

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT

East Link: Update on a proposed process for a public engagement and outreach for consideration of design options along 112th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way and a project plan, schedule and budget for reaching agreement on a binding Memorandum of Understanding with Sound Transit establishing a City contribution towards a tunnel in Downtown Bellevue.

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FISCAL IMPACT

Costs associated with the public engagement and outreach process are estimated to be \$25,000 and are to be funded within the East Link Analysis CIP (PW-R-159).

POLICY ISSUES

On August 10, 2011, the Bellevue Council adopted Resolution No. 8276, which authorized the City Manager to sign a Term Sheet with Sound Transit establishing the framework and timeline to develop a binding Memorandum of Agreement for the City to make contributions that will lower the cost to Sound Transit of the C9T (tunnel). The Resolution directed specific work to be undertaken by the City Manager and reported back to the Council.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

Action
 Discussion
 Information

Staff is providing this information for Council review, feedback and direction.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In 2010, the Bellevue City Council and Sound Transit Board of Directors agreed to reconsider East Link light rail alignment alternatives and preferences for the downtown Bellevue portion of the project ("Segment C"). After careful consideration of a number of downtown alternatives that include at-grade, grade separated and elevated alternatives that emerged after joint review of alternatives, the Council took action on March 22, 2010 to select the alternative known as "C9T"—a shorter, more affordable tunnel option that would be located on 110th Avenue and turn west over NE 6th adjacent to City Hall -- as their revised preferred alternative for the downtown (C segment). A subsequent letter was sent to Sound Transit describing the Council's action and

identifying how the City could financially participate in the cost of this alternative. Sound Transit sought concurrence from the City on a Term Sheet outlining future agreements for a City contribution to the tunnel alternative prior to making a Board decision to include C9T as a preferred alternative as it completed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for East Link. The Bellevue Council approved a Term Sheet on April 19, 2010. The Sound Transit Board authorized the Term Sheet on April 22, 2010 and identified C9T as one of two preferred alternatives in Downtown Bellevue in addition to advancing C9T into preliminary engineering.

City and Sound Transit staff worked to further develop the potential contribution items and to advance the Term Sheet subsequent to Sound Transit completing the 30% preliminary engineering and updating project costs earlier this year. In addition, the Council conducted independent analyses and reviews of alignment alternatives in the B-Segment. On July 18, 2011 in response to Council concerns and requests, members of Sound Transit's staff presented ideas for modifications to the Sound Transit preferred B2M alignment.

On July 28, 2011, the Sound Transit Board selected the preferred alignment for East Link, which included the B2M and C9T alignments, and authorized Sound Transit's CEO to sign the Term Sheet with the City of Bellevue to evaluate design options for the B segment and to develop a binding MOU for a tunnel contribution. As noted above, the Bellevue City Council authorized the Term Sheet on August 10, 2011.

Work directed by Resolution No. 8276

Resolution No. 8276 directed work to be undertaken as follows:

Public Engagement and outreach:

- Develop and implement a process for public engagement and outreach for consideration of alignment revisions and provide updates to Council regarding public feedback. This work to be completed at least four weeks prior to execution of the binding MOU.

Financial implications of a binding MOU

- In progress update to Council, address the financial implications for the City's investment based on the level and timing of resources anticipated to be contributed to the East Link project including its impact on the City's budget and implications for the City's tax policy, including property taxes and local improvement district taxes.

Public Hearing

- Hold at least one public hearing to take citizen input on the terms of the binding MOU.

Additionally, the Resolution directs that a Project Plan, Schedule and Budget be presented to the Council on September 6, 2011, generally indicating the steps to enable the Council's consideration of a binding MOU. Components include:

- The method for reaching a cooperative alignment, including any third party consultant needs;
- The method for identifying and negotiating the mitigation of impacts, including any third party consultant needs;
- Identifying the process to finalize a project list for the contributions and the implications on the City's budget;
- Identifying the process for quantifying the C Segment gap that the city and Sound Transit are working to close;
- The plan for drafting the MOU;

- The usage and retaining of any outside third party assistance that will be necessary in developing information for use in drafting the MOU, auditing Sound Transit's budget or other tasks necessary to reach a binding MOU;
- Timelines and estimated costs for items noted above.

Staff will present a draft work plan to Council during the Study Session and seek feedback and direction on next steps.

Public Outreach

Based on the timeframe set in Resolution No. 8276, staff has identified the following schedule for major elements of the outreach effort:

Sept 6-22	Individual and small group meetings for property owners and residents directly impacted by the 112 th design options and Bellevue Way HOV lane project
Sept 12-16	Stakeholder meetings regarding the MOU/Tunnel Funding
Sept 20	Open House for B2M Design Options, Bellevue Way HOV Lane Project, and MOU/Tunnel Funding
Sept 26	City Council Public Hearing on B2M Design Options, Bellevue Way HOV Lane Project, and MOU/Tunnel Funding.

If Council prefers to have a separate open house and public hearing for the MOU/Tunnel Funding portion of the outreach, dates in October are available for that outreach.

Outreach for the potential design revisions to the B2M alignment along 112th Ave SE and on the potential Bellevue Way HOV project is focused on property owners and residents in the immediate vicinity of the projects. Staff is meeting individually and in small groups with property owners and residents to discuss design revisions, listen to concerns, and seek input on approaches to address potential impacts. An open house is planned for September 20th to provide an opportunity for the community to learn about the design revisions, share concerns and ideas, and offer input on the options.

Outreach for the MOU terms and tunnel funding is focused city-wide on both residents and businesses. The following efforts are underway:

- A citywide postcard mailing to all residents and businesses with information about the design revisions and MOU/tunnel funding, the open house and public hearing dates, and providing a web address and staff contact information for more detailed information;
- Meetings with stakeholders including the Bellevue Downtown Association and the Chamber of Commerce;
- Posting information on the City's website about the MOU terms and tunnel funding proposal;
- Email alerts to Transportation and Neighborhood Outreach distribution lists;
- Advertisements in the *Bellevue Reporter*.

Staff will provide an update on the outreach effort to Council during the Study Session.