


**SOUNDTRANSIT**  
**Motion No. M2021-61**
**Renaming University Street Station**

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
Rider Experience and Operations Committee	10/7/2021	Recommend to Board	<b>Russ Arnold, Chief Passenger Experience &amp; Innovation Officer</b>
Board	10/28/2021	Final action	<b>Candace Toth, Manager – Wayfinding and Signage</b>

**Proposed action**

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

**Key features summary**

- This action changes the name of the University Street Station to Symphony Station, with the name change aligning to the East Link Extension opening.
- The station is being renamed to provide better wayfinding for customers and avoid confusion with the University of Washington Station and the U-District Station.
- The back of house station code will also change to reflect the new name, to mitigate safety concerns, using an existing maintenance contract to execute this work
- 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 proposed Board policy on Station, Line and Facility Naming. The policy established a process, timeframe, and criteria for naming facilities.
- This proposed station name is also in alignment with the University Street Station lessons learned outcomes.
- This renaming will be integrated into the East Link Extension work. A non-system expansion project focusing on station code improvements has been stood up that could support this work. This, in addition to aligning with East 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 anticipates taking ownership of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel from King County Metro in Q1 2022. 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. Renaming this station will help riders avoid confusion with the University of Washington Station and the U District Station. A new name will also help customers with wayfinding.

The 2019 public outreach was conducted in accordance with the R2012-02 Facility and Link System Naming Policy. That policy and the proposed 2021 Station, Line and Facility Naming policy both support a name change for University Street Station, to reduce redundancy and avoid passenger confusion.

This Motion was originally brought to the Board in January 2020, at which time it did not move forward due to cost concerns with the Rough Order Magnitude (ROM) presented, and safety concerns regarding the back-of-house station code.

Cross departmental teams comprised of internal staff completed the following activities in 2020-2021:

- Revised the ROM for the University Street Station name change was revised from the original January 2020 amount.
- Drafted an updated Station, Line and Facility Naming policy to address renaming and the purpose of station names.
- Conducted a study, which validated that there are passenger experience issues with the existing University Street station name.
- Conducted further analysis into the back of house codes and safety, as well as cost/benefits of a University Street rename.
- Identified workstreams impacted by a station name change.

After completing these actions, staff recommends that the outreach conducted with the public and stakeholders be honored, and the station be renamed to: Symphony Station with the back-of-house station code be updated from USS to align with the new name.

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

## Fiscal information

Although the proposed action is to rename the University Street Station, there are costs associated with the renaming work which will be performed in conjunction with the East Link Extension project to avoid duplicative costs.

Elements of this work can be included in East Link schedules and budgets, to include: static & digital signage both in-station and on-board vehicles, audio/visuals announcement in-station and on-board vehicles, real-time information, ticket vending machines and Sound Transit's website and other graphic assets. These costs are already assumed in the East Link budget as this work is necessary regardless of the name change.

The Station Codes project has anticipated the University St Link name change and estimated \$800,000 for work outside of the East Link scope which includes: station code SCADA work, manuals for operations, maintenance, and fire and life safety, and training for impacted staff due to name change/station code change. Sufficient funds remain in the Station Codes project for remaining anticipated activities.

## **Disadvantaged and small business participation**

Not applicable to this action

## **Public involvement**

In July 2021, this information was presented in conjunction with the updated Station, Line and Facility Naming Policy to the Transit Access Coalition (TAC) on 7/15/21. The TAC was supportive of this recommendation.

In 2019, 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.

## **Time constraints**

In order to be delivered with the presented schedule and fiscal impacts, this item must be approved in Q4 of 2021 so there is appropriate time to incorporate this new name into East Link Extension.

A one-month delay would not create a significant impact to the impacted project schedules.

## **Prior Board/Committee actions**

Motion No. M2020-04: University Street Station will remain 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.

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.

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**Environmental review** – KH 9/22/21

**Legal review** – AJP 10/1/21





## Motion No. M2021-61

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority renaming University Street Station in coordination with the East Link Extension opening.

### Background

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This action changes the name of the University Street Station to Symphony Station, with the name change aligning to the East Link Extension opening. The station is being renamed to provide better wayfinding for customers and avoid confusion with the University of Washington Station and the U-District Station. The back of house station code will also change to reflect the new name, to mitigate safety concerns, using an existing maintenance contract to execute this work.

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The proposed station names align with the proposed Board policy on Station, Line and Facility Naming. The policy established a process, timeframe, and criteria for naming facilities. This proposed station name is also in alignment with the University Street Station lessons learned outcomes. This renaming will be integrated into the East Link Extension work. A non-system expansion project focusing on station code improvements has been stood up that could support this work. This, in addition to aligning with East 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 University Street Station is renamed Symphony Station 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 October 28, 2021.

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Kent Keel  
Board Chair

### **Attest:**

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Kathryn Flores  
Board Administrator