

MOTION NO. M2017-53

A motion of the of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the three board members appointed to meet with Mercer Island elected officials to participate in the ongoing consultation discussions to implement the 2004 Amendment to the 1976 Memorandum of Agreement relating to Interstate 90.

BACKGROUND

Motion No. M2017-38 authorized the Board Chair to appoint three board members to meet with elected officials from Mercer Island to discuss issues related to East Link construction and operation. The motion did not authorize the board members to bind the agency or discuss topics addressed by the 2004 Amendment to the 1976 Memorandum of Agreement.

The 1976 Memorandum of Agreement requires the Washington Highway Commission (now the Washington State Department of Transportation) to consult with and seek consensus among the other signatories, to the extent possible, before implementing major changes to Interstate 90. In 2004, the signatories amended the 1976 Agreement to reflect their agreement with the State's decision to modify Interstate 90 to add two-way HOV lanes (R-8A) to the outer roadway and to permit Sound Transit to construct East Link in the center roadway. The 2004 Amendment provides that if studies conclude that the modifications will cause a loss of mobility to or from Mercer Island, WSDOT will consult with the affected parties and attempt to reach consensus on mitigation measures that could include the additional bus service and parking available for Mercer Island residents.

A 2017 mobility study concludes that with improvements to five intersections, the proposed changes to Interstate 90 will not result in a loss of mobility to or from Mercer Island. Based on the mobility study, except for efforts to agree on the proposed intersection improvements, no additional consultation or concurrence efforts among the signatories are required and no additional mitigation is required before opening the R-8A HOV lanes and converting the center roadway to light rail use.

Despite the mobility study finding of no loss of mobility to or from Mercer Island, the City of Mercer Island asserts that the East Link and the R-8A HOV Projects will cause a loss of mobility. The City has very recently identified the additional transportation measures that it seeks in order to agree that its mobility and access concerns are satisfactorily addressed. Because the City seeks transportation improvements within the City that are not deemed necessary by the mobility study, the consultation process could benefit from participation by the appointed Sound Transit board members already meeting with City officials to resolve other East Link concerns. This Board engagement would extend on-going efforts to partner with the City on East Link and R-8A and is consistent with Sound Transit's commitment to partnering with local jurisdictions to deliver the regional high-capacity transit system. Because Motion No. M2017-38 does not authorize the appointed board members to discuss the transportation mitigation measures identified by the 2004 Amendment, including additional bus service, and parking available for Mercer Island residents, Board action is required to authorize the appointed board members to join the 2004 Amendment consultation process.

MOTION:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the board members already appointed to meet with City of Mercer Island elected officials are authorized to join the ongoing 2004 Amendment consultation process to discuss each jurisdiction's concerns. Even though the City's recently identified transportation improvements are not necessary or required mitigation based on the outcome of the 2017 mobility study, because Sound Transit encourages and welcomes input from local jurisdictions, the appointed board members are authorized to meet with the City and other affected jurisdictions to discuss the additional transportation measures sought by the City.

The provisions in Motion No. M2017-38 providing that the appointed board members are not authorized to discuss the issues and mitigation measures identified in the 2004 Amendment are rescinded.

The appointed board members are not authorized to bind Sound Transit by this motion; the Sound Transit Board retains exclusive authority to bind the agency.

The authority granted by this motion ends on May 25, 2017. The Board Chair should inform the Board about the results of appointed board members' efforts.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on April 27, 2017.



Marilyn Strickland
Board Vice Chair

ATTEST:



Katie Flores
Board Administrator