



Motion No. M2023-113

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (1) authorizing the chief executive officer to execute temporary service reductions on ST Express to respond to staffing shortages based on the criteria established by this motion, to go into effect with the March 2024 service change, and (2) directing the CEO to report the details of the service reduction at the January Rider Experience & Operations Committee meeting.

Background

On October 26, 2023, the Board adopted a Rail Service Plan for 2024 and directed staff to recommend an ST Express Service Plan to the Board in early 2024, using the latest operator availability data from Sound Transit's partners. Each of the three ST Express partners who operate service on Sound Transit's behalf have different financial and operating constraints.

At this time, it appears that Community Transit and King County Metro will have adequate operator staffing to maintain ST Express service levels in 2024 on the routes that they operate, but Pierce Transit continues to face challenges hiring and retaining critical staff and recently informed Sound Transit that they will not have enough personnel to continue current service levels in 2024. They have requested that Sound Transit reduce its service by approximately 8 to 10 percent at the March 2024 service change to match their available staffing. This level of reduction will involve major service changes that need to be authorized by the Board before specific instructions can be provided to Pierce Transit. Pierce Transit needs those instructions by December 22, 2023, in order to meet the March implementation date.

Sound Transit staff will use these criteria to identify temporary reductions on Pierce Transit-operated service until Pierce Transit's staffing allows for restoration of service:

- Preserve key regional routes on I-5 and I-405 consistent with future High Capacity Transit plans.
- Prioritize Board adopted equitable service restoration plans as identified in the 2022 Service Plan.
- Continue to align resources where the most riders are using service.

Sound Transit staff is authorized to implement major services changes consistent with the above criteria on a temporary basis. These changes may only remain in effect until the Board adopts the 2025 ST Express service plan. The major service changes are expressly authorized to include:

- Suspension of low ridership routes, which may include Route 580.
- Elimination of stops which are served by parallel transit service, which may include Route 590.
- 25 percent or greater reduction of an individual route's total revenue service hours, which may include Routes 590.

Staff will provide the Rider Experience and Operations Committee details of the specific changes in January 2024. The CEO may implement additional administrative reductions after the March service change if staffing levels do not support the service levels consistent with the Board adopted service standards, Motion No. M2014-20. Staff will notify the Board Chair and Chair of the Rider Experience and Operations Committee before implementing the changes.

Motion

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the chief executive officer is authorized to execute temporary service reductions on ST Express to respond to staffing shortages based on the criteria established by this motion, to go into effect with the March service change, and the CEO is directed to report the details of the service reduction at the January Rider Experience & Operations Committee meeting.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on December 15, 2023.


Dow Constantine
Board Chair

Attest:


Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator