

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SOUND TRANSIT 2 (ST2)

Background

On July 7, 2005, the Sound Transit Board unanimously approved the *Regional Transit Long Range Plan*. The plan contains goals, objectives, a map of regional transit corridors, and a description of the various transit services identified for each corridor. With respect to the Eastside's transit interests, the *Regional Transit Long Range Plan* establishes the following transit designations:

- SR 520 – High Capacity Transit (HCT) corridor, with the transit technology undefined;
- I-90 – Electric Light Rail Service corridor connecting Seattle, Bellevue and Redmond;
- I-405 – Potential Rail Extension, from Burien, Renton, Bellevue and Kirkland to Snohomish County. The plan also designates I-405 as a Bus Rapid Transit/Regional Express Bus Service corridor, which could be a prelude to future rail service.

To implement part of the long range plan, the Sound Transit Board approved ST2 on May 24, 2007. ST2 was sent to the voters on November 6, 2007, as part of Proposition 1, the Roads and Transit package. However, Proposition 1 was not approved by the voters.

Since November the Sound Transit Board has reviewed voter surveys, examined technical and financial data on ST2 and heard public testimony. On April 24, 2008, the board approved the following three draft packages for public review as a way to gauge interest in an updated ST2 package:

- A 12-year draft ST2 Package funded by a 0.4% sales tax that extends light rail to S. 200th St. three miles south of Sea-Tac Airport, north to Northgate, and east to Downtown Bellevue. Additional commuter rail service is funded between Tacoma and Everett, along with additional Regional Express bus service on I-405 and SR 520, and a \$150 million contribution to fund transit improvements in the SR 520 corridor. The total capital cost is \$6.7 billion (2007 dollars);
- A 12-year draft ST2 Package funded by a 0.5% sales tax that extends light rail approximately six miles south of Sea Tac to Highline Community College, keeps the extension to Northgate, and continues further east to the Redmond-Overlake/NE 40th St. Transit Center. The additional proposed Sounder commuter rail and Regional Express bus service is similar to the 0.4% package, without the \$150 million contribution to SR 520. The total capital cost is \$7.8 billion (2007 dollars); and
- A 20-year draft ST2 Package funded by a 0.5% sales tax that is the transit part of the Roads and Transit package sent to voters last November, extending light rail south from SeaTac to Tacoma, north to Ash Way/I-5 in Snohomish County, and east to the Redmond- Overlake/NE 40th St. Transit Center with the possibility of continuing to

Downtown Redmond. Additional Sounder commuter rail and Regional Express bus service is included. The total capital cost is \$10.8 billion (2006 dollars).

By July 2008, the Sound Transit Board will adopt an updated ST2 package and tax rate and decide whether to submit the package to the voters in 2008 or 2010.

Issues for Discussion

1. What are the Eastside's critical regional transit needs?
2. How do the three potential ST2 packages identified by the Sound Transit Board on April 24 compare with respect to support for the Eastside's HCT needs?
3. Should additional service be added to the update of the ST2 package?
4. Is there consensus on a preferred package?

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New Options for Expanding Mass Transit

With traffic congestion growing each year, public feedback to Sound Transit has called for expanding mass transit. In response, Sound Transit has identified a targeted set of regional transit expansions that would be delivered between 2009 and 2020. With the region's population projected to increase by 30 percent by 2030, the package responds to the highest priority needs by funding light rail, commuter rail and regional express bus service expansions around the region that will provide the greatest and most immediate public benefits. These regional projects will work in tandem with local transit services to provide more travel options, increasing transit ridership and thereby responding to rising environmental concerns.

The core set of investments described below would be funded by a sales tax increase of four-tenths of one percent (0.4%). Adding a potential one-tenth of one percent (total 0.5%) would fund further light rail expansions in the south and east corridors and a longer line of Link connector service in Capitol Hill, and contribute to an arterial lane partnership project to improve transit time in Shoreline.

LINK LIGHT RAIL

Expands the Link light rail line that opens for service in 2009 by 18 miles (0.4%) or 23 miles (0.5%):

- North from the University of Washington to the Roosevelt and Northgate areas
- East from downtown Seattle across Interstate 90 to Mercer Island, downtown Bellevue, the Overlake Hospital area (0.4%) and Redmond's Overlake Transit Center (0.5%)
- South from Sea-Tac Airport to South 200th Street (0.4%) and Highline Community College (0.5%)
- Link connector service serving Seattle's International District, First Hill and Capitol Hill at John Street (0.4%) and Aloha Street (0.5%)

Expands light rail with a partnership to extend Tacoma Link beyond the downtown area.

SOUNDER COMMUTER RAIL

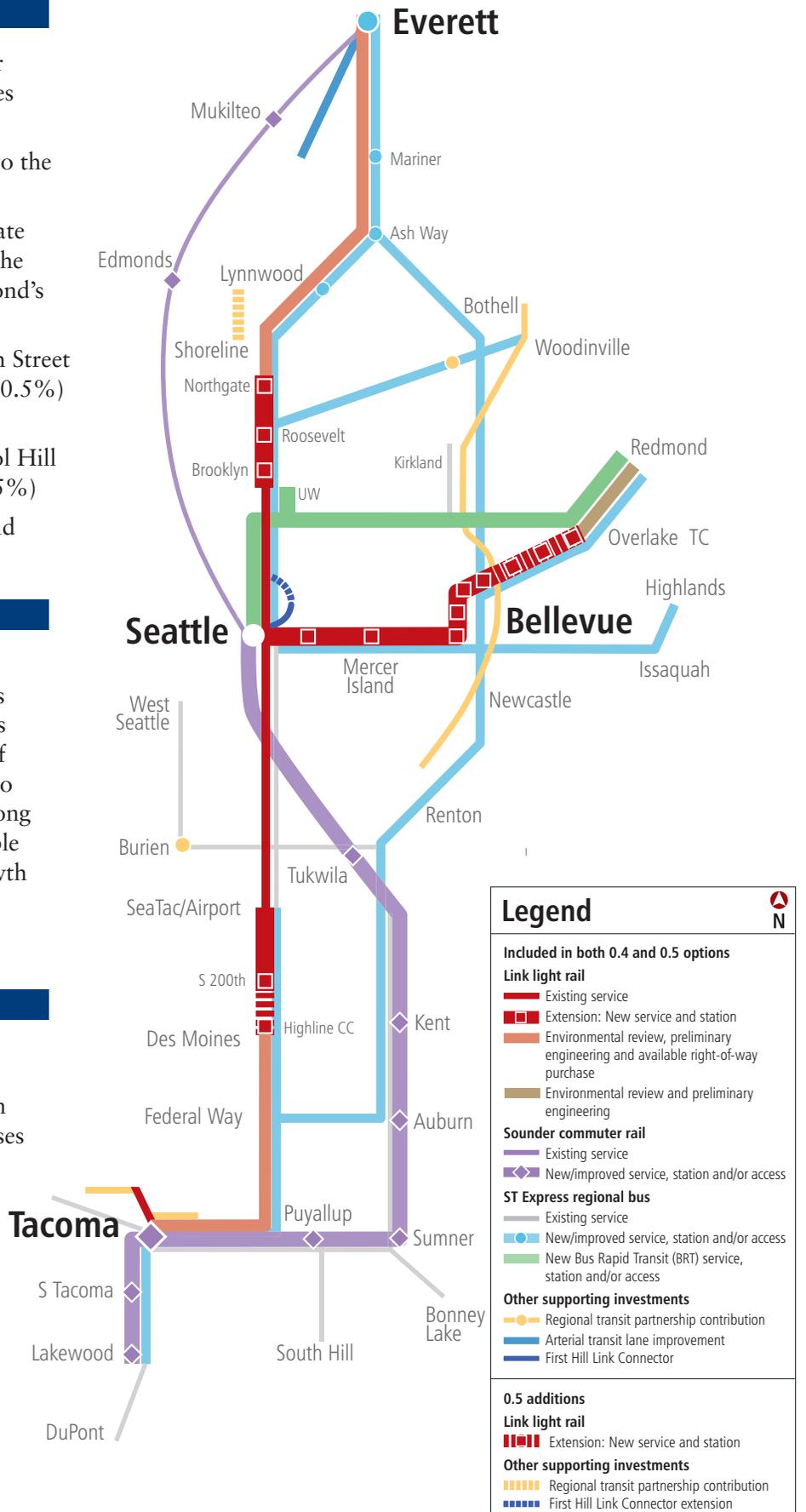
Increases Tacoma-Seattle Sounder commuter rail service by adding up to 12 new daily trips and by potentially increasing platform lengths to accommodate longer trains. With a total of up to 30 daily trips (15 round trips), this 65 to 90 percent increase in service would meet strong rider demand in the corridor, providing reliable and congestion-free travel as population growth continues to worsen roadway congestion.

Contingent upon negotiations with BNSF Railway.

ST EXPRESS REGIONAL BUS

Expands regional express bus routes serving the region's busiest housing and job centers with frequent service on major corridors from early morning to late at night. ST Express buses operate on existing freeway HOV lanes. The draft plan boosts service with:

- New Bus Rapid Transit service on State Route 520 to coincide with bridge replacement and tolling
- Up to 20 miles of new arterial transit lanes to improve transit speed and reliability
- Increase in service by 10-15 percent in key corridors



MAP IS NOT TO SCALE • APRIL 2008

LINK LIGHT RAIL FEATURES

In addition to extending the Central Link light rail line with 18 or 23 miles of new light rail, the package supports moving forward rapidly with further extensions to Tacoma, Redmond and Lynnwood in a future phase by funding environmental review, preliminary engineering and early right-of-way purchases.

Fast, frequent service

Light rail trains operate in their own right-of-way, providing fast, reliable service that isn't delayed by congestion. Trains will run 20 hours per day and every few minutes during rush hours.

Ample room to grow

System capacity can be expanded to meet long-term needs from continued population growth by running trains as often as every four minutes with up to four cars, each train carrying up to 800 riders, for an hourly capacity of up to 12,000 riders in each direction. Stations will act as hubs where riders transfer between buses and congestion-free light rail service.

Sample light rail travel times

Microsoft to downtown Bellevue	11 min.
Northgate to downtown Seattle:	15 min.
Bellevue to Qwest Field:	20 min.
UW to downtown Bellevue:	30 min.
Highline C.C. to Safeco Field:	37 min.

IMPROVED STATION ACCESS

Provides funds that will allow more people to access regional transit services at key locations. Access improvements in and around Auburn, Edmonds, Everett, Kent, Lakewood, Lynnwood (including Ash Way and Mariner), Mukilteo, Puyallup, South Tacoma, Sumner, Tacoma and Tukwila will be tailored to the needs of each location and may include:

- Expanded parking
- Pedestrian improvements at or near stations
- Additional bus/transfer facilities for improved feeder service to stations
- Bicycle access and storage at stations
- New and expanded drop-off areas to encourage ridesharing

EASTSIDE PASSENGER RAIL PARTNERSHIP

Provides funds for a potential contribution to a partnership for Eastside passenger rail operation on freight right-of-way there. Sound Transit and the Puget Sound Regional Council are currently evaluating the potential benefits of passenger rail operation on this corridor.

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS TO IMPROVE MOBILITY

Contributes funds to complete projects in conjunction with other parties, improving access to service and transit travel times:

- Tacoma Link extension
- Bothell transit center/parking garage
- Burien parking garage
- Kirkland parking garage (0.4% only)
- Shoreline transit lane improvements (0.5% only)

RESPONDING TO REGIONAL GROWTH

Continued growth in population and employment puts increasing pressure on our transportation system. The draft plan responds with targeted investments that provide new and expanded transit options to improve near-term and future mobility for people who live and work here.

Estimated growth by 2030	Population	Employment
Bellevue	+24%	+39%
Burien/Tukwila/Renton	+16%	+34%
Capitol Hill/Queen Anne	+20%	+23%
Downtown Seattle	+79%	+24%
Everett	+25%	+38%
Federal Way/Auburn	+17%	+33%
Kent	+35%	+30%
Lynnwood/Edmonds	+34%	+50%
North Seattle	+13%	+29%
Redmond/Kirkland	+26%	+40%
South Seattle	+7%	+29%
Tacoma	+18%	+28%

[Summary Needs Assessment, Parsons Brinckerhoff for Sound Transit, January 2008]

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

With transportation the region's largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, one of the most important things people can do to reduce their carbon footprints is to use public transit. By expanding regional transit options, this package would bring about 110,000 more daily riders to Sound Transit services – an increase of 55% or more – by 2030.

RIDERSHIP

This draft plan takes thousands more cars off roads, with expanded train and bus services moving people through the region's most congested corridors.

2030 Estimated Daily Ridership

Service	Without Plan	With Plan
Central Link	120,000	220,000-235,000
ST Express	52,000	58,000
Souder	19,000	27,000
Tacoma Link	4,000	6,000
Total	195,000	311,000-326,000

Figures reflect near-term demand. Actual long-term system capacity will be much higher. Figures are preliminary and subject to refinement.

PAYING FOR EXPANDED SERVICES

- 4/10 or 5/10 of one percent sales tax increase, or four or five cents for every \$10 retail purchase
- Typical new cost per adult is \$55 (0.4%) or \$69 (0.5%) annually
- Continuation of existing Sound Move taxes (0.4% sales tax and 0.3% vehicle license tax)

COSTS	2007 dollars	Year of expenditure*
0.4% option:		
Capital costs	\$6.8 billion	\$9.0 billion
Operating & maintenance (2008-2020)	\$0.7 billion	\$0.9 billion
0.5% option:		
Capital costs	\$7.8 billion	\$10.3 billion
Operating & maintenance (2008-2020)	\$0.8 billion	\$1.0 billion

*includes inflation



Sound Transit 2 Plan

Approved: May 24, 2007

This regional transit system expansion plan, adopted by the Sound Transit Board in May 2007 following more than two years of extensive planning and public outreach, formed the transit portion of the Roads & Transit ballot, Proposition 1, that voters turned down in November 2007.

The 20-year plan would add more than 50 miles of light rail, improve commuter rail facilities and increase regional express bus service. The result would nearly double Sound Transit system ridership with fast, reliable connections to more places for more people, cutting through congestion in the region's most heavily traveled corridors.

DETAILS

- Extends light rail north from the University of Washington to 164th Street SW/Ash Way in Snohomish County, with service to Northgate, Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace and Lynnwood.
- Extends light rail south from Sea-Tac Airport to downtown Tacoma, adding service to the Des Moines, Federal Way and Fife areas.
- Extends light rail east to Mercer Island, Bellevue and Redmond's Overlake Transit Center and Microsoft campus, with service all the way to Downtown Redmond if sufficient funding is available. The plan identifies the extension to Downtown Redmond as a high priority and provides up-front funding for planning, engineering and some real estate acquisition.
- Expands parking and enhances Sounder stations, increasing access to the regional transit system. Sets aside funding for future service enhancements to the existing ST Express bus network during light rail construction.
- Funds several long term studies: extension of light rail to Everett; future high capacity transit lines to Issaquah via I-90, from UW across SR-520, from Ballard to UW, and in Seattle's west corridor, from Ballard to West Seattle to Burien; additional bus rapid transit; and long-term use of the BNSF rail line in east King County.

BENEFITS

- Provides fast, frequent and reliable light rail service free of delays from congestion and weather, with trains running 20 hours a day and every few minutes at peak times.
- Moves more people through the region's most congested corridors, taking cars off the road.

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- Light rail stations serve as hubs that collect riders from local bus routes.
- Connects Snohomish, Pierce and East King counties with the almost 19 miles of first-phase light rail investments paid for by North King County and South King County taxpayers.
- Makes strategic bus rapid transit (BRT) investments in the I-405 corridor, complementing BRT investments already completed or under construction.
- Builds on the cost-estimating, engineering and construction experience that Sound Transit acquired over the last decade. Independent experts from around the country also intensively reviewed Sound Transit's work, further increasing the level of confidence that the proposed rail lines can be built with available funds.
- Reaches Northgate by 2018, and Downtown Bellevue and Kent-Des Moines Road by 2021. Other extensions would be phased through 2027.

ESTIMATED RIDERSHIP (2030)

SERVICE	ANNUAL		WEEKDAY	
	Without Package	With Package	Without Package	With Package
Central Link	37 million	93 million	118,000	305,000
Tacoma Link	1.1 million	1.6 million	3,800	5,400
Sounder	4 million	4 million	16,000	15,400
ST Express	15 million	9 million	51,000	33,000
TOTAL SYSTEM RIDERSHIP	58 million	108 million	189,000	359,000

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 168,000** More riders on the Sound Transit system
- 11,200** New park-and-ride stalls
- 50-53** Miles of new Link light rail
- 25-27** New light rail stations
- 10** Additional cities connected by light rail
- 7** New/improved Sounder stations
- 2** New I-405 BRT enhancements
- 1** Mile of new/improved Sounder tracks
- 1** New streetcar line

Financial, budget and schedule information presented here and on-line is based on estimates as of May 2007. Figures may be updated periodically to reflect updated estimates as deemed appropriate by the Sound Transit Board.

For more information visit www.soundtransit.org/ST2 or www.roadsandtransit.org.

SAMPLE TRAVEL TIMES (APPROXIMATE)

- Overlake/Microsoft to downtown Bellevue: 10 minutes
- Lynnwood to downtown Seattle: 28 minutes
- SeaTac to the Tacoma Dome: 37 minutes
- University of Washington to downtown Bellevue: 30 minutes
- Downtown Bellevue to Qwest Field: 20 minutes

PAYING FOR EXPANDED SERVICES

- 5/10 of one percent sales tax increase, or five cents for every \$10 retail purchase
- Typical new cost per adult is \$69 (0.5%) annually
- Continuation of existing Sound Move taxes (0.4% sales tax and 0.3% vehicle license tax)

COSTS	2007 dollars	Year of Expenditure*
Capital Costs	\$11.3 billion	\$18.1 billion
Operating & Maintenance (2008-2028)	\$1.5 billion	\$2.4 billion

*includes inflation