

Sound Transit Background

In the early 1990s, the Washington State Legislature enacted legislation that provided counties in the state's most populous region to create a regional transit authority to plan, develop, implement, and operate a high-capacity transportation system within that region. In July 1993, the Pierce, Snohomish, and King County Councils voted to participate in the authority, thus forming the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority.

In 1997, the Regional Transit Authority Board adopted "Sound Transit" as the popular name for the agency and selected the names of "Link" for light rail services, "Sounder" for regional commuter rail service, and "ST Express" for regional bus services.

Sound Transit Board of Directors

Sound Transit is governed by an 18-member Board made up of 17 elected officials and the Washington State Department of Transportation secretary. Board membership includes mayors, city council members, county executives, and county council members from within the Sound Transit district.

Boardmembers from each county are appointed by their respective county executive and confirmed by their county council. By state law, appointments must include an elected official representing the largest city in the county and proportional representation from other cities and unincorporated areas. To help assure coordination between local and regional transit plans, half the appointments in each county must be elected officials who serve on a local transit agency governing authority.

The Sound Transit District Boundary

The Sound Transit district includes the most congested urban areas of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. The boundary lines generally follow the urban growth boundaries created by each county in accordance with the state Growth Management Act.

Sound Move

In 1996, voters in the Sound Transit district approved the *Sound Move* plan to build a high capacity public transit system. Since 1997, Sound Transit has implemented *Sound Move*, building and operating 75 miles of Sounder commuter rail, 19 ST Express bus routes, and 16 miles of Link light rail. The last few *Sound Move* projects are currently underway, most notably University Link (extending light rail from downtown Seattle to the University of Washington). In 2012, Sound Transit carried more than 25 million passengers.

Sound Transit 2

In 2008, voters in the Sound Transit district approved a mass transit expansion proposal, *Sound Transit 2* (ST2) that will add 36 miles of light rail to the system, expand ST Express service by 17 percent, and increase Sounder service. Projects are being brought into service after they undergo planning, environmental review, preliminary engineering, property acquisition, final design, construction, startup, and testing. New service will be phased in over several years.

Program Realignment: Sound Move and ST2

As a result of the projected \$3.9 billion revenue loss resulting from the 2007-2009 national economic recession, there was insufficient revenue to complete all elements of the ST2 program by 2023 as originally planned. In response to the revenue loss, in December 2010, the Board adopted Motion No. M2010-102. While the action did not permanently delete any Sound Move or ST2 projects, it authorized advancement of specified capital projects and service improvements that are currently affordable, best achieve the stated goals of Sound Move and ST2, and/or are necessary to keep the existing system in a

state of good repair. During review of the Sound Move and ST2 projects, the Board also identified certain cost savings through operational efficiencies in an effort to realign project costs with available resources.

Sound Transit Service Program

Current Sound Transit service includes:

- 81.9 miles of commuter rail service providing ten round-trip trains daily between downtown Seattle and Tacoma, six of which extend to Lakewood, and four round-trip trains daily between Seattle and Everett serving about three million annual passengers;
- 25 regional express bus routes with a fleet of 280 buses serving about 16.0 million annual passengers;
- 15.4 miles of Link light rail line from downtown Seattle to SeaTac Airport serving about 8.7 million annual passengers.
- A 1.8 mile light rail line in Tacoma serving one million annual passengers;
- Associated stations, park-and-ride lots and transit access ramps.

Sound Transit District Subareas and Subarea Equity

For planning and budget purposes, the Sound Transit district is divided into five geographic subareas. The regional transit system plan addresses unique needs in each of these subareas. Subarea equity uses taxes collected in a geographic area for projects and services that benefit the people who live in that area.

Snohomish County

The Snohomish County subarea includes the cities of Brier, Edmonds, Everett, Lynnwood, Mill Creek, Mountlake Terrace, Mukilteo and Woodway. In 2012, the Snohomish County subarea had an estimated population of 419,394 residents, accounting for 58.0% of the Snohomish County population.

North King County

The North King County subarea includes the cities of Seattle, Shoreline and Lake Forest Park. In 2012 the North King subarea had an estimated population of 680,054 residents, accounting for 34.7% of King County's population.

South King County

The South King County subarea includes the cities of Algona, Auburn, Burien, Des Moines, Federal Way, Kent, Normandy Park, Pacific, SeaTac and Tukwila. In 2012, the South King subarea had an estimated population of 502,656 residents, accounting for 25.7% of King County's population.

East King County

The East King County subarea includes the cities of Beaux Arts, Bellevue, Bothell, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kirkland, Medina, Mercer Island, Newcastle, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, Woodinville and Yarrow Point. In 2012, the East King subarea had an estimated population of 509,116 residents, accounting for 26.0% of King County's population.

The combined three King County subareas account for 86.4% of the total King County population.

Pierce County

The Pierce County subarea includes the cities of Bonney Lake, DuPont, Edgewood, Fife, Fircrest, Lakewood, Milton, Orting, Puyallup, Ruston, Steilacoom, Sumner, Tacoma and University Place. In 2012 the Pierce County subarea had an estimated population of 670,520 residents, accounting for 83% of the Pierce County population.