

SOUND TRANSIT

MOTION NO. M98-90

Kent Commuter Rail Station Garage Site BACKGROUND AND COMMENTS

Meeting:	Date:	Type of Action:	Staff Contact:	Phone:
Board	12/10/98	Board Approval	Paul Price Val Batey	689-4760 684-1591

ACTION:

Approval of Motion No. M98-90 would select site 1 for the parking garage to serve the Kent commuter rail station parking garage. Additionally, staff would like to provide follow-up information requested by the Board for Site 1A.

When this matter was last before the Board on October 22, 1998, staff had recommended Site 1 as the preferred alternative for completion of the environmental review, which included the 2.4 acres necessary for the proposed parking garage. However, in response to testimony by one of the affected property owners, the Board decided to pursue purchasing all of the property owner's property, rather than only the part of it needed for the garage, resulting in the potential acquisition of an additional 2.77 acres. This larger site, known as Site 1A, includes the 2.4 acres of Site 1 plus an additional 2.77 acres, for a total of 5.17 acres. The Board decided to identify Site 1A as the preferred alternative for environmental review but specifically asked staff to report back regarding potential cost and environmental contamination issues for the additional 2.77 acres (Motion No. M98-73). Staff has done so and will report its findings in executive session. In light of its review, staff recommends against Site 1A and instead requests that the Board select Site 1.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the proposed parking garage at the Kent commuter rail station. The FONSI was based on a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) submitted by Sound Transit last fall. Sound Transit recently issued a Notice of Adoption of the Supplemental EA in compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Receipt of the FONSI allows Sound Transit to begin development of the parking structure, including property acquisition and design.

A number of alternatives were evaluated in the EA, including Site 1. Site 1A, however, was not included. The proposal to consider the additional 2.77 acres of Site 1A was made after the Supplemental Environmental Assessment was submitted to the FTA for review and approval. Environmental review under NEPA and SEPA of the additional 2.77 acres of property on Site 1A has not yet been completed. If the Board decides to continue to pursue site 1A, additional environmental review will need to be completed before the Board makes a final site selection.

BACKGROUND:

Sound Move and the "Implementation Guide" call for service to begin between Tacoma and Seattle by year-end 1999. The Environmental Assessment for the Tacoma-to-Seattle Commuter Rail Project implementation was completed in May 1998 and received a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on June 10, 1998 from the Federal Transit Administration. The final decision regarding the Downtown Kent station selection had been postponed until the City of Kent identified funding for a parking garage to accommodate station parking. The City of Kent has approved \$4 million to contribute to the funding of a parking garage structure.

On June 11, 1998 the Board selected the "north" station site for the commuter rail station in Kent. With that the decision, the Board also determined that the Kent commuter rail station should include a parking garage structure for 500 or more parking spaces, pending environmental review and the City of Kent's participation. The environmental review process for four alternative sites for a parking garage has been completed. A Kent Parking Garage Supplement to the Environmental Assessment for the Tacoma to Seattle Commuter Rail Project, with the preferred alternative identified, has been submitted to the Federal Transit Authority, which has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The EA also has been adopted by Sound Transit under SEPA.

Public Input

Sound Transit held a public meeting on the alternative garage locations on September 2, 1998 at Kent City Hall. Over 30 people attended the meeting. Sound Transit staff presented the three alternatives under consideration for the garage location. Questions and comments were recorded by a court reporter. A copy of the court reporter's transcript has been transmitted to the Board. Comment cards were made available and several were submitted at the public meeting. Some comments have been received by e-mail and regular mail as well. All the comments we have received are included in this agenda packet. Of the 8 comment cards we received, 6 were in support of Alternative 1, one in support of Alternative 3, and one declined to state a preference.

The Kent Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which was formed in agreement with the City of Kent and Sound Transit to represent the community throughout the station design process, met to discuss the parking garage location on September 9, 1998. It is their recommendation to the Sound Transit Board that Alternative 1 be selected for the Kent commuter rail station parking garage.

The Sound Transit Board held a public hearing prior to its regular business meeting on September 24, 1998. Four people testified at that hearing. A transcript prepared by a court reporter was transmitted to the Board. One of the people testifying at the Board's public hearing requested that a fourth alternative location for the parking garage structure be analyzed. The Chair of the Board requested that Sound Transit staff include this alternative, Alternative 4, in its analysis of the parking garage structure sites. In addition, staff was requested to include an analysis of a larger property acquisition at the Alternative 1 site. This was included in the staff report as Alternative 1A.

RELEVANT BOARD POLICIES AND PREVIOUS ACTIONS TAKEN:

- ◆ Adoption of *Sound Move* (Resolution No. 72)
- ◆ Adoption of Implementation Guide (May 22, 1997)
- ◆ Sound Transit Board Discussion (October 23, 1997)
(*Discussion of commuter rail station criteria including station components and budget for commuter rail stations.*)
- ◆ Adoption of Fiscal Year 1998 Budget (December 11, 1997)
(*The 1998 budget includes \$6.649 million for the Kent Commuter Rail Station.*)
- ◆ Sound Transit Board Workshop/Discussion (March 12, 1998)
(*Review and discussion of North and South Downtown Kent station locations.*)
- ◆ Approval of EA and preferred station sites, except for Kent, March 12, 1998 (Motion 98-19)
(*Board decision on Kent station location postponed for a period of 90 days to allow for the City of Kent to provide funding for a parking structure.*)
- ◆ “North” Station alternative selected for Kent station site, pending environmental review of the parking garage, June 11, 1998 (Motion No. M98-43).
- ◆ Approval of Site 1A as preferred site for the parking garage to serve the Kent Commuter Rail Station, October 22, 1998 (Motion No. M98-73).

FUNDING:

The Sound Move budget for the Kent commuter rail station is \$6 million. The adopted 1998 budget for the Kent commuter rail station in YOES is \$6.649 million. The proposed 1999 budget for the station is \$9.1 million in YOES. The City of Kent has approved a contribution of up to \$4 million to the project budget to include a parking garage for the station.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could choose not to select a parking garage site at this time.

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAY:

Further delay of the property acquisition process prolongs the uncertainty of the property owners, businesses and residents of Site 1.

LEGAL REVIEW:

This motion has been reviewed and approved by the Legal Department.

SOUND TRANSIT

MOTION NO. M98-90

A Motion to select Site 1 for the parking garage to serve the Kent commuter rail station parking garage.

Background:

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Motion:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that Site 1 is selected for the parking garage. Sound Transit shall work cooperatively with the City of Kent and other applicable agencies to study acquisition of additional property adjacent to Site 1 to support the commuter rail facilities and city transportation and economic development needs.

Approved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof on the 10th day of December, 1998.

ATTEST:

Marcia Walker
Marcia Walker
Board Administrator

Paul E. Miller
Paul E. Miller
Board Chair