Item No. SS 2(a)
April 1, 2013

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:
East Link: Review of EIS Addendum on cost saving options.

STAFF CONTACT:
Dave Berg, Director, 452-6468
Bernard van de Kamp, Assistant Director, 452-6459
Transportation Department

Chris Salomone, Director 452-6191
Planning and Community Development

Mike Brennan, Director, 452-4113
Development Services Department

Kate Berens, Deputy City Attorney, 452-4616
City Attorney's Office

POLICY ISSUES:
Memorandum of Understanding/Collaborative Design Process:

- The City and Sound Transit entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in November 2011 that defines City contributions to a downtown light rail tunnel.
- The MOU also provides the basis for a Collaborative Design Process (CDP) that was further defined and agreed to in January 2012. The CDP provides the mechanism for the City and Sound Transit to jointly advance the design of the East Link Project through the 60% design phase and identify cost savings to offset part of the City's tunnel funding contribution.
- Throughout 2012, Council identified and narrowed cost savings options for design refinement and impact analysis in a joint agency work plan. In late April, Council will be asked to identify which cost saving options, if any, should be incorporated into the East Link alignment. Making a final decision on the cost saving options will provide certainty to the community, facilitate efficient use of final design and staff resources, and allow for initiation of private property acquisitions.
- Per the MOU, changes to the alignment require approval of both the Bellevue City Council and Sound Transit Board of Directors, otherwise the MOU alignment will advance into final design.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:
____ Action
_X_ Discussion
_X__ Information

Sound Transit and City staff will present the findings of the East Link Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Addendum regarding the cost saving options identified for environmental analysis in October 2012. The City's acoustical consultant will present a peer review of the noise and vibration analysis in the EIS Addendum. Direction to staff is requested should Council wish to hold a public hearing on the cost saving options on April 15.

On April 8, staff will provide a report on outreach efforts and input from the community, and present analysis of the Bellevue Way HOV lane, and a recommendation by the joint CDP Steering Committee on which cost savings ideas to incorporate into the East Link Project.

On April 15, City staff will support continued discussion of the Steering Committee recommendation and a potential public hearing.

On April 22, Council will be asked for direction on which cost saving options, if any, should be incorporated in the East Link alignment. On April 25, the Sound Transit Board will make a final selection of any cost saving options to incorporate into the Project, in order to continue advancement of the Project consistent with the final design schedule and allow for initiation of property acquisitions, as discussed by Council in late February.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Cost Saving Work Plan

The City and Sound Transit have worked since early 2012 to identify and evaluate potential cost savings measures that hold promise to reduce the cost of the East Link Project. This effort is consistent with the MOU, the subsequent CDP, and Council direction. A particular focus of the cost savings effort has been to reduce overall East Link Project costs in Bellevue in order to reduce or eliminate the City's contingent $60 million tunnel funding contribution, as detailed in the MOU.

In Spring 2012, the City and Sound Transit identified a range of potential cost savings options for consideration by the community, City Council, and Sound Transit Board. After extensive public engagement, the City Council and Sound Transit Board identified a subset of cost saving ideas for further advancement and clarified the design objectives to be pursued for each area. This direction is contained in the Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan (Attachment A).

In Fall 2012, City and Sound Transit staff presented the findings of this work plan, including more advanced design on the selected cost savings ideas, a preliminary screen of environmental impacts, and Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) cost estimates for each of the cost savings ideas. This analysis is contained in the *Cost Savings Work Plan Findings Advancement of Options September 2012 Report* which is available online at: http://projects.soundtransit.org/Projects-Home/East-Link-Project.xml. In late October, the City Council and Sound Transit Board narrowed the cost savings options to be advanced for further analysis (Attachment B).

Since then, Sound Transit has continued to advance final design on the cost saving options and prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Addendum to evaluate the environmental impacts and mitigation associated with the cost saving options. This document is available online at: http://www.soundtransit.org/x6887.xml. On April 1, Sound Transit staff will present an overview of the current cost saving designs, the findings of the environmental analysis, and updated ROM cost estimates.

During the East Link Supplemental Draft EIS review in 2010, the City hired an independent consultant to undertake a peer review of the noise and vibration analysis. Because of the ongoing concern about potential noise and vibration impacts, the City has similarly undertaken a peer review of the EIS Addendum noise and vibration analysis. The peer review memo is available on the City's website at: http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light-rail-documents.htm and a summary of the review will be presented at the Council meeting.

Cost Saving Options for Consideration

Identification of cost saving options to be incorporated into the project presents significant policy choices, comparing the cost savings options with the MOU alignment. Below is a list of the cost saving options for consideration and cost saving ranges:

Cost Saving Choices	Estimated Savings
Bellevue Way	
Shift Bellevue Way West with HOV Lane	$5-8M savings (assumes $11M City contribution for HOV lane)
Bellevue Way MOU Alignment	Same as MOU
112th Road over Rail	
SE 4th At-grade	$2-4M savings
SE 4th Retained cut	($6-11M) increase
Downtown Station	
PE Optimized Station	$6-10M savings
NE 6th Station	$19-33M savings
Engineering "Just Take It" Ideas	$9-16M savings

Public Engagement

A public open house will be held on April 3 to share the findings of the EIS Addendum and the more advanced designs for the cost saving options and to seek feedback from the community. Neighborhoods, downtown interests, and other stakeholders are also being briefed on the findings of the analysis.

Next Steps: Identification of Cost Saving Options to be Incorporated into the East Link Project

In April, the City Council and Sound Transit Board are asked to identify those options, if any, that the agencies believe meet the shared project goals and should be incorporated into the East Link Project. The CDP Steering Committee will prepare a recommendation for City Council and Sound Transit Board consideration based on the shared project goals of both agencies, the findings of the EIS addendum, and input from the community.

Identifying cost saving options to be incorporated into the Project by the end of April is a critical step to advancing the East Link Project and allowing Sound Transit to maintain the final design schedule. This decision will set the final alignment and provide certainty to the community, particularly by allowing Sound Transit to proceed with early residential property acquisitions, as agreed to during the consideration of the light rail Land Use Code amendment in February.

As part of the MOU, Council adopted an alignment with Sound Transit, pending the environmental analysis of the 112th Avenue SE design and cost saving process. This alignment, other than the City requested 112th Ave SE modifications, is reflected in the MOU Exhibit C East

Link Project Description. City and Sound Transit agreement to incorporate any cost saving options into the East Link alignment will require a change to the MOU Project Description.

Council has directed staff to include the Bellevue Way HOV project in the package of improvements for a programmatic-level environmental analysis in the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) environmental impact statement (EIS). The Draft TFP EIS is anticipated to be published on April 11, which begins a 30-day comment period. The final TFP EIS is anticipated to be published in mid-June, which would allow Council to adopt the TFP and amend the CIP to add the Bellevue Way HOV lane as a stand-alone project, providing budget for further design and environmental analysis. Should Council wish to continue to advance the cost saving option above, Council could provide direction to advance the Shift Bellevue Way alignment option, with the intent to jointly implement the HOV lane, pending environmental review. In June, if Council adopts the Bellevue Way HOV lane in the CIP, the cost saving design and HOV lane would continue to advance for joint implementation.

Action Requested:
Direction to staff is requested should Council wish to hold a public hearing on the cost saving options on April 15.

ATTACHMENTS:

A. Sound Transit Board Motion M2012- 41 (Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan – June 2012)
B. Sound Transit Board Motion M2012-76 (Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan – October 2012)

SOUNDTRANSIT

MOTION NO. M2012-41

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority endorsing the Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan for the East Link Project attached as Exhibit A.

BACKGROUND:

East Link is a project to expand 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. Revenue service to the Overlake Transit Center is forecast for 2023.

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. 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 the city limits to achieve the shared goals of reducing costs and delivering a high quality project.

In early 2012, Sound Transit and the City generated ideas that could contribute to the goal of reducing project costs. These cost reduction concepts were then assessed by a Peer Review Panel. In April the concepts having the greatest potential to both 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. Sound Transit and City staff also provided numerous stakeholder briefings throughout April, May, and June. Through the public involvement process, over 350 comments were received. As a result of public involvement, an additional cost savings concept was developed for 112th Avenue SE.

The Draft Cost Savings Report and public involvement process focused on those ideas which represent a potential change to the project description contained in the MOU between the City and Sound Transit. Sound Transit and the City also identified cost savings ideas which generally will not affect the configuration of the East Link light rail system or its operational impacts and are within the administrative discretion of project staff.

Following consideration of the Draft Cost Savings Report and public comments, the City and Sound Transit, through the MOU's Collaborative Design Process, developed a Cost Savings Work Plan attached as Exhibit A.

The joint work plan identifies cost savings ideas for further development. Advancement of the Cost Savings Work Plan does not constitute a final decision, and in no way alters the East Link Project as approved by the Sound Transit Board and reflected in the Record of Decision issued by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration. The work plan identifies cost savings ideas for further development and is an indication that the ideas have sufficient merit to continue to invest resources for further 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 the latter half of 2012 and into 2013.

Exhibit A

Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan

This joint work plan identifies Cost Savings ideas for further development. It is not a final decision, and in no way alters the East Link Project as approved by the Sound Transit Board and reflected in the Record of Decision issued by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration, but rather is an indication that the ideas have sufficient merit to continue to invest resources to 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 the latter half of 2012 and into 2013.

A final decision to incorporate any one or more of these Cost Savings Ideas into East Link would not occur until this additional review is complete; and only after the Sound Transit Board and the City Council determine, in light of the cost savings available and the impacts on the Project and surrounding neighborhoods (including ridership, system impacts, noise, traffic and visual impacts) that these Cost Savings Ideas are consistent with the shared Project goals.

Winters House

Advance for further development options that replace the retained cut by the Winters House with an at-grade light rail alignment.

Design options: If the City Council in July 2012 decides to include a Bellevue Way HOV lane in the City's Transportation Facilities Plan environmental review and continues to make progress towards implementation, then study shifting Bellevue Way west with the cost of the project addressed as set forth in Section 7.2 of the MOU (Idea 1a). If not, then study relocating the Winters House. (Idea 1b)

Other design considerations:

- Noise and visual mitigation for increased length of above grade guideway
- Reduce the added length of elevated guideway
- Optimize the access location for the blueberry farm and Winter's House
- If alternative 1a advances, it should include an HOV lane

Advantages to this approach:

- Lower cost and risk
- Better LRT profile for operations
- Potentially overall reduction in cost and construction impacts for the City and Sound Transit if Bellevue Way HOV lane and LRT construction properly sequenced

112th

Advance for further development an at-grade alignment the length of 112th with a crossing from the east to the west-side at SE 15th below a new road overpass (Idea 2b). No further development of the MOU option of an elevated fly-over at SE 15th and to the extent possible the retained cut at SE 4th.

Design options: Continue to study location for optimal access to the Surrey Downs neighborhood including options from 112th which do not require a gated crossing with bells.

Other Design considerations:

- Work with the community on a package of changes in park use, neighborhood traffic control, other measures to mitigate change in access

- Reduce the height of the reconstructed 112th Ave SE over light rail by depressing light rail tracks to the extent prudent given soil conditions
- Use landscaping to screen the road overpass and LRT
- Noise mitigation for at-grade LRT
- Evaluate pedestrian access to the E. Main Station from the neighborhood and kiss-and-ride access from 112th

Advantages to this approach:

- Responds to Leadership Group criteria for 112th with respect to cost, visual, noise, and avoidance of retained cut
- Lower cost and risk
- Provides grade separated LRT operations

Downtown Station

Advance for further development both a Tunnel Station and the NE 6th Station to refine and better distinguish the difference in potential cost savings.

Design issues to examine with Tunnel Station:

- Optimize configuration to minimize impacts to surface traffic while retaining entrances north and south of NE 4th
- May involve stacked tunnel with one entrance setback from street and mitigation for loss of turn pocket south of NE 4th or further optimization of PE design with mezzanine

Design issues to examine with NE 6th Station:

- Reach agreement on impacts to City Hall and damages payment prior to further design
- Determine acceptability of design deviation (curve at 110th/NE 6th)

Advantages to this approach:

- Allows limited additional time to vet actual cost differences. Relocating the Station to NE 6th should only be advanced further if it has substantially more savings as it has operational and ridership impacts.

A final decision to incorporate any one or more of these cost savings ideas into the East Link Project would not occur until this additional review is complete; and only after the Sound Transit Board determines that these cost savings ideas are consistent with the project goals. Cost savings ideas will be evaluated in light of the cost savings available and the impacts on the project and surrounding neighborhoods (including ridership, system impacts, noise, and traffic and visual impacts).

MOTION:

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority to endorse the Sound Transit and City of Bellevue Cost Savings Work Plan attached as Exhibit A.

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

SOUNDTRANSIT

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 4th. 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