



## Resolution No. R2019-27

### 2020 Service Implementation Plan

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
Rider Experience & Operations Committee	11/7/19	Recommend to Board	Don Billen, Executive Director PEPD
Board	11/21/19	Final Action	<b>Brian de Place, Director of Support Services</b> <b>Michael Couvrette, Service Planning Manager</b>

### Proposed action

Adopts the 2020 Service Implementation Plan with major service changes for implementation in March and September of 2020.

### Key features summary

- The Draft 2020 Service Implementation Plan (SIP) describes five proposed major service changes for implementation in March and September of 2020.
- Initial service changes were released as part of a public involvement process following a briefing to the Rider Experience & Operations Committee in September.
- The proposed major service changes reflect input from partner transit agencies, regional partners, and riders based on public outreach from May to November 2018 related to King County Metro's North Eastside Mobility Project and public outreach in September and October 2019 related to Sound Transit's ST Express changes.
- Three major changes to ST Express routes are proposed in the State Route 520 corridor beginning with the March 2020 service change. The proposed changes were developed in coordination with changes to King County Metro service as part of the North Eastside Mobility Project and require coordinated implementation:
  - Create new Route 544 operating every 15 minutes during peak periods between Overlake Park-and-Ride, South Kirkland Park-and-Ride, and South Lake Union via Stewart Street, consistent with the North Eastside Mobility Project recommendation. New Route 544 (Overlake – Kirkland – South Lake Union) will be funded by reallocating resources from Route 540 (Kirkland – U District) and from Route 541 (Overlake – U District).
  - Discontinue Route 540 (Kirkland – U District), reallocating operating resources to new Route 544 (Overlake – Kirkland – South Lake Union).
  - Discontinue a majority of trips on Route 541 (Overlake – U District), reallocating operating resources to new Route 544 (Overlake – Kirkland – South Lake Union). Temporarily retain up to ten one-way trips on Route 541 to accommodate growing ridership between Overlake and the U District.

- Two proposed major service changes to improve reliability and operating resource efficiency:
  - Discontinue Route 566 (Auburn & Kent – Overlake) stops at Kennydale and Newport Hills on off-peak and reverse-peak trips to improve reliability for a majority of riders along the I-405 corridor beginning with March 2020 service change
  - Extend Route 577 (Seattle – Federal Way) weekend service to operate between Seattle and Auburn via Federal Way as short Route 578 (Seattle – Puyallup) trips beginning with the September 2020 service change. Existing weekend Route 578 service would not change.
- No major changes are proposed for Link, Tacoma Link, or Sounder.
- The 2020 SIP also includes a preliminary list of minor service changes to improve reliability, reduce crowding, increase operating resource productivity, and begin addressing findings from the 2019 Title VI Service Monitoring Report. Minor service changes do not require Board approval as defined in the *Service Standards and Performance Measures*.

## Background

Each year, Sound Transit prepares the SIP, an annual update on the development of the agency's light rail, commuter rail, and express bus services. The Draft 2020 SIP proposes major service changes to improve service quality for riders, increase operational efficiency in the system, and coordinate with King County Metro service changes on SR 520 as part of the North Eastside Mobility Project, which included extensive stakeholder and public input.

In partnership with King County Metro (KCM), Sound Transit's Service Planning Division developed an integrated restructure of bus service on the SR 520 corridor. The process included extensive public outreach and engagement with the cities of Redmond and Kirkland. Leveraging changes to KCM service approved by the King County Council in July 2019, a new budget-neutral ST Express service between Redmond, Kirkland and South Lake Union could be implemented by repurposing existing resources, with the most significant change being the truncation of Route 255 at the University of Washington Link Station. Sound Transit proposed to discontinue Route 540, as Route 255 would operate in the same markets. This change allowed Sound Transit to explore new transit markets, such as the Route 544 proposal, which would serve South Lake Union from Redmond and Kirkland.

Recent ridership trends show significant ridership growth on ST Express routes on SR 520, including Routes 541 and 542. Additionally, rider input during public involvement reflected capacity concerns if Route 541 was eliminated. In response to rider input and ridership trends, up to ten one-way trips will be retained on Route 541 in order to minimize overcrowding on Route 542. As part of continuous service monitoring, adjustments to service following any service changes will be considered to ensure levels of service are balanced with observed demand. Trips retained on Route 541 will be evaluated prior to each service change and changes will be considered based on observed performance, available fleet and budget. Per the *Service Standards and Performance Measures*, Route 544 will be evaluated for 24 months to allow for full market development and ridership potential. After the new route trial period adjustment may be recommended based on performance.

Increased traffic congestion continues to result in increased trip time on many ST Express routes, reducing the reliability of service and, at times, leading to crowding. Where possible, service adjustments to improve reliability and reduce crowding while using resources more efficiently will be considered. Operating resources and the ST Express fleet are expected to remain unchanged from 2019, meaning all proposed changes to service will be budget neutral.

## Fiscal information

The 2020 SIP is funded by the transit mode budgets for each operating service – Sounder, ST Express, Link and Tacoma Link. Those budgets are included in the Proposed 2020 Budget scheduled for Board consideration in December 2019. Budget authority will be granted with the adoption of the 2020 Budget, subject to any changes made by the Board.

Budget numbers in the following table are shown in \$ thousands:

Modal Budget	2020 Proposed Budget (\$000)
ST Express	\$150,849
Sounder	65,666
Link Orange	5,844
Link Red	147,679
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$370,037</b>

## Disadvantaged and small business participation

Not applicable to this action.

## Title VI compliance

A Title VI analysis was conducted for the major service changes proposed in the 2020 SIP. Two of the five proposed major service changes affect service areas with a higher than average minority or low-income population. This section briefly describes impacts and mitigation for each proposed change:

### Route 540 replaced by Route 544 in coordination with North Eastside Mobility Plan:

- Customers currently using Route 540 will now be able to ride a more frequent Route 255 between Kirkland and University of Washington with more service all weekday and on weekends.

### Route 566 stop discontinuations at I-405 Freeway Stations:

- Customers currently boarding at Kenndale or Newport Hills would need to board Route 560 which will continue to operate every 30 minutes on weekdays.
- This change would affect approximately 16 out of 1,341 daily boardings (1%).
- Sound Transit will work to improve the reliability of Route 566 in conjunction with Route 560 to address overcrowding as a result of bunched arrivals northbound to ensure adequate space is available for these customers.

## Public involvement

The public comment period for the proposed major 2020 service changes occurred between September 8 and October 8, with social media posts and information available on the Sound Transit website. A public hearing was held on October 3 with two public comments received.

In person street teams and pop up sessions along the SR 520 corridor, at the University of Washington Station, and in South Lake Union resulted in about 650 engagements. Rider input on the proposed Route 541 elimination reflected capacity concerns on remaining Route 542 trips. In response to rider input and ridership trends, up to ten one-way trips will be retained on Route 541 in order to minimize overcrowding on Route 542. Feedback was generally positive for the Routes 566 and 577 weekend proposals.

## **Time constraints**

A one-month delay would create a significant impact to Sound Transit operating partners' ability to deliver this service, particularly where resources are needed to develop new schedules on Routes 544. Operating agencies require time to create and fill operator shifts and plan for maintenance.

## **Prior Board/Committee actions**

Resolution R2018-46: Adopting the 2019 Service Implementation Plan, and authorizing the chief executive officer to implement recommended service changes in 2019.

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**Environmental review** – KH 10/30/19

**Legal review** – AP 10/31/19



## Resolution No. R2019-27

A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority adopting the 2020 Service Implementation Plan, and authorizing the chief executive officer to implement recommended service changes in 2020.

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, express bus, commuter rail and light rail service will be implemented in phases, providing a program for route implementation and service increases over time which meet the commitments in Sound Move, Sound Transit 2, and Sound Transit 3; and

WHEREAS, the proposed service changes included in the 2020 Service Implementation Plan are consistent with the proposed 2020 Agency Budget and Long-Range Financial Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the 2020 Service Implementation Plan is adopted, and the chief executive officer is authorized to implement the 2020 service changes included in the plan as described below:

### ST Express bus

**NEW ST Express Route 544** would operate every 15 minutes during peak periods between Overlake Park-and-Ride, South Kirkland Park-and-Ride, and South Lake Union via Stewart Street, consistent with the North Eastside Mobility Project recommendation.

**Route 540 (Kirkland – U District)** would be discontinued, reallocating operating resources to new Route 544 (Overlake – Kirkland – South Lake Union). Alternate service is available on revised King County Metro Route 255.

**Route 541 (Overlake – U District)** would discontinue a majority of trips, reallocating operating resources to new Route 544 (Overlake – Kirkland – South Lake Union). Temporarily retain up to ten one-way trips on Route 541 to accommodate growing ridership between Overlake and the U District.

**Route 566 (Auburn & Kent – Overlake)** stops at Kennydale and Newport Hills would be discontinued for all trips to improve reliability for a majority of riders along the I-405 corridor beginning with the March 2020 service change.

**Extend Route 577 (Seattle – Federal Way)** weekend service to operate between Seattle and Auburn via Federal Way as short Route 578 (Seattle – Puyallup) trips beginning with

the September 2020 service change. Existing weekend Route 578 service would not change.

ADOPTED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on November 21, 2019.



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John Marchione  
Board Chair

**Attest:**



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Kathryn Flores  
Board Administrator