



Motion No. M2020-04

Renaming University Street Station

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
Rider Experience and Operations Committee	1/16/2020	Recommend to Board	Craig Davison, Communications Executive Director
Board	1/23/2020	Final action	Carrie Avila-Mooney, Director – Government and Community Relations Alex Ko, Customer Outreach Specialist

Proposed action

Renames University Street Station in coordination with the Northgate Link Extension opening.

Key features summary

- This action changes the name of the University Street Station to align with Northgate Link Extension opening.
- The station is being renamed to provide better wayfinding for customers and avoid confusion with University of Washington Station and the future U-District Station.
- Sound Transit conducted outreach to stakeholders and the public in Q3 of 2019. Online and in-person surveys were conducted, among other methods, which provided the proposed names and requested feedback. The proposed names and the percentage results of the surveys are:
 - Symphony 25%,
 - Benaroya Hall 24%,
 - Seneca Street 20%,
 - Midtown 13%,
 - Downtown Arts District 10%,
 - Arts District 8%.
- The proposed station names align with the Board adopted Facility and Link System Naming Policy. The policy established a process, timeframe, and criteria for naming facilities.
- This renaming will be integrated into Northgate Link Extension work. Aligning with Northgate Link Extension will avoid further costs that would otherwise be incurred.

Background

Sound Transit does not currently own University Street Station, part of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. Sound Transit will take possession of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel from King County Metro in 2020. In March 2019, Sound Transit staff began a renaming process for the University Street Station to provide a better wayfinding experience for customers once Sound Transit owns the station.

This will help riders avoid confusion with the current University of Washington Station and the future U District Station. The name will also help customers with wayfinding.

The Board adopted the Facility and Link System Naming Policy in February 2012. The policy established a process, timeframe, and criteria for naming facilities. The process includes three phases: internally identify and evaluate potential names based on defined criteria; receive input from the public, local jurisdictions, and executive staff; and a decision and approval by the board. The policy states that station names should:

- Reflect the nature of the environment: neighborhoods, street names, landmarks, geographical locations;
- Be brief, easy to read and remember;
- Comply with federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and requirements and be limited to 30 characters;
- Avoid commercial references because they may change, prove confusing to the public and be costly to change;
- Avoid similar names or words in existing facility names.

A cross-departmental internal staff group was formed to develop a list of names to present to the public. This group conducted research into historical names for the surrounding area, used previous studies from other agencies, and considered the geography of the area before presenting names to an executive leadership team. With the support of this team, these names were presented through the public process.

In parallel to developing proposed names, the group also worked to identify workstreams impacted by a station name change. University Street Station is a legacy station that is being adopted from another agency, so there were impacts that would not be associated with re-naming a station already in Sound Transit's possession. Sound Transit has developed a cost estimate for the University Street Station name change based on factors identified through this process.

The policy requires public and stakeholder input be received before presenting to the Board for a decision. Sound Transit conducted outreach to stakeholders and the public in Q3 of 2019 which included meetings with local stakeholders, an online station naming survey promoted through a variety of methods including social media and newsletters, in person outreach at University Street Station, and more.

The Board has final decision-making authority in this matter.

Fiscal information

University Street Station renaming work will be performed in conjunction with the Northgate Link Extension project to avoid duplicative costs for updates to static signage, maps, and ticket vending machines. Northgate Link Extension project budget will cover all costs associated with the name change including updates to systems such as variable message signs and in-station announcements, onboard digital signage, SCADA, real-time information, and manuals for operations, maintenance, and fire and life safety.

The cost estimate to accomplish the renaming including contingencies and applicable taxes is estimated at \$5.3M, which may be reduced if additional efficiencies can be found. Staff will continue to refine the budget as specific tasks are further defined.

***1/17/20 Addition: Maintaining commonality with the USS acronym greatly reduces technical back of house changes and associated costs. The cost to rename the University Street Station to a name that utilizes the USS acronym including contingencies and taxes is estimated at \$1.046M.*

Disadvantaged and small business participation

Not applicable to this action

Public involvement

Outreach staff provided organizations, agencies, and the public with information about the naming process and the variety of methods used to obtain feedback. Methods included:

- An online survey
- In-person surveys at four outreach events
- Postings on social media
- Rider alerts
- Mailing of electronic newsletters with a survey link.

Over 14,000 responses were received, including 13,300+ online responses and 800+ in-person responses.

Several stakeholders also expressed strong sentiment regarding renaming. A Coalition of organizations including the University of Washington, Unico, Wright Runstad, and Fairmont Olympic Hotel are in favor of Midtown Station. The Seattle Symphony and Benaroya Hall are in support of Symphony Station or Benaroya Hall Station. Letters from the Seattle Symphony, Benaroya Hall, University of Washington, Unico, Wright Runstad, and the Fairmont Olympic Hotel are included in the University Street Station renaming Public Outreach Report.

Time constraints

A decision is necessary in January 2020 to coordinate this work with Northgate Link Extension. A one month delay would jeopardize the ability of the project team to deliver all assets in conjunction with Northgate Link Extension. The schedules for several of the workstreams start in January 2020.

Prior Board/Committee actions

Resolution No. R2012-02: Established a policy for naming Sound Transit facilities, including stations, maintenance bases, portals and other facilities and a naming structure for Link system lines and extensions.

Environmental review – KH 1/9/2020

Legal review – AJP 1/13/2020



Motion No. M2020-04

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority retaining the University Street Station name while staff develops a comprehensive, system-wide plan for naming stations throughout the Sound Transit District and across multiple lines of service to be implemented in coordination with the East Link Extension opening

Background

Sound Transit does not currently own University Street Station, part of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. Sound Transit will take possession of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel from King County Metro in 2020. In March 2019, Sound Transit staff began a renaming process for the University Street Station to provide a better wayfinding experience for customers once Sound Transit owns the station. This will help riders avoid confusion with the current University of Washington Station and the future U District Station. The name will also help customers with wayfinding.

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A cross-departmental internal staff group was formed to develop a list of names to present to the public. This group conducted research into historical names for the surrounding area, used previous studies from other agencies, and considered the geography of the area before presenting names to an executive leadership team. With the support of this team, these names were presented through the public process.

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- Symphony 25%,

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This renaming will be integrated into Northgate Link Extension work. Aligning with Northgate Link Extension will avoid further costs that would otherwise be incurred.

Motion

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the University Street Station will remain the University Street Station while staff develops a comprehensive, system-wide plan for naming stations throughout the Sound Transit District and across multiple lines of service to be implemented in coordination with the East Link Extension opening.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on February 27, 2020.



Paul Roberts
Board Vice Chair

Attest:



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator