



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

July 14, 2003

Motion 11753

Proposed No. 2003-0329.1

Sponsors Sullivan

1 A MOTION relating to the I-90 Two-Way Transit and
2 HOV Operations project, providing input to the I-90
3 Steering Committee, the Sound Transit Board, the
4 Washington state Department of Transportation and the
5 Washington state Transportation Commission,
6 recommending that Alternative R-2B be identified as
7 Sound Transit's Locally Preferred Alternative.

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10 WHEREAS, in November 1996, the voters of the three-county Sound Transit
11 district approved Sound Move, the ten-year regional transit system plan, and

12 WHEREAS, Sound Transit (formally known as the Central Puget Sound Regional
13 Transit Authority) is proceeding to implement the Sound Move plan, and

14 WHEREAS, one component of the Sound Move program approved by the voters
15 in 1996 was to provide reliable, two-way transit service on I-90, and

16 WHEREAS, to meet this goal, Sound Transit empanelled the I-90 Steering
17 Committee to develop recommendations on how to achieve reliable two-way transit
18 service on I-90, and

19 WHEREAS, on April 25, 2003, Sound Transit, the Washington state Department
20 of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration issued a draft environmental
21 impact statement to satisfy the requirements of both the National Environmental Policy
22 Act and the Washington state Environmental Policy Act, and

23 WHEREAS, King County has a significant interest and stake in the outcome of
24 the I-90 Two-Way Transit and HOV Operations project, and the metropolitan King
25 County council wishes to provide formal input to the decision-making process of the I-90
26 Steering Committee, the Sound Transit Board, the Washington state Department of
27 Transportation and the Washington state Transportation Commission to identify the
28 Locally Preferred Alternative;

29 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

30 A. The metropolitan King County council recommends that Alternative R-2B,
31 which would convert the I-90 center roadway to a two-way facility for transit and
32 carpools only, be chosen by the I-90 Steering Committee, and identified as Sound
33 Transit's Locally Preferred Alternative. The metropolitan King County council's position
34 is based on a review of the draft environmental impact statement ("DEIS"), the
35 Transportation Strategic Plan ("TSP") and other countywide goals and policies.
36 Alternative R-2B is the right choice because of:

37 1. Sound Transit's mission: Sound Transit's mission is to build high-capacity
38 transit. Much of the focus of Alternative R-8A (which would add high occupancy

39 vehicle ["HOV"] lanes on the I-90 outer roadways) improves travel conditions for
40 general-purpose traffic in the I-90 corridor. Sound Transit should not be spending its
41 funds to create additional general-purpose travel capacity;

42 2. Consistency with the 1976 Memorandum Agreement: In an historic
43 memorandum agreement signed in December 1976 by representatives of Seattle, Mercer
44 Island, Bellevue, King County, Metro and the Washington state Highway Commission,
45 the parties agreed to support construction of a new I-90 facility "which will accommodate
46 no more than eight motor vehicle lanes," including three general-purpose lanes in each
47 direction and two lanes "designed for and permanently committed to transit use." The
48 parties further agreed that "the design shall be such as to accommodate the operation of
49 the two transit lanes in either a reversible or in a two-way directional mode." As initially
50 built and currently operating, the facility does not allow the two transit lanes to operate in
51 a two-way directional mode, but Alternative R-2B gives the region the opportunity to
52 return to the intent agreed to so clearly by all parties to the 1976 Memorandum
53 Agreement;

54 3. Safety impacts of narrower lanes: To accommodate additional lanes,
55 Alternative R-8A would result in narrower travel lanes and narrower shoulders, thereby
56 increasing safety risks and increasing the likelihood of accidents. The DEIS indicates
57 that Alternative R-8A would have the highest potential injury crash rates of any
58 alternative studied, in both 2005 and 2025. The travel benefits that might accrue from
59 Alternative R-8A do not outweigh these safety risks;

60 4. Bicycle and pedestrian pathway: The metropolitan King County council
61 supports maintaining or improving the existing bicycle and pedestrian pathway along I-

62 90. Alternative R-8A would reduce shoulder widths on I-90, thereby necessitating
63 installation of a railing along the bicycle and pedestrian pathway. While a railing could
64 address negative impacts such as wind buffeting, road debris, and headlight glare, it
65 would also have the effect of narrowing the pathway;

66 5. Hazardous truck loads: I-90 is currently a key route for transport of
67 hazardous truck loads across Lake Washington. Alternative R-8A would narrow
68 shoulders, thereby diverting trucks carrying hazardous or flammable loads to SR-520 and
69 other routes. The resulting increase in truck volumes on these other routes, and the
70 effects on safety and congestion have not been analyzed adequately;

71 6. Affordability: Alternative R-8A has the highest cost of any alternative
72 (estimated cost of \$90 to 100 million, compared with estimated cost of \$28 to 30 million
73 for Alternative R-2B), and pursuing it would limit resources for the other critical
74 transportation safety needs in our region.

75 B. The metropolitan King County council recognizes that once high-capacity
76 transit ("HCT") is implemented on I-90, a variation of R-8A would be appropriate as the

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77 operation of HCT in the I-90 center roadway may reduce the number of lanes available
78 for vehicle traffic.

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Motion 11753 was introduced on 7/14/2003 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 7/14/2003, by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Ms. Sullivan, Ms. Edmonds, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Pelz, Mr. Constantine,
Mr. Gossett and Ms. Patterson

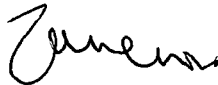
No: 1 - Mr. von Reichbauer

Excused: 5 - Ms. Lambert, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Hammond, Ms. Hague and Mr.
Irons

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Cynthia Sullivan, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments None