

MOTION NO. M2012-41

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority endorsing the Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan for the East Link Project attached as Exhibit A.

BACKGROUND:

East Link is a project to expand light rail to East King County via I-90 from downtown Seattle to downtown Bellevue and the Overlake area of Redmond, with stations serving Rainier Avenue/I-90, Mercer Island, south Bellevue, downtown Bellevue, Overlake Hospital, the Bel-Red corridor, Overlake Village and the Overlake Transit Center. Revenue service to the Overlake Transit Center is forecast for 2023.

On November 15, 2011, the City of Bellevue and Sound Transit executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the funding and construction of the Board-adopted downtown Bellevue tunnel alignment. Under the MOU, the City and Sound Transit are engaged in a collaborative design process to identify potential modifications for the section of East Link located within the city limits to achieve the shared goals of reducing costs and delivering a high quality project.

In early 2012, Sound Transit and the City generated ideas that could contribute to the goal of reducing project costs. These cost reduction concepts were then assessed by a Peer Review Panel. In April the concepts having the greatest potential to both save costs and meet project objectives were presented to the Sound Transit Board, the Bellevue City Council, and the public at the first of two open houses.

On June 5, 2012 Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue published a Draft Cost Savings Report and held a second public open house. Sound Transit and City staff also provided numerous stakeholder briefings throughout April, May, and June. Through the public involvement process, over 350 comments were received. As a result of public involvement, an additional cost savings concept was developed for 112th Avenue SE.

The Draft Cost Savings Report and public involvement process focused on those ideas which represent a potential change to the project description contained in the MOU between the City and Sound Transit. Sound Transit and the City also identified cost savings ideas which generally will not affect the configuration of the East Link light rail system or its operational impacts and are within the administrative discretion of project staff.

Following consideration of the Draft Cost Savings Report and public comments, the City and Sound Transit, through the MOU's Collaborative Design Process, developed a Cost Savings Work Plan attached as Exhibit A.

The joint work plan identifies cost savings ideas for further development. Advancement of the Cost Savings Work Plan does not constitute a final decision, and in no way alters the East Link Project as approved by the Sound Transit Board and reflected in the Record of Decision issued by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration. The work plan identifies cost savings ideas for further development and is an indication that the ideas have sufficient merit to continue to invest resources for further review. The next phase of review, including additional engineering design and impact and mitigation analysis consistent with requirements under NEPA and SEPA, will occur in the latter half of 2012 and into 2013.

A final decision to incorporate any one or more of these cost savings ideas into the East Link Project would not occur until this additional review is complete; and only after the Sound Transit Board determines that these cost savings ideas are consistent with the project goals. Cost savings ideas will be evaluated in light of the cost savings available and the impacts on the project and surrounding neighborhoods (including ridership, system impacts, noise, and traffic and visual impacts).

MOTION:


It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority to endorse the Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan attached as Exhibit A.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on June 28, 2012.



Julia Patterson
Board Vice Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator

Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan

This joint work plan identifies Cost Savings ideas for further development. It is not a final decision, and in no way alters the East Link Project as approved by the Sound Transit Board and reflected in the Record of Decision issued by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration, but rather is an indication that the ideas have sufficient merit to continue to invest resources to review. The next phase of review, including additional engineering design and impact and mitigation analysis consistent with requirements under NEPA and SEPA, will occur in the latter half of 2012 and into 2013.

A final decision to incorporate any one or more of these Cost Savings Ideas into East Link would not occur until this additional review is complete; and only after the Sound Transit Board and the City Council determine, in light of the cost savings available and the impacts on the Project and surrounding neighborhoods (including ridership, system impacts, noise, traffic and visual impacts) that these Cost Savings Ideas are consistent with the shared Project goals.

Winters House

Advance for further development options that replace the retained cut by the Winters House with an at-grade light rail alignment.

Design options: If the City Council in July 2012 decides to include a Bellevue Way HOV lane in the City's Transportation Facilities Plan environmental review and continues to make progress towards implementation, then study shifting Bellevue Way west with the cost of the project addressed as set forth in Section 7.2 of the MOU (Idea 1a). If not, then study relocating the Winters House. (Idea 1b)

Other design considerations:

- Noise and visual mitigation for increased length of above grade guideway
- Reduce the added length of elevated guideway
- Optimize the access location for the blueberry farm and Winter's House
- If alternative 1a advances, it should include an HOV lane

Advantages to this approach:

- Lower cost and risk
- Better LRT profile for operations
- Potentially overall reduction in cost and construction impacts for the City and Sound Transit if Bellevue Way HOV lane and LRT construction properly sequenced

112th

Advance for further development an at-grade alignment the length of 112th with a crossing from the east to the west-side at SE 15th below a new road overpass (Idea 2b). No further development of the MOU option of an elevated fly-over at SE 15th and to the extent possible the retained cut at SE 4th.

Design options: Continue to study location for optimal access to the Surrey Downs neighborhood including options from 112th which do not require a gated crossing with bells.

Other Design considerations:

- Work with the community on a package of changes in park use, neighborhood traffic control, other measures to mitigate change in access

- Reduce the height of the reconstructed 112th Ave SE over light rail by depressing light rail tracks to the extent prudent given soil conditions
- Use landscaping to screen the road overpass and LRT
- Noise mitigation for at-grade LRT
- Evaluate pedestrian access to the E. Main Station from the neighborhood and kiss-and-ride access from 112th

Advantages to this approach:

- Responds to Leadership Group criteria for 112th with respect to cost, visual, noise, and avoidance of retained cut
- Lower cost and risk
- Provides grade separated LRT operations

Downtown Station

Advance for further development both a Tunnel Station and the NE 6th Station to refine and better distinguish the difference in potential cost savings.

Design issues to examine with Tunnel Station:

- Optimize configuration to minimize impacts to surface traffic while retaining entrances north and south of NE 4th
- May involve stacked tunnel with one entrance setback from street and mitigation for loss of turn pocket south of NE 4th or further optimization of PE design with mezzanine

Design issues to examine with NE 6th Station:

- Reach agreement on impacts to City Hall and damages payment prior to further design
- Determine acceptability of design deviation (curve at 110th/NE 6th)

Advantages to this approach:

- Allows limited additional time to vet actual cost differences. Relocating the Station to NE 6th should only be advanced further if it has substantially more savings as it has operational and ridership impacts.