternative 1** would increase the frequency of service during peak periods from every 15 minutes to every 10 minutes in both directions, with no change in routing. **Alternative 2** would increase the peak service from every 15 minutes to every 12 minutes in both directions, but the eastbound A.M. and westbound P.M. routing would be modified to serve the Capitol Hill neighborhood between Redmond and downtown Seattle. Both alternatives have about the same cost and require the same number of buses to operate.

During the process of evaluating the two alternatives, it became clear to staff that there was a large potential market of Capitol Hill residents with work destinations in Redmond. Alternative 2 would increase transit usage from this group by decreasing travel time and reducing the need to transfer between routes. Staff also found that there was a large group of existing Redmond commuters from Seattle neighborhoods outside of Capitol Hill who would experience longer travel times with Alternative 2, while still needing to transfer. Alternative 2 does not meet the route deviation criteria in Sound Transit's *Service Standards and Performance Measures* because the Capitol Hill routing increases travel time significantly for these riders. These findings do not mean the potential Capitol Hill market is insignificant, but it illustrates that Route 545 routing changes are not the best way to address the Capitol Hill-Redmond transit need.

Staff recommends that Alternative 1 be implemented. This alternative would benefit all existing and future riders by providing more seating capacity, improving frequency and decreasing wait time. Staff also recommends that a package of low-cost facility improvements be developed to address the transfer environment at the Montlake Freeway Station, where many transfers occur to and from Route 545.

OTHER PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES

Since the Draft 2005 SIP was released August 20, 2004, staff has received comments regarding other possible changes and additions to Sound Transit service. The City of Everett has asked Sound Transit to consider improvements to midday frequency on Route 510 (Everett-Seattle). King County Metro has asked staff to consider the extension of Route 555 (Issaquah-Northgate) from the Issaquah Park and Ride to the Issaquah Highlands Park and Ride. Since these comments were received relatively late in the SIP process and the changes would likely impact the budget, staff will be evaluating them for possible 2006 implementation.

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAY

The first proposed service improvements under the Draft 2005 SIP would occur in June 2005. Contractual requirements in Sound Transit's service agreements with the transit agency partners require that service decisions for the June service change be finalized by January 20, 2005.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public outreach has focused on the proposed ST Express bus service changes in the Draft SIP. A key element in this outreach was the *Regional Transit News (RTN) tabloid* for May 2004, which described the proposed bus service changes and included a mail-back survey questionnaire. The *RTN* was mailed to more than 5,500 households and distributed on-board buses, at open houses, transit centers and through the Redmond Employee Transportation Network. In total, more than 13,000 copies of the *RTN* were distributed. A public hearing on the Draft SIP proposals was conducted at Union Station on September 9, 2004.

LEGAL REVIEW

JW 10/15/04

SOUND TRANSIT

RESOLUTION NO. R2004-15

A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority approving the proposed 2005 Service Implementation Plan authorizing staff to implement service changes during 2005 on the Sounder Commuter Rail North Line and five ST Express bus routes, and to defer service improvements on two ST Express bus routes.

WHEREAS, a Regional Transit Authority, hereinafter referred to as Sound Transit, has been created for the Pierce, King, and Snohomish County region by action of their respective county councils pursuant to RCW 81.112.030; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 1996, at a general election held within the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority district, the voters approved local funding for Sound Move, the ten-year plan for high capacity transit in the Central Puget Sound Region; and

WHEREAS, Sound Move called for new high-speed regional express bus routes together with new commuter rail and light rail services to provide a high-capacity transit network for the region; and

WHEREAS, on December 11, 2003, by Resolution No. R-2003-18, the Sound Transit Board of Directors adopted the 2003 Service Implementation Plan; and

WHEREAS, express bus, commuter rail and light rail services will be implemented in phases, providing a program for route implementation and service increases over time which meets the commitment in Sound Move in a cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, proposed 2005 service changes included in the 2005 Service Implementation Plan are consistent with the 2005 Agency Budget and Long-Range Financial Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Sound Transit Board has further determined it is in the best interest of the citizens of the region to adopt the 2005 Service Implementation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority hereby approves the proposed 2005 Service Implementation Plan authorizing staff to implement service changes during 2005 on the Sound Commuter Rail North Line and five ST Express bus routes, and to defer service improvements on two ST Express bus routes, as described below.

1. An additional second weekday round-trip on the Sounder Everett-Seattle (North) commuter rail line, subject to issuance of necessary permits related to capital improvements.
2. Adding weekday service on ST Express Route 545 (Redmond-Seattle), improving weekday peak period service from every 15 minutes to every 10 minutes in both directions (Alternative 1).
3. Temporary operation of ST Express Route 550 (Bellevue-Seattle) on surface streets in downtown Seattle while the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel is retrofitted for light rail.
4. Modifying ST Express Route 555 (Issaquah-Northgate) to serve the University District on A.M. westbound and P.M. eastbound trips.
5. Modifying ST Express Route 560 (Bellevue-West Seattle) to serve the Wilburton Park-and-Ride lot.
6. Extending ST Express Route 565 (Bellevue-Federal Way) from downtown Bellevue to the Overlake Transit Center at NE 40th.
7. Deferring service changes for ST Express Route 532 (Everett-Bellevue) included in the 2003 Service Implementation Plan.
8. Deferring service changes for ST Express Route 535 (Lynnwood-Bellevue) included in the 2003 Service Implementation Plan.

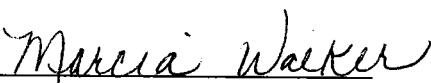
9. Deferring service improvements for ST Express Route 586 (Tacoma-University District Express) included in the 2003 Service Implementation Plan.

ADOPTED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on February 24, 2005.



John W. Ladenburg
Board Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator