

Resolution No. R2023-24

Authorizing the phased opening of the East Link Extension via the East Link Starter Line (2 Line from Redmond Technology Station to South Bellevue Station)

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
System Expansion Committee Board	8/10/2022 8/24/2022	Recommend to Board Final action	Moises Gutierrez, Chief System Quality Officer Eric Beckman, PSO Executive Director Jon Lebo, Executive Project Director

Proposed action

Authorizes the chief executive officer to implement the phased opening of the East Link Extension via the East Link Starter Line using funds authorized in the approved budget for the East Link Extension, inclusive of \$6 million authorized by Resolution No. R2023-06.

Key features summary

- The Board authorized up to \$6 million of the East Link Extension project budget to complete the work necessary to develop the option to open a portion of the East Link Extension from South Bellevue to Redmond Technology Stations (Resolution No. R2023-06).
- This action would authorize the East Link Starter Line as a phased opening of the East Link Extension to begin passenger service in Spring 2024. This action authorizes expenditure of any of the unspent \$6 million authorized in Resolution No. R2023-06 and an amount up to \$43 million from the existing East Link Extension \$3.68 billion budget (adopted via Resolution No. 2015-04) to fund the activities necessary to implement the phased East Link Starter Line opening in Spring 2024.
- At present, the start-up cost forecast for the East Link Extension, inclusive of the East Link Starter Line, is within the available remaining project budget. Start-up costs are closely monitored, including substantially increased labor costs, impacted by the macroeconomic environment.
- Of the \$43 million authorized by this action, \$32 million was already planned to be spent to open the East Link Starter Line. The difference (\$11 million) puts pressure on the project budget's estimate at completion. These estimated expenditures are based on our current assumptions, including re-balancing of start-up costs to each Link project currently under construction based on updated schedules. The cost to operate and maintain the East Link Starter Line in 2024 is estimated to be \$34 million, which will be included in the proposed 2024 agency operating budget presented to the Board for approval during the budget adoption process later this Fall.
- Schedule and budget tracking for East Link Starter Line will be a component of the full East Link Extension project.
- Staff will return to the Board to approve East Link Starter Line service levels in the 2024 Service Plan. The 2024 Service Plan is currently in development and is anticipated for Board action in October 2023.

Background

In August 2022, the Sound Transit Board System Expansion Committee received a briefing on project delays to the East Link, Downtown Redmond Link, Lynnwood Link, and Federal Way Link Extensions.

East Link Extension challenges include construction quality and durability concerns about plinths, the raised concrete structures that support the tracks on the I-90 segment (except for the floating bridge). The contractor's work to repair the plinths supporting the tracks led to the identification of further challenges including issues with mortar pad and rebar placements and track fasteners. The contractor is re-casting the plinths to ensure they resolve the issues and assure the long-term durability, reliability, and safety of the extension.

In light of the schedule and service impacts to the full East Link Extension due to the issues with the track plinths on the I-90 segment, Board members asked staff to analyze whether the eastern portion of the East Link Extension from the South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station could be opened to align with transit service changes that would result in minimal change to any other extension openings, particularly Lynnwood Link Extension.

In January 2023, the Board approved Resolution No. R2023-06 that authorized the expenditure of up to \$6 million to develop the option to open a portion of the East Link Extension. If this action is approved, staff will include service for the East Link Starter line in the 2024 Service Plan which will be brought to the Board in Fall 2023 (anticipated in October).

Fiscal information

Budget exists within the \$3.68 billion East Link Extension project budget to fund up to \$43 million to implement this East Link Starter Line segment.

The cost to operate and maintain the East Link Starter Line in 2024 after opening is estimated to be \$34 million, which will be included in the proposed 2024 agency operating budget presented to the Board for approval during the budget adoption process later this Fall.

Disadvantaged and small business participation

Not applicable to this action.

Public involvement

A public comment period on the service proposal is part of the 2024 Service Plan development process.

Time constraints

If the Board decides to approve the East Link Starter Line at a later date, and decides that the line should open before Lynnwood Link, then the East Link Starter Line pre-revenue service and potentially revenue service may be delayed such that the East Link Starter Line and Lynnwood Link opening dates are sufficiently close that the work required would likely exceed the staff and consultant capacity to timely complete both projects.

Prior Board/Committee actions

Resolution No. R2023-06: Authorizing the expenditure of up to \$6 million from the East Link project budget, to be funded by the East King subarea, to complete the work necessary to develop the option to open a portion of the East Link Extension from South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station (East Link Starter Line).

Environmental review – KH 7/25/23

Legal review – DLB 08/09/2023



Resolution No. R2023-24

A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the phased opening of the East Link Extension via the East Link Starter Line using funds authorized from the agency budget for the East Link Extension, inclusive of \$6 million authorized by Resolution No. R2023-06.

WHEREAS, the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, commonly known as Sound Transit, was formed under chapters 81.104 and 81.112 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) for the Pierce, King, and Snohomish Counties region by action of their respective county councils pursuant to RCW 81.112.030; and

WHEREAS, Sound Transit is authorized to plan, construct, and permanently operate a high-capacity system of transportation infrastructure and services to meet regional public transportation needs in the Central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, in general elections held within the Sound Transit district on November 5, 1996, November 4, 2008, and November 8, 2016, voters approved local funding to implement a regional high-capacity transportation system for the Central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, in April 2015, the Board adopted Resolution No. R2015-04 to establish a baseline budget for the East Link Extension and a baseline schedule of June 2023; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of numerous factors including a concrete strike and COVID-19 delayed construction, including the East Link, Downtown Redmond Link, Lynnwood Link, and Federal Way Link Extensions; and

WHEREAS, the East Link Extension experienced construction impacts including construction quality and durability concerns about plinths, the raised concrete structures that support the tracks on the I-90 segment (except for the floating bridge), and issues with mortar pads and rebar placements and track fasteners; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the schedule delays and service impacts to East Link and to Lynnwood Link Extensions, the Board adopted Resolution No. R2023-06 to authorize the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$6 million from the East Link project budget (funded by the East King Subarea) to develop an option to open a portion of the East Link Extension from South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station (East Link Starter Line) without delaying the Lynnwood, Federal Way or Redmond Link Extension openings; and

WHEREAS, assuming sufficient additional resources are available if necessary to address unexpected contingencies, an option was developed in which the East Link Starter Line could be completed and tested in late 2023, and opened in Spring 2024 without delaying the Lynnwood, Federal Way or Downtown Redmond Link Extensions; and

WHEREAS, the East Link Extension scope and project budget includes budget for startup and opening expenditures and a portion of that budget will be used for the expenditures associated with this phased opening of the East Link Starter Line; and

WHEREAS, Board approval is needed to authorize the use of an expected amount up to \$43 million from the adopted East Link Extension \$3.68 billion budget to complete a phased opening of the East Link Starter Line; and

WHEREAS, operation and maintenance of the East Link Starter Line is estimated to cost approximately \$34 million in 2024, which will be included in the 2024 annual operating budget for Board approval; and

WHEREAS, East Link Starter Line will not be impacted by construction activities such as the Washington State Department of Transportation's Revive I-5 work; and

WHEREAS, the number of anticipated weekday boarding from Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace, and Shoreline is 25,000 to 34,000 and 6,000 weekday boardings on the Eastlink Starter Line; and

WHEREAS, the level of ridership from Snohomish County and North King County must be sufficiently resourced.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that:

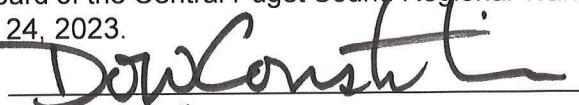
Section 1. The chief executive officer is authorized to expend up to \$43 million on all activities required for a phased opening of the East Link Extension from South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station (East Link Starter Line) to open in Spring 2024, and any unspent amount of \$6 million authorized for additional East Link Extension project costs authorized by Resolution No. R2023-06.

Section 2. In managing Link operational resources, including vehicles and required staff, Sound Transit will prioritize maximizing peak-hour 1 Line service to and from Lynnwood to the greatest degree possible. Sound Transit will allocate staff and other resources to maintain 1 Line service and will urgently expedite the implementation of all feasible options for increasing service and capacity on Lynnwood Link Extension.

Section 3. In authorizing East Link Starter Line service to move forward before the full opening of the 2 Line, Sound Transit will also advance interim impact mitigation plans of 2 Line delays on 1 Line operations. Until the full 2 Line opening, Sound Transit will, to the greatest extent feasible, provide sufficient additional bus services to meet rider demand. Mitigation will include deferring components of the ST Express 2024 service plan associated with opening of Lynnwood Link, and instead focus those resources on providing additional passenger service and capacity in the corridor. Implementation of mitigation measures must account for impacts of Washington State Department of Transportation Revive I-5 construction work on bus operations and must serve the largest ridership base possible.

Section 4. Sound Transit will utilize internal or contracted resources to provide sufficient in-person customer support at stations and times when inadequate Link capacity may result in full trains, waits, overcrowding or confusion. On-site assistance, at a minimum, will include guiding customers safely and efficiently to bus alternatives. Given fleet and capacity challenges, Sound Transit will also consider mitigation through interim transportation management strategies such as temporary seating reconfigurations.

ADOPTED by not less than a two-thirds vote of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on August 24, 2023.


Dow Constantine
Board Chair

Attest:


Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator