

# *Sound Transit's Response to COVID Pandemic*

*Elected Leaders Information Session*

*May 29, 2020*



# Operations changes

## Sound Transit Weekday Ridership COVID-19 March to April 2020



- ST Express down 80-85%
- Link down 87%
- Sounder down 90%



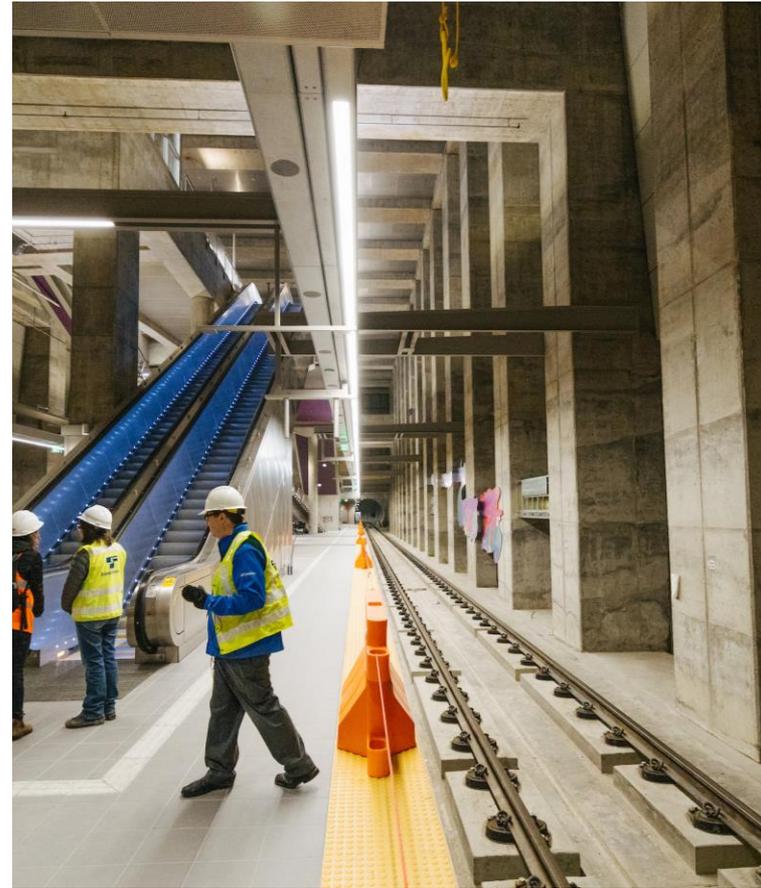
# Operations changes

- Suspended fares and reduced service on Link, Sounder, ST Express.
- Fares resume on Link/Sounder on June 1.
- New Recovery Fare option.
- ST Express fare-free until further notice.



# Construction changes

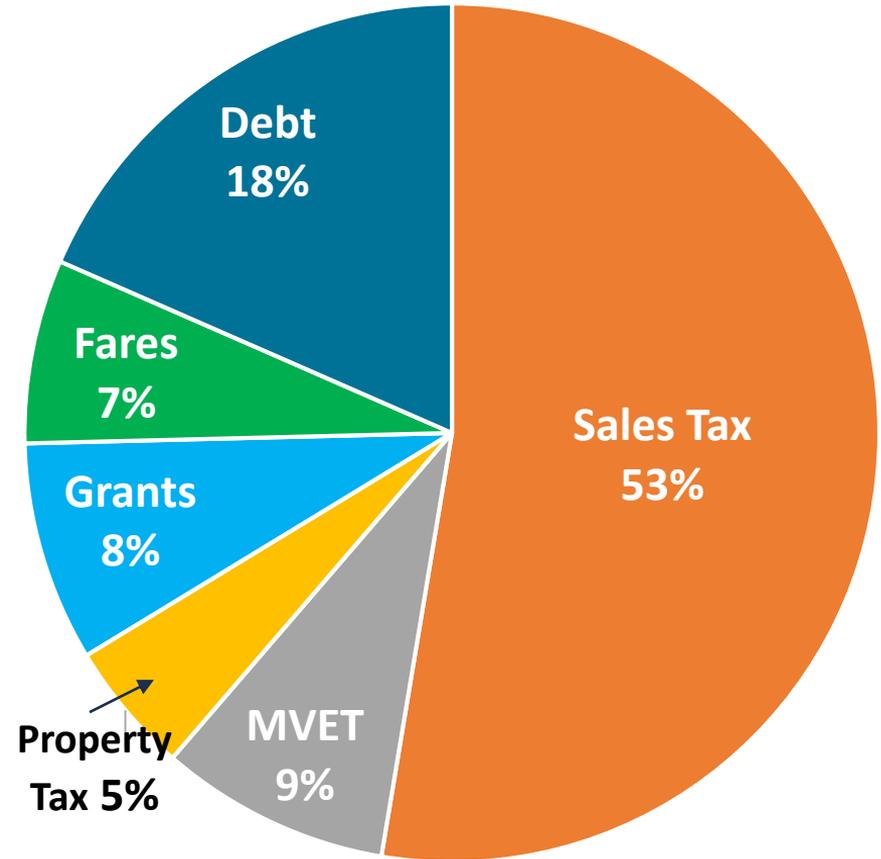
- Suspended 80% of construction in early April.
- Resumed most construction in May under strict safety protocols.



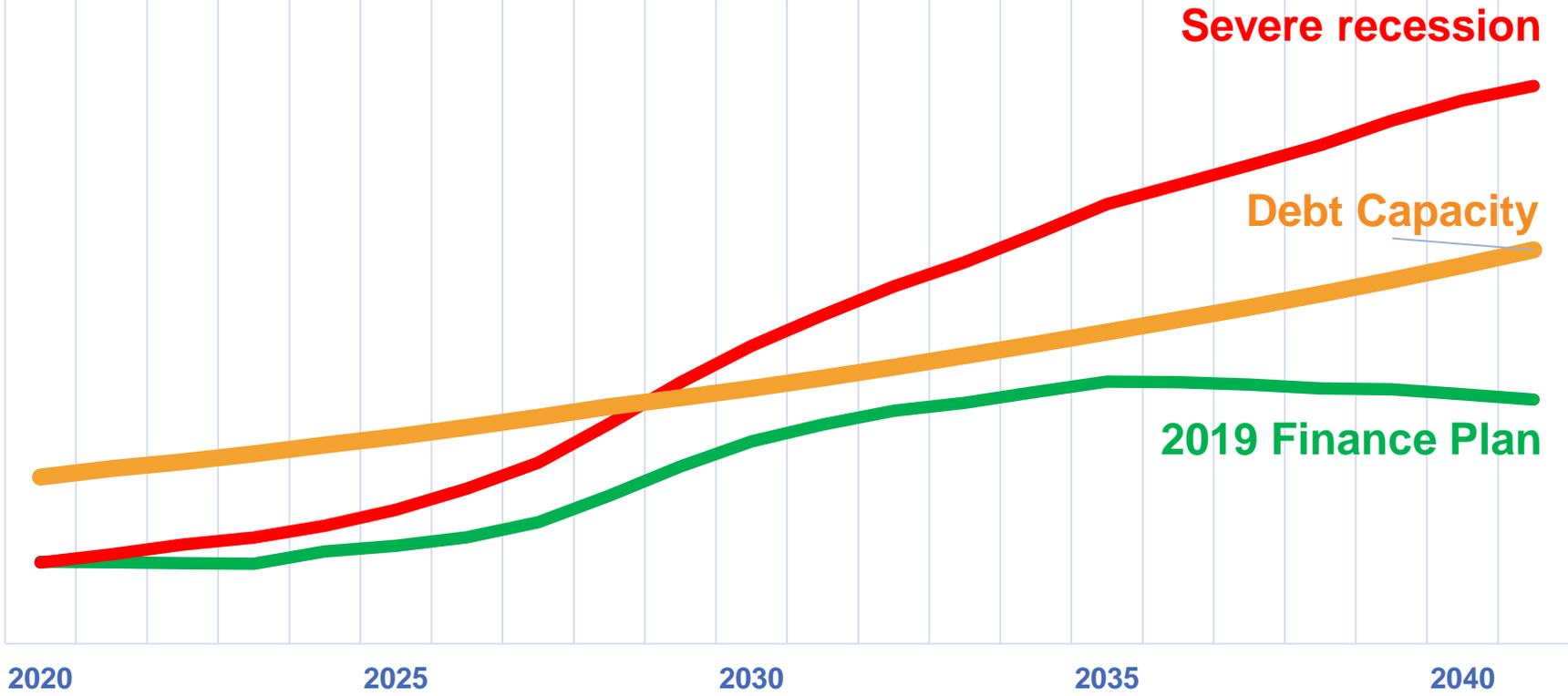
# Finance Plan Sources and Uses

- Includes capital, operations, maintenance, debt service etc.
- Tax revenues fund 66%.
- Debt funds 18%.
- Fares fund 7%.

**These sources are received on an ongoing basis and are all reduced by recession.**



# Recession threatens affordability



# *Near-term priorities*

*Maintain Board's flexibility and readiness for uncertain future*

## **Keep construction going safely**

- Light rail extensions: Northgate, East Link, Lynnwood, Federal Way, Downtown Redmond, Hilltop Tacoma.
- Operations & Maintenance Facility East.

# ***Near-term priorities***

## ***Flexibility and readiness for uncertain future***

### **Continue current phases of project work**

- Maintain readiness for variable revenue/grant scenarios.
- Slower, more incremental approach in some instances as longer-term realignment takes shape.

### **Wait to advance projects into final design or construction**

- Avoid over-commitment until Board priorities become clearer.

# *Board tools to manage affordability*

## *Tools established in ST3 plan documents*

- Delay project completion.
- Modify project scope (alignments/stations, etc).
- Suspend or cancel projects.
- Secure new grant funding or funding partners.
- Request a tax increase.

# Previous realignment categories

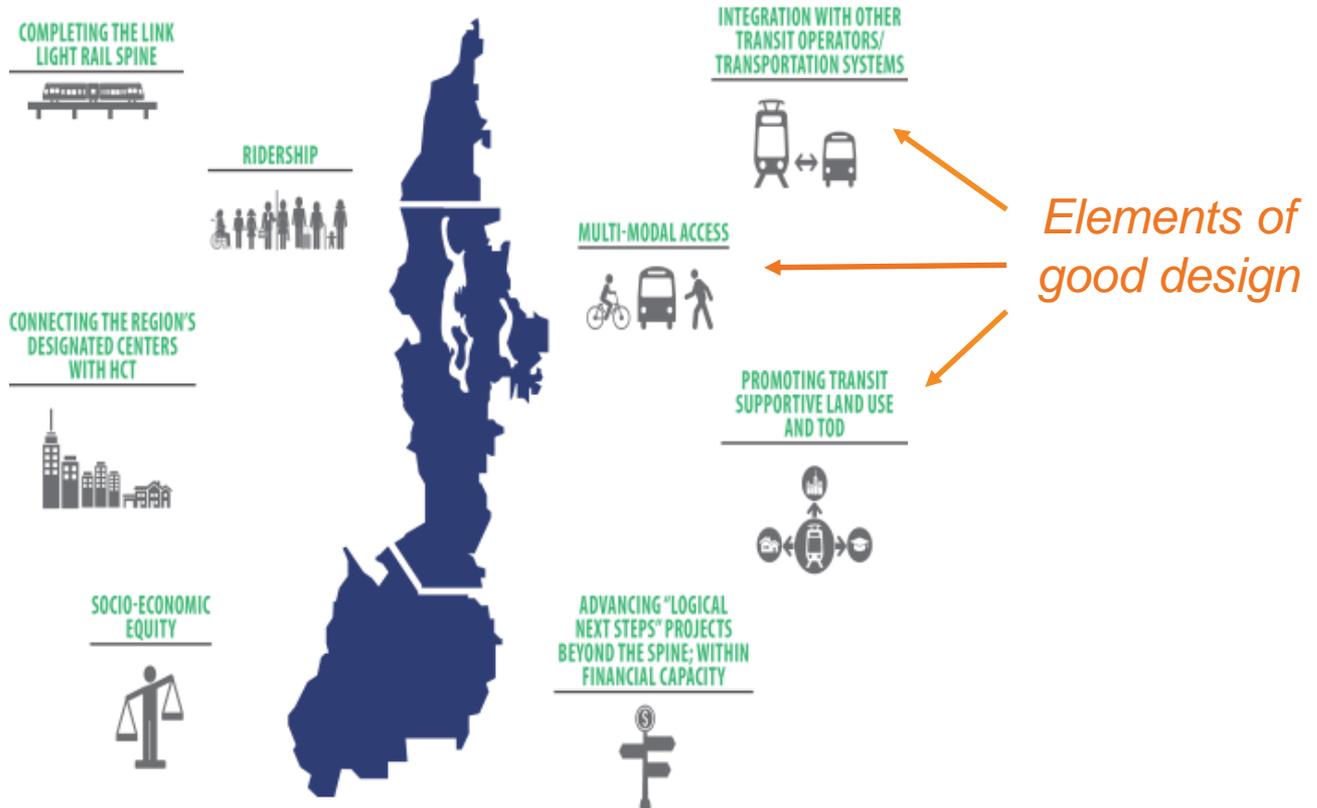
## 2009-2010 Recession

-  **Design & construct** as planned.
-  **Continue** with schedule and affordability risk.
-  Retain **limited funding** to develop future options.
-  **Suspend indefinitely and remove** from finance plan.
-  **Delete** project from program entirely.

# *Uncertain outlook for new revenues*

- Federal capital grants.
- Additional stimulus funding.
- State funding.
- New local taxes.

# ST Board's Core Priorities for ST3



# *Project level – core principles*

*Drawn from ST3 core priorities*

## *Does the project:*

- Help complete the regional Link light rail **spine**?
- Connect regional **centers**?
- Have good **ridership** potential?
- **Equitably** serve the region's population?
- **Advance logically** beyond the spine?

## *Project level – other considerations*

- Are other projects **dependent** on this project's completion?
- Can the project be built and opened in **increments**?
- What is the project's state of **readiness** to open?
- Is the project **necessary to operate** the expanded system?
- **How long** have voters been waiting for the project?
- Do affected communities have **other transit options**?

# *Board realignment schedule*

- **June 3**      Workshop (finances/tools).
- **Summer**    Direction on project paused pending realignment.
- **Fall**        Direction on projects to advance in 2021.

*Thank you.*



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