

Sound Transit Transit Development Plan 2024-2029



 **SOUNDTRANSIT**
#2Line

*To be adopted by the Board of Directors:
August 22, 2024*

 **SOUNDTRANSIT**

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- Emailing stdiscriminationcomplaint@soundtransit.org;
- Mailing to Sound Transit, Attn: Customer Service, 401 S. Jackson St. Seattle, WA 98104-2826; or
- Visiting our offices located at 401 S. Jackson St. Seattle, WA 98104.

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INTRODUCTION

This Transit Development Plan (TDP) provides updated information to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on various elements of public transit service delivered by Sound Transit, also known as the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority. This report contains information for all of Sound Transit's current service modes including ST Express (commuter bus), Sounder (commuter rail), and T Line and Link (light rail). Planned capital expenses for Stride (a future bus rapid transit service) are also covered. The information in this report is current as of June 2024.

This document is submitted per the requirement of [RCW 35.58.2795](#). As a public transit agency in Washington, Sound Transit is required annually to prepare a six-year Transit Development Plan. WSDOT may use this document to prepare an annual report for the Washington state legislature summarizing the status of public transportation systems across the state.

1. PUBLIC HEARING AND DISTRIBUTION

1.1. Plan Adoption

The Sound Transit Board of Directors is scheduled to adopt this Transit Development Plan on August 22, 2024.

1.2. Public Participation Process

Public comment period: July 18, 2024 - August 1, 2024

Comments can be mailed to: main@soundtransit.org

Sound Transit
Service Planning and Development
401 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104

Public hearing: Sound Transit will hold a virtual public hearing on the Transit Development Plan on August 1, 2024.

Notice posted to website: Sound Transit posted a notice of the hearing on the Transit Development Plan to its website at www.soundtransit.org on July 18, 2024.

Notice published in local paper: The Daily Journal of Commerce published a notice of the hearing on the Transit Development Plan on July 18, 2024.

Requests for paper or digital copies: Sound Transit allowed the public to request a paper or digital copy of the Transit Development Plan on or after July 18, 2024 by emailing main@soundtransit.org or calling (888) 889-6368.

1.3. Plan Distribution

On September 1, 2024, Sound Transit will distribute the adopted Transportation Development Plan to:

- WSDOT Public Transportation Division online grants management system compliance module
- The Transportation Improvement Board via:
 - Vaughn Nelson, Finance Manager at vaughnn@tib.wa.gov
 - Chris Workman, Engineering Manager at chrisw@tib.wa.gov
- All cities, counties, and regional transportation planning organizations within which Sound Transit operates.

2. SERVICE AREA, OPERATIONS, AND FACILITIES

2.1. Agency Background

In March 1992, the Washington state Legislature (through RCW 81.104.040) authorized King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties to create a single agency—the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, now known as Sound Transit—to develop public transit alternatives to meet the region’s travel needs. The Legislature charged Sound Transit with planning, building, and operating a high-capacity transportation system that would connect people to their communities and jobs throughout the urban areas of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.

On November 5, 1996, voters approved local funding for Sound Move, a regional high-capacity transit plan that included a local sales and use tax of 0.4 percent, a motor vehicle excise tax of 0.3 percent, and a rental car tax to finance construction and operation of the regional transit system. Sound Move included the ST Express bus network along with high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane access improvements, Sounder commuter rail, and light rail.

On November 4, 2008, voters approved additional local funding as part of the Sound Transit 2 (ST2) plan. This transit plan included a new 15-year construction program of light rail, commuter rail and regional bus service by extending the Sound Move taxes and increasing the local sales and use tax by an additional 0.5 percent to 0.9 percent.

On November 8, 2016, voters approved additional local funding as part of the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) plan. This transit plan included a new 25-year construction program of light rail, commuter rail, and regional bus service by extending the Sound Move and ST2 taxes, increasing the local sales and use tax by an additional 0.5 percent to a total of 1.4 percent, increasing the motor vehicle excise tax by 0.8 percent to a total of 1.1 percent, and assessing a \$0.25 property tax on every \$1,000 of assessed home values.

Sound Transit has grown from a planning agency in the late 1990s to an agency that now operates express bus (ST Express), commuter rail (Sounder), and light rail (T Line and Link). In 2023, **37.6 million passenger trips** were served across all modes, a 17% increase over the previous year (see [Ridership Trends](#)), supporting mobility throughout the Puget Sound region.

Sound Transit continues to build out light rail extensions, transit centers, and other transportation infrastructure, including bus rapid transit (to be named Stride, a new mode of service for the agency) along I-405 and SR 522/523. Although yearly refinements and updates are made as reflected in the Transit Development Plan, Sound Move, ST2, and ST3 continue to guide growth and provide the framework for Sound Transit’s high-capacity transportation system.

2.2. Service Area

Sound Transit’s taxing and service area boundary lines follow the urban growth boundaries created by Snohomish, King, and Pierce counties in accordance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The Sound Transit service area boundary was adjusted in some places considering voter precinct boundaries, city limit lines, and geography. For planning and budgeting purposes, the district was divided into five geographic subareas, each with unique system components.

Current and future service maps illustrating the **service area** are available on Sound Transit’s website:

<https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/our-brand/maps>

Sound Transit current service



An interactive map of the official Sound Transit District is also available online:

http://rtamaps2.soundtransit.org/st_determineaddress.html

Sound Transit also has a profile within the WSDOT Summary of Public Transportation which includes more details about the agency’s **service area** and **intermodal connections**:

<https://wsdot.wa.gov/engineering-standards/all-manuals-and-standards/manuals/washington-state-summary-public-transportation>

The following subsections go into more detail about the **services**, **equipment**, and **facilities** related to the various transit modes that Sound Transit currently offers: express bus (ST Express), commuter rail (Sounder), and light rail (T Line and Link). Note that most Sound Transit services are operated by local partner transit agencies, apart from the T Line.

2.3. ST Express



Fleet: 319

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 212

Routes: 24

Adult Fare: \$3.25



Sound Transit operates a regional express bus service with routes ranging from weekday peak-direction-only service to frequent, all-day, bi-directional routes on both weekdays and weekends.

Sound Transit contracts with partner agencies—Community Transit, King County Metro, and Pierce Transit—to operate and maintain ST Express buses. ST Express service is operated out of Community Transit's Kasch Park Base in Everett, King County Metro's East Base in Bellevue, and Pierce Transit's operations facility in Lakewood. The ST Express fleet is fully equipped with Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs), which help monitor the mode's ridership.

As a result of ongoing staffing challenges, ST Express continues to operate at reduced service levels and several peak-hour routes have been suspended since 2021. Per the Board-adopted [2024 Service Plan Phase 2](#), the following routes will be in operation as of Fall 2024:

Route Number	Express Route Description	Days Operated	Type of Service
510	Everett – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
512	Everett – Lynnwood	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
513	Seaway Transit Center – Lynnwood	M-F	Peak Only
515 ¹	Lynnwood - Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
522	Woodinville – Roosevelt	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
532	Everett – Bellevue	M-F	Peak Only
535	Lynnwood – Bellevue	M-F, Sa	All-Day
542	Redmond – University District	M-F	All-Day
545	Redmond – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
550	Bellevue – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
554	Issaquah – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
556	Issaquah – University District	M-F	Peak Only
560	West Seattle – Sea-Tac – Bellevue	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
566	Auburn & Kent – Overlake	M-F	All-Day
574	Lakewood – Sea-Tac Airport	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
577	Federal Way – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	Peak Only
578	Puyallup – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
580 ²	Puyallup – Lakewood	M-F	Sounder Connector
586	Tacoma – University District	M-F	Peak Only
590 ³	Tacoma – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
592	DuPont – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
594	Lakewood/Tacoma – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-day
595	Gig Harbor – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
596	Bonney Lake – Sumner	M-F	Sounder Connector

ST Express buses serve regional transit facilities, including Sounder and Link Stations, park-and-ride lots, freeway stations, transit centers and ferry terminals.

¹ Temporary additional route to provide direct service to Downtown Seattle until full 2 Line is complete.

² Temporarily suspended route.

³ Temporarily suspended Downtown Tacoma segment and half of weekday trips between Tacoma and Seattle.

2.4. Sounder (S and N Lines)



Fleet: 78 railcars, 14 locomotives

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 55 railcars, 9 locomotives

Routes: 2

Adult Fare: \$3.25 - \$5.75 based on distance traveled

Track Length: 81.8 miles

Stations: 12



Sound Transit operates weekday peak-oriented service along two corridors that radiate from Seattle's King Street Station, north to Everett (N Line) and south to Tacoma/Lakewood (S Line). Approximate travel times are about 60 minutes on the N line to Everett and about 55 minutes to Tacoma and 75 minutes to Lakewood on the S line. The complete and current Sounder schedule can be found online:

<https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/schedule-sounder.pdf>

The N Line serves stations at Edmonds, Mukilteo, and Everett. The S Line serves stations at Lakewood, South Tacoma, Tacoma Dome Station, Puyallup, Sumner, Auburn, Kent, Tukwila, and King Street Station (Downtown Seattle). Both services operate on Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway tracks.

The S Line uses five-car and seven-car trains while the N line usually operates using two-car and three-car trains, extending to five-car trains during special event service. Special events include sporting events in Seattle's Lumen Field or T-Mobile Park and the Washington State Fair in Puyallup.

Sound Transit owns 78 railcars (30 cab cars, 48 coach cars) manufactured by Bombardier and 14 locomotives manufactured by the ElectroMotive Division of General Motors and Motive Power Industries. Sound Transit contracts with BNSF to operate Sounder service and Amtrak for maintenance of the fleet. Maintenance activities are carried out at Amtrak's Holgate yard in Seattle. All Sounder railcars are equipped with APCs on every door.

All Sounder commuter rail stations have bus transportation connections located directly at the station or within a short walking distance. Bus service schedules are often synchronized to the train schedule to allow passengers the opportunity to complete a seamless transit trip. In addition, Sounder shares Seattle's King Street Station with Amtrak, facilitating connections between the two services. Under RailPlus, an agreement between Sound Transit and Amtrak, passengers with valid regional passes may ride Amtrak Cascades trains that operate between Seattle, Edmonds, and Everett. Likewise, Sounder will honor Amtrak tickets between these locations.

No service is provided on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Reduced weekday schedules operate on the Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and New Year's Eve when those days land on a weekday. The reduced weekday schedule operates eight round trips on the S Line and two round trips on the N Line.

2.5. T Line



Fleet: 8

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 5

Routes: 1

Adult Fare: \$2.00

Track Length: 4.0 miles

Stations: 12



Tacoma Link, now called the T Line, opened in 2003 and connects Tacoma Dome and the Hilltop neighborhood in Tacoma. To operate the T Line, Sound Transit owns eight electric-powered light rail vehicles. Three are manufactured by Inekon and Skoda Dopravni Technica of the Czech Republic. The other five are manufactured by Brookville Equipment Corporation in Brookville, Pennsylvania. All vehicles are equipped with APCs.

Sound Transit operates and maintains the vehicles out of its central Operations & Maintenance Facility (OMF). A maximum of five cars are scheduled, with one car available as a GAP train and the other two as maintenance spares. The T Line alignment is mostly double-track and a short section of single-track, with a scheduled end-to-end running time of approximately 22 minutes each way.

Local and express bus service connects with T Line stations along Commerce Street. The Tacoma Dome Station, at the south end of the line, provides connections to Sounder, ST Express, Pierce Transit local bus service, Intercity Transit bus service to Olympia/Thurston County and Greyhound intercity service. In addition, Tacoma's Amtrak station is located nearby.

The current T Line schedule can be found online:

<https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/schedule-tacoma-line.pdf>

The T Line operates 365 days a year, with a "Sunday" schedule for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Paratransit services for the T Line are provided under contract by Pierce Transit.

2.6. Link (1 and 2 Lines)



Fleet: 175+

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 76

Routes: 2

Adult Fare: Flat \$3.00 as of Fall 2024

Track Length: 31 miles

Stations: 27



Link light rail service currently consists of two routes. The 1 Line runs north-south between Northgate and Angle Lake. Trains arrive every eight minutes in the peak period, every 10 minutes in the midday period, and every 15 minutes at night. The 2 Line runs east-west between South Bellevue and Redmond Technology Station, arriving every 10 minutes from 5:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. every day.

The current schedules for the two Link light rail lines can be found online:

<https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/routes-schedules/1-line>

<https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/routes-schedules/2-line>

The agency operates service with 62 low-floor light railcars from Kinkisharyo/Mitsui of Japan and 113 Siemens light railcars manufactured by Siemens Mobility in Sacramento, CA, while continuing to test and commission additional Siemens LRVs (eventually reaching a total of 162). Each 95-foot railcar can seat 74 passengers and hold up to 148 in a target maximum load. To date, 20 of the 62 Kinkisharyo vehicles (32% of the fleet) are equipped with APCs, while all the new Siemens vehicles are fully equipped with APCs.

The cars are currently paired in a mix of three-car and four-car trains, and all Link stations have been constructed to accommodate up to four-car trains. Day-to-day operations, maintenance, dispatching, and complementary paratransit service are provided by King County Metro under contract. Link vehicles are stored and maintained primarily at the central Link Operations & Maintenance Facility (OMF) in Seattle's SODO District on Airport Way South. A second maintenance facility, OMF East, is in Bellevue along the 2 Line.

Passengers may transfer between Link and regional/local bus services on the street above the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT). Besides the DSTT, numerous connections to other modes are available at all other Link stations.

Link operates 365 days a year, with a "Sunday" schedule on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day; it operates a "Saturday" schedule on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, and the Day after Thanksgiving.

3. STATE & AGENCY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

The State’s six transportation system policy goals (as stated in [RCW 47.04.280](#)) and corresponding Sound Transit action strategies going forward are as follows:

Policy Goal	Description	Sound Transit Action Strategies
Preservation	To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services.	Sound Transit will make wise investments and prioritize spending to maintain its equipment, facilities, and services.
Safety	To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.	Sound Transit will continue to focus on the safety and quality of the passenger experience and will maintain safe, secure facilities in addition to keeping a regular schedule of light and heavy maintenance of buses and trains.
Stewardship	To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, resilience, and efficiency of the transportation system.	In the context of ongoing operator shortages, Sound Transit will continuously adjust service to right-size to available resources and prioritize reliable service delivery. In this way, Sound Transit will remain a reliable and solid transit system that serves the region.
Mobility	To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington state, including congestion relief and improved freight mobility.	The agency will continue operating ST Express, Sounder, T Line, and Link to foster greater ease of travel while mitigating traffic congestion across the entire Puget Sound region.
Economic Vitality	To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.	Sound Transit will connect multiple regional employment centers with reliable, accessible, and affordable transit service. Additionally, Sound Transit will promote transit-oriented development at stations, enabling more people to access more jobs and thus support regional economic growth.
Environment	To enhance Washington’s quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.	Sound Transit will maintain ISO 14001 certification of our Environmental and Sustainability Management System, as well as improve the environment of the Central Puget Sound region by carrying hundreds of thousands of people each day on trains and buses instead of personal motor vehicles.

The following are a few highlights of agency accomplishments from 2023 that illustrate how the agency is making progress on several of the policy goals:

- **January:** Adopted a \$1.00 fare for ORCA LIFT (low-income) riders following a six-month demonstration project.
- **February:** Launched an online open house for the Stride bus rapid transit (BRT) project, which also reached 60% design.
- **March:** Identified a preferred alternative for light rail route and station locations for the Ballard

Link Extension.

- **April:** Performed a safety drill for the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension which involved partners from Pierce Transit, Tacoma Fire and Rescue, WSDOT, Bellevue Fire, and King County.
- **May:** Celebrated the opening of a new parking garage and surface lot at Puyallup Station, with commitments to the city of Puyallup for improved multimodal access to the station.
- **June:** Re-activated an escalator at International District – Chinatown Station, the last of long-term vertical conveyance outages in Downtown stations.
- **July:** Posted all-time high Link ridership numbers (more than 100,000 daily riders) during Major League Baseball’s All-Star week and Taylor Swift concerts.
- **August:** Performed essential maintenance work to ensure State of Good Repair on the light rail system, including extensive work at Royal Brougham.
- **September:** Opened the Hilltop Link Extension in Tacoma, more than doubling the length of the T Line and adding seven new stations.
- **October:** Opened a new parking garage at Redmond Technology Station, in addition to a new transit-oriented development (TOD) called Pride Place in Capitol Hill.
- **November:** Enacted a new fare compliance policy, issuing violations to passengers found riding repeatedly without proof of payment.
- **December:** Moody’s Investor Service affirmed their “AAA” rating for the agency’s “Prior Bonds” – the highest possible score for tax-backed bonds.

Currently, one of Sound Transit’s primary strategic priorities is to deliver a “Great Ride” – a safe, welcoming, and equitable passenger experience. Corresponding measures of success and how they align with state goals established in the Washington State Transportation Plan are outlined in the table below. Built into this strategic priority is an expectation that the actions and decisions made will consider Sound Transit’s commitment to equity and fairness, environmental stewardship, partnerships, and communities the agency serves.

Agency Strategic Priority: Deliver a safe, welcoming, and equitable passenger experience (“Great Ride”)	Preservation	Safety	Stewardship	Mobility	Economic	Environment
Experience: Create a simple, seamless, and intuitive passenger journey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in foundational service measures of dependable, available, clean, and informed • Increase in overall passenger experience metric • International certification of asset management system 	X		X	X	X	
Safety: Improve physical and psychological safety for every passenger in stations and on all buses and trains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International certification of safety management system • Increase in enhanced foundational safety measure that centers equity and psychological safety of passengers • Closeout of November 26, 2021 Link incident corrective actions by December 2024 		X	X			
New service: Plan, construct, activate, and operate new service effectively and efficiently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 percent use of activation readiness tools • 100 percent application of station experience design guidelines and station standard manual on ST3 projects • Improvement in enhanced operational metrics for all transit services 			X	X	X	X

4. LOCAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS

Sound Transit measures the performance of its system and regularly reports to the Board and shares information with the public. Sound Transit reports on the following categories in its System Performance Tracker available online:

<https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/system-performance-tracker>

The online dashboard reports on metrics aimed at delivering a safe, simple, seamless, and intuitive passenger journey by delivering on the following foundational service measures:

- **Accessible:** Sound Transit buses, trains and station facilities should be ADA-accessible and available to all.
- **Clean:** Passengers deserve vehicles and facilities that are in good working order and are free of trash, graffiti, and vandalism.
- **Dependable:** Passengers should expect consistent, reliable service that departs and arrives on time, allowing them to rely on Sound Transit to get where they are going.
- **Informed:** Passengers deserve to know what is happening, so Sound Transit tracks response time to complaints and how it is doing with service disruption notifications. Sound Transit continues to develop more measures for monitoring dissemination of information to passengers.
- **Safe:** Sound Transit is committed to providing a physically and psychologically safe experience for passengers, whether in stations, aboard buses and trains, or in any other Sound Transit facility.
- **Passenger feedback:** Sound Transit tracks trends and explores themes in passenger feedback provided to its customer care team.
- **Peer comparisons:** Sound Transit provides data that compares to other U.S. agencies with information from the National Transit Database (NTD).
- **Ridership:** Sound Transit is committed to delivering a great ride for all passengers and tracks ridership trends for ST Express buses, Sounder trains, and Link light rail.

More information can be found at [Sound Transit's System Performance Tracker website](#).

4.1. Transit Asset Management

In addition to the metrics discussed above, Sound Transit measures its asset management program with the goal of keeping its equipment, vehicles, and facilities in a state of good repair.

4.1.1. Rolling Stock (Revenue Vehicles)

To ensure that its revenue vehicles are maintained in a state of good repair, Sound Transit projected the age of all Revenue Vehicles for the coming year and calculated the number of vehicles that would be above or below their Useful Life Benchmark (ULB). These targets were set by the agency using the FTA's suggested ULB for each modal fleet. Prior to NTD submission, staff reviewed the vehicle fleet and set achievable performance targets.

Vehicle Type	2024 Targets
Buses	30/302 (9.9%) that exceed ULB
Light rail vehicles	0/163 (0%) that exceed ULB
Commuter rail locomotives	0/14 (0%) that exceed ULB
Commuter rail passenger coaches	0/78 (0%) that exceed ULB
T Line vehicles	0/8 (0%) that exceed ULB

4.1.2. Equipment (Non-Revenue Vehicles)

Sound Transit projected the age of all Non-Revenue Vehicles (NRV) for the coming year and calculated the number of vehicles that would be above or below their ULB. These targets were set by the agency using the FTA's suggested ULB for each modal fleet. A review of the NRV inventory was completed and each vehicle was categorized into its distinct sub-category where its age was compared to its ULB.

Vehicle Type	2024 Targets
Non-revenue service vehicles (including automobiles, steel-wheel vehicles, trucks, and other rubber-tired vehicles)	28/255 (11.0%) that exceed ULB

4.1.3. Facilities (Condition)

The agency reviewed all operating stations on a rolling triannual basis. Performance targets were set using condition assessment scores derived from the reviews. The agency sets targets based on the FTA Transit Economic Requirement (TERM) scale of 1-5.

Facility Type	2024 Targets
Support facilities (maintenance, administrative)	0/9 (0%) will have rating < 3.0
Passenger facilities (rail terminals, bus transfer stations)	5/54 (9.3%) will have rating < 3.0
Parking facilities (parking garages, park-and-ride lots)	1/15 (6.7%) will have rating < 3.0

4.1.4. Infrastructure (Performance Restrictions)

Agency staff provide regular reports of performance restrictions, defined as when the maximum speed of vehicles on a given track segment is below the segment's full service speed. For each reporting year, a target is set to compare the amount of track with performance restrictions to the total amount of track operated by the agency. Agency personnel advise whether any track will be under restrictions in the following year due to repair, and targets are adjusted to reflect planned future work and performance restrictions.

Infrastructure Type	2024 Targets
Sounder Commuter Rail	Less than 3.18/158.89 (2.0%) of track segments under a performance restriction
Tacoma Link (T Line)	Less than 0.08/4 (2.0%) of track segments under a performance restriction
Link	Less than 1.71/57.1 (3.0%) of track segments under a performance restriction

4.2. Safety

Sound Transit regularly reports on key safety measures within the annually published Agency Safety Plan. The 2024 Agency Safety Plan can be found online, with performance measures defined in section 1.2:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/safety/public-transportation-agency-safety-program/agency-safety-plan-asp>

5. PLAN CONSISTENCY

Sound Transit works closely with many local jurisdictions to plan, build, and operate a regional transit system. In fact, the Sound Transit District includes over 50 cities within the Pierce, King, and Snohomish counties. The agency's many projects and services are typically referred to as "high-capacity transit" (HCT) in the transportation elements of their local comprehensive plans.

Following guidelines from the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), Sound Transit also ensures alignment and consistency with the goals and policies of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) – the region's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In turn, PSRC reviews and approves local comprehensive plans, ensuring they are consistent with the regional transportation plans where Sound Transit plays a key role.

Other ways Sound Transit strives to align projects to the goals and objectives included in local comprehensive plans include:

- Coordinating with jurisdictions to check that their land use (zoning) is consistent with station area plans
- Aligning with local visions for future development and station typologies
- Fulfilling growth management objectives per PSRC guidelines
- Participating in the Model Code Partnership to align design standards and partner interests throughout a corridor (e.g., along the future Everett Link Extension)
- Providing input on local code amendments to support various access modes for future stations (e.g., defining minimum bicycle parking requirements in Seattle)
- Contributing to the development of transportation elements of comprehensive plans as stakeholders (e.g., in Bothell's Transportation Advisory Focus Group)

As the regional transit authority for Puget Sound, Sound Transit also regularly coordinates with other public transit agencies in the region on a wide variety of initiatives, including:

- Participating in cross-agency working groups (e.g., the executive-sponsored "Mobility Partnership" and relevant subcommittees) to investigate and share knowledge on common topics of interest such as ridership trends, workforce planning, fare coordination, transitions to zero emission fleets, etc.
- Continually working with service partners (i.e., Pierce Transit, King County Metro, and Community Transit) to coordinate routes and schedules as part of semi-annual Service Changes, in addition to partnering on actual service delivery
- Coordinating operations and service integration (including identifying resourcing needs) as major HCT corridor projects open, such as the Northgate and East Link extensions
- Conducting public engagement (e.g., public surveys, focus groups, etc.) together when reasonable
- Working together to serve passengers during service disruptions, through our respective Ambassador staff teams

6. PLANNED CAPITAL EXPENSES

Planned capital expenses are aggregated at the project level within the agency’s overall capital improvement program for conciseness, as referenced in the [Multiyear Financial Plan section](#).

Below are a few selected highlights of planned elements, including notable additions in **rolling stock** and major new **facilities** that will be opening in the coming years alongside the primary system expansion projects (given known timelines as of June 2024).

6.1. Rolling Stock Expansion

Year	New Rolling Stock
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 new CEM bi-level passenger cars
2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final acceptance of 152 Siemens light rail vehicles Two articulated prototype buses for testing Stride BRT service Two double-decker prototype buses for testing Stride BRT service
2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 articulated BRT vehicles 31 double-decker BRT vehicles
2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final acceptance of additional 10 Siemens light rail vehicles
2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None planned
2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None planned

6.2. Facilities / Infrastructure

Year	New Facilities & Infrastructure
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Link Extension with new stations at South Bellevue, East Main, Bellevue Downtown, Wilburton, Spring District, BelRed, Overlake Village, and Redmond Technology Lynnwood Link Extension with new stations at Shoreline South/148th, Shoreline North/185th, Mountlake Terrace, and Lynnwood City Center New parking garage at Sumner Station
2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Redmond Link Extension with new stations at Marymoor Village and Downtown Redmond East Link Extension with new stations at Mercer Island and Judkins Park New parking garage at Auburn Station New parking garage at Kent Station NE 44th Stride BRT station for interim use by ST Express routes
2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Way Link Extension with new stations at Kent Des Moines, Star Lake, and Federal Way Downtown NE 130th Street infill station NE 85th Stride BRT station for interim use by ST Express routes
2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Base North New Stride BRT stations along I-405 South between Burien and Bellevue (S1 Line)
2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Stride BRT stations along SR 522 between Bothell and Shoreline (S3 Line)
2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Stride BRT stations along I-405 North between Lynnwood and Bellevue (S2 Line)

7. PLANNED OPERATING CHANGES

Sound Transit’s voter-approved regional transit expansion is one of the most ambitious in the country. As the agency continues building and opening new transit service every few years, riders will increasingly use a combination of Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail, Stride bus rapid transit, ST Express buses, and other local services to reach their destinations. Sound Transit service is more than a single project, route, or line. It is the connections between each mode that make an efficient, accessible transit network. As the agency continues opening new services, it will restructure existing services to continue strengthening the network and expand regional access.

The ST Express bus system was originally designed to strengthen regional mobility on an interim basis while Sound Transit planned and constructed fast and reliable HCT services. To connect more people to more places as the region grows, Sound Transit’s enabling legislation and voter-approved plans require replacing interim ST Express bus service when new HCT projects (such as Link light rail extensions) are delivered. As a result, as new HCT projects are completed, Sound Transit will reevaluate ST Express routes in the surrounding area.

As Sound Transit continues to deliver new transit service to the region, original planned opening timelines have changed as additional information about project constructability and staffing availability has become available. The COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing effects on the labor market and global supply chain, a regional concrete delivery strike, and construction quality issues have led to project delays. Sound Transit continues to monitor construction progress and operational capacity to determine when service will open and how much service is possible to provide within existing constraints. As a result, the planned operating changes reported here include several different service configurations and differ from previous years’ reports.

The following section outlines the agency’s planned service changes each year through 2029 given the known timelines as of June 2024. These proposed changes are not final and may change, be partially implemented, or deferred in response to construction progress and operating capacity.

7.1. Changes in 2024

In Fall 2024, Link light rail will extend from Northgate into Lynnwood in Snohomish County, serving four new stations: Shoreline South/148th, Shoreline North/185th, Mountlake Terrace, and Lynnwood City Center.

Service to Lynnwood was originally planned to open as an extension of both the 1 Line (Lynnwood–Angle Lake) and the 2 Line (Lynnwood–Redmond). However, due to construction delays on the I-90 bridge delaying full 2 Line service into 2025, service to Lynnwood will initially operate as an extension of the 1 Line only.

The routing of ST Express bus service on I-5 south of Lynnwood will be realigned to connect with expanded light rail service. Lynnwood City Center Station will become a key transfer point for local and regional services.

The initial phase of the 2 Line, the 6.3-mile segment between South Bellevue and Redmond Technology Stations, opened for service in Spring 2024, serving eight new Link light rail stations.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Link Light Rail	New 2 Line service between South Bellevue and Redmond Technology stations.	Expansion
Link Light Rail	1 Line service extended to Lynnwood.	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Shorten Routes 512 and 513 to connect to 1 Line at Lynnwood City Center Station; introduction of new temporary Route 515 until full 2 Line opens.	Supports expansion of 1 Line

7.2. Changes in 2025

The full Link 2 Line, which includes service over the I-90 bridge to Lynnwood City Center Station and the Downtown

Redmond Extension, is scheduled to open in 2025. Exact opening dates and service will be determined by construction progress and operational capacity. The 2 Line will provide direct service between Downtown Redmond, Downtown Seattle, and Lynnwood. Most ST Express bus service running along I-90 and SR 520 will be evaluated to coordinate and connect with expanded light rail service. South Bellevue and Bellevue Downtown stations will become key transfer points connecting bus riders to the regional Link system.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Link Light Rail	2 Line service expands to Downtown Redmond and Lynnwood City Center Stations.	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 510, 522, 542, 544, 545, 550, 554, and 556; discontinue temporary Route 515.	Supports expansion of 2 Line

7.3. Changes in 2026

In 2026, the Link 1 Line is anticipated to extend south to Federal Way with three new stations: Kent Des Moines, Star Lake, and Federal Way Downtown. Existing ST Express bus service along the I-5 corridor will be evaluated and coordinated with planned light rail service.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Link Light Rail	1 Line extends from Angle Lake to Federal Way.	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 574, 577, 578, 580, 590, 592, 594, and 595.	Supports expansion of 1 Line
ST Express Bus	When staffing and operational capacity allow, evaluate feasibility of restoring service on ST Express routes in alignment with Board adopted priorities, financial capacity, and ongoing evaluation of ridership trends.	Restoration

7.4. Changes in 2027

In late 2027, the new Stride bus rapid transit (BRT) service (S1 Line) will begin operations along I-405 between Burien and Bellevue initially using a temporary stop at Tukwila International Boulevard Station. ST Express bus service will be evaluated to coordinate and connect with this new high-capacity transit service.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Stride BRT	Begin S1 Stride BRT service on I-405 South between Burien and Bellevue using an interim facility at Tukwila Int'l Blvd Station.	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 560, 566, and 567.	Supports expansion of S1 Line

7.5. Changes in 2028

In 2028, Stride BRT service (S3 Line) will begin operations along SR 522 between Bothell and Shoreline South Station. ST Express bus service will be evaluated to coordinate and connect with this new high-capacity transit service.

Mode	Description	Type
Stride BRT	Begin S3 Stride BRT service on SR 522 / NE 145 th between Bothell and Shoreline South Station.	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Route 522.	Supports expansion of S3 Line

7.6. Changes in 2029

In 2029, Stride BRT service (S2 Line) will begin operations along I-405 between Lynnwood and Bellevue. ST Express bus service will be evaluated to coordinate and connect with this new high-capacity transit service.

Mode	Description	Type
Stride BRT	Begin S2 Stride BRT service on I-405 North between Lynnwood and Bellevue.	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 532 and 535.	Supports expansion of S2 Line

8. MULTIYEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

8.1. Capital Improvement Program

A full list of capital projects and their **capital costs** (for the current budgeted year and next five years) can be found within *Appendix H* of the agency's publicly available 2024 Financial Plan & Adopted Budget:

<https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/2024-financial-plan-adopted-budget.pdf>

- Link (light rail) projects: starting on page 108
- Sounder (commuter rail) projects: starting on page 128
- Tacoma Link (T Line) projects: starting on page 144
- ST Express (regional commuter bus) projects: starting on page 146
- Stride (bus rapid transit) projects: starting on page 154
- System Expansion and Other projects: starting on page 160
- State of Good Repair: starting on page 174
- Enhancement projects: starting on page 190
- Administrative projects: starting on page 217

Capital revenues from grants and other sources are summarized in the following table.

(In Thousands)

Annual Capital Purchase Obligations	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Federal Grants	\$137,158	\$136,137	\$485,491	\$601,750	\$350,000	\$575,000
Other Capital Grants	8,547	40,391	60,991	8,647	4,148	4,148
Total	\$145,705	\$176,528	\$546,482	\$610,397	\$354,148	\$579,148

8.2. Operating Financial Plan and Cash Flow Analysis⁴

(In Thousands)

Annual Revenues	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Sales Tax	\$1,783,131	\$1,851,713	\$1,927,380	\$2,012,452	\$2,101,649	\$2,192,236
MVET	387,923	401,879	416,344	432,489	362,208	250,750
Rental Car Tax	4,934	5,082	5,234	5,391	5,553	5,720
Property Tax	168,674	172,517	176,485	180,584	184,857	189,232
Farebox Revenue	60,041	81,725	102,462	121,165	133,590	146,060
Federal Operating	70,934	70,493	73,202	74,820	74,894	75,525
Other Operating Revenue	16,692	23,832	21,680	47,112	25,650	17,477
Realized & Unrealized Interest Earned	165,042	85,053	93,311	86,537	67,561	40,365
Total	\$2,657,371	\$2,692,294	\$2,816,099	\$2,960,550	\$2,955,962	\$2,917,365

(In Thousands)

Annual Operating Expenses	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual Modal Expenses	\$638,125	\$688,926	\$733,836	\$765,836	\$808,668	\$883,266
Paratransit Expenses	4,200	5,854	6,734	7,256	7,532	7,819
Leases	11,426	7,111	7,367	7,571	7,533	7,692
Other Operating Expenses	128,053	154,115	164,279	181,390	191,076	367,258
Interest	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and Amortization	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donations to Other Governments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$781,804	\$856,007	\$912,217	\$962,052	\$1,014,808	\$1,266,035

(In Thousands)

Ending Balances, December 31	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Unrestricted Cash and Investments	\$4,068,417	\$4,458,313	\$4,108,597	\$3,149,935	\$1,784,406	\$798,585
O&M Reserve Fund	140,636	172,857	186,636	194,896	206,358	206,358
Capital Reserve Fund	345,759	349,217	352,709	356,236	359,798	363,396
Emergency Reserve Fund	60,036	66,191	72,408	78,687	85,029	91,434
Debt Service Fund ⁵	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Contractually Required Reserve Fund	13,890	13,890	13,890	13,890	13,890	13,890
Affordable Housing Fund	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Total	\$4,656,238	\$5,087,967	\$4,761,739	\$3,821,144	\$2,476,981	\$1,501,163

⁴ Financial data sources: Forecast (2024-2029) is from a cash-based future model

⁵ Forecast only includes prior bond reserve investment

9. PROJECTS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Given the role of Sound Transit as a regional transit authority, all projects detailed in the capital improvement program referenced in the [previous section](#) could be considered projects of regional significance. However, specific projects from the agency's [2024 Financial Plan & Adopted Budget](#) that meet thresholds for [Regional Capacity Projects](#) as defined by the Puget Sound Regional Council (the regional metropolitan planning organization) are mentioned again here. More details about each project can be found in the full [2024 Financial Plan & Adopted Budget](#) using the included project and page numbers below.

9.1. Link Projects

- T400047: WEST SEATTLE LINK EXTENSION (p. 113)
- T400052: EVERETT LINK EXTENSION (p. 114)
- T400053: TACOMA DOME LINK EXTENSION (p. 115)
- T400066: BALLARD LINK EXTENSION (p. 116)
- T400115: NE 130TH STREET INFILL STATION (p. 118)
- T400136: GRAHAM ST INFILL STATION (p. 119)
- T400137: BOEING ACCESS RD INFILL STN (p. 120)
- T4X115: LYNNWOOD LINK EXTENSION (p. 122)
- T4X445: FEDERAL WAY LINK EXTENSION (p. 125)
- T4X600: EAST LINK (p. 126)
- T4X630: DOWNTOWN REDMOND LINK EXT (p. 127)

9.2. Sounder Projects

- T300019: LAKEWOOD STATION IMPROVEMENTS (p. 131)
- T300044: SUMNER, KENT & AUBURN SPAI (p.134)
- T300057: SOUTH TACOMA ACCESS IMPROV (p. 136)
- T300136: TDS PARKING AND ACCESS IMPROV (p. 138)
- T300140: DUPONT EXTENSION (p. 139)

9.3. Stride BRT Projects

- T500050: I-405 BRT (p. 155)
- T500051: SR 522-NE 145TH ST BRT (p. 156)
- T500054: I-405 BRT GARAGES (p. 157)
- T500055: SR-522 BRT GARAGES (p. 158)

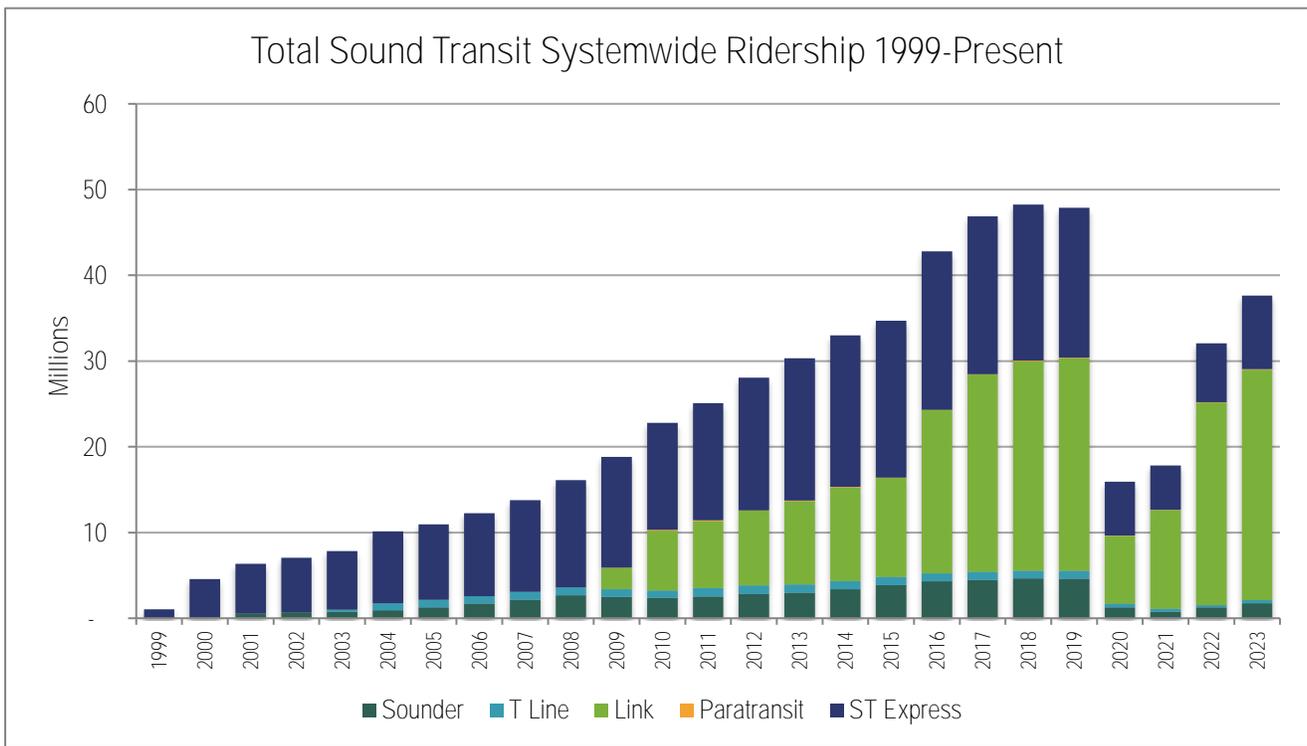
Several of these projects are also referenced starting on page 133 of the Puget Sound Regional Council Regional Transportation Plan: <https://www.psrc.org/media/5938>

10. RIDERSHIP TRENDS

In 2023, Sound Transit served **37.6 million** passenger trips across all modes. This was 17% more ridership than in 2022 (32.1 million) and more than double the ridership of 2021 (17.8 million). This suggests that transit ridership in the Puget Sound region continues to recover from the lows of the COVID-19 pandemic, in response to both recent service expansions and increasing use of transit for a wider variety of trip purposes.

T Line ridership grew the most in 2023, benefiting from an extension that doubled the length of the line. Sounder commuter-oriented service also saw robust growth in ridership, nearly 40% higher than the previous year. Ridership on ST Express buses saw more modest growth (25%) compared to other modes, potentially due to the ongoing operator shortages which have led to service reductions and delays in the planned restoration of service.

Since 1999, Sound Transit has served over **572 million** passenger trips – providing sustainable transportation options and enhancing regional mobility for all Puget Sound residents.

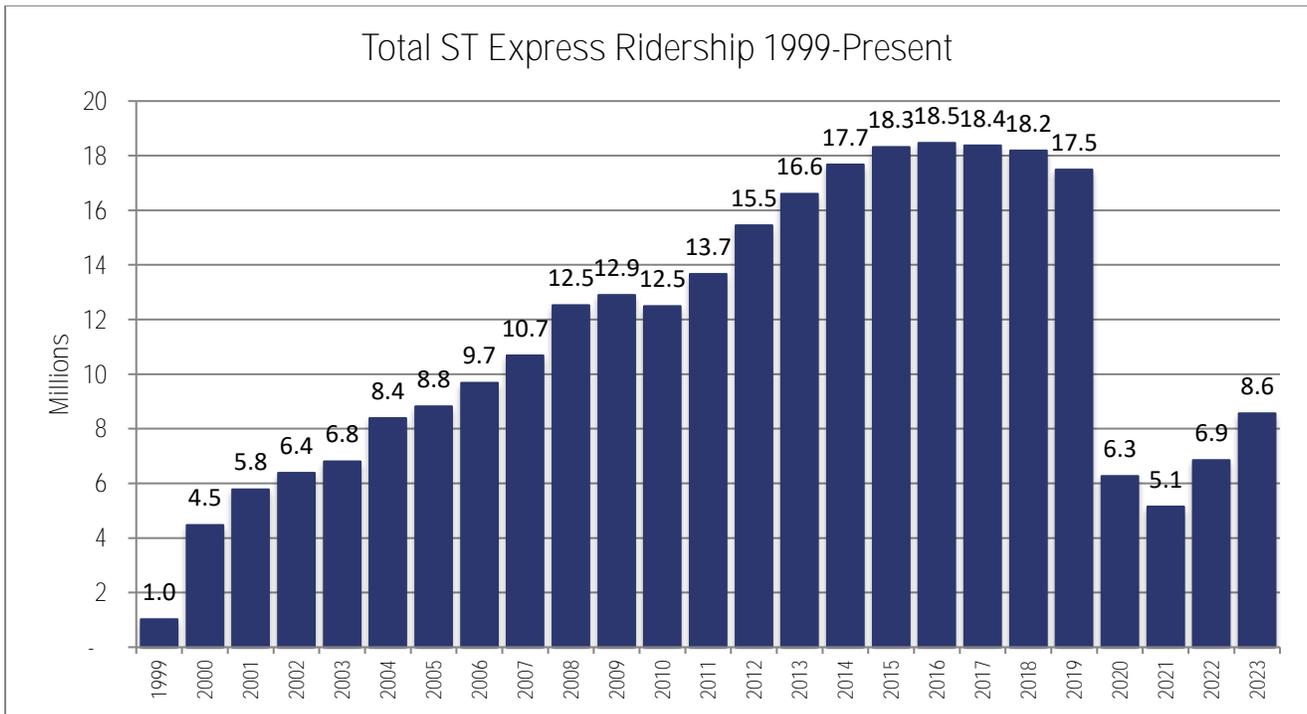


The following sections provide additional detail for each mode.

10.1. ST Express

Sound Transit’s regional bus system, ST Express, served nearly **8.6 million** passengers in 2023. Among all modes, ST Express ridership declined the most in 2020, attributed to trip reductions caused by regional workforce constraints.

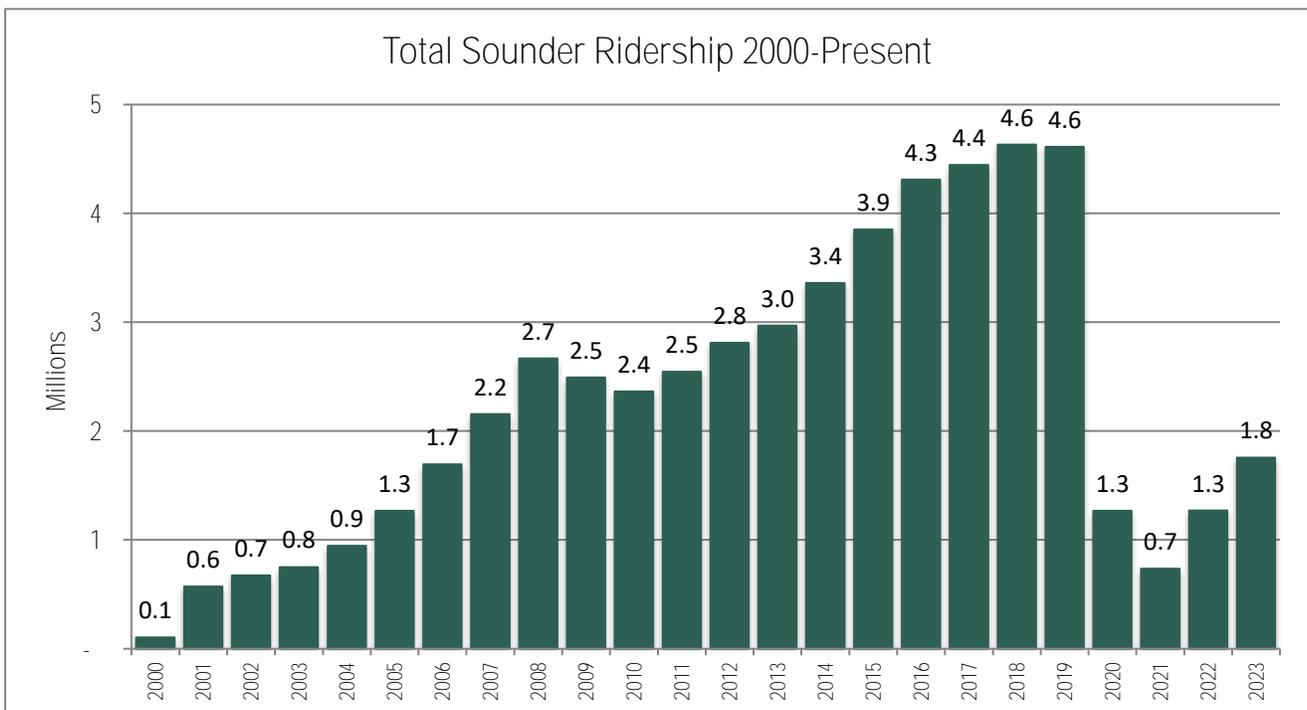
In 2023, ST Express carried **27,895** passengers on average each weekday. The following figure shows the trends for ridership on ST Express since 1999.



10.2. Sounder (S and N Lines)

Sounder commuter trains have carried over **54 million** passengers since service began in September of 2000. In 2023, Sounder carried **1,755,751** passengers, with an average of **6,715** boardings per weekday.

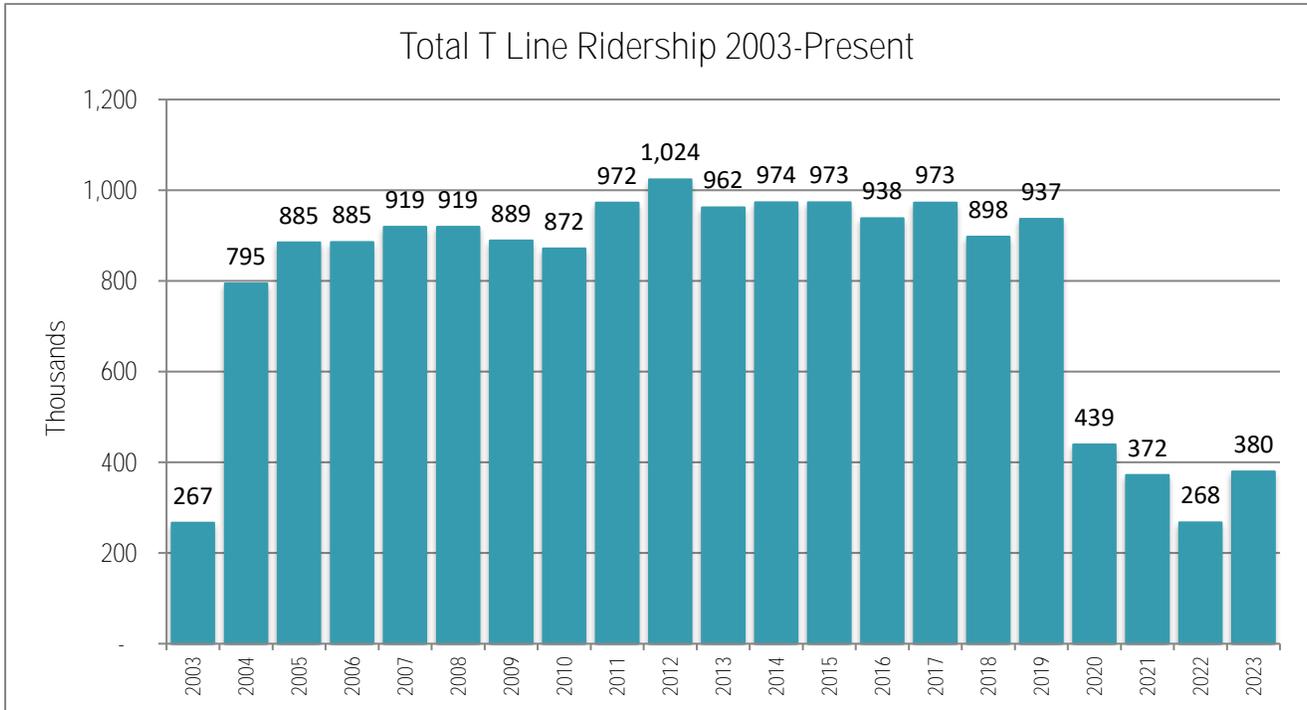
The following figure shows the trends for ridership on Sounder since 2000.



10.3. T Line

T Line (formerly Tacoma Link) has carried over **16.5 million** passengers since it began operations in 2003. T Line carried approximately **380K** passengers in 2023, with an average of **1,364** passengers each weekday.

The following figure shows ridership trends on T Line since 2003.

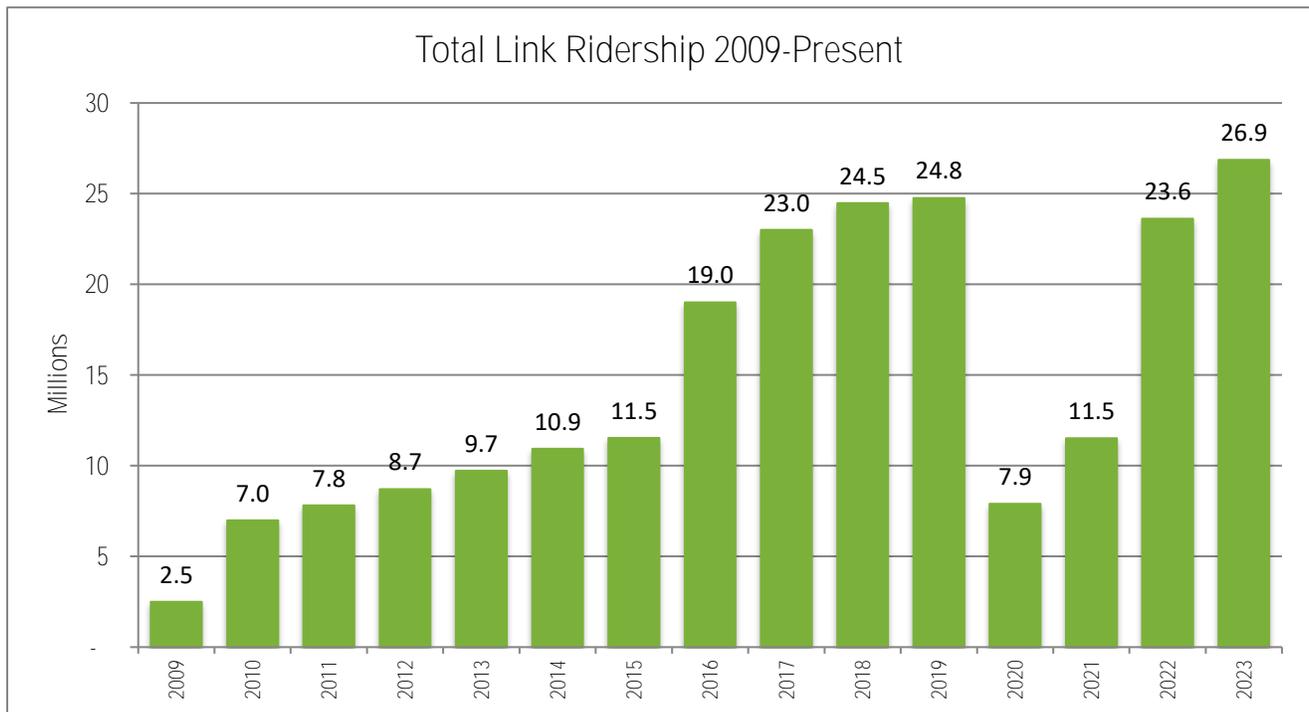


10.4. Link (1 Line)

Approximately **26.9 million** passengers rode the Link 1 Line in 2023, with over **219 million** boardings since the original line opened in 2009. Link carried **78,269** passengers on average each weekday in 2023.

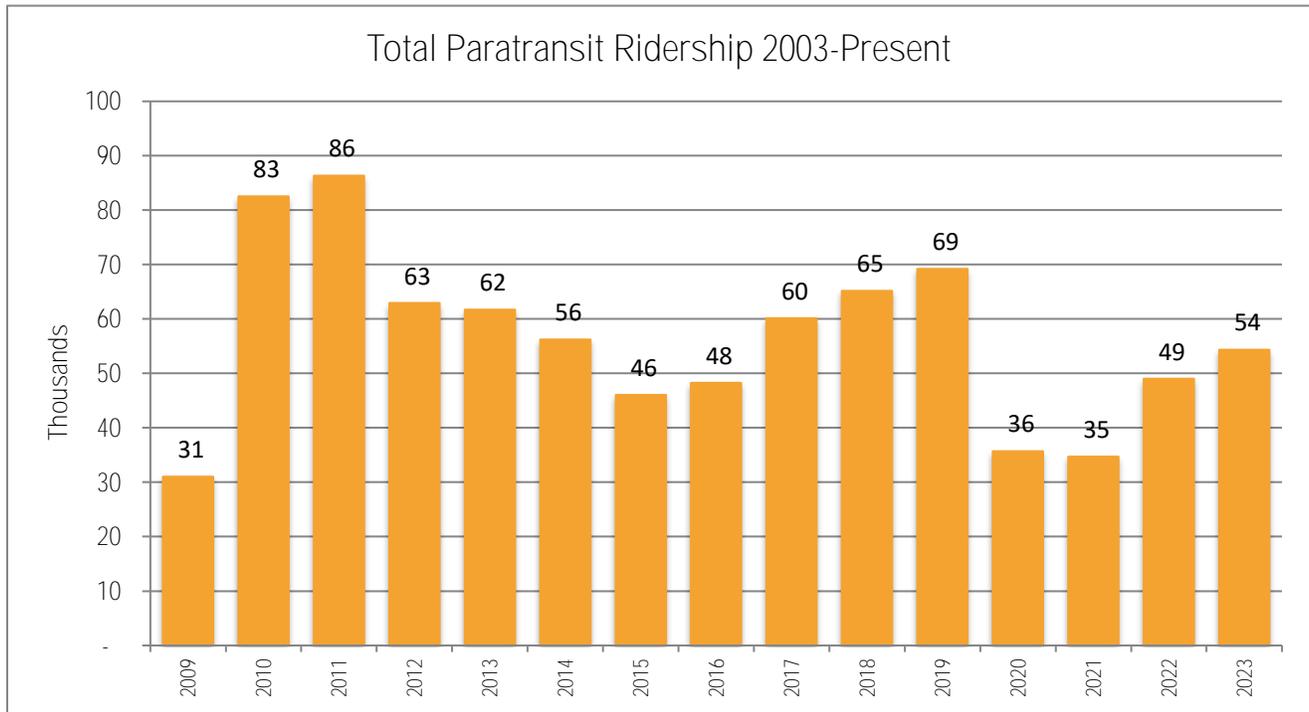
The opening of the Northgate Link extension in 2021 and robust demand during special events have significantly contributed to Link's rapid post-pandemic ridership recovery.

The following figure shows ridership trends on Link since 2009.



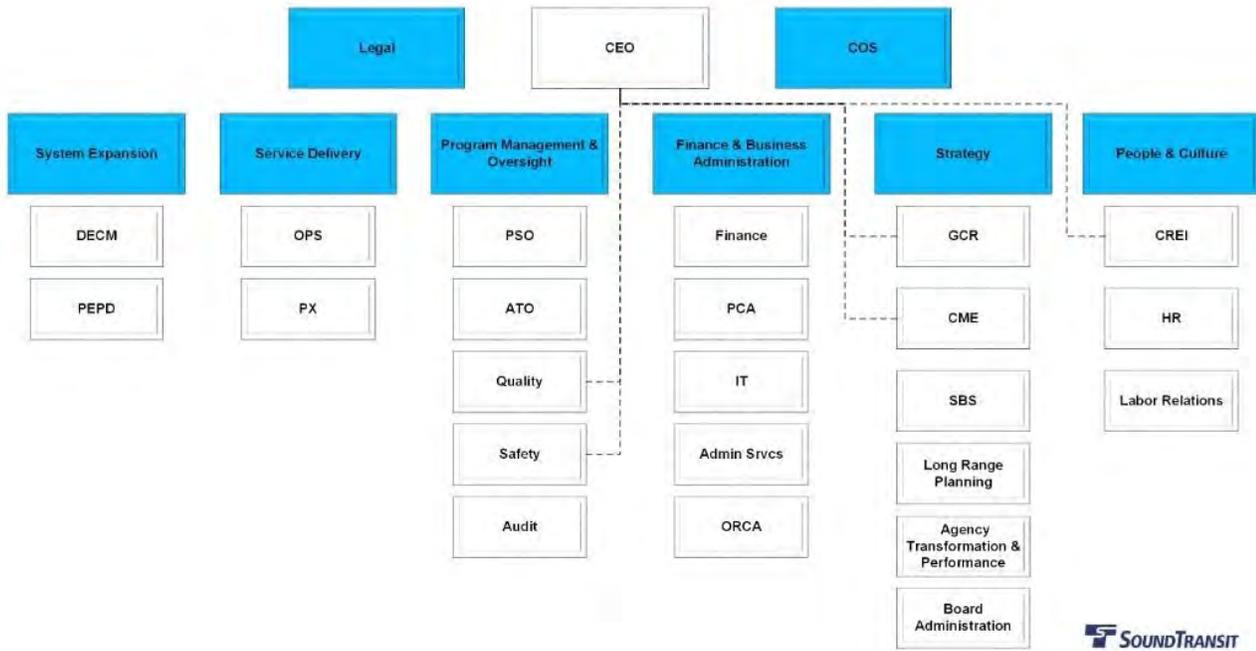
10.5. Paratransit

Approximately **54,335** passengers rode paratransit associated with Link service during 2023 and **843,256** passengers have used this service since Link opened in 2009. The following figure shows paratransit ridership allocated to Sound Transit since the beginning of Link service.



11. AGENCY STRUCTURE

11.1. Organizational Chart



11.2. Board of Directors

In accordance with state law RCW 81.112.030, the Sound Transit Board is comprised of 18 members, including the Washington state Secretary of Transportation and 17 locally elected officials nominated by each of the three counties' executive officials and confirmed by the respective county councils. The Sound Transit Board includes the three county executives, representatives from the largest city in each county and representatives from other cities and unincorporated areas of each county. At least one-half of all appointees from each county also serve on local transit agency boards. At the end of 2023, the Sound Transit Board of Directors included:

Dow Constantine, Chair	King County Executive
Dave Somers, Vice Chair	Snohomish County Executive
Nancy Backus	Auburn Mayor
Claudia Balducci	King County Councilmember
Angela Birney	Redmond Mayor
Bruce Dammeier	Pierce County Executive
Cassie Franklin	Everett Mayor
Christine Frizzell	Lynnwood Mayor
Bruce Harrell	Seattle Mayor
Jim Kastama	Puyallup Mayor
Roger Millar	Washington State Secretary of Transportation
Ed Prince	Renton City Councilmember
Kim Roscoe	Fife Mayor
Dan Strauss	Seattle City Councilmember
Dave Uptegrove	King County Council Chair
Peter von Reichbauer	King County Councilmember
Kristina Walker	Tacoma Councilmember
Girmay Zahilay	King County Council Vice Chair



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