

**SOUND TRANSIT  
STAFF REPORT**

**RESOLUTION NO. R2006-03**

**2006 Service Implementation Plan**

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Action:</b>	<b>Staff Contact:</b>	<b>Phone:</b>
Finance Committee	1/19/06	Discussion	Martin Minkoff, Director Transportation Services <b>Mike Bergman, Program Manager, Service Planning &amp; Development</b>	(206) 398-5111
Executive Committee	2/2/06	Discussion/Possible Action to Recommend Board Approval		(206) 398-5358
Finance Committee	2/2/06	Discussion/Possible Action to Recommend Board Approval		
Board	2/9/06	Discussion/Possible Action		

<b>Contract/Agreement Type:</b>	✓	<b>Requested Action:</b>	✓
Competitive Procurement		Execute New Contract/Agreement	
Sole Source		Amend Existing Contract/Agreement	
Agreement with Other Jurisdiction(s)		Budget Amendment	

**PROJECT NAME**

2006 Service Implementation Plan

**PROPOSED ACTION**

Authorizes the Chief Executive Officer to implement proposed changes included in the 2006 Service Implementation Plan and to use the preliminary 2007-2011 service changes included in the plan for planning and forecasting purposes.

**KEY FEATURES of PROPOSED ACTION**

- The recommended Service Implementation Plan (SIP) includes Sound Transit service changes proposed for 2006, together with preliminary service plans for 2007 through 2011. Board approval of the draft SIP authorizes the implementation of the proposed 2006 changes only. Preliminary service plans for 2007 through 2011 would be approved in-principle only, for planning purposes.
- Changes proposed for ST Express bus service in 2006 would delete two routes, revise routing on two routes, extend two routes, and increase service levels on four routes. Total bus system platform hours would increase from 553,500 in 2005 to 569,779 in 2006, an increase of 2.9%.
- No changes are proposed for Sounder commuter rail and Tacoma Link light rail services during 2006.
- Proposed service changes are consistent with ridership projections and subarea equity and are coordinated with the development of Sound Transit's capital projects.

**BUDGET IMPACT SUMMARY**

Current Project Phase: Operations  
 Projected Completion Date: N/A

<b>Action Outside of Adopted Budget:</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>Comments on Checked Items</b>
This Project		
This Phase		
This Task		
Budget Amendment Required		

<b>Key Financial Indicators:</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>Comments on Checked Items</b>
Contingency Funds Required	✓	A transfer of contingency funds to purchased transportation would be necessary to fund the 2006 service agreements. Contingency is sufficient to fund this additional need.
Funding required from other parties (other than what is in financial plan)		

Not checked = action is assumed in current Board-adopted budget. No budget action or adjustment to financial plan required.

**BUDGET and FINANCIAL PLAN DISCUSSION**

The 2006 Service Implementation Plan was developed in coordination with the 2006 Transit Operations Budget and the Draft 2006 Financial Plan. As currently configured, the SIP is affordable through the planning horizon of 2011. However, there are challenges ahead to ensure sustainability in the out years. Approaches to addressing these challenges will be developed with the Board later this year and as part of the 2007 SIP process. Aside from the changes to the ST Express bus operations budget discussed below, there are no amendments necessary to ensure that the SIP, budget, and financial plan are synchronized.

The Adopted 2006 Budget included a provisional amount of \$55,114,992 for purchased transportation in the ST Express transit operations budget, as well as a contingency amount of \$2,965,575. After negotiations with the three transit partners, the actual purchased transportation amount in the ST Express budget is expected to be \$56,380,720, an increase of \$1,265,728 over the proposed budget amount.

The purchased transportation portion of the budget had been left unchanged from the Proposed 2006 Budget, which was put together during the summer prior to the large run-up of fuel prices due to various environmental and macroeconomic factors. Though prices have stabilized in recent weeks, fuel cost increases will cause an increase to the budget of approximately \$1.1 million. Other factors have led to cost increases of an additional \$200,000.

The budgeted contingency is sufficient to cover this increase in costs. After administratively transferring contingency to purchased transportation, the remaining contingency in the ST Express transit operations budget would be \$1,699,847.

## BUDGET TABLE

### Summary for Board Action

#### Action Item: Adoption of 2006 Service Implementation Plan (SIP) (\$000's)

	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
Service Mode	Adopted 2006 Budget	Financial Plan	Service Implementation Plan	Difference
1 Sounder Commuter Rail	\$26,297	\$26,297	\$26,297	\$0
2 Tacoma Link Light Rail	3,469	3,469	3,469	0
3 ST Express Bus	62,747	64,013	64,013	(1,266)
4 Total Transit Operations Before Contingency and Depreciation	\$92,513	\$93,779	\$93,779	(\$1,266)

#### Budget Shortfall

	Level	Shortfall	Potential Source	Funding Source
9	ST Express Bus	(1,266)	2,966	Contingency

#### Notes

- (A) 2006 budget before contingency and depreciation, adopted as amended by the Board in Resolution R2005-26, on 12/8/2005.

## M/W/DBE – SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

No applicable to this action.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND FOR PROPOSED ACTION

Each year, the Transportation Services Department develops a draft Service Implementation Plan (SIP) for Board consideration. Covering ST Express bus, Sounder commuter rail, and Link light rail services, the draft 2006 SIP includes service changes recommended for implementation during 2006, together with preliminary service changes for 2007 through 2011. Board approval of the SIP authorizes the implementation of the 2006 service changes, but adopts the 2007-2011 proposals for planning purposes only.

### *Proposed 2006 Service Changes*

- **Route 510 Everett-Seattle:** Improve weekday midday and Saturday daytime service from hourly to every 30 minutes;
- **Route 530 Everett-Bellevue:** Delete this route in its entirety due to low productivity;
- **Route 532 Everett-Bellevue:** Add weekday morning peak trips from Bellevue to Everett and weekday afternoon peak trips from Everett to Bellevue; add “shoulder” weekday morning trips from Everett to Bellevue and “shoulder” weekday afternoon trips from Bellevue to Everett;
- **Route 535 Lynnwood-Bellevue:** Improve weekday midday service from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes;

- **Route 554 Issaquah-Seattle:** Delete bus stops at Richards Road/I-90 and replace with stops at new Eastgate Freeway Station (142<sup>nd</sup> Ave SE/I-90); revise routing to serve downtown Issaquah; extend weekend service to Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride; and improve Sunday daytime service from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes;
- **Route 555/556 Issaquah-Northgate:** Extend from Issaquah Park-and-Ride to Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride via I-90;
- **Route 564 Overlake-Auburn:** Extend from Auburn Station to South Hill Mall Transit Center with intermediate stops at Sumner Station and South Hill Park-and-Ride; add midday service operating every 60 minutes by converting alternate Route 565 trips to Route 564 trips;
- **Route 565 Overlake-Federal Way:** Convert alternate midday trips to Route 564 trips;
- **Route 582 Bonney Lake-Tacoma:** Delete service during off-peak times (weekday midday, evening and weekend); revise routing in downtown Tacoma to serve employment destinations near Tacoma Avenue;
- **Route 585 Lakewood-Auburn:** Delete this route in its entirety due to low productivity;
- **Route 586 Tacoma-University District:** Add three new morning trips from Tacoma to the University District and five new afternoon trips from the University District to Tacoma; operate consistent peak period schedule all year, with no summertime service reductions.

With these changes, total bus system platform hours would increase from 553,500 in 2005 to 569,779 in 2006, an increase of 2.9%. No service changes are proposed for Tacoma Link light rail or Sounder commuter rail during 2006.

The bus service changes proposed for 2006 were developed using data from a systemwide Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA), together with evaluation criteria from Sound Transit's Board-adopted Service Standards and Performance Measures. In general, bus routes with a history of continuous low performance are proposed for deletion or restructuring, while added service is proposed for routes with strong performance and positive growth trends. Other proposed service changes support new transit capital facilities scheduled to be completed during 2006, including the Federal Way Transit Center, the Eastgate Freeway Station and direct access ramps, and the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride.

#### *Bus Service Cost Submittals*

The draft 2006 SIP was released on October 3, 2005, with Sound Transit's transit agency partners submitting their initial cost estimates for 2006 bus service between October 31 and November 15. These initial submittals resulted in a gap of approximately \$2.4 million in the 2006 ST Express purchased transportation budget. As a result, staff delayed Board action on the SIP to ensure that it was affordable and to evaluate the cost submittals in detail and negotiate with the partners. This evaluation and negotiation was successful in identifying cost reductions. Some examples of cost reductions to Sound Transit include a reevaluation of the methodology for allocating shared costs and overhead, corrections of estimates of revenue hours, and a reduction in fuel cost assumptions for one partner to make the assumptions consistent across all three partners. With the reductions, the budget gap was closed to

approximately \$1.3 million. The remaining gap is composed primarily of increases in fuel costs. Together with the reduced costs, staff has determined that the proposed SIP service changes can be implemented by using a portion of the bus contingency funds set aside in each subarea to cover the gap. Projected service hours and cost estimates in the draft SIP would be revised in the final version to reflect the latest cost information and used to update the agency's Long-Range Financial Plan.

#### *Public Outreach*

During the public outreach process on the draft SIP, changes proposed for the Pierce subarea generated the most interest, with a majority of respondents (57%) opposing the proposed reduction of service on Route 582 Bonney Lake-Tacoma. However, respondents were more equally divided on the proposal to delete Route 585 Lakewood-Auburn (47% in favor, 53% opposed). Operational savings from these changes would be used to increase service on the Tacoma-University District Express (586), a popular route with growing ridership, and to extend Route 564 from Auburn to South Hill, providing replacement service for a portion of the deleted Route 585. In total, the changes are expected to increase service productivity in the Pierce subarea significantly and make more efficient use of the existing bus fleet and service hours. In other areas of the Sound Transit district, the majority of respondents supported the proposed SIP service changes. Additional information on the public outreach process is included in the "Public Involvement" section.

#### *Preliminary Plans for 2007-2011*

As a planning tool, the draft 2006 SIP includes preliminary service plans and estimated operations and maintenance costs for 2007 through 2011. Two major park-and-ride projects will be completed during 2007 and 2008 that are expected to generate new riders - Lakewood Station in Pierce County, and South Everett Park-and-Ride in Snohomish County. Additional bus service capacity will be needed to maximize the benefits of these projects and avoid passenger overload. The Snohomish subarea can support the increased service hours needed for the South Everett project. The draft SIP also assumed a large increase in Pierce subarea bus service associated with the opening of Lakewood Station in late 2007. To provide a balanced SIP, staff has adjusted planned service levels slightly to ensure the plan is affordable and retains adequate contingency. Staff believes that the Pierce subarea can sustain the increased bus service, but recommends that a further refinement of appropriate service levels be conducted during the 2007 SIP process. Staff is also recommending that a review and updating of the Sound Transit Service Standards be performed and used to evaluate route productivity and other key performance attributes. This will enable continued improvement of system efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

#### *Bus Fleet and Maintenance Base Capacity*

The draft SIP includes a proposal to acquire approximately 12 new buses for delivery in late 2007 and early 2008. These buses are needed to provide increased service at the new South Everett Park-and-Ride and to replace buses that are currently leased from King County Metro. In addition, there is a need to replace 27 buses in the Pierce subarea in the 2007-2008 timeframe. Staff is currently having discussions with the transit agencies on whether they are able to accommodate these buses within their existing operating bases. Staff will be developing potential options for ensuring adequate base capacity, vehicle seating capacity, and fleet size needed to support SIP service levels in the 2007-2011 timeframe and will return to the Board for further discussion of these issues during 2006.

## Prior Board/Committee Actions on this Project and Relevant Board Policies

Motion or Resolution Number	Summary of Action	Date of Action
R2004-15	Approval of the 2005 Service Implementation Plan	2/22/05

### **CONSEQUENCES of DELAY**

Contractual requirements with the transit agency partners require that service decisions for the June 2006 service change be finalized no later than February 10, 2006. If final Board action is delayed beyond this date, all 2006 service changes would take place in September 2006, the final designated service change of the year.

### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Public outreach focused on the proposed ST Express bus service changes in the draft SIP. A key element in this outreach was the Regional Transit News tabloid for October 2005, which described the proposed bus service changes and included a mail-back survey questionnaire. The Regional Transit News was posted on Sound Transit's web site and distributed directly to customers at bus stops, park-and-ride lots, transit centers, and on-board buses. Three public open houses were conducted during October in Bellevue, Tacoma, and Everett. A public hearing on the draft SIP proposals was held on November 17, 2005 at Union Station in Seattle.

### **TITLE VI IMPACTS**

Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and applicable state and local laws, no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in any program or activity performed by Sound Transit. As part of the draft 2006 SIP, an assessment was conducted of potential impacts to minority communities and populations with the proposed 2006 ST Express bus service changes. The assessment concluded that proposed changes to Routes 554, 565, 582, and 585 may potentially impact minority populations living in the census tracts served by these routes, but that other transit alternatives are available as mitigation. Proposed changes to Routes 510, 530, 532, 535, 555, 556, and 586 would have either no or a positive impact on minority transit riders.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

Not applicable for this action.

### **LEGAL REVIEW**

JW 1/25/06