



Motion No. M2020-63

Adopting the 2021 State Legislative Program

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
Executive Committee	11/05/2020	Recommend to Board	Ann McNeil, Chief Government & Community Relations Officer
Board	11/19/2020	Action Postponed	
Board	12/17/2020	Final Action	Alex Soldano, State Relations Director

Proposed action

Adopting the Sound Transit 2021 State Legislative Program and directing staff to evaluate and engage in issues that impact the agency as it continues to implement a regional high-capacity transit system.

Key features summary

- This action would authorize Sound Transit staff and consultants in Olympia to advocate and/or pursue the following positions during the upcoming state legislative session:
 - Work to create new flexible revenue options to fund transit and transportation investments consistent with Motion No. M2020-37.
 - Support and engage with partner agencies and others on efforts to facilitate the safe, cost-effective and equitable delivery of transit projects and services.
 - Oppose legislation that increases the costs of transit improvements and services or otherwise impairs the agency's ability to deliver its voter-approved regional high capacity transit program.
 - Continue to work with legislators to address concerns related to the motor vehicle excise tax.
 - Work with our agency partners to maintain mobility and service amid uncertainty subsequent to passage of I-976.

Background

The Board annually considers a State Legislative Program. The program has typically included issues and policy guidance to staff and contract lobbyists to assist them in representing the agency's interests during the legislative session.

This action would authorize Sound Transit staff and consultants in Olympia to advocate and/or pursue the following positions during the upcoming state legislative session:

- **Work to create new flexible revenue options to fund transit and transportation investments**

As directed by Motion 2020-37, Sound Transit will work to identify and support new, flexible, revenue options and mechanisms to increase the agency's debt capacity in order to mitigate impacts from COVID-19 and its' associated effects. As the State undertakes discussion of new transportation funding options, Sound Transit supports flexibility in the requirements for use of any such funding, to support timely delivery of the Sound Transit capital program as approved by voters.

- **Support and engage with partner agencies and others on efforts to facilitate the safe, cost-effective and equitable delivery of transit projects and services.**

Sound Transit has historically supported the legislative efforts of our partners and others that facilitate the efficient, safe and cost-effective delivery of transit projects and services. As part of on-going coordination efforts, Sound Transit will work in collaboration on efforts aimed at improving the transit system, including proposals impacting transit operations, the ORCA program, public safety and public works contracting.

- **Oppose legislation that increases the costs of transit improvements and services or otherwise impairs the agency’s ability to deliver its voter-approved regional high capacity transit program.**

In 2019 Sound Transit provided more than 47.8 million trips across 51 cities. In 2021, Sound Transit will be opening three new light rail stations and investing more than \$2.5 billion to develop infrastructure. The Sound Transit Board opposes legislation that would negatively alter the oversight, planning, financing, construction, delivery and operation of Sound Transit projects and services.

- **Continue to work collaboratively with the State Legislature to support the public’s desire to base vehicle taxes on a vehicle’s true current value, in a revenue neutral manner that does not unconstitutionally impair bondholder contracts.**

The Board, through Motion No. M2017-37 directed Sound Transit staff to engage with the State Legislature and pursue options to address public concerns about Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes and the depreciation schedule in use for Sound Transit 3. Sound Transit will continue to work with the Legislature to develop solutions that seek to implement the public’s desire to base vehicle taxes on a vehicle’s true current value in a revenue neutral manner, provided that such solutions must not unconstitutionally impair bondholder contracts.*

Fiscal information

This action does not have a budget or financial impact to the agency or any of its programs. There is no action outside of the Board-adopted budget; there are no contingency funds required, no subarea impacts, or funding required from other parties other than what is already assumed in the financial plan. Advocacy of the State Legislative Program is fully funded through the Executive Department budget.

Disadvantaged and small business participation

Not applicable to this action.

Public involvement

Not applicable to this action.

Time constraints

Sound Transit’s interests are better served at the State Legislature if the Board of Directors adopts a State Legislative Program in advance of the 2021 legislative session that begins January 11, 2021. Delaying adoption until after the start of the session could minimize effective advocacy.

Environmental review – KH 10/20/20

Legal review – DB 10/30/2020



Motion No. M2020-63

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority adopting the Sound Transit 2021 State Legislative Program and directing staff to evaluate and engage in issues that impact the agency as it continues to implement a regional high-capacity transit system.

Background

The Board annually considers a State Legislative Program. The program has typically included issues and policy guidance to staff and contract lobbyists to assist them in representing the agency's interests during the legislative session.

This action would authorize Sound Transit staff and consultants in Olympia to advocate and/or pursue the following positions during the upcoming state legislative session:

- **Work to create new flexible revenue options to fund transit and transportation investments**

As directed by Motion 2020-37, Sound Transit will work to identify and support new, flexible, revenue options and mechanisms to increase the agency's debt capacity in order to mitigate impacts from COVID-19 and its' associated effects. As the State undertakes discussion of new transportation funding options, Sound Transit supports flexibility in the requirements for use of any such funding, to support timely delivery of the Sound Transit capital program as approved by voters.

- **Support and engage with partner agencies and others on efforts to facilitate the safe, cost-effective and equitable delivery of transit projects and services.**

Sound Transit has historically supported the legislative efforts of our partners and others that facilitate the efficient, safe and cost-effective delivery of transit projects and services. As part of on-going coordination efforts, Sound Transit will work in collaboration on efforts aimed at improving the transit system, including proposals impacting transit operations, the ORCA program, public safety and public works contracting.

- **Oppose legislation that increases the costs of transit improvements and services or otherwise impairs the agency's ability to deliver its voter-approved regional high capacity transit program.**

In 2019 Sound Transit provided more than 47.8 million trips across 51 cities. In 2021, Sound Transit will be opening three new light rail stations and investing more than \$2.5 billion to develop infrastructure. The Sound Transit Board opposes legislation that would negatively alter the oversight, planning, financing, construction, delivery and operation of Sound Transit projects and services.

- **Continue to work collaboratively with the State Legislature to support the public's desire to base vehicle taxes on a vehicle's true current value, in a revenue neutral manner that does not unconstitutionally impair bondholder contracts.**

The Board, through Motion No. M2017-37 directed Sound Transit staff to engage with the State Legislature and pursue options to address public concerns about Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes and the depreciation schedule in use for Sound Transit 3. Sound Transit asks that the Legislature adopt legislation to base vehicle taxes on a more accurate and current value of a vehicle, provided that such solutions must provide alternative or additional security that does not unconstitutionally impair bondholder contracts and is revenue neutral.

Motion

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the Sound Transit 2021 State Legislative Program is adopted and staff is directed to evaluate and engage in issues that impact the agency as it continues to implement a regional high-capacity transit system.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on December 17, 2020.

Kent Keel
Board Chair

Attest:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator