

**SOUND TRANSIT
TRANSIT OPERATIONS TASK FORCE
Meeting Summary
October 23, 2008**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:10 a.m. by Chair Dow Constantine in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington.

Roll Call

Chair

(P) Dow Constantine, King County Council Vice Chair

(P) Fred Butler, Issaquah Deputy Council President

(A) Deanna Dawson, Edmonds Councilmember

(P) Dave Enslow, Sumner Mayor

(P) John Marchione, Redmond Mayor

(A) Julia Patterson, King County Council Chair

Report of the Chair

Chair Constantine announced that the Task Force would be discussing parking capacity. He noted that due to ridership growth, Sound Transit's parking facilities are at or near capacity. He also noted that it might not be environmentally or economically sustainable to offer a parking space to every transit rider.

Minutes of the July 24, 2008 Meeting

It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember Marchione, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that the July 24, 2008 minutes be approved as presented.

Sound Transit and Parking Capacity

Chair Constantine introduced Sue McKim, Project Manager for Parking Management and Customer Facilities, to give the presentation on parking capacity.

Ms. McKim reviewed the types of parking facilities currently used by Sound Transit; Primary, Adjacent and Satellite lots. Primary parking facilities have a large number of parking spaces, generally 250 or more spaces, and are located on service lines. Adjacent Lot parking facilities are smaller, generally 25-100 spaces, and are frequently leased. Satellite Lot parking facilities are generally larger, around 250 spaces, but are located further away from service connections. Satellite lots are connected to other stations through feeder service.

Boardmember Butler asked if feeder service could be used to address the capacity issues being experienced at the Mercer Island Park & Ride. Ms. Govern, Executive Director of Operations, Projects and Corporate Services, explained that King County Metro runs a route on Mercer Island that acts as a feeder service for the Park & Ride.

Ms. McKim presented information on use of Sound Transit Park & Ride lots. Usage includes single occupant vehicles, vanpools, carpools, and bicycles that are using the lots to connect to transit service. Some shared use lots are used partially for non-transit uses. In addition, the parking facilities are sometimes used for unauthorized purposes. She noted that because of the number of lots that are at capacity, Sound Transit is trying to protect the use of the lots by transit users.

Ms. McKim defined the parking lot capacity terms Sound Transit uses. "At Capacity" utilization is at or above 85%; "Near Capacity" utilization is between 70% and 84%; "Room for Growth" utilization is below 70%.

Boardmember Marchione asked that "Over Capacity" be added to the terminology to describe lots where illegal parking has brought the utilization over the number of available spaces.

Ms. McKim reported that Sound Move created 12,500 parking & ride spaces at 25 facilities and Sound Transit currently serves over 50 Park & Rides. Sound Transit has added 6,400 spaces in King County, 3,100 spaces in Pierce County, and in 3,000 spaces in Snohomish County.

Ms. McKim showed a chart of parking utilization from 2005 to 2008. Utilization has been trending up and in 2008; utilization exceeded the 85% mark. All parking lots on the south Sounder line are "At Capacity" or above with the exception of the two satellite parking lots. Parking lots along the north Sounder line are "Near Capacity" or at "Room for Growth" levels. She showed utilization levels of the 47 Sound Transit parking facilities in the first half of 2008. Seventy-four percent are "At Capacity" 17% are "Near Capacity," and 9% have "Room for Growth."

Ms. McKim summarized the current Sound Transit parking policy and explained that its intent is to provide parking for transit uses including access to transit and use by vanpools and carpools. Boardmember Enslow noted that the policy was based on encouraging people to park their cars and use some alternate form of transportation. Based on the high usage, he noted that it is a good time to look at focusing the usage of the lots on people who are connecting to transit and look at other locations for carpools and vanpools.

Boardmember Butler noted that parking capacity is a regional issue and transit partners should be involved in looking at ideas for going forward. Ms. Govern responded that some coordination has taken place, some of the potential solutions need to be regional solutions, or the problem will be moved around. She noted that the Transit Integration Group or a subset of that group would be a good forum to have those discussions.

Ms. McKim talked about challenges with parking capacity, including high ridership growth, increased demand for facilities, policies that are vague in some areas, and enforcement of unauthorized parking. In response to a question from Chair Constantine, Ms. McKim reported that enforcement is done by monitoring lots when ST receives reports of illegal parking or non-transit use. Boardmembers Enslow and Marchione noted that unauthorized use is taking place in parking lots in their jurisdictions and tickets have been issued.

Ms. McKim talked about management strategies Sound Transit has implemented for dealing with parking capacity, including creating a Parking & Customer Facilities division within the agency, increasing capacity through small capital expansion projects or through lease lot programs, launching initiatives to inform people of alternatives, looking at the effectiveness of adding drop-off areas. Additionally, an initial policy study on charging for parking will be conducted in 2009.

Ms. McKim discussed management strategies other transit agencies use. She noted that while some agencies have guidelines or policies to limit parking to transit users only, some agencies encourage use by non-transit rideshare modes. Almost all agencies limit the time a lot can be used. Agencies use gates, fee based parking, and attendant assisted systems. Effective parking enforcement is very difficult due to resource and labor requirements. One strategy is to contract for enforcement. "Smart parking technologies" inform customers of availability and parking is another way to maximize parking space.

Chair Constantine asked if charging for parking on demand would allow optimization of the current parking facilities and possibly provide funding for construction of additional parking. He also asked if the smart card being developed could be used to pay for parking or help differentiate people who are using the parking facilities for transit from those people who are not.

Boardmember Enslow is interested in fee parking policy issues and service to satellite lots. Boardmember Butler is also interested in fee parking and wants transit providers in the region to work together to find solutions. Chair Constantine expressed an interest in looking at opportunities for providing parking through private lots. Boardmember Marchione wants to look at a policy for determining when a parking facility is warranted and when a location does not merit a parking facility.

Chair Constantine asked costs per parking space. Mr. Huffaker responded that construction costs for a structured lot are \$60,000 per space; construction costs for a surface lot are \$10,000-\$20,000 per space. He also noted there are also ongoing operations costs.

Chair Constantine noted that the Task Force is interested in continuing the parking discussion later.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, November 13, 2008, 11:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle WA.

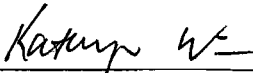
Adjourn

There was no other business; the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.



Dow Constantine
Transit Operations Task Force Chair

ATTEST:



Katie Weiss
Board Coordinator