

MOTION NO. M2012-42

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the chief executive officer to complete a Northgate access improvement study to identify potential additional pedestrian and bicycle access improvements to enhance access to the current Northgate Transit Center and future Northgate Station inter-modal transit facility as part of the Northgate Link Extension Project. The Northgate access improvement study would include:

- a) A two-step study process that will include a connectivity analysis followed by an access study to identify and prioritize specific improvements that could be funded by Sound Transit in partnership with the City of Seattle, King County Metro, and other local, state, and federal sources.
- b) Sound Transit's funding contribution for proposed Northgate pedestrian and bicycle access improvements would be capped at \$10 million, which includes credits for current Project commitments as included in the baselined Northgate Link Extension Project budget; and
- c) Before Sound Transit dollars will be authorized towards the improvements, the City of Seattle must match Sound Transit's \$10 million funding contribution, must complete appropriate environmental review for the proposed pedestrian and bicycle access improvements, and must have full funding partnership agreements in place to complete the improvements by 2021.

BACKGROUND:

Sound Transit is preparing to act on the region's long-promised vision of Link light rail service at Northgate. The agency envisions a world-class transit hub at Northgate that will be one of the highest performing stations in the whole system. Bringing light rail to Northgate will dramatically improve commute times to and from North Seattle and will also leverage and encourage smart growth development in the station area consistent with the City of Seattle's comprehensive plan.

A big part of Sound Transit's commitment is providing easy, safe access to Northgate Station for riders arriving by all modes. The integrated access modes include:

- Link light rail system, with connections north to Snohomish County, south to downtown Seattle, the airport and further stations south, and east to Bellevue and Redmond
- A safe and inviting pedestrian environment
- Bike access
- King County Metro and Sound Transit bus service
- Future TOD
- Passenger drop-off/pick-up
- Park-and-ride facilities

The current plans by Sound Transit and King County Metro for Northgate Station and the transit facility include:

- Integrated inter-modal transit facilities – easy connections between bus and rail
- Bicycle parking/access
- Light rail station with connection for a future pedestrian/bicycle bridge over I-5
- Implementing transit-oriented development (TOD) using existing publicly-owned property
- Accommodation of city's sidewalk/bike access improvement plans
- Park-and-ride facilities including a new parking garage that accommodates 450 park and ride stalls, preferably in shared use. Private funding could be used to provide additional parking garage stalls and potentially free existing surface parking for future development. The 450 stalls and any additional stalls may be used to replace parking now provided at the King County-owned park and ride surface lot currently east of the proposed station. This

will allow that lot to be made available within the next few years for TOD that will bring ridership to North Link and support the added vitality of the Northgate Urban Center. Sound Transit will work with King County and the City of Seattle to implement this replacement as quickly as practicable.

To continue Sound Transit's commitment to an integrated access plan for Northgate Station and to ensure access to the station is prioritized according to need, Sound Transit staff will identify potential additional pedestrian and bicycle access improvements to enhance access to the current Northgate Transit Center and future Northgate Station inter-modal transit facility. The initial work will be a two-step process that will include a connectivity analysis followed by an access study to identify and prioritize specific improvements that could be funded by Sound Transit in partnership with the City of Seattle and King County.

The connectivity modeling would assess Northgate area pedestrian and bicycle access issues to help identify potential travel obstacles and potential improvements that will enhance walk and bike access to the Northgate Station. Ideally, the modeling would map the walk travel sheds (5, 10 and 15 minutes) and the bike travel shed (15 minutes) of the station to assess effectiveness of alternative connection improvements.

Upon completion and analysis of the connectivity modeling, a follow-on access study will be completed that will identify how future improvements (such as TOD and/or I-5 pedestrian/bicycle bridge) would affect the ridership to the station with and without the improvements identified in the connectivity analysis.

The results of the access analysis along with the connectivity modeling will be shared with the Northgate Executive Steering Committee and other stakeholders to:

- assess feasibility of the candidate improvement projects,
- assess relative cost-effectiveness of the potential improvements, and
- identify priority improvement projects to consider for funding.

This analysis will provide a framework for allocating funds for access improvements in and around the station consistent with the Northgate Link Extension Project EIS requirements and applicable codes. Sound Transit will fund and manage the consultant modeling analysis work in collaboration with the City of Seattle. Sound Transit's funding commitment for the improvements will be as follows:

1. Twenty-five percent of the cost of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across I-5 up to a maximum of \$5 million. Sound Transit costs associated with designing and constructing the Northgate Station to accommodate a connection for the pedestrian/bicycle bridge will be credited against this contribution. The City of Seattle will match Sound Transit's \$5 million contribution towards the I-5 pedestrian/bicycle bridge costs. The City will also seek other funding partners to secure full funding to complete design and construction of the bridge (total cost approximately \$20 million). If a full funding agreement for the implementation of the I-5 pedestrian/bicycle bridge cannot be completed by July 2015, the Sound Transit Board will reallocate any unspent bridge funds to other priority pedestrian/bicycle projects identified through the connectivity and access study processes.
2. Match up to \$5 million in City investments in pedestrian/bicycle facilities in and around Northgate Station consistent with the improvements identified and recommended by the connectivity analysis and access study. The City of Seattle will credit toward this Sound Transit contribution the cost of any discretionary conditions and discretionary mitigation requirements, and any street use fees and any fees for temporary loss of on-street parking,

should they be imposed by the City through permitting of the Northgate Link Extension Project. Discretionary conditions or mitigation requirements are any conditions or requirements that exceed published City codes, standards and Director's Rules. Sound Transit and the City will mutually determine the extent to which Director's Rules are discretionary. Sound Transit will also be credited against this contribution for its incremental investment in designing and constructing its guideway in the Northgate area to accommodate the City's implementation of the cycle track along 1st Avenue NE, if Sound Transit and City of Seattle staff agree that this investment exceeds \$1 million. City of Seattle staff will work collaboratively with Sound Transit staff to minimize Sound Transit's costs to accommodate the cycle track. Any Sound Transit costs to accommodate the cycle track over \$1 million will be credited against Sound Transit's \$5 million match.

The non-credited portion of these Project funds will be directed to the City of Seattle for implementation of these priority improvements. Improvements must be completed by the City prior to or at the start of light rail service in 2021. Expenditure of these funds by Sound Transit will be authorized only after completion of environmental review and funding for the entire cost of these improvements have been identified and appropriate agreements have been fully executed.

MOTION:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the chief executive officer is authorized to complete a Northgate access improvement study to identify potential additional pedestrian and bicycle access improvements to enhance access to the current Northgate Transit Center and future Northgate Station inter-modal transit facility as part of the Northgate Link Extension Project. The Northgate access improvement study would include:

- a) A two-step study process that will include a connectivity analysis followed by an access study to identify and prioritize specific improvements that could be funded by Sound Transit in partnership with the City of Seattle, King County Metro, and other local, state, and federal sources.
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APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on June 28, 2012.



Julia Patterson
Board Vice Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator