

# **SOUTH COUNTY AREA TRANSPORTATION BOARD (SCATBd)**

October 16, 2012

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **Members**

Mayor Dave Hill	City of Algona (Chair)
Mayor Pete Lewis	City of Auburn (Vice Chair)
Kelly McGourty	PSRC
Councilmember Wayne Snoey	City of Covington
Councilmember Jeanne Burbidge	City of Federal Way
Emiko Atherton	King County Council (Alternate)
Commissioner Don Meyer	Port of Tacoma
Charles Prestrud	WSDOT (Alternate)
Elizabeth Leavitt	Port of Seattle
Kelly Hayden	Pierce Transit
Councilmember Marcie Palmer	City of Renton
Councilmember Bart Taylor	City of Milton
Councilmember Victoria Laise Jonas	City of Maple Valley (Alternate)
Brandon Carver	City of Des Moines (Alternate)
Chris Arkills	King County (Alternate)
Tom Gut	City of SeaTac (Alternate)
Councilmember Elizabeth Albertson	City of Kent

### **I. Open Meeting**

After the introductions, the September 18, 2012 SCATBd meeting summary was approved

### **II. Reports, Communications and Citizen Requests to Comment**

Jeannie Burbidge reported on the Transportation Improvement Board meeting, and said that because of low bids on current projects, there are additional funds available for grants; she urged city staffs to contact TIB staff to review options for funding opportunities.

Kelly McGourty reported that the PSRC policy boards will be briefed on the progress on Transportation 2040's priority project testing process at their next meetings. She also said that the PSRC has received its 2012 Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) allocations. She said the actual funding levels are higher than the estimates used for the initial programming of the funds, and an additional \$24 million is available for distribution to the contingency lists.

Mayor Hill reported that the subarea chairs and vice-chairs met on October 2 to discuss the potential extension of the subarea Agreements. Mayor Lewis said the group discussed the possibility of making "house cleaning" changes to the agreement without the need to do major Agreement revisions. Chris Arkills said the group also discussed an option to extend the agreement for one year and take that time to review the Agreements. Mayor Lewis said it was King County's desire to keep agreement similar for administrative purposes. Mayor

Hill noted that there were differences between how the subareas operated and said how SCATBd had reached out to different groups in the past two years to sit at table. The Board was informed about an upcoming November 7 between the subarea chairs and vice-chairs to discuss possible subarea Agreement extension language. Mayor Lewis asked that copies of the Agreement be sent out to the Board prior to the next meeting. Councilmember Snoey suggested an agenda item at next meeting to discuss and possibly voting on an Agreement extension in November or December.

Kelly Hayden discussed Pierce Transit's Proposition 1 ballot measure in the November election. Proposition 1 asks for a 3/10<sup>th</sup> of one percent increase in sales tax to restore lost service hours. Mr. Hayden said that Pierce Transit has reduced the service area boundaries from 414 to 292 square miles, resulting in a loss of \$8 million in sales tax revenues, and service levels have dropped from 622,000 hours to 418,000. If successful, the sales tax increase will allow Pierce Transit to increase current service by 23% or just around 100,000 service hours to their new service area. If the ballot measure is not successful, he said Pierce Transit will have to reduce service down to about 197,000 service hours within the next year and a half.

Mayor Lewis reported on the recent Suburban Cities Public Issues Committee meeting, where they received a King County budget presentation. They were told that King County does not have enough money to keep up its roads, and were briefed on the County's 5 tiered roads plan that will result in little or no general maintenance on local access streets. Mayor Lewis said that this was similar to the funding problems that all cities are facing. He said there is no money for ongoing preservation of their arterial system, and this was one of the reasons for having a SCATBd legislative agenda. The cities of Auburn and Algona have reduced the speed limits on some of their arterials because of deteriorating conditions. The City of Covington is considering a sales tax increase for road preservation projects, and the City of Kent has a property tax levy lid lift on the November ballot to pay off maintaining its parks and roads.

Commission Don Meyer asked if there was an inventory of street conditions at the local level. Mayor Lewis said that the Valley cities have information on the conditions of their arterials and information on the potential cost on maintaining these arterials at an acceptable level based on a their Pavement Condition Index. Commissioner Meyer said that it is important that city streets are able to allow the movement of freight from ports to the warehouses, and said that the Port of Tacoma would like to be an advocate for local arterial needs.

Mayor Hill asked for volunteers to serve on a Nominating Committee of next year's SCATBd Chair and Vice-Chair. Wayne Snoey, Marcie Palmer, and Jeannie Burbidge volunteered to be on Committee. They were asked to report back to the Board at the November meeting.

### **III. . Sound Transit Service Change Briefing – Mike Bergman, Sound Transit**

Mike Bergman briefed the Board on Sound Transit's (ST) service implementation plan in the south county area. He also reported starting next fall; ST is planning a new round trip Sounder service between Lakewood and Seattle. He said that ST was being careful in scheduling this new service because they are now starting to see operational constraints on the system. These constraints include the ability of Sounder station platforms to handle Sounder train cars, and the capacity of the single track system used by Sounder.

Mr. Bergman reported that Sound Transit Express bus ridership was growing but next year's budget allows for no increase in Express bus service hours. ST strategies to address this service issue include: 1) reducing low-ridership bus routes, 2) minimizing duplicative service routes, and 3) deferring bus retirements. Sound Transit will use the savings from these strategies to address overload issues and growing markets. Mr. Bergman highlighted some of the ST actions that will implement these strategies

- Delete low-ridership midday trips on Route 566
  - Use savings to add cross-lake trips & more Federal Way-Seattle service, Route 577
  - Savings would also be reinvested into the Route 545 in the SR 520 corridor, Route 550 in the I-90 corridor, and Route 577 in the I-5 south corridor.
- Create new Route 567 operating non-stop Kent to Bellevue/Overlake (+10m time savings, 15m during peak period)
  - Route 567 will meet with Sounder trains at Kent Station
- Minimizing service duplications between Route 560 and Metro Routes including RapidRide Line C.

Mr. Bergman said the key milestones in the upcoming months include:

- Oct. 12: Draft SIP posted on ST website; proposed changes announced in "Regional Transit News" (RTN)
- Oct. 12-Nov. 1: Public outreach including distribution of RTN; SIP posters; open houses; stakeholder briefings
- Nov. 1: SIP public hearing and Sound Transit Operations & Administration Committee briefing
- Nov. 1 - Nov. 9: Incorporate any changes from public outreach/O&A Committee briefing
- Dec. 6: Sound Transit Operations & Administration Committee action
- Dec. 20: Sound Transit Board action
- June 8, 2013 and Sept. 28, 2013: Service changes implemented

Mayor Hill asked if Sound Transit had considered adding additional cars instead of adding a new Sounder run. Mr. Bergman said that the maximum number of car per run was 7, and there was also a limiting factor associated with how many train cars a Sounder station

platform could accommodate. Mayor Hill also asked what the fare box recovery rate was for Sound Transit service. Mr. Bergman said it was about 30% for express bus and 25% for Sounder. Boardmembers noted that it was recently reported that the fare box recovery rate for south Sounder service was about 32%. He also said that the fare evasion was relatively small and noted that there were a large number of fare enforcement officers on ST transit service, especially on light rail.

Councilmember Palmer noted that noted that the City of Renton was paying into Sound Transit for the last 15 years and noted that Renton has only two ST bus routes. She said Renton was concerned about any reduction in bus services caused by ST's service implementation plan.

#### **IV. SCATBd 2013 Legislative Agenda**

The Board reviewed the draft 2013 SCATBd legislative message brochure and the priority project map and the Board and approved the printing of the brochure and map. Councilmember Burbidge said she appreciated the value of hard copies of the brochure and map, but also wanted an on-line link to the brochure and map for easy reference. Mr. Takamine also asked to include language mention transit in project map descriptions. The Board asked Mr. Takamine to work with Councilmember Snoey to adjust the working.

#### **A motion was made and seconded to set a \$1500 printing budget for the SCATBd 2013 Legislative Message Brochure and project map.**

#### **V. King County Metro Transit Service Change Briefing, David Hull, King County Metro**

Mr. Hull reported on Metro's service changes that occurred on September 29. He said these revisions included the opening of the new RapidRide C and D lines, five new routes, two re-numbered routes, 17 discontinued routes and changes to over 50 other routes. He also said the Ride Free Area in downtown Seattle ended on Sept 29 and passengers are now required to pay on entry for all trips in King County. He said the purpose of these service changes was to improve the efficiency and productivity of Metro's transit system.

Mr. Hull noted there are a few problems associated with the service changes and highlighted some of the issues associated with the new RapidRide C line serving West Seattle. He said the C Line was carrying about 500 more riders than was expected during the peak hours. This resulted in standing room only on some runs and having to bypass customers. Metro is adjusting the C Line service and it is getting better, but there are still some runs with standing room only. Mr. Hull noted that the other service changes in the Burien - Des Moines area were doing very well. The service changes in this area included splitting existing routes, improving the bus frequency between Burien and the Highline Community College, and improving the connections between SeaTac and the Westfield Shopping Center.

Mr. Hull said the Metro has about 10,000 reserve service hours and will be putting together a plan on how to address the remaining issues brought about by the service changes. He said that the service changes have brought about more productive transit service, but there are still some growing pains. Chris Arkills said that there are some problems in West Seattle area, and said that the West Seattle area population has grown by 22% and people are turning to transit to get to work. He said buses all over the county are packed and there are challenges ahead for Metro.

Councilmember Snoey asked if Metro has demographic information on existing transit riders. Mr. Hull said that surveys are the best to gather comprehensive demographic information, but it is expensive process. He said the last comprehensive transit ridership survey was done about 12 years ago. Mr. Hayden asked about security issues and problems with LINK service associated with the elimination of the ride-free-area. Mr. Hull said that studies done prior to the elimination of the ride-free-zone resulted in moving some routes out of the tunnel to surface streets, thereby limiting the service change impacts to LINK. Mr. Hull said that there were security concerns with the service changes and that Metro Transit Police was part of the service change strategy. He said the loss of the loss of ride-free-area did have an impact to social service agencies and their customers, but the implementation of a circulator bus system should help address that concern.

Councilmember Burbidge asked if an effort will be made to allow senior citizens to more conveniently obtain ORCA cards. Mr. Arkills said that Metro was interested in discussing possible partnerships with Senior Centers or City Halls to allow senior citizens easier access to ORCA cards, and said King County would appreciate working with local cities to make this happen. Ms. Atherton said that the County Council recently created committee to look at creating an easier pathway for low income residents to access transit service, as addressing social equity is part of Metro Transit’s strategic plan. She said that this committee work will be a 6 month effort and will be part of transit fare discussion.

**Other Attendees:**

Bill Peloza, City of Auburn (Alt)	Paul Takamine, King County DOT
Jim Seitz, City of Renton	Monica Whitman, SCA
Rachel Smith, Sound Transit	Cathy Mooney, City of Kent
Karen Waterman, Sound Transit	Mike Bergman, Sound Transit
Evette Mason, Port of Tacoma	Stephanie Rossi, PSRC
David Hull, King County Metro	Rick Perez, City of Federal Way