

MOTION NO. M2013-96

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority identifying the preferred light rail routes and station locations for the Lynnwood Link Extension Final Environmental Impact Statement.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2008, voters approved funding for the Lynnwood Link Extension project to provide light rail service between Northgate Station in Seattle, Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace and Lynnwood Transit Center in Lynnwood. The Lynnwood Link Extension EIS evaluates the impacts of constructing and operating light rail service from Northgate to the Lynnwood Transit Center.

The evaluation of alternative route alignments, profiles and station locations is being conducted in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration. Before committing federal funds to the Lynnwood Link Extension project, the FTA is required to undertake environmental review in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As the public agency proposing the Lynnwood Link Extension project, Sound Transit is required to comply with the Washington 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 route alignments, profiles and station locations may have probable significant adverse environmental impacts. To satisfy both NEPA and SEPA requirements, the agencies are preparing a combined NEPA/SEPA environmental impact statement (EIS) for the project.

Sound Transit and the FTA published a Draft EIS for the project on July 26, 2013. The extended 60 day comment period closed on September 23, 2013. To ensure adequate public and agency input, the comment period included four informational open house events, held in Seattle, Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace and Lynnwood. Public hearings were held at each open house. The Board has received copies of each of the over 640 comments submitted during the comment period. On September 19, 2013, the Board held a workshop to review the Draft EIS analysis of the potential environmental impacts, mitigation measures and project benefits associated with the light rail alternatives and to discuss the tradeoffs among those alternatives.

NEPA requires that Sound Transit identify its preferred alternative in the Final EIS. Identifying the preferred alternative will also enable Sound Transit to report a preferred alternative to the FTA's New Starts capital investment grant program. The identification of a preferred alternative for the Final EIS is a statement of the Board's current intent regarding the Lynnwood Link Extension project based on the Board's review of the Draft EIS, public comments from interested citizens, agencies, tribes and organizations, and other information developed to date; it is not a final decision. The Board will make a final decision on the Lynnwood Link Extension project to be built, including the route and station locations, after publication of the Final EIS.

MOTION:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that, based on the alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS and the public and agency comments received, the preferred alternative for the Lynnwood Link Extension Final EIS is as follows:

Segment A: Northgate to NE 185th Street

The preferred alternative for Segment A is:

- Alternative A1, At-Grade/Elevated with NE 145th and NE 185th Street Stations, with these features:
 - Align the guideway east of 1st Avenue NE and the NE 117th Street bridge as in Alternative A5
 - Maintain access to the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church after the project is complete
 - Locate the NE 145th Street station parking garage as in Alternative A3, station option 2
 - Align the guideway east of the NE 185th Street bridge with a side-platform station as in Alternative A5

Staff is directed to further evaluate the following potential modifications to the preferred alternative:

- Include a retained cut station at NE 130th Street
- Provide for the future addition of a station at NE 130th Street
- Pedestrian improvements on the NE 185th Street bridge over I-5 to better connect the transit parking garage and station

Segment B: NE 185th Street to 212th Street SW

The preferred alternative for Segment B is:

- Alternative B2, East Side to Mountlake Transit Center to West Side

Staff is directed to further evaluate the following potential modifications to the preferred alternative:

- Re-align Alternative B2 to align closer to I-5 and under the 220th Street SW bridge
- Include a retained cut station at 220th Street SW
- Provide for the future addition of a retained cut station at 220th Street SW
- Transit parking expansion options at or near the Mountlake Terrace Transit Center

Additionally, the Board directs staff to continue to advance the design and engineering of Alternative B1, East Side to Mountlake Transit Center to Median, and to develop a preliminary plan for future use of the Mountlake Terrace Freeway Station once light rail service to Lynnwood begins.

Segment C: 212th Street SW to Lynnwood Transit Center

The preferred alternative for Segment C is:

- Alternative C3, Along I-5 to Lynnwood Park-and-Ride, with station Option 1 utilizing the existing Lynnwood Transit Center
- Re-align Alternative C3 to better connect to the Lynnwood Transit Center, preserve more re-developable area, and minimize wetland and stream impacts to the extent feasible

Staff is directed to further evaluate the following potential modifications to the preferred alternative:

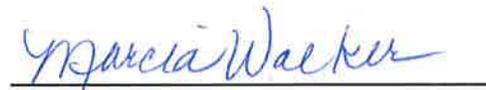
- Further transit parking expansion at or near the Lynnwood Transit Center beyond that included in Alternative C3

This motion also authorizes staff to complete the Final EIS, using the preferred alternative identified above and the other alternatives in the Draft EIS. Staff is also authorized to proceed with preliminary engineering on the preferred alternative and potential modifications. The Board will continue to consider all of the alternatives and will not make a final decision on the project to be built until after completion of the Final EIS, which is anticipated to be published in 2015.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on November 21, 2013.


Pat McCarthy
Board Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator