

**SOUND TRANSIT
STAFF REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO. R2006-07

North Link Project Identification and Related Finance and Budget Amendments

Meeting:	Date:	Type of Action:	Staff Contact:	Phone:
Finance Committee	4/20/06	Discussion/Possible Action to Recommend Board Approval	Ahmad Fazel, Link Director Ron Endlich, North Link Program Manager	(206) 398-5389 (206) 398-5141
Board	4/27/06	Action		

PROJECT NAME

North Link; University Link Segment of the North Link – University of Washington Station to Pine Street Stub Tunnel

PROPOSED ACTION

- Selects the final route, profile, and station locations for the North Link Light Rail Project.
- Selects the University Link portion of North Link from the Initial Segment Pine Street Stub Tunnel in downtown Seattle to the University of Washington Station to be constructed and operated as part of the Central Link Light Rail project, including authorizing the steps necessary to complete final design and implementation of the University Link project including securing a federal Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA).
- Increases the lifetime Adopted 2006 Budget for University Link to \$1.514 billion and revises the annual Adopted 2006 Budget for University Link to \$20.6 million.
- For planning purposes reduces the minimum debt service coverage for the North King County subarea to 1.15x for the University Link Finance Plan.

KEY FEATURES of PROPOSED ACTION

- Selects the final route, profile, and station locations for the North Link portion of the Central Link Light Rail Project (see Project Description below).
- Selects “University Link” as the segment of North Link from the Pine Street Stub Tunnel (PSST) in downtown Seattle to University of Washington Station consistent with the selected route described below, to be advanced to final design and land acquisition, followed by construction and operation, subject to appropriate federal approvals. The University Link project will be baselined at the time of the FFGA.
- The 3.15-mile University Link light rail extension proposed to be constructed between the PSST and the UW Station will be fully integrated into the Initial Segment operations.

- Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Sound Transit and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued the North Link Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) on April 7, 2006. The Final SEIS is a supplement to the Central Link Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) issued in November 1999, and discusses the environmental effects of extending light rail from the PSST to Northgate in the City of Seattle.
- Following Board action on this resolution, the FTA is expected to issue a Record of Decision (ROD) on the North Link project in May or June 2006.
- Preliminary Engineering for North Link has been completed. Final design for University Link will not begin until the Record of Decision is issued and permission from FTA to enter into final design is received.
- Reviews the University Link Finance Plan and amends the 2006 North Link and lifetime capital budgets to reflect implementation of the University Link portion of the North Link project.

BUDGET IMPACT SUMMARY

Current Project Phase: Final Design

Action Outside of Adopted Budget:	✓	Comments on Checked Items
This Project	✓	Requires transfer of uncommitted financial capacity within the North King County subarea
This Phase		
This Task		
Budget Amendment Required	✓	Requires amendment to the adopted 2006 Link capital budget for North Link

Key Financial Indicators:	✓	Comments on Checked Items
Contingency Funds Required		
Funding required from other parties (other than what is in financial plan)		Requires funding from competitive federal New Starts grants

Not checked = action is assumed in current Board-adopted budget. No budget action or adjustment to financial plan required

BUDGET and FINANCIAL PLAN DISCUSSION

The current adopted 2006 lifetime capital budget for the North Link-45th Street to CPS project is \$161 million. Within that amount \$60 million has been set aside for final design of University Link and other project related activities.

The proposed resolution would create a budget for University Link of \$1.514 billion, made up of \$64 million in historic costs and \$1.45 billion of future budget to complete final design, land acquisition, construction and related project activities to extend light rail to the University of Washington Station.

The adopted 2006 annual capital budget for University Link would also be adopted to fund project activities during the balance of 2006. Should the Board adopt the proposed resolution, the amended 2006 annual budget for University Link would be \$20.6 million.

Budget for the segment north of the University of Washington Station will consist of budget equivalent to that segment's historic costs as well as budget for anticipated future work in that area. Once historic costs have been divided between this segment and University Link, and before additional costs are incurred, staff will bring forward a resolution to the Board to seek adoption of a scope, schedule and budget for that portion of the alignment.

This proposed action would increase the Board-adopted lifetime budget for both the Link Light Rail capital program and the North King County subarea by \$1.39 billion. It has been determined that sufficient uncommitted financial capacity is available within the North King County subarea to fund this budget increase.

Elements of the University Link Finance Plan include:

1. \$700 million of federal New Start grants (FFGA).
2. For planning purposes, a reduction in the minimum debt service coverage ratio for any single year for the North King County subarea from 1.3x to 1.15x.
3. Issuance of bonds after 2009 for the University Link project with 10-year interest only structure.
4. A delay in the start of full planned capital replacement for the North King County subarea.

Sound Transit also anticipates seeking other competitive grant sources for the University Link project, such as FTA section 5307 competitive funding, CMAQ, etc.

A draft University Link Finance Plan was first reviewed with the Sound Transit Finance Committee in November 2005. In early 2006 the finance plan was submitted to a peer review. The results of the peer review were discussed with the Finance Committee on April 6, 2006.

BUDGET TABLE

Action Item: University Link (selects the University Link portion of North Link from the Initial Segment Pine Street Stub Tunnel in downtown Seattle to the University of Washington Station, to be constructed and operated as part of the Central Link Light Rail project)

(Year of Expenditure \$000)

		Proposed Amended 2006 Budget	
Phase		2006 Annual Budget	Lifetime Budget
1	Agency Administration	\$ 2,079	\$ 87,532
2	Preliminary Engr / Environmental Review	\$ 261	\$ 23,776
3	Final Design / Specifications	\$ 3,324	\$ 74,635
4	Right of Way	\$ 9,959	\$ 135,261
5	Construction	\$ -	\$ 972,140
6	Construction Services	\$ -	\$ 57,911
7	Third Party Agreements	\$ 5,018	\$ 20,433
8	Vehicles	\$ -	\$ 142,320
9	Contingency	\$ -	\$ -
10	Total	\$ 20,641	\$ 1,514,008

M/W/DBE – SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

Not applicable to this action.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION and BACKGROUND for PROPOSED ACTION

On November 18, 1999, the Sound Transit Board approved Resolution No. R99-34, which selected the Central Link light rail alignment from the University District in Seattle to South 200th Street in the City of SeaTac to be built.

After re-examining the Central Link Light Rail Project because of cost, schedule, and engineering issues, on September 27, 2001 the Sound Transit Board identified the preferred initial 14-mile light rail segment to be constructed and operated from Convention Place in downtown Seattle to South 154th Street. On November 29, 2001 the Board adopted Resolution No. R2001-16, selecting that Initial Segment of the Central Link Light Rail Project to be constructed and operated by 2009.

Also on September 27, 2001, the Board adopted Motion No. M2001-104, which authorized a work plan including the engineering and environmental analysis required to evaluate light rail routes and station alternatives for North Link. The scoping process to evaluate the range of proposed actions, alternatives, and impacts to be discussed in the North Link Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) was completed in November 2001.

On February 14, 2002, the Board approved Motion No. M2002-13, which identified routes for inclusion in the North Link draft SEIS. On May 23, 2002, the Board approved Motion No. M2002-69, which modified those route alternatives previously identified for inclusion in the North Link draft SEIS.

The Board approved Motion No. M2003-33 on March 13, 2003, which directed staff to complete additional work to further develop the North Link route alternatives in order to better inform its decision-making.

Sound Transit and the Federal Transit Administration issued a Draft SEIS to satisfy the requirements of NEPA and SEPA on November 21, 2003 (2003 Draft SEIS). The 2003 Draft SEIS stated that a purpose of the revised North Link project was to reduce costs and construction risks. The 2003 Draft SEIS included a detailed evaluation of the costs and impacts of the North Link route alternatives. The 2003 Draft SEIS process included a 70-day public comment period and two public hearings.

Following consultation with the University of Washington, the Board approved Motion No. M2003-128 on December 11, 2003, authorizing study of a modified Montlake route. In February 2004, Sound Transit issued an addendum to the 2003 Draft SEIS, which analyzed the impacts of a modified Montlake route through the University of Washington campus. The addendum process included a 30-day public comment period and a public meeting to discuss its contents. Over 300 letters and oral comments were received on the 2003 Draft SEIS and addendum.

On May 20, 2004, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution No. R2004-08 identifying the preferred route and stations for North Link (except identifying two potential routes and stations for the Roosevelt area) and directing staff to complete the Final SEIS and other work on the preferred alternative and other alternatives in the 2003 Draft SEIS. On January 27, 2005, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution No. R2005-06 identifying the preferred Roosevelt route and station location.

On July 28, 2005, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution No. R2005-20, which modified the preferred route, profiles, and station locations for the North Link Light Rail Project including removal of the First Hill light rail station and identifying University Link as the preferred segment of North Link for purposes of the Final SEIS and for purposes of obtaining a New Starts rating from the Federal Transit Administration.

Sound Transit published the 2005 North Link Draft SEIS in October 2005 to identify project changes since the 2003 Draft SEIS. Two public open houses/hearings were held during the 45+day comment period and approximately 80 letters and oral comments were received.

In December 2005 the FTA announced that University Link received its highest New Starts rating, the only project in the nation to achieve this rating for FY2007, since new project rating criteria were recently implemented by FTA.

The North Link Final SEIS was published on April 7, 2006, informing the Board's final decision on the North Link project to be built, including route, station locations, project phasing and financing.

This action would select the final route, profile, and station locations for the North Link Light Rail portion of the Central Link Light Rail Project as follows:

- From the Initial Segment Pine Street Stub Tunnel (PSST) in downtown Seattle, the light rail route would cross under Interstate-5 and proceed east and then north to a cut-and-cover station beneath Nagle Place, south of East John Street on Capitol Hill. The Capitol Hill Station will have two entrances on the east side of Broadway Avenue E. A third entrance west of Broadway will be included in the Capitol Hill Station final design but it is anticipated that entrance construction funding would be provided through third-party partnerships or deferred to a future phase.
- The tunnel route would then cross the ship canal via the modified Montlake route with a cut-and-cover crossover track and station on the University of Washington campus near Husky Stadium. The University of Washington Station will have one entrance east of Montlake Boulevard NE and one entrance or station access north of Pacific Place NE and the Burke-Gilman Trail (profile to be determined in final design). A third entrance west of Montlake Boulevard on the “Triangle Garage” block will be included in the UW Station final design but it is anticipated that the entrance profile and potential construction funding or deferral to a future phase will be determined after additional safety/security reviews and third-party partnership negotiations.
- The tunnel route would include a vent facility in the vicinity of East Roanoke Street and 22nd Avenue East (Hop-In Market site) in the Montlake neighborhood to meet operational and system requirements. During final design, additional ventilation and fire/life/safety reviews will be undertaken to determine whether the vent facility can be eliminated.
- North from the University of Washington Station, the tunnel route would continue to a cut-and-cover station under Brooklyn Avenue NE, south of NE 45th Street in the University District.
- North of the Brooklyn Station in the University District, the light rail route would continue in a tunnel to a cut-and-cover station just west of 12th Avenue NE between NE 65th Street and NE 67th Street in the Roosevelt neighborhood. From the Roosevelt Station, the tunnel route would continue north and then northwest to a portal location on Washington State Department of Transportation right-of-way immediately north of the Lake City Way interchange with Interstate-5.
- North of the Roosevelt tunnel portal, the light rail line would continue along the east side of Interstate-5 staying west of the parallel city streets to Northgate. The elevated Northgate Station would be located east of 1st Avenue NE, spanning NE 103rd Street. This station would provide access to bus transfers at the Northgate Transit Center and to adjacent park-and-ride facilities.

This action would also select the University Link portion of North Link from the Pine Street Stub Tunnel in downtown Seattle to the University of Washington Station to be constructed and operated as part of the Central Link Light Rail Project, including authorizing the steps necessary to complete final design and implementation of the University Link project including securing a FFGA; amend the 2006 budget as required to implement this action; and amend financial policies consistent with the University Link Finance Plan.

CONSEQUENCES of DELAY

Delay in Board action to select the North Link route, profile, and station locations for the North Link Light Rail Project and to select the University Link portion of the project to be implemented would delay the FTA's ability to issue a Record of Decision as well as delay the FTA final design approval process. Delay of the Board action would also postpone final design consultant procurement activities, planned to begin shortly after the Board action, if this resolution is approved.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Sound Transit staff has held a number of station design workshops, project open houses, and other meetings involving property owners, neighborhood and business groups, and other interested parties throughout the North Link study area as part of the environmental and Preliminary Engineering work completed to date. A 45+day comment period on the 2005 Draft SEIS began in October 2005 and two public open houses/hearings were held in November 2005.

In addition, staff has worked with the First Hill community and other groups as the evaluation of potential First Hill transit connector alternatives advance into conceptual engineering, as an identified candidate ST2 project.

Sound Transit would continue an active community outreach program as part of University Link final design work efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

PW

LEGAL REVIEW

DB 4/14/06

SOUND TRANSIT

RESOLUTION NO. R2006-07

A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (1) selecting the final route, profile, and station locations for the North Link Light Rail Project; (2) selecting the University Link portion of North Link to be constructed and operated as part of the Central Link Light Rail Project, including authorizing the steps necessary to complete final design and implementation of the University Link Project including securing a federal Full Funding Grant Agreement; (3) increasing the University Link lifetime Adopted 2006 Budget and revising the annual Adopted 2006 Budget; and (4) for planning purposes reducing the minimum debt service coverage for the North King County subarea to 1.15x for the University Link Finance Plan.

WHEREAS, a Regional Transit Authority, hereinafter referred to as Sound Transit, has been created for the Pierce, King, and Snohomish County region by action of their respective county councils pursuant to RCW 81.112.030; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 1996, at a general election held within the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority district, the voters approved local funding for Sound Move, the plan for high capacity transit in the Central Puget Sound Region, which includes an electric light rail line connecting the cities of SeaTac, Tukwila, and Seattle; and

WHEREAS, Sound Transit is implementing the Sound Move transit plan; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 1999, Sound Transit and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a final environmental impact statement (FEIS) for the Central Link Light Rail Transit Project to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA); and

WHEREAS, on November 18, 1999, the Sound Transit Board approved Resolution No. R99-34, which selected the Central Link Light Rail Project alignment from the University District in Seattle to South 200th Street in the City of SeaTac to be built; and

WHEREAS, on July 27, 2000, the Board adopted Resolution No. R2000-11, which further refined the alternatives to be studied for the University District to Northgate light rail segment; and

WHEREAS, because of the changed and unforeseen circumstances set forth in Resolution No. R2001-16 adopted on November 29, 2001, the Board selected as the initial segment of the Central Link Light Rail Project to be constructed, the 14-mile segment from Convention Place Station in downtown Seattle to South 154th Street in Tukwila, with connections to Sea-Tac Airport; and

WHEREAS, because Sound Transit is committed to completing the light rail segments from downtown Seattle to the University District and to Northgate, on September 27, 2001 the Board approved Motion No. M2001-104, which authorized a work plan including the engineering and environmental analysis required to evaluate light rail routes and station alternatives for Central Link light rail between Convention Place and Northgate; and

WHEREAS, the scoping process to evaluate the range of proposed actions, alternatives, and impacts to be discussed in the North Link Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) was completed in November 2001; and

WHEREAS, on February 14, 2002, the Board approved Motion No. M2002-13, which identified routes for inclusion in the North Link draft SEIS; and

WHEREAS, on May 23, 2002, the Board approved Motion No. M2002-69, which modified the route alternatives previously identified for study in the North Link draft SEIS; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2003, the Board approved Motion No. M2003-33, which directed staff to complete additional work to further develop the North Link route alternatives in order to better inform its decision-making; and

WHEREAS, on November 21, 2003, Sound Transit and the Federal Transit Administration issued a Draft SEIS to satisfy the requirements of NEPA and SEPA. The 2003 Draft SEIS stated that a purpose of the revised North Link project was to reduce costs and construction risk. The

2003 Draft SEIS included a detailed evaluation of the costs and impacts of the North Link route alternatives. The 2003 Draft SEIS process included a 70-day public comment period and two public hearings; and,

WHEREAS, following consultation with the University of Washington, the Board approved Motion No. M2003-128 on December 11, 2003, which authorized study of a modified Montlake route; and

WHEREAS, in February 2004, Sound Transit issued an addendum to the 2003 Draft SEIS. The addendum analyzed the impacts of a modified Montlake route through the University of Washington campus. The addendum process included a 30-day public comment period and a public meeting to discuss its contents. Over 300 letters and oral comments were received on the 2003 Draft SEIS and addendum; and

WHEREAS, on May 20, 2004, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution No. R2004-08 identifying the preferred route and stations for the North Link Light Rail Project (except identifying two potential routes and stations for the Roosevelt area) and authorizing staff to complete the Final SEIS and other work on the preferred alternative and other alternatives in the 2003 Draft SEIS; and

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2005, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution No. R2005-06 identifying the preferred Roosevelt route and station location for the North Link Light Rail Project; and

WHEREAS, on July 28, 2005, the Sound Transit Board adopted Resolution No. R2005-20, which modified the preferred route, profile, and station locations for the North Link Light Rail Project including removal of the First Hill light rail station and identifying University Link as the preferred segment of North Link for purposes of the Final SEIS and for purposes of obtaining a New Starts rating from the Federal Transit Administration; and

WHEREAS, Sound Transit published the 2005 North Link Draft SEIS in October 2005 to identify project changes since the 2003 Draft SEIS. Two public open houses/hearings were held

during the 45+ day comment period and approximately 80 letters and oral comments were received, and

WHEREAS, in December 2005 the FTA announced that University Link received its highest New Starts rating, the only project in the nation to achieve this rating for FY2007 since new project rating criteria were recently implemented by FTA; and

WHEREAS, the North Link Final SEIS was published on April 7, 2006, informing the Board's final decision on the North Link Project to be built, including route, station locations, project phasing and financing.

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

Section 1: The final route, profile, and station locations for the North Link Light Rail Project shall be adopted as follows (as generally described in the 2006 Final SEIS):

A. From the Central Link Initial Segment Pine Street Stub Tunnel (PSST) in downtown Seattle, the light rail route would cross under Interstate-5 and proceed east and then north to a cut-and-cover station beneath Nagle Place, south of East John Street on Capitol Hill. The Capitol Hill Station will have at least two entrances. One entrance (north) will be located east of Broadway Avenue E, just south of E. John Street. A second entrance (west) will be located west of Broadway, south of E. Denny Way. A third entrance (south), if needed for code compliance and/or safety/security reasons, would be located east of Broadway, south of E. Denny Way.

B. The tunnel route would then cross the ship canal via the modified Montlake route with a cut-and-cover crossover track and station on the University of Washington campus near Husky Stadium. The University of Washington Station will have one entrance east of Montlake Boulevard NE and one entrance north of Pacific Place NE and Burke-Gilman Trail (profile to be determined in final design). A third entrance west

of Montlake Boulevard on the “Triangle Garage” block will be included in the University of Washington Station final design and it is anticipated that the entrance profile and potential construction will be determined after additional safety/security reviews and third-party partnership negotiations.

C. The tunnel route would include a vent facility in the vicinity of East Roanoke Street and 22nd Avenue East (Hop-In Market site) in the Montlake neighborhood to meet operational and system requirements. During final design, additional ventilation and fire/life/safety reviews will be undertaken to determine whether the vent facility can be eliminated.

D. North from the University of Washington Station, the tunnel route would continue to a cut-and-cover station under Brooklyn Avenue NE, south of NE 45th Street in the University District.

E. North of the Brooklyn Station in the University District, the light rail route would continue in a tunnel to a cut-and-cover station just west of 12th Avenue NE between NE 65th Street and NE 67th Street in the Roosevelt neighborhood. From the Roosevelt Station, the tunnel route would continue north and then northwest to a portal location on Washington State Department of Transportation right-of-way immediately north of the Lake City Way interchange with Interstate-5.

F. North of the Roosevelt tunnel portal, the light rail line would continue along the east side of Interstate-5 staying west of the parallel city streets to Northgate. The elevated Northgate Station would be located east of 1st Avenue NE, spanning NE 103rd Street. This station would provide access to bus transfers at the Northgate Transit Center and to adjacent park-and ride facilities.

Section 2: The University Link portion of North Link (University Link Project) from the Pine Street Stub Tunnel in downtown Seattle to the University of Washington Station will be constructed and operated as part of the Central Link Light Rail Project, the steps necessary to complete final design and implementation of the University Link Project are authorized, and the


Chief Executive Officer is authorized to secure and execute a federal Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA).

Section 3: The lifetime Adopted 2006 Budget for University Link is amended to \$1.514 billion and the annual Adopted 2006 Budget for University Link is amended to \$20.6 million. The lifetime budget includes \$1.45 billion in future costs and approximately \$64 million in actual cost incurred or committed through March 31, 2006.

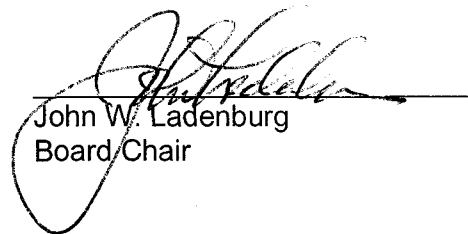
Section 4: The major elements of the project financing plan, as detailed in the 2006 Draft Finance Plan with University Link (February 2006) include a \$700 million Full Funding Grant Agreement, issuing bonds from 2009-2016 with a 10-year interest only period, delaying the start of full capital replacement contributions for the North King County subarea from 2009 to 2016, and for planning purposes reducing the minimum net debt service coverage for the North King County subarea to 1.15x.

ADOPTED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on April 27, 2006.

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator



John W. Ladenburg
Board Chair