

**SOUND TRANSIT  
STAFF REPORT**

**MOTION NO. M2006-34**

**Feasibility Study on the Proposed  
Grade-Separated Track between D and M Street**

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Action:</b>	<b>Staff Contact:</b>	<b>Phone:</b>
Finance Committee	4/20/06	Discussion/Possible Action	Agnes Govern, Director, Capital Projects Jim Edwards, Deputy Director <b>Diane Hilmo, Project Manager</b>	(206) 398-5037  (206) 398-5436 (206) 398-5415

**PROJECT NAME**

Tacoma to Lakewood Track and Signal Project

**PROPOSED ACTION**

Authorizes staff to complete a feasibility study on the proposed grade-separated Sounder commuter rail track between D Street and M Street using current authorized Tacoma to Lakewood Track and Signal Project contingency funding.

**KEY FEATURES of PROPOSED ACTION**

- On March 23, 2006, the Board advised staff to pursue the feasibility of a grade-separated track alignment over Pacific Avenue.
- Current authorized project contingency dollars will be used by existing contracts to fund the following areas of the feasibility study:
  - Using existing design contract authorization, HDR Engineering will begin conceptual engineering on the grade-separated track design concept.
  - The on-call environmental services contract with Herrera will be used to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with NEPA and also complete appropriate SEPA documentation, using current contract authorization.
  - Using current on-call right of way services authorization, the existing contract with Pharos Corporation will be used to provide due diligence on potential property acquisition.
- Staff will return to the Finance Committee later in the year to seek a contract amendment to the HDR Engineering contract if the Board directs staff to continue the preliminary engineering of the grade-separated track alignment option.

**BUDGET IMPACT SUMMARY**

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.

## **BUDGET and FINANCIAL PLAN DISCUSSION**

Consultants are developing proposals to do this work. Cost to complete the feasibility study is estimated at \$600,000. Possible sources to fund this work include:

HDR Contract -- remaining contract contingency funds of \$281,866;  
Herrera Environmental Consultants – remaining contract funds of \$443,000;  
Pharos Corporation Contract – remaining contract funds of \$1,849,000;  
Unallocated Phase and Project Contingency Funds – Final Design Phase, \$1,190,828; Right of Way Phase; \$878,051; and Contingency Phase, \$7,374,255.

## **BUDGET TABLE**

Summary for Board Action (Year of Expenditure \$000)

	2006 Board Adopted Budget (A)	Committed To Date (B)	This Action (C)	Total Committed & Action (D)	Uncommitted (Shortfall) (E)
1 Agency Administration	\$ 8,908	\$ 4,611	\$ -	\$ 4,611	\$ 4,297
2 Preliminary Engineering	\$ 3,063	\$ 2,980	-	\$ 2,980	\$ 84
3 Final Design	\$ 7,018	\$ 4,428	-	\$ 4,428	\$ 2,589
4 Right of Way	\$ 28,237	\$ 22,496	-	\$ 22,496	\$ 5,741
5 Construction	\$ 73,743	\$ 4,924	-	\$ 4,924	\$ 68,818
6 Vehicles	\$ 19,783	\$ 17,767	-	\$ 17,767	\$ 2,016
7 Contingency	\$ 7,374	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ 7,374
8 Total Current Budget	\$ 148,126	\$ 57,206	\$ -	\$ 57,206	\$ 90,920

**Notes:**

Project budget is located on page 97 of the Adopted 2006 Budget book.  
Committed to-date amount includes actual outlays and commitments through April 4, 2006.

## **M/W/DBE – SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION**

This action will be completed through existing contracts with HDR Engineering, Inc.; Herrera Environmental Consultants; and Pharos Corporation.

### **Prime Consultant/Contractor – Conceptual Engineering**

HDR Engineering, Inc. is the prime consultant for the conceptual engineering and will perform 51.3% of the work. HDR Engineering, Inc. committed to a 28% M/W/DBE and Small Business goal. Actual M/W/DBE and Small Business participation is estimated to be over 37% at the conclusion of the contract. Currently, the M/W/DBE contract usage is at 35%.

### **Prime Consultant/Contractor – On-Call Environmental Services**

Herrera Environmental Consultants is the prime consultant for this contract and is committed to a 30% M/W/DBE and Small Business goal. Their current M/W/DBE allocation is 26%.

## Prime Consultant/Contractor – Real Estate

Pharos Corporation is a W/DBE contractor and is committed to using employees and subconsultants to achieve an overall goal of 40%. Currently, the M/W/DBE contract usage is at 50%.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION and BACKGROUND for PROPOSED ACTION**

Sound Transit will provide commuter rail service along a new 1.2-mile track extension in Tacoma. This extension will be from the Tacoma Dome Station to M Street, where it will connect to the existing Lakeview Subdivision tracks and continue south to Lakewood. It will include two to three new at-grade crossings between D Street and M Street.

Early studies of the project corridor were initiated in the mid-1990s. A corridor-wide EIS and supporting technical studies were completed between 1999 and 2002. A Final EIS in compliance with NEPA and SEPA was issued by the FTA and Sound Transit in May 2002. Several alternative alignments were considered for the new track segment between D Street and M Street (1.2 miles in length). The preferred alternative, adopted by the Board in December 2003, begins at Tacoma Dome Station and continues approximately one mile to the Yakima Avenue overpass where it meets existing railroad right-of-way. The alignment crosses Pacific Avenue at-grade and runs along the south side of South Tacoma Way crossing South Tacoma Way at-grade and then entering existing railroad right-of-way.

Design for the corridor began in November 2004. An independent technical review and an industry peer review were conducted in April 2005 and September 2005. Sound Transit initiated a series of computerized train simulations to evaluate train operations along the steep grade between D Street and M Street. Since that time, Sound Transit has worked with project stakeholders to consider other design options to reduce the D Street to M Street grade and eliminate the two new at-grade crossings.

On February 9, 2006, staff updated the Sound Transit Board on the challenges related to design of the new 1.2 mile track segment in Tacoma and discussed the possible operational issues relating to the steep grade in that segment and the two new grade crossings.

On March 23, 2006, staff briefed the Board on a potential third alignment alternative. Based on the information to date, the Board was informed that this alternative could add \$16 to \$20 million to the project budget and two to three years to the project schedule. The Board advised staff to evaluate the feasibility of the grade-separated track alignment over Pacific Avenue and report back to the Board in six months.

If Sound Transit were to finalize and construct the EIS at-grade track design preferred alternative, the corridor would be constrained to operating a maximum of 18 train trips based on the risk analysis conducted last fall. Sound Transit's re-evaluation of designing a grade separation track over Pacific Avenue would eliminate the construction of two new at-grade crossings at Pacific Avenue and South Tacoma Way and would allow train trips in addition to the 18 Sounder commuter rail trips.

## Prior Board/Committee Actions on this Project and Relevant Board Policies

Motion or Resolution Number	Summary of Action	Date of Action
M2005-115	Contract amendment with HDR Engineering Inc. to include final design services for the Lakewood layover facility.	10/27/05
M2005-77	Execute a three-year contract with Herrera Environmental Consultants to provide on-call environmental permitting services for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$864,000, with an option to extend the contract by one year	7/21/05
M2005-61	Contract amendment with HDR Engineering Inc. to include final design services for track and signal work for the Lakewood to Tacoma commuter rail segment.	6/23/05
M2004-115	Executed a contract with HDR Engineering Inc. to provide preliminary engineering services for the Tacoma to Lakewood Track and Signal project.	11/18/04
M2003-135	Executed the Joint Use Agreement with the BNSF Railway for the Tacoma to Nisqually railroad right-of-way and properties.	12/13/03
M2004-15	Executed a three-year contract with Pharos Corporation to provide appraisal, acquisition and relocation services for the sounder Commuter Rail and Regional Express projects yet to be completed under Sound Move, for a total amount not to exceed \$6,165,885, with two one-year options to extend the term of the contract.	2/13/03
R2002-21	Selected the rail corridor improvements for the Lakewood to Tacoma Commuter Rail project.	12/12/02
M2001-44	Executed a contract with Berger-Abam for services related to Lakewood to Tacoma Commuter Rail Final Environmental Impact Statement.	5/3/01
M2001-13	Selected the preferred alternative for the Lakewood to Tacoma Commuter Rail Project.	2/8/01

### **CONSEQUENCES of DELAY**

On March 23, 2006, the Board advised staff to evaluate the feasibility of the grade separated track alignment over Pacific Avenue and to report back to the Board in six months. Staff needs to start working on the feasibility study now to complete conceptual engineering, environmental review and NEPA/SEPA documentation, and due diligence on possible real estate acquisition to determine project budget and schedule in order to better inform the Board's decision.

### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Staff has presented information on the overpass alternative to community groups in the City of Tacoma. Through the preparation of the feasibility study and the environmental assessment Sound Transit will hold a public hearing to obtain comments from the public. Staff and designers will also work with local businesses through the design process to obtain their input.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

SK

### **LEGAL REVIEW**

JW 4/12/06

## **SOUND TRANSIT**

### **MOTION NO. M2006-34**

A motion of the Finance Committee of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing staff to complete a feasibility study on the proposed grade-separated Sounder commuter rail track between D Street and M Street using currently authorized Tacoma to Lakewood project contingency funds.

#### **Background:**

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Staff will return to the Finance Committee later in the year to seek a contract amendment to the HDR Engineering contract if the Board directs staff to continue the preliminary engineering of the grade separated track alignment option.

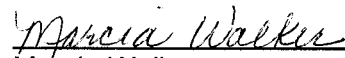
**Motion:**

It is hereby moved by the Finance Committee of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that staff is authorized to complete a feasibility study on the proposed grade-separated Sounder commuter rail track between D Street and M Street using currently authorized Tacoma to Lakewood project contingency funds.

APPROVED by the Finance Committee of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on April 20, 2006.

  
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Fred Butler  
Finance Committee Chair

ATTEST:

  
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Marcia Walker  
Board Administrator