

SOUND TRANSIT

RESOLUTION NO. R2002-21

A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority to select the corridor improvements, station facilities, train storage facility, and park-and-ride improvements to be built for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project.

WHEREAS, the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority is a duly organized regional transit authority existing under Chapters 81.104 and 81.112 RCW and has powers necessary to implement a high capacity transportation system; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 1996, Central Puget Sound area voters approved local funding for Sound Move, the ten-year plan for regional high-capacity transit in the Central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion projects are elements of Sound Move; and

WHEREAS, on June 15, 1999, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued notice of its intent under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Lakewood-to-Tacoma and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project. Sound Transit concurrently issued a determination of significance and scoping notice for the preparation of an EIS for the project under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). By agreement of the two agencies, these environmental reviews were combined; and

WHEREAS, the environmental scoping process for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project included extensive community outreach and scoping meetings to solicit public input on project alternatives that should receive detailed analysis in the Draft EIS and the identification of any significant social, economic, or environmental issues related to the alternatives. This scoping process followed other extensive public involvement efforts for the project that took place in 1998 and 1999; and

WHEREAS, FTA and Sound Transit issued the Draft EIS for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project in accordance with NEPA and SEPA on June 23, 2000. The Draft EIS included a detailed analysis of the environmental impacts of the project alternatives, and identified mitigation measures for reducing project impacts. The Draft EIS was widely distributed to affected local jurisdictions; regional, state, and federal agencies; tribes; community organizations; and other interested groups and individuals; and

WHEREAS, Sound Transit held three public hearings on the Draft EIS in July and August 2000, and received written and oral comments prior to the close of the Draft EIS comment period on August 12, 2000; and

WHEREAS, following review of the Draft EIS, public comments received, and other information, the Sound Transit Board identified the Preferred Alternative for inclusion in the Final EIS, taking into account public and agency comments on the project (Motion M2001-13, adopted February 8, 2001); and

WHEREAS, FTA and Sound Transit issued the Final EIS for the project in compliance with NEPA and SEPA on June 18, 2002. The Final EIS considers and responds to the comments received on the Draft EIS and evaluates the environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative and other project alternatives. The Final EIS further includes information on project mitigation measures; and

WHEREAS, the Preliminary Engineering phase for the project has been completed; and

WHEREAS, the Board has had the opportunity to review and consider the environmental effects of the project and alternatives to the project; and

WHEREAS, after due consideration of the planning, environmental, engineering, and other issues relevant to the Lakewood-to-Tacoma and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project, the Sound Transit finds that it is in the best interest of, and will best serve, the citizens of the Sound Transit District and others to select the project alternative set forth below in this

Resolution, and to transmit the Board's decision to FTA as Sound Transit's Locally Preferred Alternative for the project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that:

Section 1. The Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project to be built shall include the corridor improvements, station facilities, train storage facility, and park-and-ride improvements described below:

A. Rail Corridor Improvements Corridor improvements that will be implemented include the completion of rail improvements identified in the Final EIS between Tacoma and Lakewood, including a new approximately 1.2 mile track segment to be located between Freighthouse Square in Tacoma and the BNSF Lakeview Branch. Other corridor improvements may include the installation of fiber optic/communication cable along the length of the tracks for operational systems such as central traffic control and closed circuit security television and communications.

B. Station Facilities The project will include the development of a commuter rail station in South Tacoma located between 56th Street and 60th Street along the BNSF track, along with up to 300 parking spaces and accommodation for local bus service. The project also includes a commuter rail station in Lakewood to be located at Pacific Highway Southwest. The Lakewood Station will be served by the SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion, described below, and includes local and regional bus facilities. Station improvements for both the South Tacoma and Lakewood commuter rail stations will include station platform areas, surrounding landscape improvements, passenger shelters and platforms, crosswalks and/or passenger waiting areas, and pedestrian crossings. Station features will be designed and built consistent with FTA requirements.

C. Train Layover Facility The project includes the development of a new train layover facility at Camp Murray, Washington, located approximately five miles south

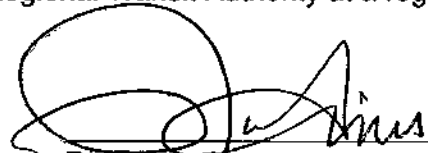
of the Lakewood Station. The train layover facility will consist of tracks for storage of four six- to ten-car trains, and small office/storage buildings for the commuter rail crew.

D. SR 512 Park-and-Ride Expansion/Lakewood Commuter Rail Parking

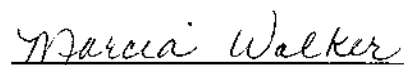
The project includes the expansion of the SR 512 Park-and-Ride and development of commuter rail parking at the location of the Lakewood station at Pacific Highway SW. Up to 1,200 new surface parking stalls will be provided. Design of the Park-and-Ride expansion/commuter rail parking will include standard and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) stall dimensions, landscaping, and surface water management facilities.

Section 2. The Executive Director is authorized to transmit the project to be built, as described above, to the Federal Transit Administration as the "Locally Preferred Alternative" for issuance of a Record of Decision and final design authorization.

ADOPTED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on December 12, 2002.


Ron Sims
Board Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administration

**SOUND TRANSIT
STAFF REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO. R2002-21

**Selecting station locations and corridor improvements to be built
for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma commuter rail project and
selecting a location for the SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project.**

Meeting:	Date:	Type of Action:	Staff Contact:	Phone:
Executive Committee	12/12/02	Discussion/Possible Action to Recommend Board Approval Action	Martin Minkoff, Director, Commuter Rail David P. Beal, Program Manager - Project Development	(206) 398-5111
Board	12/12/02			(206) 398-5124

Contract/Agreement Type:		Requested Action:	
Competitive Procurement	3	Execute New Contract/Agreement	3
Sole Source		Amend Existing Contract/Agreement	
Memorandum of Agreement		Contingency Funds Required	
Purchase/Sale Agreement		Budget Amendment Required	

4 Applicable to proposed transaction.

OBJECTIVE OF ACTION

Select rail line corridor improvements, station locations in South Tacoma and Lakewood, SR-512 Park and Ride expansion improvements, train layover facility for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail, and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion Projects.

ACTION

- Selects the series of station and corridor improvements the Board wishes to pursue, construct, and put into service on the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail project.
- Selects a co-developed site with the Lakewood commuter rail station as the SR-512 Park-and-Ride expansion project.
- Authorizes staff to transmit the improvement selections to the Federal Transit Administration as the “Locally Preferred Alternative” (LPA) for issuance of the Record of Decision (ROD) and final design authorization.

KEY FEATURES

- Selects commuter rail corridor improvements between Lakewood and Tacoma needed to implement Lakewood-to-Tacoma commuter rail service.
- Identifies components of the South Tacoma and Lakewood commuter rail station facilities.

- Determines the location of the SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion. (The budget for this Regional Express project is proposed to be incorporated into the Sounder Commuter Rail Lakewood-to-Tacoma project budget through the 2003 Proposed Budget.)
- Provides staff with direction to transmit combined station locations, park-and-ride expansion, and corridor improvements as the Locally Preferred Alternative to the FTA for issuance of the ROD. Sound Transit has requested that FTA issue the ROD in December 2002.
- Confirms that the Lakewood Court Mobile Home Park *will not* be acquired for the Lakewood Station, thereby eliminating the need for relocation of the residents.

BUDGET IMPACT SUMMARY

Project Description: The proposed action would select a Locally Preferred Alternative for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Sounder corridor, consisting of projects:

- #130 Tacoma-to-Lakewood Track & Facilities
- #251 South 56th Street Station (South Tacoma Station)
- #253 Lakewood Station

Current Status: Preliminary Engineering

Projected Completion Date: Construction 2006

Action Outside of Adopted Budget:	Y/N	Y	Requires Comment
This Line of Business	N		
This Project	N		
This Phase	N		
This Task	N		
Budget amendment required	N		
Key Financial Indicators:	Y/N	Y	Requires Comment
Contingency funds required	N		
Subarea impacts	N		
Funding required from other parties other than what is already assumed in financial plan	N		

N = Action is assumed in current Board-adopted budget. Requires no budget action or adjustment to financial plan

BUDGET DISCUSSION

While it has no direct budgetary impact, this action is a step by the Board toward later actions committing funds to final design, final property acquisitions, construction, and operations.

The project schedule and budget are under review and subject to revision in 2003. Project schedule milestones will be developed based upon the outcome of negotiations with the BNSF for the construction, use, and operation on the right-of-way, and as other key issues become more certain. The project cost estimates will also be reviewed independently. Project scopes, schedules, and budgets will then be updated as needed.

REVENUE, SUBAREA, AND FINANCIAL PLAN IMPACTS

The proposed action is consistent with the current Board-adopted and 2003 proposed budgets and is affordable within Sound Transit's current long-term financial plan and the subarea financial capacity

M/W/DBE – SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

N/A. This action has no M/W/DBE small business impacts. The individual project components will be designed and constructed in a manner consistent with all pertinent ST programs.

HISTORY OF PROJECT

The Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail facility and the SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion are components of the Sounder Commuter Rail program and the Regional Express program of Sound Move. FTA and Sound Transit issued the Draft EIS for the project on June 23, 2000.

On February 8, 2001, the Board identified a Preferred Alternative to be considered in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail project and SR-512 Expansion project (see Motion No. M2001-13).

The Preferred Alternative was based upon written and oral testimony collected during the public involvement process for the Draft EIS, comments offered by the various environmental agencies and local governments consulting on the project, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway's (BNSF's) operational requirements, and Sound Transit's schedule and budget constraints.

On June 18, 2002, FTA and Sound Transit issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), (published in the Federal Record on July 5, 2002,) prepared in accordance with the State and National Environmental Policy Acts (SEPA and NEPA).

Staff is returning to the Board following completion of the Preliminary Engineering phase as stated in Motion No. M2001-13, and request the Board consider transmitting the Locally Preferred Alternative to the Federal Transit Administration. Submittal of the LPA is a pre-condition of FTA to advancing the project into the final design phase.

Staff requests that the Board consider the following combined project elements as the Locally Preferred Alternative:

Project Element	Identified in the FEIS as:
Lakewood Section <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lakewood Station, incorporating commuter rail station and parking, local and regional bus facilities, and expansion of the SR-512 Park-and-Ride• Development of Sounder train layover tracks at Camp Murray	Preferred Alternative
South Tacoma Station, including up to 300 parking spaces	Preferred Hybrid Alternative
Rail corridor improvements between Lakewood and Tacoma, including improvements to existing BNSF facilities and the construction of a new 1.2-mile rail connection in Tacoma	Preferred Alternative

Lakewood Section

The Lakewood Station consists of a commuter rail station and parking, local and regional bus facilities, and expansion of the SR-512 Park-and-Ride. The Lakewood Station would be

bisected by Pacific Highway Southwest and extend along Interstate-5 from the McChord spur line Railroad Bridge to 47th Avenue South. The existing SR-512 Park-and-Ride (500 spaces), located at SR-512 and South Tacoma Way, would continue to serve commuters.

The development of Lakewood Station would *not* require acquisition of the Lakewood Court Mobile Home Park. Staff analyzed potential parcels of land against parking space needs and determined that it was possible to achieve the parking requirements stated in the EIS without relocating any residents of the mobile home park.

The DEIS and FEIS describe a possible parking structure at Lakewood Station. Preliminary Engineering has supported the conclusion that surface parking will provide adequate parking for commuter rail and bus passengers (approximately 1,000 spaces). However, ST could determine that construction of a parking structure is necessary in the future. (The current project budget is inadequate for a parking structure.)

The train layover facility at Camp Murray would be constructed within an existing, low-use BNSF rail corridor and would consist of three new double-ended storage tracks and a small office/storage facility. Train crews would report to this office.

South Tacoma Station

South Tacoma commuter rail station, includes station platforms, accommodation for local bus service and the development of up to 300 parking spaces. The commuter rail station would be located along the BNSF track between South 56th Street and South 60th Street. All parcels identified in the Final EIS are currently under consideration; a final decision on the specific location of the station and parking facilities will be made in the course of final design. It is likely that the final design will require the closure of the South 58th at-grade crossing of the BNSF track.

Rail Corridor Improvements (Lakewood-to-Tacoma)

This project would include improvements to the existing BNSF rail corridor between Tacoma and Lakewood, constructed largely within BNSF right-of-way. New and upgraded track, signal, and switch improvements will be built. The project may also include installing fiber optic/communication cable along the length of the tracks for operational systems such as central traffic control and closed circuit security television and communications.

In addition to existing track improvements, the project would include a 1.2-mile segment of new track between East "D" Street and South "M" Street in the City of Tacoma. A portion of Delin Street would need to be vacated and re-graded. The connection would include three new at-grade crossings at "A" Street, Pacific Avenue/26th, and South Tacoma Way.

**Prior Board or Committee Actions
and Relevant Board Policies**

Motion or Resolution Number	Summary of Action	Date of Action
Motion No. M2001-13	Identifying the Preferred Alternative for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and Ride Expansion Project to be considered in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, including rail line corridor improvements, commuter rail station locations in South Tacoma and Lakewood, a train storage facility, and the expansion of the SR-512 Park-and-Ride capacity.	2/8/01
Motion No. M2002-66	A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound RTA to authorize the Executive Director to execute the "Funding and Cooperative Agreement Between the City of Lakewood and Sound Transit for the Development of a Regional Rail and Bus Station and Community Connector Budget" which transfers \$1.7 million of local revenue funds to the City to be utilized for the City's CBD Connector Project upon completion of the City's environmental review process and the FTA's review of the Agreement.	5/9/02
Motion No. M2001-18	A motion of the Finance Committee of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the Executive Director to execute a contract with Merritt+Pardini to provide preliminary design services for the Lakewood Transportation Center (combined commuter rail station and express bus facility).	3/15/01
Motion No. M2000-36	Authorizing the Executive Director to execute a contract with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) for Preliminary Engineering, with an option to add Final Design of Everett-to-Seattle and Lakewood-to-Tacoma railroad improvements.	5/4/00
Motion No. 98-14	Authorizing the Executive Director to execute a contract with Berger/Abam Engineers, Inc. for services in connection with the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma commuter rail and 512 Park-and-Ride Expansion.	3/6/98

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAY

Delay by the Board could delay FTA's issuance of a Record of Decision and would delay authorization to enter final design for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project. While there are other milestones to be reached before FTA will grant final design approval (e.g., an agreement in principle with BNSF for construction and operations,) this Board action is a key step toward the final design process.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION

The Cities of Tacoma and Lakewood, the Washington State Department of Transportation, and Pierce Transit served as coordinating agencies during the environmental review process for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion Project. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) served as a Cooperating Agency. The FTA is the federal lead agency for this project and the related environmental process. These agencies have been instrumental in the substantial progress on the project made to date.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion Project has been the subject of an extensive public involvement process. In 1998, prior to the commencement of the formal scoping process for the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion project, Sound Transit conducted a number of project workshops with area stakeholders, including Tacoma and Lakewood Technical Advisory Committees, downtown organizations and social service providers, community organizations, neighborhood councils and arts organizations, planning entities, and City of Tacoma and Lakewood staff and commissions. In March 1998, Sound Transit also held public meetings to provide information regarding the project and the development of potential alternatives.

The scoping comment period took place in summer 1999. At that time, Sound Transit solicited input from citizens, organizations, and agencies in order to define the alternatives included in the Draft EIS. As part of the scoping process, Sound Transit held scoping meetings on July 27 and July 29, 1999.

Sound Transit and FTA widely circulated the Draft EIS to affected local jurisdictions, regional, state, and federal agencies, community organizations, environmental, and other interest groups, and interested individuals. The Draft EIS was issued on June 23, 2000, and the comment period extended to August 12, 2000. Public meetings/hearings on the Draft EIS were held on July 12 and 13, 2000, and August 9, 2000. Both oral and written comments were accepted at the meetings. In addition, comments were received at the Sound Transit office by mail, e-mail, and fax. Official responses to the Draft EIS were addressed at the hearings and were incorporated into the Final EIS.

Other public involvement efforts include Sound Transit's ongoing briefings to a number of interest groups and the use of design workshops intended to facilitate public comment/input. Briefings, targeted workshops, and scoping meetings were held with a number of groups, such as the Tacoma Planning Commission, the Tacoma Chamber of Commerce, the Master Builders Association, the Tacoma News Tribune Editorial Board, the Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, Pierce County representatives, and the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce.

Sound Transit also held a meeting in early 2001 with several agencies to discuss potential issues and effects related to the development of the Lakewood-to-Tacoma Commuter Rail and SR-512 Park-and-Ride Expansion Project including design of the project, water quality and quantity, and potential impacts to natural resources. Attendees included professionals from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Washington State Department of Ecology, the Army Corps of Engineers, and Camp Murray. Sound Transit also held a meeting with residents of the Lakewood Court Mobile Home Park in the City of Lakewood to provide details regarding the project and to identify and address concerns regarding potential project effects. Finally,

Sound Transit held numerous informal discussions with State Historic Preservation Office, WSDOT, the Cities of Tacoma and Lakewood, and BNSF.

ALTERNATIVES

- The Board could delay this selection of improvements to be built and the Locally Preferred Alternative decision.

Not recommended. FTA issuance of the ROD and Final Design Authorization will allow ST to proceed into the Final Design phase. This action would keep the entire Lakewood-to-Tacoma project, including the SR-512 Park-and-Ride expansion, moving forward.

- The Board can request a modified or reduced project inside or outside the scope of the DEIS/FEIS.

Not recommended. The Board could request a modified or reduced project scope inside the scope of the DEIS/FEIS with some minor delay while the Draft Record of Decision is modified. However, any requested modification to project scope outside what is described in the DEIS/FEIS would jeopardize federal funding until a re-evaluation of any new impacts was completed, including additional public review and comment periods. FTA requires adoption of a Locally Preferred Alternative prior to issuance of Record of Decision and Final Design Authorization.

LEGAL REVIEW

JW 11/26/02