

CITY COUNCIL ITEM B

CITY OF LYNNWOOD Community Development

TITLE: Briefing: City Center Light Rail Transit Station- Study Report

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SUMMARY:

Under voter-approved ST-2, Sound Transit is scheduled to complete Light Rail (LRT) to the Lynnwood Transit Center by 2023. While this represents a major community asset and development catalyst, the City has concerns that the Transit Center Station could not be optimally located to also serve City Center. City Center and environs will be the largest urban center between Seattle and Everett. The Transit Center station is focused largely on commuters arriving by car or bus and is not easily walkable to most of City Center. Therefore an idea was advanced to undertake an analysis of the potential for an extension of the line into City Center. Clearly, ST does not have funding for such an extension at this time however it could occur either under an ST3 program when approved by voters or under ST2 if the economy recovers strongly and funding becomes available. The Council provided funds to study this potential station as an element of City Center development..

Summary Conclusions:

- An urban station without parking could ideally be located above Alderwood Mall Parkway adjacent to land owned by Edmond's School District. It would provide excellent access to City Center, the Convention Center, future Bus Rapid Transit on 196th and redevelopment of the Transition Area (located between City Center and the Mall).
- Staff believes that a City Center station so located would support future extensions of the line to Everett with subsequent stations at Alderwood Mall, Ash Way Transit Center and points north.
- Using Federally mandated criteria and standards also being used to plan for the balance of the line, a City Center station is costly and ridership generation is lower than expected. However staff is convinced that ridership would grow as developers take advantage of the station. The Cost is considerable as a stand-alone project however all costs would be subsumed into an ST3 program in the future.
- Since the analysis had to use the LRT termination of the line at the transit center as the point of origin, a lot was learned about the potential pros and cons of various alignments and station locations that will be studied as ST2 is designed. The City has gleaned extensive information about how to plan this station to create the greatest advantage for our community while limiting impacts.

POLICY QUESTION(S) FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION:

Should the City continue to advocate for a City Center station either under ST-2 should funding become available or as an element of ST-3 when that plan is developed and brought before the voters?

ACTION:

Staff is proposing that advocacy of the City Center LRT Station be incorporated into the 2012 Lynnwood Comprehensive Plan amendments.

KEY FEATURES:

This analysis is a starting point for continued discussions on how ST2 relates to the Lynnwood City Center and how LRT service may best be located to support the City Center and achieve transit-oriented development as envisioned in the City Center Plan.

The City of Lynnwood and Puget Sound Regional Council have long recognized the importance of the development of both Lynnwood's City Center and the larger Sub-Regional Center that includes City Center plus the greater Alderwood Mall area and the Transition Area that links them. At build out, the area will be the largest concentration of urban development between Seattle and Everett. It will accommodate thousands of residents, tens of thousands of jobs and millions of square feet of office, retail, and housing development.

Multi-modal access support of bi-directional commuting is clearly required to meet local and regional development goals. While the Lynnwood Transit Center and existing local and express bus service represent a good start, much more support is required. Extension of Light Rail Transit (LRT) service to the Transit Center approved by the voters in ST2 represents a major element but by itself will not be sufficient to achieve PSRC policy objectives and support transit-oriented development. The Transit Center is located at the periphery of City Center, is focused almost entirely on commuters to points outside of Lynnwood and is already at or near capacity. Additional access to LRT is needed to effectively serve the City Center area.

The City's initial reviews of LRT station site alternatives for the City Center were included in the City of Lynnwood Mode Split for City Center Street Master Plan (December 2009, Pertee, Project Number 28035). This analysis studied how station placement may be designed to meet both the needs of commuters to the Lynnwood Transit Center, as well as those who live, work and do business in the City Center. This study and a related analysis hosted by the Urban Land Institute, determined that the Transit Center service for the City Center was problematic for pedestrians and proposed development due to the distances involved and barriers to access by major thoroughfares.

After learning that Sound Transit was receptive to shorter station spacing to serve urban scale development being planned in the Bel-Red Corridor, the City began to explore options to serve City Center proper. While fully understanding that funding for such an extension does not currently exist, the City wanted to achieve the following goals:

- Analyze the potential opportunities and constraints for a future City Center station including likely routing, cost and ridership,
- Gain the knowledge required to ensure that the approved Transit Center station routing and design facilitates the eventual extension of the LRT line to City Center and points north in and past Lynnwood to Everett,
- Provide guidance to refine City Center planning to facilitate the eventual extension of the LRT line, and
- Serve as the basis for proposals to extend the LRT to a City Center station under ST2 should funding become available or as part of a future ST3 program that would need to be approved by the voters.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

Consider adding text supporting the development of the City Center LRT station in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan amendments later this year.

DOCUMENT ATTACHMENTS

Description:

 [Lynnwood City Center Station Study](#)

Type:

Backup Material