

SOUND TRANSIT

MOTION NO. M98-49

Light Rail Alignments options noted "for study only" in Motion M98-40 BACKGROUND AND COMMENTS

Meeting:	Date:	Type of Action:	Staff Contact:	Phone:
Executive Committee	6/19/98	Discussion	Paul Bay	689-4761
Special Executive Committee Meeting	6/25/98	Action	Valerie Rosenkrantz	689-3542
Sound Transit Board	7/23/98	Ratification		

ACTION:

Adopt a motion providing for one of the options noted "for study only" in Motion M98-40 to be confirmed as a promising route alternative to be included in the Central Link LRT Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and conceptual design in 1998.

BACKGROUND:

The Sound Transit Board approved the general alignment and technology for the central light rail system in May 1996. Financing for the system was approved by Puget Sound area voters on November 5, 1996. Central Link light rail represents 22 miles of the Sound Move regional transportation program connecting SeaTac airport through downtown Seattle to the University of Washington, and if funding is available, to Northgate with electric light rail. On May 14, 1998, the Sound Transit Board confirmed the most promising route alternatives and maintenance facility locations for study in the Draft EIS and during conceptual design.

In connection with adoption of Motion M98-40 on May 14, the Sound Transit Board identified two locations where recent proposals from the community for route alternatives had not yet had adequate time for engineering and environmental analysis to determine feasibility. These two locations were designated by the Board as options "for study only." Information from the environmental and engineering analysis was to be brought back to the Board within 30 to 60 days to allow the Board to determine whether these route alternatives should also be included in the DEIS.

RELEVANT BOARD POLICIES AND PREVIOUS ACTIONS TAKEN:

- ◆ Adoption of *Sound Move*, The Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan (May 31, 1996)
- ◆ Resolution No. 78-1 (April 9, 1998)
- ◆ Adoption of Implementation Guide (May 22, 1997)
- ◆ Adoption of First Moves (May 22, 1997)
- ◆ Adoption of Fiscal Year 1998 Budget (December 11, 1997)
- ◆ Adoption of Motion No. M98-40 (May 14, 1998)

KEY FEATURES:

Since May 14, further engineering and environmental analysis and community input has taken place and it is recommended that one of the “for study only” options be confirmed as a promising alternative to be included in the Draft EIS, and the other option be dropped from further consideration. The option “for study only,” described as a “North Beacon Hill/Massachusetts Avenue Tunnel” in Motion No. M98-40 is recommended for inclusion in the DEIS. It is recommended that the option “for study only” described as “Columbia City to MLK via Alaska – underground” in Motion No. M98-40 be dropped from further consideration.

Information is attached describing the results of engineering and environmental analysis leading to the recommendations.

FUNDING:

Funding for further study of these most promising alternatives is provided for in Fiscal Year 1998 budget, and consultant efforts previously approved with a civil design contract to the PSTC Team in February 1998 and an environmental contract to the Link EIS Team in February 1998.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could choose to include both “options for study only” in the DEIS; or could choose to include neither. If new information uncovers any other more promising alternative(s), there remains limited flexibility to address that option during the summer in the course of the environmental analysis.

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAY:

Agreement on the most promising alternatives for further study is essential for completing the EIS process, identifying the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and consequently obtaining a Record of Decision from the FTA to allow for federal grant funding for the Central Link Project. Delaying this activity would delay all subsequent major milestones on the project.

SOUND TRANSIT

MOTION NO. M98-49

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority providing for a previously designated “for study only” option to be included in the Central Link LRT Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and during conceptual design in 1998 as a promising route alternative.

Background:

Sound Transit is now implementing Link, a light rail transit system serving a central travel corridor from Northgate to SeaTac via downtown Seattle and the Rainier Valley. After consideration of environmental scoping comments and extensive public and agency input on alternative routes, the Sound Transit Board on May 14, 1998, by Motion No. M98-40, confirmed the most promising route alternatives for inclusion in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Motion No. M98-40 also identified two locations where recent proposals for a route alternative were still undergoing engineering and environmental analysis as “options for study only,” and provided for final determination by the Board within 30 to 60 days of whether those options would also be included in the DEIS. This motion confirms one of those two options, previously designated as “for study only,” as a promising route alternative to be included in the DEIS, and eliminates the other option from further consideration at this time.

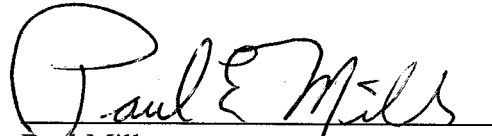
Motion:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that an option previously designated “for study only”, as outlined below, be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and conceptual design work in 1998 as a promising route alternative.

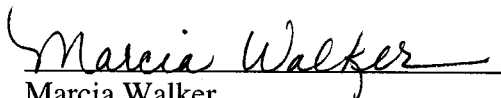
Segment C. Westlake Station to South McClellan Street.

Route C3: North Beacon Hill Tunnel/Massachusetts Street: This alignment has undergone engineering evaluation based on recent input from a Rainier Chamber workshop and Sound Transit staff investigations. It connects from the International District Station at-grade onto the E-3 Busway with an at-grade station at Royal Brougham Way. The route turns east onto Massachusetts Street, crosses Airport Way and I-5 either underground or on a structure, and tunnels under north Beacon Hill. It transitions onto an elevated structure with a station on the southwest side of I-90 and Rainier Avenue S. Turning south into the center (or onto the westside of Rainier Avenue S.), the route continues on an elevated structure where it transitions to one block west of Rainier Avenue S. approximately between 23rd Avenue S. and S. McClellan Street.

ADOPTED by the Executive Committee of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a special meeting thereof held on the 25th day of June, 1998.


Paul Miller
Committee Vice-Chair

ATTEST:


Marcia Walker
Board Administrator

Ratified by the Board of Directors of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on the 23rd day of July, 1998.