



October 2013 Seattle Transit Update:

EXPANDING RAIL AND HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT IN THE CITY

A high-quality transit system that knits together our neighborhoods with frequent and reliable service is an essential backbone to Seattle's future vision for growth and livability. Seattle is in various stages of planning and construction for several routes.

FIRST HILL STREETCAR

This 2.5-mile streetcar project, funded by the Sound Transit 2 measure, will open in 2014. Connecting Pioneer Square, the Chinatown/International District, Little Saigon, First Hill, and the Broadway business district, this line will have ten minute headways during peak travel times.

BROADWAY EXTENSION

The First Hill Streetcar project currently ends in a terminus at Denny and Broadway. Due to popular demand, an extension of the project to the northern end of Broadway was identified, serving the full business district. Completion could occur as early as 2016.

CENTER CITY CONNECTOR

The Center City Connector is one of four high-capacity transit routes identified in Seattle's Transit Master Plan (TMP), adopted in 2012. It connects the South Lake Union and First Hill streetcars. A locally preferred alternative will be selected in the first quarter of 2014, with construction anticipated in 2016-2018. With exclusive use of the right of way for the Connector (where streetcars and vehicles travel in separate lanes), daily ridership could be between 25,000-33,000 daily trips.



DOWNTOWN TO BALLARD

In partnership with Sound Transit, study of a Ballard to Downtown Seattle route began in late 2012. This route was also one of four high-capacity routes identified in the TMP, and it had the highest ridership potential of any corridor in the city, at 26,000 daily riders. Partnership with Sound Transit made sense because this is one of their Long Range Plan corridors as well; this study includes both light rail and rapid streetcar options.

MADISON STREET BUS RAPID TRANSIT

Madison Street is another high capacity transit route from the TMP. Unlike the other three, this route is not suitable for rail because of its steepness. The goal for this bus rapid transit project is to use bus lanes, level boarding, off-board fare payment, and other amenities that are a best practice for systems around the world. The current timeline is to achieve final design in 2016 and construction in 2017-2018.

UNIVERSITY DISTRICT TO SOUTH LAKE UNION

This corridor is also a high-capacity transit corridor identified in the TMP. The TMP recommends rail for this corridor, with an estimated 25,000 riders per day (even with a Link Light Rail corridor also being built from downtown to the University District), but also lists bus rapid transit as an option. Full analysis begins in late 2013, with final design in 2016, and potential construction in 2017-2018.

SOUND TRANSIT LONG RANGE PLANNING

Sound Transit has begun to update their Long Range Plan. The outreach and environmental review process for potential alignments for each corridor will occur in 2013-2014. The next phase of the regional high capacity transit system plan – the package that will be known as “ST3” – will occur in 2015-2016. Decision-makers will then agree on a package to be taken to voters as early as 2016. Downtown to Ballard, Ballard to the University District (and beyond), and downtown to West Seattle and Burien are all under consideration.

	SYSTEM PLAN (TRANSIT MASTER PLAN – 2012)	PROJECT PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT	PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING & ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW	FINAL DESIGN	CONSTRUCTION
First Hill Streetcar	2009–2010		2010	2011	2012–2014
Broadway Extension			2013–2014	2014–2015	2015–2016
Center City Connector		2013–2014	2014	2015	2016–2018
Ballard to Downtown		2013–2014			
Madison BRT		2013–2014	2014	2016	2017–2018
U-District to South Lake Union		2013–2014	2015	2016	2017–2018

Transit Master Plan Implementation Matrix

NEXT STEPS? The further along we get in the planning process, the easier it will be to identify and secure funding. Because of this, the City is aggressively moving forward on planning and design. We will also continue to leverage local partnerships, and look to our own budget resources to keep the momentum on these projects going.

RESOURCES: For more information on high capacity transit, see http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/transit_projects.htm. To read the Transit Master Plan online, go to <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/transitmasterplan.htm>.

QUESTIONS? Call or email Rebecca Deehr in the Office of Mayor Mike McGinn at rebecca.deehr@seattle.gov or 206.233.2662.