

## STAFF REPORT

### SOUND TRANSIT

#### MOTION NO. M2001-02

#### Adopting the Tukwila Freeway Route as the Preferred Alternative

Meeting:	Date:	Type of Action:	Staff Contact:	Phone:
Executive Board Board	1/19/01 1/25/01 2/8/01	Deferred Deferred Discussion/Possible Action	Paul Matsuoka, Deputy Director	(206) 398-5070

#### **PROPOSED ACTION**

Identifying the Tukwila Freeway Route (TFR) as the Preferred Alternative for purposes of completing the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and directing staff to identify alternatives for financing the additional costs of the TFR and develop the terms of a potential agreement with the City of Tukwila as related to the Preferred Alternative for the board to consider in the spring following issuance of the SEIS.

#### **KEY FEATURES**

##### **Highlights of the Proposed Action**

- ◆ Identifies the TFR as the Preferred Alternative for purposes of completing the SEIS
- ◆ Directs staff to identify alternatives for financing the additional costs of the TFR and to develop the terms of a potential agreement with City of Tukwila as related to the Preferred Alternative.

#### **DISCUSSION**

On November 18, 1999, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution R99-34 selecting the alignment for the Central Link Light Rail Project and transmitted the decision to the Federal Transit Administration. For "Segment E" of the alignment through the City of Tukwila, the board selected a surface route along Tukwila International Boulevard. At the same meeting, the board adopted Motion M99-85 directing staff to review an alternative route recommended by the City of Tukwila, subsequently referred to as the "Tukwila Freeway Route". This route was identified too late in the process to be included in Central Link Light Rail Project's Environmental Impact Statement leading up to the board's action selecting the alignment.

Following these board actions, staff evaluated the TFR and found sufficient merit in the route to recommend further study. On May 25, 2000, the board adopted Motion M2000-44 directing staff to initiate and complete a SEIS process on the TFR. The draft SEIS was issued on October 20, 2000 and a public hearing was held on November 15, 2000. The public comment

period closed on December 4, 2000 and a final SEIS is expected to be published in March 2001.

The National and State Environmental Policy Acts require the lead agency to identify its Preferred Alternative, if it has one, in the final environmental document. The board will make a final decision on the alignment through the City of Tukwila this spring after issuance of the final SEIS. To assist the board with that decision, staff will provide the board with information on the financial affordability of the TFR and with the terms of a potential agreement with the City defining costs, establishing schedule certainty and providing for an effective and successful project partnership should the board select the TFR.

## **BUDGET**

The additional estimated cost of the TFR alternative over the Tukwila International Boulevard alternative is approximately \$40m (1995\$). This additional cost could be covered by project savings, by project deletions or substitutions, or by changes in financial assumptions that the board is considering in its Financial Plan. Project deletions/substitutions could include the deferral or deletion of the Boeing Access Road commuter rail station or the deletion of the Southcenter direct access HOV ramp on Interstate 405.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

- Amend the Motion as desired.
- Take no action on this Motion and instead wait until issuance of the final SEIS this spring
- Take no action on the Motion and reaffirm the Tukwila International Boulevard route as the alignment as set forth in Resolution R99-34.

## **REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION**

The development of the SEIS has been a cooperative effort between Sound Transit and the City of Tukwila.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

A public hearing for this route was held on November 15, 2000. At that hearing several individuals spoke against the TFR citing impacts to their neighborhoods. Several speakers voiced opposition to the International Boulevard route and support for the TFR route. In staff's judgment, significantly fewer people are opposed to the TFR route than the International Boulevard route, judging from attendance and testimony at this public hearing and the hearing held in Tukwila on the Environmental Impact Statement in 1999. In addition, the TFR route has the support of the Mayor and Tukwila City Council.

## **LEGAL REVIEW**

MBL 1/4/00



## MEMO

January 23, 2001

TO: Sound Transit Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Matsuoka, Deputy Executive Director

SUBJECT: Addendum to the Staff Background Report for Motion M2001-02

Since the material for the Board was prepared, staff would like to transmit additional information as you consider Motion M2001-02, relating to the Tukwila Freeway Route.

Preliminary Estimates of Costs and Revenues: The staff background paper was prepared some time ago and reports on the cost differential between the Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) route and the Tukwila Freeway Route (TFR) in 1995 dollars. In recent weeks, staff has committed to the Board that we would report in YOE dollars, rather than in 1995 dollars. The attached page shows both costs and potential revenue sources in YOE dollars. The most important point to note is that the cost differences between the TIB and TFR options has been reduced based on recent work.

When we published the draft SEIS on the TFR, we reported that the cost difference between the TIB and the TFR was \$40m in 1995 dollars. Since that time, we have revised the TIB costs to reflect a higher estimate for right-of-way along the corridor. This updated cost was included in the Central Link cost-at-completion estimate of \$3.6b that the Board adopted at its January 11th meeting. By increasing the cost of the TIB, this makes the differential between TIB and TFR less.

However, the Central Link project schedule was extended from 2006 to 2009, thus when reporting costs in YOE dollars, the cost estimates increase because of the extended schedule.

Accounting for all revised costs and extended construction schedules, the cost differential between TIB and TFR, in YOE dollars, is now estimated at \$43-45m. The range represents the two variations we have examined for the TFR, and the option preferred by the City is the lower figure in the range.

In order to cover these increased costs, should the Board wish to adopt the TFR as the preferred alternative, we have shown some potential sources of financing on the attached page. As you will note, staff is not proposing a detailed financial strategy, rather we are showing some illustrative sources of financing which we will be investigating further. Should the Board wish to pursue the TFR, we will report back to you in the spring on a detailed finance plan.

Recent information from WSDOT: In our draft SEIS, the light rail system along the freeway has been almost entirely located within WSDOT right-of-way (ROW) and it has been assumed that the costs of using such ROW would be covered by Land Bank credits that would be established at that time. Accordingly, we did not budget for ROW costs associated with WSDOT property for the light rail cost estimates.

In response to our draft SEIS, WSDOT sent to us their comments on the Freeway Route. WSDOT's letter contains the following paragraph: "Section 3.3.2 needs to acknowledge the fact that Sound Transit could be required to purchase additional right-of-way adjacent to WSDOT right-of-way to avoid compromising

WSDOT design standards and for highway future highway expansion. As a minimum, the document should address those areas along SR599 and I-5 where the alignment may have to be shifted outside WSDOT right-of-way to minimize adverse effects on safety in these corridors, e.g., control zone or sight distance."

In prior meetings with WSDOT staff, discussion focussed on providing enough clear space and adequate protection between the edge of the traveled way and the edge of Link facilities (planned at 10 feet clear). WSDOT had raised concerns over this but felt that adequate protection details could be dealt with in final design, allowing Sound Transit to stay the course. ST and WSDOT will work closely together as the design of this alternative is refined, to minimize any possible additional ROW costs. At this time, both agencies believe that the potential cost impacts, if any, would be manageable.

As for "future highway expansion," WSDOT staff made it clear that it is the state's responsibility to provide capacity on the state highway system and they wanted to make sure that ST understood and addressed that point if we were considering the use of their right-of-way. It is ST staff's belief that the addition of the Link light rail system in the I-5 corridor provides tremendous capacity to move people, when considering cost, environmental impacts, and other feasibility criteria, which should mitigate the need to expand the freeways in this location. Indeed, in the state highway plan, WSDOT is relying on ST to provide the people-moving capacity in the I-5 corridor, and they do not have specific plans to expand I-5 in this location. However, to provide the Board with a full understanding of a possible worst case, we have estimated the additional right-of-way costs that ST would incur if WSDOT added one lane onto the highway system, forcing ST to move the light rail line 12 additional feet and pushing the route outside of WSDOT right-of-way. That estimate is an additional \$ 7m in YOY dollars.

ST staff will work closely with WSDOT staff to examine the right-of-way requirements and to further assess the implications of this paragraph of their letter, and will keep the Board informed as we learn more later this spring.

Releasing ST's hold on Tukwila's SR99 project: In the past, Tukwila has had on the drawing boards a project to improve, revitalize, and beautify International Boulevard. In that their plans had no provision for light rail operating in the right-of-way, ST placed a "hold" on the project because Tukwila's plans were inconsistent with ST's Locally Preferred Alternative. The City has proceeded to finish the engineering design for the project and is now ready to advertise for bids. To implement the project, they must get ST to release its "hold", allowing PSRC to process the paperwork to receive the federal funds that they have lined up to finance the project. While this is occurring, Tukwila would be advertising for bids and evaluating proposals from contractors, and would break ground later this spring.

Thus the ST Board's identification of a preferred alternative is important for Tukwila's International Boulevard project. The City has been patiently waiting for the Board to indicate its direction since our publication of the draft SEIS in October, 2000. ST asked Tukwila to wait until after the Central Link cost and financial information was completed and the FFGA was signed before asking the Board to indicate its preferred alternative in Tukwila. Tukwila agreed to do that, but is now waiting for the Board's action.

**ESTIMATE OF ADDITIONAL SOUTH SUB- AREA COSTS**

	<u>May-2000</u>		<u>Updated Estimate</u>	
	1995\$	YOES	1995\$	YOES
Additional cost for Tukwila Freeway Route Alternatives	\$38 - \$40 m	\$51 - \$53 m	\$32 - \$34 m	\$43 - \$45 m
Additional cost for Tukwila Freeway Route Alternatives if alignment shifted to provide for highway widening			\$36 - \$38 m	\$50 - \$52 m

**Notes**

(1) Updated estimate reflects new right-of-way and environmental cost assumptions contained in the revised \$3.6 billion budget (YOE) for Central Link.

(2) Cost ranges span the two alternate alignments along E. Marginal Way (Alternatives E4.1 and E4.2); Tukwila supports alternative E4.1, the lesser number in the range given.

**ESTIMATE OF SOUTH SUBAREA SCOPE CHANGE AND REVENUE**

	YOES
Deferral/Elimination of S. 154th Street LRT Station and Park-Ride (ST Link)	\$15 - \$17 m
Deferral/Elimination of Southcenter Highway Access Ramps (ST Regional Express)	\$20 - \$24 m
Deferral/Elimination of Boeing Access Road Commuter Rail Station (ST Sounder)	\$8 m
Updated Financial Capacity	\$0 - 30.m

**Notes**

(1) Under the Draft Updated 2001 Financial Plan reviewed by the Board in December and January, the South King County subarea has a small amount of unused debt capacity (approximately \$25m in 1995 dollars; \$30m in YOE dollars). However, as the financial plan is updated and revised to match finalized cash flow estimates for Central Link, the end-year 2000 budget, and revenue figures, and as staff receives additional Board feedback on the Financial Plan, the amount of unused capacity for South King County will change. Under some scenarios, the amount of unused capacity could be eliminated and in other scenarios it could marginally increase. Updated financial capacity will be available in the April-May timeframe.

## **SOUND TRANSIT**

### **MOTION NO. M2001-02**

A Motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority identifying a Preferred Alternative for the Central Link Light Rail Project in the City of Tukwila for purposes of completing the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **Background:**

On November 18, 1999, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution R99-34 selecting the alignment for the Central Link Light Rail Project and transmitted the decision to the Federal Transit Administration. For "Segment E" of the alignment through the City of Tukwila, the board selected a surface route along Tukwila International Boulevard. At the same meeting, the board adopted Motion M99-85 directing staff to review an alternative route recommended by the City of Tukwila, subsequently referred to as the "Tukwila Freeway Route (TFR)".

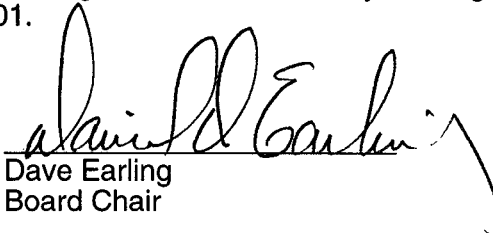
Following these board actions, staff evaluated the TFR and found sufficient merit in the route to recommend further study. On May 25, 2000, the board adopted Motion M2000-44 directing staff to initiate and complete a SEIS process on the TFR. The draft SEIS was issued on October 20, 2000, and a public hearing was held on November 15, 2000. The public comment period closed on December 4, 2000, and a final SEIS is expected to be published in March 2001.

The National and State Environmental Policy Acts require the lead agency to identify its Preferred Alternative, if it has one, in the final environmental document. The board will make a final decision on the alignment through the City this spring after issuance of the final SEIS.

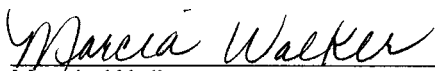
#### **Motion:**

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the Tukwila Freeway Route be identified as the Preferred Alternative for purposes of completing the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and that staff be directed to: identify alternatives for financing any additional costs that may exist on the TFR; to continue to work with Tukwila on the steps Tukwila has taken to reduce costs of the TFR; and to finalize the terms of the joint Sound Transit/Tukwila agreement on the Preferred Alternative for the board to act on this spring following issuance of the final SEIS. The alternatives for financing the additional cost should include the deferral or deletion of the Boeing Access Road Commuter Rail station and the deletion of the Southcenter direct access HOV ramp on I-405, and other financing methods and sources with the goal of achieving a neutral Sound Move budget impact.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2001.

  
Dave Earling  
Board Chair

ATTEST:

  
Marcia Walker  
Board Administrator

# The Tukwila Freeway Route

*Summary Report and Update*

## Environmental Impacts Summary

<b>Tukwila International Boulevard Route</b>	<b>Tukwila Freeway Route</b>
<b>Length</b>	
4.4 miles	5.5 miles
<b>Travel Time</b>	
8.8 minutes	9.6 minutes
<b>Stations</b>	
Boeing Access Road with Park-and-Ride	Boeing Access Road with Park-and-Ride
S. 144 <sup>th</sup> Street	S. 154 <sup>th</sup> Street with Park-and-Ride
S. 154 <sup>th</sup> Street with Park-and-Ride	No station
<b>Ridership</b>	
<b>BAR</b>	
4,000 route boardings/day	3,800 route boardings/day
156,700 system boardings/day	156,100 system boardings/day
<b>Property Acquisitions</b>	
34 full properties	26 full properties (28 with Marginal Way Option)
80 partial properties	33 partial properties (38 with Marginal Way Option)
7 residential units	9 residential units (10 with Marginal Way Option)
<b>Noise/Vibration</b>	
99 LRT impacts – 0 after mitigation	39 LRT impacts – 0 after mitigation
56 traffic impacts – 0 after mitigation	0 traffic impacts
23 vibration impacts – 0 after mitigation	8 vibration impacts – 0 after mitigation
<b>Ecosystems</b>	
2.0 acres wetlands	2.2 acres wetlands
1.6 acres wetland buffer	4.7 acres wetland buffer (more than half of the buffer is located in WSDOT right-of-way and functions at a low value)
1.5 acres forest	3.3 acres deciduous forest, the Marginal Way Option would remove an additional 0.2 acres (more than half of the forest is of low value)



## Environmental Impacts Summary (continued)

<b>Tukwila International Boulevard Route</b>	<b>Tukwila Freeway Route</b>
Affects 2 creeks (includes 1 creek with salmon)	Affects 2 creeks
<b>Traffic, Circulation and Access</b>	
Traffic congestion impacts at 5 intersections, can be mitigated.	Traffic congestion impacts at 3 intersection, can be mitigated.
Restrict access along Tukwila Intl. Blvd. and at 9 unsignalized intersections to right-in/right-out could increase distances for some motorists and divert traffic to side streets and adjacent parallel arterials.	Minor access impacts to properties along East Marginal Way.
Add two new signalized intersections, allow U-turns.	
<b>Pedestrians</b>	
Increased crossing distance across Tukwila International Blvd.	No adverse effects, improve sidewalks around stations.
Increased distance between pedestrian crossings to reach signalized pedestrian crosswalks.	
Add 3 new signal-protected mid-block crossings compared to the No-build Alternative, which provides 10 new unsignalized (4 active and 6 passive) mid-block crossings (updated since Final EIS publication).	
Urban Design Improvements at 149 <sup>th</sup> /Foster Commons.	
<b>Parking</b>	
80 off-street, 56 on-street spaces displaced (includes 42 long-term airport parking spaces).	88 off-street spaces displaced (includes 42 long-term airport parking spaces).
<b>Safety</b>	
Overall accident rates on Tukwila International Blvd. would not worsen compared to no build – reduction in mid-block vehicle left turn accidents and reduction in pedestrian accidents due to 3 new signal protected mid-block crossings, offset by possible increase in accidents due to fewer pedestrian crossing opportunities.	No significant impacts.
Minor delays for emergency vehicles	

## Environmental Impacts Summary (continued)

### **Tukwila Freeway Route**

#### **Tukwila International Boulevard Route**

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##### **Visual**

Minor impacts, compared to the No-build Alternative.

Elevated guideway impacts some views along SR 518.

##### **Historic and Archaeological**

Near a property of cultural interest to Tribes.

Affect but also protect historic Farmstead. Marginal Way Option avoids but does not protect farmstead. Near several additional properties of cultural interest to Tribes. The Tribes have expressed concerns over location of this route in a culturally important area.

##### **Land Use/Economics**

Estimated to displace 14 businesses and 72 employees.

Estimated to displace 2 businesses and 9 employees.

Could affect businesses on Tukwila International Blvd.

##### **Construction**

Short-term impacts to businesses along Tukwila International Blvd.

Short-term impacts to residences adjacent to SR 518.

##### **Cost (1995\$)**

###### **Capital Cost**

\$245 million (1995 dollars)

\$277 – 282 million (1995 dollars)

\$353 million (YOE)

\$397 – 404 million (YOE)

###### **O & M Cost**

\$49.8 million per year

\$50.4 million per year

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## **Link Light Rail Tukwila Freeway Route Option**

### Key Milestones

- November 1996 – Voter approve Sound Move identified Pacific Highway (SR99) as the alignment through Tukwila and stipulated that an Interurban route through Tukwila be studied
- May 1998 Board narrowed alternatives to four potential alignments through Tukwila
- December 1999 – Sound Transit releases Central Link Draft EIS identifying a preliminary LPA including an alignment on Tukwila International Blvd.
- February 1999 - Board narrowed alternatives in the Draft EIS to 2 alternative alignments through Tukwila: E1.1 – Pacific Highway (name changed to Tukwila) & E3 – MLK Jr. Way /Southcenter
- August 1999 Tukwila proposes freeway route alternative
- September 1999 Puget Sound Regional Council puts hold on TIP funds for Tukwila International Blvd Improvement project
- November 1999 - Sound Transit Board adopts alignment for Central Link Light Rail and directs evaluation of freeway route alternative
- March 2000 – Sound Transit holds open house on Evaluation Report findings
- May 2000 - Sound Transit Board directs preparation of a Supplemental EIS (SEIS) on Tukwila Freeway Route
- October 2000 - Sound Transit releases the Draft SEIS on Tukwila Freeway Route (TFR)
- November 2000 - Sound Transit holds public hearing on Draft SEIS
- December 2000 - Sound Transit Executive Committee briefed on Draft SEIS
- January 2001 - Sound Transit Board revises schedule and budget; authorizes signing of FFGA
- January 2001 - Sound Transit Board Motion to identify an LPA for Tukwila
- March, 2001 - Sound Transit issues Final SEIS (FSEIS)
- March/April 2001 - Sound Transit Board considers Freeway Route (FSEIS issued prior)
- April/May 2001 – Earliest FTA could revise Record of Decision