

SOUND TRANSIT

MOTION NO. M2009-44

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the chief executive officer to exercise a contract option with CH2M Hill to amend the East Corridor High Capacity Transit planning contract to provide engineering, environmental, and public outreach services in the amount of \$31,082,942, with a 4% contingency of \$1,389,972 for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$49,972,055.

Background:

In November 2008, voters approved funding for the East Link project to provide light rail service between Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, and the Overlake Transit Center in Redmond. The terminus of the project is the Overlake Transit Center. Environmental review has also been prepared for the future extension of the line from the Overlake Transit Center to downtown Redmond.

In May 2006, the Finance Committee authorized the chief executive officer to execute a contract with CH2M Hill to provide engineering, environmental, and public outreach services for the Phase II East Corridor High Capacity Transit planning. Subsequently, staff initiated NEPA/SEPA project-level environmental review, route, station, and maintenance facility screening, and project-level public involvement in the corridor. In July 2006 following the review of the planning and other studies described above, the Board identified light rail as the preferred High Capacity Transportation (HCT) mode in the Seattle to Redmond via I-90 corridor. Light rail provides the highest level of ridership and the shortest travel time of all the HCT modes evaluated in the corridor and provides a higher level of system integration, because East Link light rail will be interlined with northbound Central Link light rail in downtown Seattle.

On December 14, 2006, the Board identified the light rail routes, stations, and maintenance facility alternatives to study in detail in the EIS. In February 2007, the Board authorized the chief executive officer to execute a contract option with CH2M Hill for the completion of conceptual engineering and preparation of the East Link Draft EIS.

Sound Transit is evaluating alternative project routes, stations, and light rail maintenance facility locations in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Before committing federal funds to the East Link project, the FTA is required to undertake environmental review in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As the public agency proposing the East Link project, Sound Transit is required to comply with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The FTA, as the federal lead agency under NEPA, and Sound Transit, as the state lead agency under SEPA, have determined that alternative routes and station locations in the project area may have probable significant adverse environmental impacts. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is also a SEPA co-lead agency. To satisfy both NEPA and SEPA requirements, the agencies are preparing a combined NEPA/SEPA EIS for the project.

Sound Transit, FTA, and WSDOT published a Draft EIS for the project on December 12, 2008. The 75-day comment period closed on February 25, 2009. To ensure adequate public and agency input, the comment period included five informational open house events. Public hearings were held at each open house event.

On January 15, 2009, the Board held a workshop to review the Draft EIS analysis of the potential light rail route options in terms of the potential environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and project benefits. Staff briefed the Board on March 26, 2009, summarizing the Draft EIS public and agency comments. On April 23, 2009 and May 14, 2009, staff responded to further questions from the Board regarding the light rail alternatives. The Board also received public testimony at its March and April meetings and identified the preferred alternative for the final East Link EIS on May 14, 2009.


Motion:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the chief executive officer is authorized to exercise a contract option with CH2M Hill to amend the East Corridor High Capacity Transit planning contract to provide engineering, environmental, and public outreach services in the amount of \$31,082,942, with a 4% contingency of \$1,389,972 for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$49,972,055.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on May 28, 2009.


Claudia Thomas
Board Vice Chair

ATTEST:


Marcia Walker
Board Administrator