

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:

East Link Project Update from Sound Transit and follow up on Funding for City East Link Work Program

STAFF CONTACT:

Bernard van de Kamp, Regional Projects Manager, 452-6459
Kevin O'Neill, Assistant Director (Long-Range Planning), 452-4064
Transportation Department

Diane Carlson, Intergovernmental Relations Director, 452-4225
City Manager's Office

Matt Terry, Director, 452-6191
Planning and Community Development

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City's East Link work program will require consultant assistance in a number of areas, as discussed with Council during the July 6 study session. As outlined, staff proposes to reallocate and/or program funds from the existing operating budget and Capital Investment Program (CIP) to accomplish this work.

A total of \$60,000 is proposed to be programmed from the Transportation operating budget, and \$1,010,000 is proposed to be committed from other CIP projects, as presented to Council on July 6, and as outlined in Attachment 1. Staff will address questions raised by Council on the CIP reallocation at the July 13 Study Session. Staff proposes to return to Council on July 20 for action on a CIP amendment to accomplish these funding changes.

POLICY ISSUES:

The Bellevue Council has adopted a body of light rail policy (including light rail best practices policies adopted by Council in August 2008, other Comprehensive Plan policies, and Council interest statements) that articulates the community values related to the development of light rail in Bellevue. This policy body provides guidance and support for light rail transit investment in Bellevue and is complementary to the information provided in the East Link Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

On February 23, 2009 the Council selected a preferred East Link alignment and recommended it to the Sound Transit Board of Directors for its consideration. On May 14, 2009 the Sound Transit Board of Directors identified a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the East Link project. This preference, which City staff discussed with Council on May 18 and July 6, and all other alternatives that have been studied to date will continue to be evaluated in the East Link Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that is expected to be complete in late summer 2010. Concurrently, the LPA will be advanced through preliminary engineering, which will also

be complete by fall 2010. The focus of tonight's briefing will be Sound Transit staff updating the City Council on their schedule and work program for the East Link project.

On July 6, City staff discussed the proposed City work plan for the remainder of 2009 and for 2010. At the meeting, Council gave preliminary endorsement to undertake the work plan and discussed transferring of funds within the CIP to cover the costs, but had questions about some of the CIP re-allocations and their implications. This evening, staff will provide information to Council on these questions.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The Bellevue Council recommended its preferred East Link light rail transit alignment and station locations to the Sound Transit Board of Directors on February 25, 2009. This recommendation was based on extensive review and discussion in late 2008 and early 2009 over the course of seven Council meetings. This decision making process included the following major components:

1. Technical information provided by the Draft Environmental Impact Statement;
2. Review of city policy that provided guidance for the development of light rail in Bellevue; and
3. Consideration of public input provided at Sound Transit and Council public hearings to help understand public preferences and considerations.

Council's preferred alternative was detailed in a letter to the Sound Transit Board of Directors.

During the May 18, 2009 Council meeting staff summarized the May 14, 2009 Sound Transit Board of Directors' Locally Preferred Alternative decision. The summary compared the Bellevue City Council and Sound Transit Board of Directors preferences. Staff also discussed anticipated next steps for the project, through issuance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement in late summer 2010.

On July 6, staff discussed the proposed City work plan for the remainder of 2009 and for 2010, and proposed funding re-allocations to accomplish it. This discussion highlighted Sound Transit's general project schedule through the summer 2010 issuance of the East Link project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and summer or fall 2010 completion of preliminary engineering. As discussed, this schedule and the May 14, 2009 Sound Transit Board of Director's Locally Preferred Alternative motion influences the City's efforts. Central foci of Bellevue efforts will be the identification of potential local funding sources for a downtown tunnel alternative; City analysis of the proposed downtown at-grade alternative; support to Sound Transit on the development of the FEIS and preliminary engineering; and evaluation of several outstanding planning and engineering issues.

Sound Transit staff East Link Briefing

The Sound Transit staff presentation on July 13 will provide additional information for Council regarding Sound Transit's Locally Preferred Alternative and associated direction from the Board and the timeline for developing and issuing the FEIS and completing preliminary engineering.

Funding to Accomplish East Link Work Program

As discussed with Council on July 6, the consultant resources expected to be required to deliver the City's work plan exceed currently programmed resources for the East Link project. As a consequence, the City proposes allocating existing operating budget and CIP resources to accomplish this work plan. Staff currently estimates a total of nearly \$1.1 million will be required for specialized consultant assistance and tools such as VISSIM traffic modeling software (purchase of which was approved on July 6).

Staff proposes to allocate \$60,000 from the Transportation Department operating budget to fund this work. Staff further proposes to allocate or reallocate funds from existing CIP projects as follows:

- Allocate \$200,000 from PW-R-153 for work on NE 15/16th and the 122nd LRT station/street interface
- Reallocate \$300,000 from ED-2 (Downtown Parking Initiative)
- Allocate \$320,000 from PW-R-147 (DIP Implementation)
- Allocate \$40,000 from PW-R-130 (HCT Study)
- Allocate \$150,000 from PW-R-44 (Transportation Planning Studies)

On July 6, Council raised several questions about the implications of these proposed changes. The information in Attachment 1 is intended to more specifically address these issues, and provide more information on implications. In summary, reallocation of resources from the CIP and operating fund sources cited above will have implications for other work that the City will not be able to accomplish during the 2009-2010 period. However, many of the specific proposed reallocations would utilize funds that are closely related to the body of East Link work. On July 6, Council provided direction to staff that accomplishing the East Link work program was a priority, and staff has proposed a funding reallocation strategy designed to have as minimal impact on other work priorities as possible.

Should Council concur with this approach, staff will return on July 20, 2009 with an ordinance amending the CIP to accomplish this new body of work.

ATTACHMENT

Proposed CIP Fund Transfer to new East Link Analysis and Development Project

**Proposed CIP Fund Transfers to new "East Link Analysis and Development (ELAD) Project"
(Proposed CIP Plan No. PW-R-159)**

CIP Plan No.	Total Programmed Funding¹	2009-2010 Budget Available	Original 2009-2010 Work Plan	Transfer to E.L.A.D. Project	Impact to 2009-2010 Work Plan
PW-R-44 (Transportation Planning Studies)	\$3,651,000	\$252,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning & pre-design of possible future CIP projects; • Cost estimating; • Project scoping; • Traffic modeling; • Environmental impact assessment 	\$150,000	Limits capacity to perform capital project/program update work (i.e. CIP & TFP updates)
PW-R-130 (HCT Study)	587,000	158,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of route and station locations in Downtown Bellevue; • Coordinate with local and regional studies including DIP Update, Circulator Study, Bel-Red Study, and ST Phase II 	40,000	No impact; similar work transfers to new ELAD project
PW-R-147 (DIP Implementation)	1,070,000	528,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclude Main Street conceptual design work (work will be completed as intended with remaining R-147 budget); • Update the Downtown Subarea Plan by extending the planning horizon from 2020 to 2030; • Arterial street operational optimization (Council allocated additional \$400K in budget update for Downtown planning and operations work) 	320,000	Work to update the Downtown Plan horizon year and on arterial operational analysis will occur under the new ELAD project with the added consideration of surface LRT; proposed work is consistent with intent of \$400K budget add
PW-R-153 (Early Implementation of Bel-Red Corridor Plan)	3,825,000	2,318,000	<p><u>Not Included in PW-R-147:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Mid-Block Crossing work - reprogrammed to CIP Plan No. PW-W/B-77; • Downtown Great Streets work - reprogrammed to CIP Plan No. PW-R-158 	200,000	No impact; similar work (focused on 15 th /16 th Street design and LRT integration) transfers to new ELAD project
ED-2 (Downtown Parking Initiative)	387,000	354,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a plan for more efficient use of downtown parking supply to help create more short-term visitor parking opportunities 	300,000	Significantly lessens capacity in 2009 and 2010 to develop downtown parking plans (such as for Downtown park)
Total:				\$1,010,000	

¹ Amount reflects total funding allocated over the life of the CIP project or program, including prior to the current 2009-2015 Plan period.