



Sound Transit

Regional Transit Projects – Ready to Go

Accelerate the expansion of commuter rail to Lakewood:

Sound Transit is working to expand Sounder commuter rail service from Seattle and Tacoma to Lakewood. The expansion project includes adding new commuter rail service in South Tacoma and Lakewood by improving the track and signals and grade crossings in that corridor. In advance of these improvements, Sound Transit has completed the Lakewood Station and is offering a direct bus connection for Sounder customers using the Lakewood Station. Also, the agency has started construction on the South Tacoma Station. The track and signal elements of the project are in final design, but service to Lakewood cannot start until these elements are fully funded. In addition, these improvements will provide new layover space to store our trains. With additional funding, the track improvements will be ready to advance to construction.

By finishing this critical regional connection, the expanded Sounder service to Lakewood will serve an estimated 14,000 riders per day, connect nine urban centers in the Puget Sound region and greatly improve travel times in the corridor. Commuter rail service is reliable – delivering people to their jobs and homes on time every time. Currently, 10,000 people ride Sounder every day and those same people are not driving on I-5. This mode shift is long term and sustainable.

With the completion of this project, Sound Transit will operate up to 22 trains each weekday on this alignment, and AMTRAK plans to run another 18 trains for a total of 40 passenger rail trips per day in the corridor. Freight traffic also benefits from these improvements – and that's good for the continued economic prosperity of the region.

Stimulus: \$44 million

Build the Mountlake Terrace Freeway Station:

Sound Transit is proposing to construct the Mountlake Terrace Freeway Station in the I-5 median between Seattle and Everett. This project will complete a key component of the I-5 HOV Expressway System, and will increase transit ridership by over 1,000 new transit riders per weekday in the congested I-5 corridor connecting King and Snohomish counties, and annually, reduce 535,080 vehicle trips. The Mountlake Terrace Freeway Station is in final design and can go to construction in 2009.

The project includes HOV ramps to/from the I-5 HOV lanes to a bus station in the freeway median connected directly via a pedestrian bridge to Community Transit's 660 stall parking garage now under construction. Between 20 to 35 buses per hour will travel through the Station during peak commute times. The increased operating efficiency will save up to 8 minutes of travel time per trip, for a total of 16 minutes of savings roundtrip. The Mountlake Terrace Freeway Station would provide express transit connections to some of the region's major regional growth centers.

Stimulus: \$10 million

Buy Clean Fuel Buses:

Sound Transit has experienced unprecedented levels of ridership growth in the last year. Between July 2007 and July 2008, ridership on the agency's 22 regional, express bus routes has grown by 23% percent. Sound Transit buses are full and many commuters are standing. To meet this strong demand for more transit service, the agency is planning to expand its fleet of vehicles and has options to procure as many as 35 buses in March 2009. The additional buses will allow Sound Transit to meet the public's growing demand for more transit.

Stimulus: \$11 million

Build University Link:

Sound Transit will break ground on the extension of light rail to the University of Washington in January 2009. University Link is located in the most densely developed residential and employment area in Seattle and the State of Washington. The three largest urban centers in the State – downtown Seattle, Capitol Hill/First Hill and the University District – are located on the alignment. The University Link project will serve approximately 40,200 riders per day in 2030 and will double ridership on the regional light rail system to 114,000 a day. Expanding the federal partnership on this project would allow Sound Transit to leverage local revenues for other regional high capacity transit projects.

Stimulus: \$54 million

Build the Tukwila Commuter Rail Station:

Right now, Sounder commuter trains serve a temporary station in Tukwila, but the agency is planning to construct a permanent rail station, a 400-stall surface parking lot, and a multi-agency transit center. Right-of-way acquisition -- provided through partnership with Boeing -- is complete, and the project is in design. With additional funding, the project can advance to construction.

The I-5 corridor from Tukwila to Seattle is severely congested, parking for transit is very limited and there are few intermodal connections. Sound Transit estimates there will be over 1,400 daily riders at the Tukwila Station. Because the Station is close to a Boeing facility with 12,000 employees, there is a strong demand for additional parking at the station. Also, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco recently located its new Seattle branch headquarters adjacent to the station site. This station area has planned employment estimated between 25,655 and 34,538.

Sound Transit plans to run 22 commuter trains every weekday between Seattle and Lakewood with stops in Tukwila. In 2030, the ridership on the Tacoma-Seattle segment is estimated to be 14,000 per day. Amtrak Cascades (Seattle to Portland, Oregon) also serves Tukwila and plans to offer 18 additional passenger trains a day for a total of 40 daily trips.

Stimulus: \$21 million

Build Two-Way Transit and HOV Facilities on I-90:

This project will increase both transit and HOV capacity and sets the stage for building light rail that will connect the east and west sides of Lake Washington, fulfilling the historic vision of the I-90 floating bridge. The project adds two-way, all-day HOV lanes while preserving the existing number of general purpose traffic lanes. When complete, the project will add a total of 10 miles of HOV lanes between Bellevue and Seattle (5 miles in each direction), along with two new HOV ramps (on Mercer Island) and improvements to three HOV ramps (on Mercer Island and Bellevue Way). The investments will improve travel times during peak commute periods, and increase the number of people moving through this critical I-90 corridor – a major connection between the economic engines on the east and west sides of Lake Washington.

The project also allows Sound Transit to begin work to convert the center roadway to light rail. The Sound Transit 2 plan just approved by voters calls for opening light rail to the Eastside by 2020. Current population and employment levels are causing longer hours of congestion for traffic across Lake Washington in both directions. The cities of Bellevue, Redmond and Seattle are meeting housing and employment density goals established by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and the PSRC's Vision 2040 plan recognizes that these urban centers need high capacity transit options to meet their increasing transportation demands. Daily ridership on the East Link light rail project is projected to be 48,000 boardings by 2030.

Completion of the Two-Way Transit and HOV project is a necessary precursor to the light rail connection and provides additional transit capacity in the meantime.

Stimulus: \$34 million

Accelerate Light Rail to Northgate:

In the Sound Transit 2 plan just approved by voters, the extension of light rail from the University of Washington to Northgate is scheduled to open in 2020. This extension will provide additional travel capacity in the highest ridership corridor in the region. For commuters, travel time savings are significant: the trip from downtown Seattle to Northgate on a bus takes 26 minutes, and only 13 minutes on a train.

With federal stimulus funding, final design could begin in 2009 – two years earlier than planned.

Stimulus: \$180 million

Accelerate Airport Link South:

The extension of light rail to the Sea Tac International Airport is under construction and is scheduled to open at the end of 2009. The *Sound Transit 2* plan includes an extension south of the Airport to South 200th Street in the City of Sea Tac. With federal stimulus funding, final design and construction could begin in 2009 and the extension could be complete in 2012.

Stimulus: \$30 million