

SOUND TRANSIT

MOTION NO. M2009-50

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation to receive funding in the amount of \$5,940,000 which will be used to assist with the D Street to M Street Connection project associated with the Point Defiance Bypass Project.

Background:

In December 2007, the Board selected the Alternative 3 Modified – Grade-Separated alternative alignment for this project. The selection of this alternative created a budget shortfall. The shortfall requires funding in addition to that provided by Sound Move, with possible additional funding coming from grants, partnerships with WSDOT, Amtrak and other parties that also benefit from this project. The proposed action is additional revenue and will be additive to the project to assist in closing the funding gap on this project.

The project will enable Sound Transit to complete design and right-of-way acquisition requirements to prepare for the construction of 1.2 miles of new rail bed (from D Street to M Street in Tacoma), connecting the currently discontinuous Point Defiance Bypass trackage to Tacoma's Freighthouse Square station and the BNSF mainline.

WSDOT and Sound Transit coordinated on a grant proposal to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Intercity Passenger Rail grant program for the D-M Street improvements. Only states are eligible to apply for this particular funding source; however, since the D-M Street project supports both intercity and commuter rail, Sound Transit and WSDOT partnered on the grant to help reduce the funding gap for the project.

Upon completion, the Point Defiance Bypass project will enable passenger rail service to relocate from the heavily utilized BNSF Point Defiance route to a route prioritizing passenger service, significantly improving passenger rail service between Portland and Seattle. The Point Defiance Bypass will increase capacity to support the operation of two additional Amtrak Cascades trips, reduce travel times by six minutes, and reduce delays due to freight traffic interference along the current BNSF Point Defiance route. The Point Defiance Bypass will enable Amtrak services to relocate to Sound Transit's newly constructed Freighthouse Square station in Tacoma, providing direct access to Sound Transit's "Sounder" commuter rail service, and "Tacoma Link" light rail service to downtown Tacoma. Completion of the Point Defiance Bypass will also enable Sound Transit to extend "Sounder" commuter rail service south to South Tacoma and Lakewood Stations, recently completed and now in operation as bus-served park-and-ride facilities.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Sound Transit prepared and issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Lakewood to Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park and Ride Expansion in May 2002 which covered the proposed locations for the two commuter rail stations in South Tacoma and Lakewood, track and signal improvements and extensions from Tacoma to Lakewood, including the D to M Street segment. A NEPA Record of Decision (ROD) was issued by FTA in December 2002. On November 28, 2007, FTA approved a NEPA Reevaluation which evaluated the impacts of a new alignment in the D to M Street segment in Tacoma (Modified Alternative 3 with a grade separated railroad bridge at Pacific in Tacoma). This is the current preferred alternative which will be built. In compliance with SEPA, a SEPA Addendum was issued on December 4, 2007 which also evaluated the impacts of Modified Alternative 3. The Federal Highway Administration approved a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) for the Washington State Department of Transportation's Point Defiance By-Pass project which will implement track improvements from Nisqually Junction to S. 66th St. in Tacoma. Sound Transit is currently working with FRA and WSDOT on a NEPA Environmental Assessment to support the D to M Street funding grant.

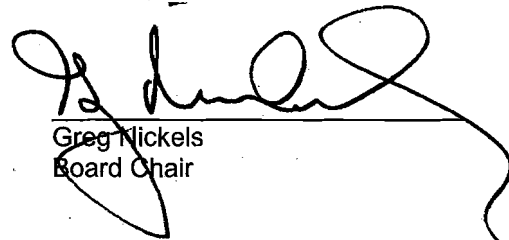
Motion:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the chief executive officer is authorized to execute an agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation to receive funding in the amount of \$5,940,000 which will be used to assist with the D Street to M Street Connection project associated with the Point Defiance Bypass Project.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on June 25, 2009.

ATTEST:

Marcia Walker
Marcia Walker
Board Administrator


Greg Nickels
Board Chair