

MOTION NO. M2013-106
2014 State Legislative Program

MEETING:	DATE:	TYPE OF ACTION:	STAFF CONTACT:	PHONE:
Executive Committee	12/05/2013	Recommend to Board	Ann McNeil, Director Government & Community Relations	206-398-5298
Board	12/19/2013	Final Action	Melanie Smith, State Government Relations Manager	206-240-9035

PROPOSED ACTION

Adopts the Sound Transit 2014 State Legislative Program and directs staff to evaluate and engage in issues that impact the agency as it continues to successfully implement the regional high capacity transit system.

KEY FEATURES SUMMARY

- This action would authorize Sound Transit staff and consultants in Olympia to advocate and/or pursue the following positions during the upcoming state legislative session:
 - Engage in discussions with the legislature to begin to identify options for future expansion of the regional high-capacity transit system.
 - Support a balanced statewide multimodal transportation funding package that helps address funding needs for all public transportation and high capacity transit systems through state funding and local revenue options.
 - Seek legislation amending the statute of limitations for construction damage claims.
 - Seek legislation to allow ticket formats that are more efficient for fare enforcement on Sound Transit vehicles.
 - Support and engage with partner agencies and others on efforts that would facilitate the safe, cost-effective and efficient delivery of transit projects and services.
 - Oppose legislation that increases the costs of transit improvements and services or otherwise impairs the agency’s ability to deliver its voter-approved regional high capacity transit program.

BACKGROUND

The Board annually considers a State Legislative Program. The program has typically included issues and policy guidance to staff and contract lobbyists to assist them in representing the agency’s interests during the legislative session. This action would authorize Sound Transit staff and consultants in Olympia to advocate and/or pursue the following positions during the upcoming state legislative session:

- **Engage in discussions with the legislature to begin to identify options for future expansion of the regional high-capacity transit system.**
 The Sound Transit Board has initiated efforts to update the agency’s Long-Range Plan and identify options for expanding the regional high-capacity transit system. With the passage of Sound Transit 2 in 2008, the agency used its existing statutory taxing authority to fund the capital investments, operations and planning currently underway. As Sound Transit explores system expansion options and seeks public input, the Board will begin working with the legislature to identify and seek new revenue authority for a possible future ballot proposal.

- **Support a balanced statewide multimodal transportation funding package that helps address funding needs for all public transportation and high capacity transit systems through state funding and local revenue options.**

Like most local government entities, Sound Transit continues to experience decreased revenues due to the Great Recession. Sound Transit has worked to address a 30% (\$4.7B) reduction in forecasted revenue by tapping into project reserves, finding efficiencies and delaying or defunding some projects and services of the voter-approved Sound Transit 2 Plan. The Board continues to express support for a balanced statewide approach to transportation funding, project planning and implementation and hopes to work with the Legislature as it examines future investments and funding options for all transit agencies.

- **Seek legislation amending the statute of limitations for construction damage claims.**
Under existing law, claims for property damage caused by construction activities on adjacent property do not accrue until a construction project is completed, and such claims must then be filed within two years after that. Due to the length and linear nature of many of Sound Transit's projects, construction can sometimes take six or more years to complete, which could allow claims to be brought up to eight years after the alleged damage occurred. Legislation is needed to amend the statute of limitations to three years from the date the property owner knew or should have known of the damage caused by the adjacent construction, which would prevent the spoliation of evidence and allow the agency to thoroughly investigate and address claims while preserving the rights of property owners to seek damages.

- **Seek legislation to allow ticket formats that are more efficient for fare enforcement on Sound Transit vehicles.**

In 2009, the legislature authorized Sound Transit to issue civil infractions to help address fare evasion, but ticket format requirements are not compatible with the environment and needs of Sound Transit's mobile fare enforcement officers. Current options are time consuming, costly for district courts, create adjudicatory difficulties and result in officers being able to verify fares for only approximately eight to 10 percent of riders. Legislation is needed to allow Sound Transit to use a ticketing format that is more efficient and suitable for our officers traveling on foot.

- **Support and engage with partner agencies and others on efforts that would facilitate the safe, cost-effective and efficient delivery of transit projects and services.**

Sound Transit has historically supported the legislative efforts of our partners and others that facilitate the efficient, safe and cost-effective delivery of transit projects and services. As part of on-going coordination efforts, Sound Transit will work in collaboration on legislative efforts aimed at improving the transit system, including proposals impacting transit operations, the ORCA program, the Eastside Rail Corridor, public safety and public works contracting.

- **Oppose legislation that increases the costs of transit improvements and services or otherwise impairs the agency's ability to deliver its voter-approved regional high capacity transit program.**

Having served more than 210 million riders in 14 years of service and with many major capital projects built or under construction, the Sound Transit Board will oppose legislation that would negatively alter the oversight, planning, financing, construction, delivery and operation of Sound Transit projects and services.

FISCAL IMPACT

This action does not have a budget or financial impact to the agency or any of its programs. 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. Advocacy of the State Legislative Program is fully funded through the Executive Department budget.

SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

Not applicable to this action.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Not applicable to this action.

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Sound Transit's interests are better served at the State Legislature if the Board of Directors adopts a State Legislative Program for the 2014 legislative session that begins January 13, 2014. Delaying adoption until after the start of the session could minimize effective advocacy.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

JI 11/26/2013

LEGAL REVIEW

SS 11/26/2013

MOTION NO. M2013-106

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority adopting the Sound Transit 2014 State Legislative Program and directing staff to evaluate and engage in issues that impact the agency as it continues to successfully implement the regional high capacity transit system.

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MOTION:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the Sound Transit 2014 State Legislative Program is adopted and staff is directed to evaluate and engage in issues that impact the agency as it continues to successfully implement the regional high capacity transit system.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on December 19, 2013.


Pat McCarthy
Board Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator