

**MOTION NO. M2012-76**  
**East Link Extension Cost Savings**

MEETING:	DATE:	TYPE OF ACTION:	STAFF CONTACT:	PHONE:
Board	10/25/12	Final Action	Ahmad Fazel, DECM Executive Director <b>Ron Lewis, Executive Project Director, East Link</b> <b>Don Billen, Deputy Project Director, East Link</b>	206-398-5389  206-689-4905  206-398-5052

**PROPOSED ACTION**

Endorses cost savings ideas for further feasibility analysis for the East Link Extension project within the City of Bellevue.

**KEY FEATURES SUMMARY**

- On November 15, 2011, the City of Bellevue and Sound Transit executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the funding and construction of the Board-adopted downtown Bellevue tunnel alignment as adopted in Resolution No. R2011-10. Under the MOU, the City and Sound Transit are engaged in a collaborative design process to identify potential modifications for the section of East Link located within Bellevue city limits to achieve the shared goals of reducing costs and delivering a high quality project.
- In June 2012, the Board and Bellevue City Council endorsed a Cost Savings Work Plan identifying cost saving ideas for further development. The results of this work were published in the September 27, 2012 Cost Savings Work Plan Findings report.
- The following cost savings ideas from the September 27, 2012 Cost Savings Work Plan Findings are endorsed for further feasibility analysis:
  - 1a – Shift Bellevue Way West to Allow Space for At-Grade LRT in Front of Winters House and a Proposed City of Bellevue HOV Lane.
  - 2b.1 – Raise 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Alignment over At-Grade Light Rail with emergency only access at SE 4<sup>th</sup>. Access options to the Surrey Downs neighborhood will continue to be evaluated with the City.
  - 3c – Relocate the Downtown Bellevue Station to NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- In addition to the Cost Savings Ideas, the MOU directs evaluation of certain City requested design changes on 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE identified in 2011. Sound Transit and the City now agree that further development of an elevated light rail fly-over on 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE at SE 15<sup>th</sup> is not required while the retained cut under SE 4<sup>th</sup> will continue to be studied.

**BACKGROUND**

East Link extends light rail to east King County via I-90 from downtown Seattle to downtown Bellevue and the Overlake area of Redmond, with stations serving Rainier Avenue/I-90, Mercer Island, South Bellevue, Downtown Bellevue, Overlake Hospital, the Bel-Red Corridor, Overlake Village, and the Overlake Transit Center. The East Link project route, profiles, and station locations, including the tunnel route in downtown Bellevue, were selected by the Sound Transit Board on July 28, 2011. Revenue service between Seattle and the Overlake Transit Center is forecast for 2023.

In early 2012, Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue generated ideas for reducing project costs. These cost reduction concepts were then assessed by a Peer Review Panel. In April, the ideas having the greatest potential to save costs and meet project objectives were presented to the Sound Transit Board, the Bellevue City Council, and the public at the first of two open houses. On June 5, 2012 Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue published a Draft Cost Savings Report and held a second public open house.

Following consideration of the Draft Cost Savings Report and public comments, the City of Bellevue and Sound Transit endorsed a joint Cost Savings Work Plan of ideas for further development. On September 27, 2012 Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue published a Cost Savings Work Plan Findings Report. Sound Transit and City staff held drop-in sessions and numerous stakeholder briefings to discuss the findings of the work plan with members of the public.

Following consideration of the work plan findings and public comments, a Steering Committee comprised of Sound Transit's East Link Senior Management and key City of Bellevue Department Directors, prepared Cost Savings Recommendations for consideration by the Sound Transit Board and the Bellevue City Council. The Steering Committee's recommendation considered the Cost Savings Work Plan Findings criteria of cost, light rail operations, ridership, traffic, vehicle access, pedestrian access, noise and vibration, visual, property impacts, wetlands, park lands, and historic properties, along with schedule risk, quality, urban design, and a 100 year perspective.

In addition to the Steering Committee recommendations regarding Cost Savings Ideas, the MOU directs evaluation of certain City requested design changes on 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE identified in 2011. The Steering Committee and City Council recommend no further development of one of these changes—an elevated light rail fly-over on 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE at SE 15<sup>th</sup>. The other changes will continue to be evaluated, including a retained cut under SE 4<sup>th</sup>.

Advancement of the cost savings ideas for further analysis is not a final decision, and does not alter the East Link Extension as approved by the Board and reflected in the Records of Decision issued by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration. Rather, advancing cost savings ideas is an indication of sufficient merit for continued review. The next phase of review, including additional engineering design, and impact and mitigation analysis consistent with requirements under NEPA and SEPA, will occur in late 2012 and into 2013. A final decision to incorporate any cost savings idea into the East Link Extension would not occur until the NEPA and SEPA review is complete.

#### Cost Savings Idea 1a

Shift Bellevue Way West to allow space for at-grade LRT in front of Winters House and a proposed City of Bellevue HOV Lane. The City of Bellevue HOV lane continues an HOV lane north from the main entrance of the South Bellevue Station to the Bellevue Way and 112<sup>th</sup> Ave "Y" intersection.

#### Cost Saving Idea 2b.1

Raise the 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue Roadway over an at-grade alignment of light rail in the vicinity of SE 15<sup>th</sup> Street so that light rail passes under the road rather than elevated over the road. From SE 15<sup>th</sup>, light rail continues at-grade to the East Main Station with emergency only access at SE 4<sup>th</sup>. Access options to the Surrey Downs neighborhood will continue to be evaluated with the City.

### Cost Saving Idea 3c

Moves the Downtown Bellevue Station out of the tunnel to NE 6<sup>th</sup>. Access to the station is provided from an entrance on the City Hall plaza. Alignment and access improvements will be evaluated as design progresses.

## **FISCAL INFORMATION**

Not applicable to this action.

## **PRIOR BOARD/COMMITTEE ACTIONS**

Motion No. M2011-62: Authorized the chief executive officer to enter into a term sheet with the City of Bellevue regarding the East Link Project.

Resolution No. R2011-10: Selected the route, profiles, and station locations for the East Link Light Rail Project.

## **TIME CONSTRAINTS**

Delay of this action will postpone further analysis of these cost savings ideas and may preclude the ability to consider incorporating them into the project without delaying design completion and start of construction for the East Link Extension.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

On September 27, 2012 Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue published a Cost Savings Work Plan Findings Report. Sound Transit and City staff held drop-in sessions October 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> and conducted numerous stakeholder briefings to discuss the findings of the work plan with members of the public.

Sound Transit and City staff also provided numerous stakeholder briefings throughout April, May, and June. As a result of public involvement, an additional cost savings concept was developed for 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

JI 10/24/12

## **LEGAL REVIEW**

PW 10/24/12

## **MOTION NO. M2012-76**

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority endorsing cost savings ideas for further feasibility analysis for the East Link Extension project within the City of Bellevue.

### **BACKGROUND:**

East Link extends light rail to east King County via I-90 from downtown Seattle to downtown Bellevue and the Overlake area of Redmond, with stations serving Rainier Avenue/I-90, Mercer Island, South Bellevue, Downtown Bellevue, Overlake Hospital, the Bel-Red Corridor, Overlake Village, and the Overlake Transit Center. The East Link project route, profiles, and station locations, including the tunnel route in downtown Bellevue, were selected by the Sound Transit Board on July 28, 2011. Revenue service between Seattle and the Overlake Transit Center is forecast for 2023.

In early 2012, Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue generated ideas for reducing project costs. These cost reduction concepts were then assessed by a Peer Review Panel. In April, the ideas having the greatest potential to save costs and meet project objectives were presented to the Sound Transit Board, the Bellevue City Council, and the public at the first of two open houses. On June 5, 2012 Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue published a Draft Cost Savings Report and held a second public open house.

Following consideration of the Draft Cost Savings Report and public comments, the City of Bellevue and Sound Transit endorsed a joint Cost Savings Work Plan of ideas for further development. On September 27, 2012 Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue published a Cost Savings Work Plan Findings Report. Sound Transit and City staff held drop-in sessions and numerous stakeholder briefings to discuss the findings of the work plan with members of the public.

Following consideration of the work plan findings and public comments, a Steering Committee comprised of Sound Transit's East Link Senior Management and key City of Bellevue Department Directors, prepared Cost Savings Recommendations for consideration by the Sound Transit Board and the Bellevue City Council. The Steering Committee's recommendation considered the Cost Savings Work Plan Findings criteria of cost, light rail operations, ridership, traffic, vehicle access, pedestrian access, noise and vibration, visual, property impacts, wetlands, park lands, and historic properties, along with schedule risk, quality, urban design, and a 100 year perspective.

In addition to the Steering Committee recommendations regarding Cost Savings Ideas, the MOU directs evaluation of certain City requested design changes on 112th Avenue SE identified in 2011. The Steering Committee and City Council recommend no further development of one of these changes—an elevated light rail fly-over on 112th Avenue SE at SE 15th. The other changes will continue to be evaluated, including a retained cut under SE 4th.

Advancement of the cost savings ideas for further analysis is not a final decision, and does not alter the East Link Extension as approved by the Board and reflected in the Records of Decision issued by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration. Rather, advancing cost savings ideas is an indication of sufficient merit for continued review. The next phase of review, including additional engineering design, and impact and mitigation analysis consistent with requirements under NEPA and SEPA, will occur in late 2012 and into 2013. A final

decision to incorporate any cost savings idea into the East Link Extension would not occur until the NEPA and SEPA review is complete.

Cost Savings Idea 1a

Shift Bellevue Way West to allow space for at-grade LRT in front of Winters House and a proposed City of Bellevue HOV Lane. The City of Bellevue HOV lane continues an HOV lane north from the main entrance of the South Bellevue Station to the Bellevue Way and 112th Ave "Y" intersection.

Cost Saving Idea 2b.1

Raise the 112th Avenue Roadway over an at-grade alignment of light rail in the vicinity of SE 15th Street so that light rail passes under the road rather than elevated over the road. From SE 15th, light rail continues at-grade to the East Main Station with emergency only access at SE 4th. Access options to the Surrey Downs neighborhood will continue to be evaluated with the City.

Cost Saving Idea 3c

Moves the Downtown Bellevue Station out of the tunnel to NE 6th. Access to the station is provided from an entrance on the City Hall plaza. Alignment and access improvements will be evaluated as design progresses.

**MOTION:**

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the following cost savings ideas from the September 27, 2012 Cost Savings Work Plan Findings report for the East Link Extension project within the City of Bellevue, are endorsed for further feasibility analysis:

- 1a – Shift Bellevue Way West to Allow Space for At-Grade LRT in Front of Winters House and a Proposed City of Bellevue HOV Lane.
- 2b.1 – Raise 112th Avenue SE Alignment over At-Grade Light Rail with emergency only access at SE 4<sup>th</sup>. Access options to the Surrey Downs neighborhood will continue to be evaluated with the City.
- 3c – Relocate the Downtown Bellevue Station to NE 6th Street.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on October 25, 2012.

  
Pat McCarthy  
Board Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker  
Board Administrator