

# Mass transit expansion options

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, potentially to Tacoma General Hospital.

## 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.

## 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



## 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 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 business access transit (BAT) lanes (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	211,000-224,000
ST Express	52,000	58,000
Souder	19,000	27,000
Tacoma Link	4,000	6,000
Total	195,000	302,000-309,000

Figures reflect near-term demand. Actual long-term system capacity will be much higher.

## 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*
<b>0.4% option:</b>		
Capital costs	\$6.8 billion	\$9.0 billion
Operating & maintenance (2008-2020)	\$0.7 billion	\$0.9 billion
<b>0.5% option:</b>		
Capital costs	\$7.8 billion	\$10.3 billion
Operating & maintenance (2008-2020)	\$0.8 billion	\$1.0 billion

\*includes inflation