

Link Light Rail

FACT SHEET | MARCH 2009



Link light rail corridor

Sound Transit's Link light rail line is a critical element of this region's long-term transportation network that keeps people and goods moving through corridors where road expansion is difficult or very costly.

In 2009 Sound Transit opens the Link light rail line from downtown Seattle to Sea-Tac Airport. By 2020, this line and an extension to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington will carry 100,000 riders each day. The first 15.6-mile segment runs from the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel to Tukwila and Sea-Tac International Airport. This line also serves Seattle's SODO industrial area and the Beacon Hill and Rainier Valley neighborhoods.

The line to the University of Washington is under construction and scheduled to open in 2016. In 2008, voters approved 36 miles of north, east and south extensions scheduled to open between 2020 and 2023.

Fast, frequent, reliable

Sound Transit's Link light rail will offer two-way, rapid service 20 hours each day, running frequently throughout the day. Trains will leave every seven and-a-half minutes during peak periods, and every 10 to 15 minutes during midday and evening hours.

The light rail trains operate in their own right of way and will serve some of the region's largest population and employment centers. Link provides a 30-minute ride between Tukwila and downtown Seattle no matter what the weather is like.

Each car can comfortably carry about 200 riders including those standing. Service will begin with two-car trains, and the station platforms are designed to accommodate longer trains as needed.

University Link

University Link extends light rail from Westlake Station in downtown Seattle to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington. Construction on the 3.15-mile extension began March 2009, and is scheduled to have trains running by 2016.

continued on back





Light rail trains are being tested on the alignment from downtown Seattle to Tukwila in preparation for the start of service this July.

Tacoma Link

Tacoma Link is a 1.6-mile line running between the Tacoma Dome Station and downtown Tacoma. It opened for service in August 2003, and serves the University of Washington's Tacoma campus, the Washington State History Museum, the Museum of Glass, the Convention Center, downtown offices and the Broadway Theater District.

At the Tacoma Dome Station, the line connects to a major regional transportation hub that includes Sounder commuter train service and local and regional buses operated by Sound Transit and Pierce Transit. Tacoma Link's five stations are served by modern 66-foot-long air-conditioned vehicles. Tacoma Link rides are free of charge, and the line has carried more than 3.5 million riders since opening.

Expanding Link East, South and North

In 2008, voters approved the expansion of light rail to Lynwood to the north, Overlake to the east and Redondo/Star Lake to the south. The expansion adds 36 miles of new light rail serving 19 or more new stations.

The extension east from downtown Seattle across Interstate 90 will serve Mercer Island, Bellevue and Redmond's Overlake Transit Center. Several route alternatives are currently being considered. A final decision by the Sound Transit Board on the project will be made after the final Environmental Impact Statement is complete in 2010.

The extensions north and south are still in the early stages of planning, and are scheduled to open in 2023. The light rail extension north from the University of Washington to the University District, Roosevelt, Northgate, Jackson Park, Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace and Lynnwood is 12.5-miles long. Expanding southward, the seven-mile light rail extension from the airport to Highline Community College and the Redondo/Star Lake area of Federal Way is seven miles long.

Get involved

Sound Transit plans, builds and operates regional transit systems and services to improve mobility for Central Puget Sound. To request information in alternative formats call 1-800-201-4900 / TTY Relay: 711 or e-mail accessibility@soundtransit.org.

If you would like to be added to the agency's mailing list to receive notices of Sound Transit activities in your community, write us at Union Station, 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle WA 98104-2826, call 206-398-5000, e-mail us at main@soundtransit.org, or visit our Web site, www.soundtransit.org/subscribe, to sign up for e-mail alerts.

