



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

September 28, 2010

Ordinance 16935

Proposed No. 2010-0437.2

Sponsors Ferguson and Phillips

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to a corridor-implementation
2 plan for State Route 520 and State Route 522;
3 implementing public transportation service improvements
4 according to the plan; and repealing Ordinance 16843,
5 Section 1, and Ordinance 16843, Section 2.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

- 6
- 7 1. United States Department of Transportation ("USDOT") issued a
8 Federal Register Notice soliciting metropolitan areas to apply for Urban
9 Partnership status by April 30, 2007, promising designated areas would
10 receive priority consideration for available federal discretionary funds to
11 implement aggressive congestion-relief programs.
- 12 2. In 2007, King County, the Puget Sound Regional Council ("PSRC")
13 and the Washington state Department of Transportation ("WSDOT")
14 submitted an application for Urban Partnership status to USDOT.
- 15 3. King County, WSDOT and PSRC submitted the Lake Washington
16 Urban Partnership proposal to implement aggressive congestion-relief
17 programs on the State Route (SR) 520 corridor, one of the most congested
18 corridors in the central Puget Sound Region that included variable tolling.

19 4. Toll revenues were needed to complete a funding package to replace
20 the SR 520 floating bridge that is vulnerable to catastrophic failure from
21 seismic or storm events.

22 5. In 2007, the Seattle area received Urban Partnership status from
23 USDOT and was awarded a \$139 million grant from federal discretionary
24 funds to implement the four Ts -- tolling, technology, transit, and
25 telecommuting strategies -- to reduce congestion in the SR 520 corridor.

26 6. Implementation of variable tolling on SR 520 would increase the
27 demand for transit service in the SR 520 corridor and the Urban
28 Partnership Agreement ("UPA") requires the Urban Partners to expand
29 transit capacity along SR 520 by adding ninety one-way peak period trips
30 on bus routes operated by Metro transit and Sound Transit ("ST").

31 7. The UPA only provided funds for the purchase of buses and capital
32 improvements associated with the Lake Washington Urban Partnership.

33 8. In 2009, recognizing the need for additional funding to support the
34 operations, maintenance and capital needs of public transportation, the
35 state legislature authorized King County to implement an additional
36 regular property tax levy not to exceed seven and one-half cents per one-
37 thousand dollars with the first cent required to expand transit capacity in
38 the SR 520 corridor.

39 9. Ordinance 16734 was passed by the King County council, enacting the
40 property tax for public transportation, levying six and one-half cents per
41 thousand dollars of assessed value to fund transit-related expenses and

42 meet the UPA commitments of providing enhanced service on the SR 520
43 corridor.

44 10. Ordinance 16717, Section 131, Proviso P5, as amended, required a
45 corridor implementation plan be delivered by April 30, 2010, for adoption
46 by ordinance and shall:

47 a. be developed cooperatively with ST and WSDOT to address peak and
48 all day service changes consistent with the SR 520 UPA and the SR 520
49 Tolling Implementation Committee Recommendations;

50 b. be integrated with ST's bus service and WSDOT's tolling and traffic
51 management investments;

52 c. include at least twenty-eight thousand hours of SR 520 bus service;

53 d. consider transit service-related mitigation needs for SR 520, 1-90 and
54 SR 522; and

55 e. include up to five thousand annual bus service hours supporting the
56 core SR 522 bus service to mitigate the impacts of diversionary trips onto
57 SR 522.

58 11. In April 2010, WSDOT identified a preferred alternative design for
59 the I-5 to Medina Bridge Replacement and HOV project that will have
60 impacts on the operation of transit services in and approaching SR 520.

61 12. The metropolitan King County council unanimously passed
62 Ordinance 16843 on May 24, 2010, acknowledging the transmittal of the
63 State Route 520 and State Route 522 Corridor Implementation Plan
64 required by Ordinance 16717, Section 131, Proviso P5, as amended, in

65 Attachment A to this ordinance and the State Route 520 and State Route
66 522 Corridor Implementation Plan for public transportation service
67 improvements for October 2010 and February 2011 for King County, as
68 described in Attachment B to this ordinance.

69 13. Ordinance 16843 directed the executive to conduct additional review
70 and analysis of the State Route 520 and State Route 522 Corridor
71 Implementation Plan to further consider revenue and cost implications of
72 emerging SR 520 issues including the operational cost implications of the
73 WSDOT Preferred Alternative for SR 520 and revenue forecast issues
74 associated with the additional regular property tax for public
75 transportation authorized in RCW 84.52.140.

76 14. The revised State Route 520 and State Route 522 Corridor
77 Implementation Plan should be transmitted by July 31, 2010, to the King
78 County council for adoption by ordinance.

79 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

80 SECTION 1. The council adopts the revised State Route 520 and State Route 522
81 Service Implementation Plan required by Ordinance 16843, originally prepared in
82 response to Ordinance 16717, Section 131, Proviso P5, as amended, which is Attachment
83 A to this ordinance.

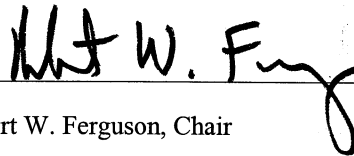
84 SECTION 2. The State Route 520 and State Route 522 Service Implementation
85 Plan public transportation service improvements for October 2010 and February 2011 for
86 King County, substantially as described in Attachment B to this ordinance, are hereby
87 adopted.

88 SECTION 3. Ordinance 16843, Section 1, and Ordinance 16843, Section 2, are
89 each hereby repealed.
90

Ordinance 16935 was introduced on 8/23/2010 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 9/27/2010, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ms. Drago, Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett,
Ms. Hague, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Dunn
No: 0
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Robert W. Ferguson, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

RECEIVED
2010 OCT -8 AM 11:35
CLERK
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

APPROVED this 7 day of October, 2010



Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: A. State Route 520 State Route 522 Service Implementation Plan, B. October 2010 and February 2011 Urban Partnership-Related Service Change - dated September 1, 2010

STATE ROUTE 520/STATE ROUTE 522
SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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I. Background

This report presents the background, analysis and service implementation plan for State Route (SR) 520 and SR 522. This report was developed in response to direction included in the 2010-2011 Budget Ordinance 16717, Section 131, provided below, and Ordinance 16843.

Proviso P5:

In coordination with the SR 520 Urban Partnership Agreement and the tolling of SR 520, up to 5,000 annual bus service hours shall be delivered on SR 522, as supporting bus service to the core SR 520 Urban Partnership Agreement bus service to mitigate the impacts of diversionary trips on SR 520.

The actual amount of service to be delivered shall be based on a corridor service implementation plan transmitted by April 30, 2010, for adoption by ordinance. The implementation plan shall:

- 1. be developed cooperatively with Sound Transit (ST) and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to address peak and all-day service changes consistent with the SR 520 Urban Partnership Agreement and the SR 520 Tolling Implementation Committee recommendations;*
- 2. be integrated with ST bus service and WSDOT tolling and traffic management investments;*
- 3. include at least 28,000 hours of core SR 520 bus service;*
- 4. consider transit service related mitigation needs for the SR 520, I-90 and SR 522; and*
- 5. include up to 5,000 annual bus service hours supporting the core SR 520 bus service, to mitigate the impacts of diversionary trips onto SR 522.*

The plan and ordinance required to be submitted by this proviso must be filed in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers and to the committee coordinator for the physical environment committee or its successor.

The King County Executive transmitted a corridor service implementation plan on April 29, 2010. Council unanimously passed Ordinance 16843 on May 24, 2010, acknowledging the executive's submittal as meeting the requirement of Ordinance 16717, Proviso P5, requiring the executive to conduct an additional review and analysis of revenue and cost implications associated with emerging SR 520 issues, including the operational cost implications of the WSDOT SR 520 Preferred Alternative and revenue projections associated with the additional regular property tax for public transportation authorized in RCW 84.52.140.

II. Lake Washington Urban Partnership

In 2006, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced a major initiative, *the National Strategy to Reduce Congestion on America's Transportation Network*. A major component of it is the Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA). The agreement encouraged urban partners such as state and local governments to adopt the "Four T's:" tolling (congestion pricing), transit, telecommuting, and technology, as strategies to reduce congestion.

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), WSDOT and King County Metro Transit submitted an application for the Urban Partnership grant program, known as the Lake Washington Urban Partnership. The Lake Washington Urban Partnership included tolling as a strategy that would achieve several purposes. As envisioned by the UPA, tolling would reduce congestion on one of the most overcrowded corridors in the central Puget Sound region. Although not required by the UPA, the Lake Washington Partnership also intended to use the tolling funds to help fund the replacement of the SR 520 Bridge.

In August 2007, King County, WSDOT and PSRC were awarded a \$139 million federal grant. This grant would fund the tolling infrastructure, the purchase of new buses for SR 520 related service, and other transit capital improvements including new park-and-ride spaces, bus stop improvements, and real-time passenger information signs at key transfer points and destinations in the corridor. The UPA includes \$41 million for transit capital investments, of which about \$31 million will be used to purchase diesel-electric hybrid buses that Metro and ST will use in the corridor. Through the UPA, the partners are committed to add 90 one-way peak period trips on core and other related bus service along SR 520. The UPA does not provide operating revenue for this service. It assumes that revenue to operate the enhanced SR 520 service will be available through local funds.

III. Financing Transit Service on SR 520

Since the UPA only provides capital funds and existing transit resources are not adequate to fund the operation of the required service enhancements, new local funds are needed to ensure this service can operate.

Metro's resources have not kept pace with increased costs and the rising demand for service. Metro's primary funding source is a 0.9 percent sales tax, which accounts for 70 percent of the operating cost of delivering service. In 2008, the rising price of diesel fuel, followed by the national recession, created a significant budget shortfall for Metro that is expected to continue. The impact of the economic decline on Metro was further exacerbated as people spent less and the sales tax revenue plummeted. As a result, Metro's ability to maintain existing service continues to be a significant concern. Metro's strained budget precludes the use of existing sales tax resources to fund enhanced SR 520 service without causing significant service reductions in other areas.

Initially, Metro advocated for a share of the SR 520 toll revenue to fund the UPA transit service but received little support in the state legislature. In April 2009, the state legislature gave King County the authority to levy a property tax for transit of up to seven and one-half cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The legislation, Second Substitute Senate Bill 5433 (2SSB 5433), required the first penny of assessed property tax be used to expand transit capacity along SR 520 by adding core and other-related bus routes. In November 2009, the King County Council authorized a transit property tax, levying six and one-half cents per \$1,000 of assessed value as part of the 2010 Property Tax Levy, Ordinance 16734. As directed by the legislature, a portion of the resulting property tax revenue will be used to implement the Urban Partnership service.

Property Tax Growth Limitation

In 1971 the Washington State Legislature established a limitation on the increase in regular property taxes for taxing districts. These limits apply to the taxing district as a whole, not to individual parcels of property. The current limit each year for most districts is 101 percent of their highest lawful levy since 1985 and the value of the property tax levied on new construction within the district. Jurisdictions and special districts may present voters with a special excess levy and, if approved, exceed the current 101 percent limitation.

The growth limit places a ceiling on the amount of property tax a district can collect from year to year. For example, if the taxing authority received \$1 million in property taxes one year, it can only receive \$1.01 million the next year, plus the incremental increase generated by new construction during the past year. The one percent limitation can affect the tax *rate* as well. For instance, if the taxable value of properties (not counting new construction) within the district increases by more than one percent, then the rate per thousand must be adjusted to a level that maintains the growth limitation on the total amount collected, i.e. the levy. As a further illustration of this effect, if the assessed value of the property increased by 15 percent, the levy *rate* per \$1,000 of assessed value would need to drop to 87 percent of its prior level to stay within the one percent limitation.

2SSB 5433 Transit Property Tax and the "First One Cent" Mandate

The transit property tax legislation creates a challenge in planning for funding of SR 520 and SR 522 transit service because the amount of revenue collected for that purpose varies each year. When property values rise, the revenue produced by the "first one cent" would increase. Given past escalation in property values, this could be a significant increase. However, during times when property values decrease, as is the current situation, the amount collected would decrease. Using the latest King County Office of Economic and Financial Analysis (OEFA) forecast, property values are projected to sink further over the next several years before they recover. Beginning in 2012, the "first one cent" will not be enough to sustain the urban partnership 28,000 annual hours Council approved on May 24, 2010 (Ordinance 16843) to be put in service on SR 520 in October 2010 and February 2011. However, the revenue collected during 2010 and not spent on services allow for sufficient funding through 2015.

Since the transit property tax is constrained by the one percent growth limitation plus revenues from new construction, expected revenue would be more certain and, thus, planning easier, if the portion of the transit property tax dedicated to SR 520 and related routes was a

fixed percentage of the total levy. However, whether the SR 520 portion of the tax is the “first one cent” or a fixed percentage of the levy, both scenarios raise concerns related to the sustainability of the property tax as a sole revenue source for the operation of specific transit service.

If the SR 520 portion of the transit property tax remains as the “first one cent,” the volatility of the value of the “first one cent” caused by the increase or decrease in assessed property values is the sole determinant of the amount collected. If assessed values drop, as anticipated for the next several years, other portions of the property tax or other Metro revenues will be needed to support the SR 520 Urban Partnership service. If assessed values increase and produce more revenue than is required to fund the SR 520 service, the legislation requires excess revenue be spent for the expansion of transit capacity along SR 520 by adding core and other supporting bus routes. This prevents use of the “first one cent” excess property tax revenues to support other elements of Metro’s service network.

If the SR 520 portion of the transit property tax were to become a fixed percentage of the total levy, it would be subject to the one percent growth limitation. As such, if operating costs increase by more than one percent, Metro may have to tap into the non-SR 520 portion of the levy to maintain service levels. Also, it is possible that property values would decline sufficiently so that the tax rate tops out at 7.5 percent and the levy is unable to grow at even one percent.

With the total transit property tax subject to the one percent growth limitation, the consequence of the “first one cent” being tied only to assessed value is that the proportion of revenue produced from the other portion of the tax will fluctuate conversely with the “first one cent’s” value.

As shown in the table below, July forecasts from the OEFA result in the value of the property tax declining in the next few years due to declines in assessed value. Based on this, it is projected that revenue collected during 2010 and not spent on SR 520 services in 2010 are sufficient to fund the SR 520 and limited SR 522 services through 2015.

Estimated Revenue “first one cent” (\$ in 000s)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Property Tax (1 cent; OEFA July Forecast)	\$3,386	\$3,174	\$3,205	\$3,380	\$3,736	\$4,043

Expense SR 520 Service and Property Tax Balance (\$ in 000s)

Passenger Fares ¹	\$97	\$733	\$733	\$733	\$813	\$813
Operating Expense ^(2,3,4,5) (28,096 annual hours)	\$ 493	\$3,641	\$4,468	\$4,654	\$4,847	\$5,049
Net Revenue – Expense	\$2,990	\$266	(\$530)	(\$541)	(\$299)	(\$194)
Property Tax Remaining SR 520 only		\$3,256	\$2,726	\$2,185	\$1,886	\$1,692

With SR 522 Service Expense Added and Property Tax Balance (\$ in 000s)

Passenger Fares ¹		\$70	\$70	\$70	\$78	\$78
Operating Expense ^(2,4,5) (5,000 annual hours)		\$373	\$398	\$413	\$429	\$445
Net Revenue-Expense		(\$303)	(\$328)	(\$343)	(\$351)	(\$367)
Property Tax Remaining	\$2,990	\$2,953	\$2,095	\$1,211	\$561	0

1 – Assumes 22 passengers per hour

2 – Based on cost per hour for type of fleet to be operated

3 – Includes Estimate for Fleet Replacement for grant-funded fleet

4 – Does not include funding for tolls (\$600k - \$750k estimate)

5 – Does not include estimates for costs that might be higher due to the amenities provided in the corridor per grant specifications

To correct the property tax sustainability issue, a change in the transit property tax legislation is needed. Ideally, the state legislature would eliminate the “first one cent” language. Having all of the property tax under the same constraints would provide predictable revenue that would allow Metro to strategically plan how to sustain the SR 520 Urban Partnership, RapidRide and other service funded by the transit property tax. If the legislature wants to assure that some of the property tax goes to fund SR 520 service, the amendment to the statute could replace the "first one cent" requirement with a requirement that a certain percentage (e.g. 15 percent) of the levy go to SR 520. In that case, the SR 520 portion would grow at the same rate as the rest of the levy instead of fluctuating with assessed value.

Sound Transit Urban Partnership Funding

Sound Transit’s Urban Partnership funding comes from their ST2 plan, approved by voters in November 2008. Although the majority of the ST2 funding is dedicated to extending Link light rail to the North, South and East, the plan also included funds to add 100,000 annual hours of bus service to enhance ST Regional Express service. Sound Transit will be contributing to the UPA by adding service between Redmond and the University District during the peak travel periods. Those trips make up a portion of the 90 one-way peak trips required by the UPA.

Urban Partnership Timeline

According to the Urban Partnership Agreement as of September 2009, the following projects shall be delivered by the dates identified:

Project	Operational Date (no later than)
Variable Pricing on SR 520	1st Quarter 2011, no later than June 2011
Enhanced Transit Service on SR 520	October 2010 and February 2011
Transit Facility Improvements	June 30, 2011
Redmond Park-and-Ride Lot	Completed
Kirkland Park-and-Ride Lot	October 15, 2014
Real Time Information	June 30, 2011
Real-Time Multi-Modal Traveler Information	June 30, 2011
SR-520 Active Traffic Management	
SR 520	June 30, 2011
I-90	June 30, 2011

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Project

SR 520 is one of the region's most congested corridors. The SR 520 floating bridge is vulnerable to catastrophic failure from earthquake and windstorms. Replacement of the SR 520 facility is crucial not only for public safety, but also to accommodate the significant growth expected in the region by 2030. The Puget Sound region is expected to grow by more than 1.3 million people and add 700,000 jobs, increasing the travel demand on vital corridors such as SR 520.

As required by RCW 47.01.408, the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Project will consist of six lanes, with two lanes for transit and HOV traffic and four lanes for general-purpose traffic. The floating bridge portion of the project will be completed by 2014 with the full project between I-5 and I-405 completed by 2016.

The SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program consist of three main elements on two segments--Interstate 5 (I-5) to Medina and Medina to SR 202. The I-5 to Medina segment includes the floating bridge pontoons that will be constructed offsite and the land connection on both sides of Lake Washington. The USDOT determined that the Medina to SR 202 segment provided independent utility as a stand-alone project allowing WSDOT to approach the environmental review differently for each section. WSDOT undertook an Environmental Assessment process for the Eastside project. The Westside required a full environmental review through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.

The Medina to SR 202 preferred alternative responds to the needs of the growing Eastside by reducing transit and HOV travel time, improving reliability, enhancing safety, and supporting current and planned growth east of Lake Washington. The project includes center HOV lanes in both directions with direct access provided to and from the west at 108th Avenue and center bus stops and lids at 92nd Avenue NE (Yarrow Point) and Evergreen Point Road. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) determined that Eastside improvements did not create significant adverse environmental impacts and issued a finding of no significant

impacts May 21, 2010, allowing the project to move forward with permitting. The state has identified funding to complete \$776 million for Medina to SR 202--Eastside Transit and HOV Project. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2011. Construction of the bridge pontoons is also moving forward after the needed environmental review. The state is preparing to issue a Request for Qualifications in August 2010 and Request for Proposal for construction of the pontoons in October 2010. Construction of the pontoons is scheduled to begin in 2011.

In April 2010, the state announced a preferred design for the Westside. The preferred design reflects public and agency comments received on the supplemental draft environmental impact statement. The preferred alternative follows the direction of RCW 47.01.408 adding HOV lanes in each direction and maintains four general-purpose lanes. The preferred alternative provides a new urban interchange at Montlake that includes direct access ramps to the center HOV lanes to and from the east and a lid over SR 520 that reconnects neighborhoods split by SR 520. The project includes a second bridge across the Montlake cut and HOV lanes on Montlake Boulevard between SR 520 and Pacific Avenue. The Westside preferred alternative eliminates the Montlake freeway station. WSDOT plans to publish the final EIS in spring 2011. Once the final EIS is released, the FHWA will prepare a Record of Decision that describes the project's direction and specific mitigation measures. With the Record of Decision, the environmental review process is completed and WSDOT can begin seeking construction permits.

Preferred Alternative Revenue and Operating Cost Implications

The SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program will improve transit operations. The HOV lanes and other transit operating enhancements will increase operating speeds and improve reliability and could result in lower operating costs. On the other hand, the elimination of the Montlake Freeway Station requires an increase in direct service to the University District to replace riders' access to crosslake service. The Urban Partnership service supported by the "first one cent" of the transit property tax and Sound Transit's ST2 investments will provide a portion of the direct University District service needed. However, to provide similar service levels to those currently offered at the Montlake Freeway Station throughout the entire day, additional operating resources are needed. To fully replicate the Montlake Station service frequency and span through the provision of direct service to the University District would require approximately \$3 million annually. Metro and WSDOT continue in a dialogue about this issue. It is Metro's position that since not replacing the Montlake Freeway Station allowed WSDOT to design a facility acceptable to the community and reduce the cost, the state should mitigate the impact of transit riders' loss of access through the provision of direct University Service.

Tolling SR 520

The Urban Partnership program provides a mechanism to fund a portion of the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project through toll revenues. WSDOT expects to toll the existing bridge, starting in spring 2011. The Washington State Transportation Commission will set rates that consider the amount needed to complete the funding package, bonding requirements and other considerations by fall 2010. Higher tolls during peak travel periods will help manage travel demand by increasing the cost of driving at times when the roads are most congested. Variable tolling is expected to reduce congestion levels, increase vehicle throughput in the corridor, and increase transit use.

The implementation of tolling on SR 520 is expected to increase transit demand by 15-35 percent as more people look for viable lower-cost alternatives to driving. Low-income populations will be among the most affected and are expected to look to transit as an alternative to paying vehicle tolls. All transit riders will benefit from more frequent, faster and more reliable service across SR 520.

However, if transit is not exempted from paying tolls, operating cost will increase by about \$600,000 to \$750,000 annually. Under current state law RCW 47.56, the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) is the body charged with setting toll rates and determining discount and exemption policy. Although the WSTC has yet to make a final decision, preliminary recommendations would exempt public transportation vehicles from paying SR 520 tolls. The WSTC plans to adopt final tolling rates and policies in the fall. With the number of weekly trips across the Evergreen Point Bridge operated by Metro at over 4500, including deadhead trips, the cost could be significant. Using Toll Scenario 7 that was recommended by the SR 520 work group, Metro's annual cost is estimated at \$725,000. Scenario 7 envisioned a variable rate by the time of day with a maximum of \$3.25 for automobiles. However, it is likely that tolls will vary by the number of axles on a vehicle. Scenario 7 also presumes that when construction is completed tolls would increase. If Metro is required to pay tolls, the Urban Partnership investments are not sustainable through the "first one cent" of the transit property tax.

The table below shows Scenario 7 toll rates for auto traffic by period.

Scenario 7: 2010 Rates, Increase in 2016	
Morning (5-9am)	\$2.60
Mid-day (9am-3pm)	\$2.10
Afternoon(3-7pm)	\$3.25
Evenings (7-10pm)	\$2.60
Nights (10pm-5am)	\$0.00
Weekends (Sat and Sun)*	\$1.00
*Toll assumed to be \$.80-\$1.60 on Sat/Sun	

SR 520 High Capacity Transit Plan and Montlake Multimodal Center

As directed in Engrossed Senate Bill 6099, ST, Metro, WSDOT and the University of Washington (UW) worked together to plan for high capacity transit in the SR 520 corridor. In December 2008, the group submitted the High Capacity Transit (HCT) Plan to the Governor and the Joint Transportation Committee. The HCT Plan provides an outline for how transit can capitalize on investments in the SR 520 corridor through Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and improve off-corridor transit facilities to help meet anticipated growth in travel through 2020.

The BRT service plan includes five lines serving eastside activity and employment centers, targeting connections between Redmond, Overlake, Kirkland, Woodinville, Eastgate, Bellevue, downtown Seattle and the University District. HOV lanes and direct access ramps constructed as part of the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project will provide the speed and reliability needed to operate BRT service that is competitive with driving. The SR 520, BRT service plan features frequent all-day, two-way service, off-board fare payment and improved passenger amenities such as real-time, next bus arrival information. The estimated cost to implement the HCT Plan is \$84-\$172 million for capital elements, and an annual operating cost of \$16 million for the five BRT lines and associated services.

The HCT Plan also includes a vision for development of a multimodal center adjacent to the UW campus, UW Medical Center and ST UW Link Light Rail Station. The result of this vision is the Montlake Multimodal Center, which would improve access to the University District destinations and provide convenient connections between light rail and bus. The plan includes pedestrian pathways and bicycle facilities improvements.

The UW, ST, Metro and the City of Seattle are taking steps toward implementing this vision with the Rainier Vista Project. The Rainier Vista Project, initiated by the UW, will create a pedestrian land bridge that spans a lowered NE Pacific Place and the Burke-Gilman Trail, enhance bicycle access, and improve the pedestrian environment to both light rail and bus service. The Rainier Vista Project will facilitate multimodal connections, add to mobility options and improve current transit infrastructure in the Montlake Triangle area. Metro applied for a \$3.0 million dollar federal grant to fund improvements associated with the Rainier Vista Project including a bus layover, sidewalks, bus shelters, lighting, trolley infrastructure and signal improvements. However, recently the Federal Transit Administration announced the awards for their Livability and Urban Circulator grant programs. Unfortunately, Metro's Rainier Vista Transit Project was not selected. Metro continues to support the Rainier Vista Project and other pedestrian, bicycle and transit improvements at the Montlake Triangle and will continue to seek grant opportunities to improve transit connections in this area.

IV. SR 520 and SR 522 Service Implementation Plan

Existing Transit Service: SR 520 and SR 522

SR 520 provides a major connection between eastside communities and Seattle neighborhoods across Lake Washington. Metro and ST currently operate approximately 600 daily trips across SR 520 each weekday. A majority of these trips occur during the peak periods (6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m.) and primarily travel toward Seattle in the morning and away from Seattle in the afternoon. Metro and ST serve about 5,000 riders across the Lake Washington corridor during each peak period. In addition to peak period focused service, Metro and ST provide all-day bus service connecting Kirkland, Bellevue, and Redmond with the University District and downtown Seattle. Throughout the day, about 15,000 riders take advantage of the SR 520 crosslake service.

SR 522 is a major corridor for connections between Woodinville, Bothell, Kenmore Lake Forest Park, downtown Seattle and the University District. As an alternative route to SR 520 for South Snohomish and North King County residents, tolls on SR 520 are expected to increase the diversion of traffic to the SR 522 corridor. Metro and ST currently operate five routes on SR 522. These routes include peak-only and all-day services to downtown Seattle, all-day service on weekdays to the University District, and peak-only service to Bellevue. Over 200 bus trips serve the corridor daily, with a majority of trips operating during the peak periods. During the peak periods, over 2,500 riders take advantage of SR 522 service.

Service Plan Development and Coordination with WSDOT and ST

To develop service plans for the SR 520 and SR 522 corridors, Metro worked with WSDOT and ST. Metro and ST addressed the growing transit demand and how to achieve the 90 one-way peak trips required by the UPA for the SR 520 corridor. ST and Metro focused on developing transit investments that meet the all-day market and peak period needs. Additionally, ST will be adding bus trips on SR 522 in February 2011 between Woodinville and downtown Seattle to meet peak commuter service demand. Metro continuously works with WSDOT to ensure transit can operate quickly and reliably in the corridor.

While the UPA will provide improved service in the SR 520 corridor, Metro continues to work with WSDOT on other SR 520 issues such as mitigating construction impacts. The UPA service investments will help offset some of the impacts of construction by providing frequent service to the UW and to downtown Seattle. Additional resources are needed to offset the planned removal of the Montlake Freeway Station and the increased cost to operate existing service, and to initiate new service to mitigate lost vehicle capacity during construction.

SR 520 Transit Service Implementation Plan

The transit service concepts developed for the UPA meet the 90 one-way peak period trips required by the agreement, as well as enhance midday and evening service to improve the attractiveness of using transit throughout the day. The service implementation plan increases frequency on core routes and adds commuter service to employment concentrations on both sides of Lake Washington.

Core Network Enhancements

All Day Routes

Two popular Metro routes 255 and 271, currently providing over 4,300 crosslake trips each weekday, will receive all-day service enhancements. Both routes serve residential areas, commercial centers and employment concentrations on both sides of Lake Washington.

Route 255

The Route 255 improvements are proposed in two phases. In October 2010, trips that now start in downtown Kirkland will be extended during the peak period to the new Totem Lake Transit Center. In February 2011, Metro will enhance weekday frequency between 116th Avenue NE and N. 128th Street in Kirkland, and International District Station in both directions to provide 10 to 20 minutes headways. Service levels will reflect the direction of travel demand during specific periods of the day. Route 255 serves the Kingsgate and South Kirkland park-and-rides and employment centers, which anchor the service on both sides of the lake. The east terminus is adjacent to the Evergreen Hospital and Medical Center, Kirkland's largest employer. The west terminus is downtown Seattle.

Route 271

The Route 271 investment will increase peak period frequency to 10 minutes and extends the period of 15-minute midday service between the Eastgate Park and Ride and the University District via downtown Bellevue.

Commuter Service Enhancements

The UPA also enhances point-to-point commuter service to existing employment concentrations and to employment centers not served directly today. The availability of commuter parking was an important consideration in developing the investments. This proposal adds trips from the Houghton and Woodinville park-and-rides, which are both under-utilized lots.

Route 265

All Route 265 trips will be extended to serve First Hill and add up to three morning and three afternoon trips to and from the Houghton Park-and-Ride. First Hill is home to Swedish, Harborview and Virginia Mason hospitals and the offices of associated health care providers. The Route 265 extension to First Hill provides a one-seat ride for those that currently must transfer to reach their destination. Route 265 will travel via 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle and connect to First Hill via Seneca and Spring Streets.

Route 311

The service investment adds up to three morning trips to Seattle and three afternoon trips to Woodinville. Route 311 serves Woodinville, Brickyard and Kingsgate park-and-rides.

Sound Transit Regional Express Route 542

In fall 2010, ST will implement a new peak period route with service between the urban centers of downtown Redmond, Overlake and the University District. The new route will be two-way and will provide 15-minute frequency for an extended peak period to accommodate the high-tech sector's variable work schedules and UW class schedules.

Sound Transit Regional Express Route 522

Sound Transit's Route 522 operates all day, seven days a week in both directions. Peak period ridership is heavy along the corridor and subject to occasional overcrowding. In February 2011, ST will add peak period/peak directional trips on Route 522 and provide a consistent 15-minute headway service both morning and afternoon.

SR 522 Service Implementation Plan

Proviso P5 also required Metro submit a corridor implementation plan for up to 5,000 additional annual service hours on SR 522. The proviso tied the SR 522 service investment to mitigating increased traffic congestion due to a diversion of traffic that would result from SR 520 tolls. WSDOT analysis shows that some drivers will utilize SR 522 instead of SR 520 to avoid paying the toll. Diversion to SR 522 is expected to increase traffic volumes by about four percent between I-405 and I-5. SR 522 is already congested during peak commute periods.

SR 522 Recommended Service Enhancements

After analyzing service investments on existing routes and service alternatives to new markets, Metro is recommending a new route (Route 309) that would serve the two growing transit markets of South Lake Union (SLU) and First Hill. Approximately 1,000 people that work in SLU or on First Hill live within the one-quarter mile walking distance of the proposed route along SR 522. Riders could also drive to the Kenmore Park-and-Ride or one of several leased park-and-rides along the corridor.

This new peak-only route would use the I-5 reversible express lanes to exit at Mercer Street in SLU. Three major healthcare facilities are located on First Hill – Swedish, Harborview and Virginia Mason. SLU is home to several major health-science employers including the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle Children’s Hospital and the University of Washington Medical Center. Employment in South Lake Union continues to expand as other major employers such as Amazon and the Gates Foundation relocate to the area.

Riders currently have to transfer once they reach downtown Seattle in order to reach First Hill and SLU from the SR 522 corridor. They either connect to SLU via the South Lake Union Streetcar or Route 70. If traveling to First Hill, several routes are available to complete their trip. The new Route 309 is expected to save riders 10-20 minutes over current options, making transit much more time competitive with driving. Ideally, the new route (Route 309) would feature up to 10 trips, five morning southbound and five afternoon northbound, between Kenmore, SLU and First Hill. A good ridership target for this route would be 600 rides per day (300 people) or approximately 30 rides per platform hour. Thirty rides per hour is similar to other north end commuter routes that provide similar service to downtown Seattle, routes 306 and 312 produce 27.5 rides per platform hour and routes 64 and 303 produce 32.5 rides per platform hour. Given the uncertainty of the stability of property tax revenues, it would be prudent to start Route 309 at less than the ideal service level.

Metro recommends implementing the new Route 309 in February 2011, offering a minimal service level of six trips, three morning southbound and three afternoon northbound. The annual hours estimate is approximately 2,700 annual hours. Implementing the route in February 2011 with 6 daily trips will show market potential and allow for expansion as the market develops and funding allows.

Development of SR 522 Service Implementation Plan

Metro staff analyzed alternative service ideas including the proposed SLU/First Hill commuter service. Many concepts were discarded because they did not mitigate the impacts of diversionary trips resulting from the tolling of SR 520, the primary criterion for investment. Some were also discarded because the investments were outside of the subarea allocation parameters. The following are alternatives that were evaluated, but not selected:

1. Additional Peak Commuter Service to downtown Seattle

This alternative added trips on Route 312 from the Kenmore Park-and-Ride to and from downtown Seattle. The alternative was not selected because of the ST plan to increase

service on Route 522 between Woodinville and downtown Seattle in February 2011. The additional Route 522 trips will meet the demand to downtown Seattle.

2. Restructure NE Seattle/Eastside, add peak/evening/weekend Route 372 service

This alternative involved the restructure, shortening or elimination of existing routes to fund Route 372 service enhancements. The impact to existing riders would be significant, making the alternative difficult to implement. Also, since much of the Route 372 investment would be made in the late evening and weekends, it did not seem to mitigate the congestion impacts resulting from tolling SR 520.

3. New peak-only Route serving South Lake Union/Uptown/Interbay

This alternative met the principle criteria and responded to rider and employer requests for direct service to South Lake Union, Uptown and Interbay. While this alternative has the potential of attracting new transit riders, Route 309 should be more productive because it provides service to both SLU and First Hill. The First Hill market is stronger than the combined Uptown/Interbay markets.

4. New peak-only Route serving First Hill

This alternative also met the principle criteria, responding to rider and employer requests for direct service to First Hill. While this alternative has the potential of attracting new transit riders, it was felt that a single market for the route was not enough to make it successful.

The table below identifies the proposed SR 520 and SR 522 implementation schedule.

2010-2011 SR 520 UPA Transit Service Improvements		
October 2010		
Route	Destinations	Service Improvement
Metro		
Route 255	Totem-Lake-Kirkland-Downtown Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extends all peak period trips to the New Totem Lake Transit Center in the heart of the Totem Lake Urban Center
Route 265	Houghton-Montlake-downtown Seattle-First Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds additional peak period trips between the Houghton Park-and-Ride and First Hill via downtown Seattle
Route 271	Eastgate-Bellevue-University District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases peak period frequency between Bellevue's Eastgate area and the University District and improves midday and evening service frequency
Sound Transit		
Route 542	Redmond-University District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new two-way service with 15-minute frequency during the peak periods
February 2011		
Route	Destinations	Service Improvement
Metro		
Route 255	Totem-Lake-Kirkland-Downtown Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases the duration of reduced frequency during peak periods and reduces midday frequency
Route 311	Woodinville-Downtown Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds more peak period trips
Sound Transit		
Route 522	Woodinville-Downtown Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds more peak-period/peak-directional trips
SR 522 Urban Partnership Agreement Transit Service Improvements		
February 2011		
Route	Destinations	Service Improvement
New Peak Service	Kenmore to Seattle, SLU and First Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds new peak service route to the corridor

**OCTOBER 2010 and February 2011
URBAN PARTNERSHIP-RELATED
SERVICE CHANGE**

September 1, 2010

ROUTE: 255

OBJECTIVES:

In support of the Urban Partnership Agreement between the United States Department of Transportation, the Washington State Department of Transportation, King County, and the Puget Sound Regional Council. Mitigate the affects of tolling by increasing the attractiveness of transit through service enhancements in the SR-520 corridor. (*Strategy S-9 Partnerships, Develop partnerships with local jurisdictions, employers, and institutions to increase public transportation services and improve service effectiveness; Strategy F-2 Grants, Pursue grants to fund projects that have been identified as necessary to support system service priorities or maintain the system as outlined in this plan; and Strategy F-3 Financial partnerships, pursue opportunities for partnerships and economic development with communities, employers, other transit agencies, federal and state governments and vendors to expand resources to support transit services and supporting capital facilities.*)

IMPACTED SERVICE AREA:

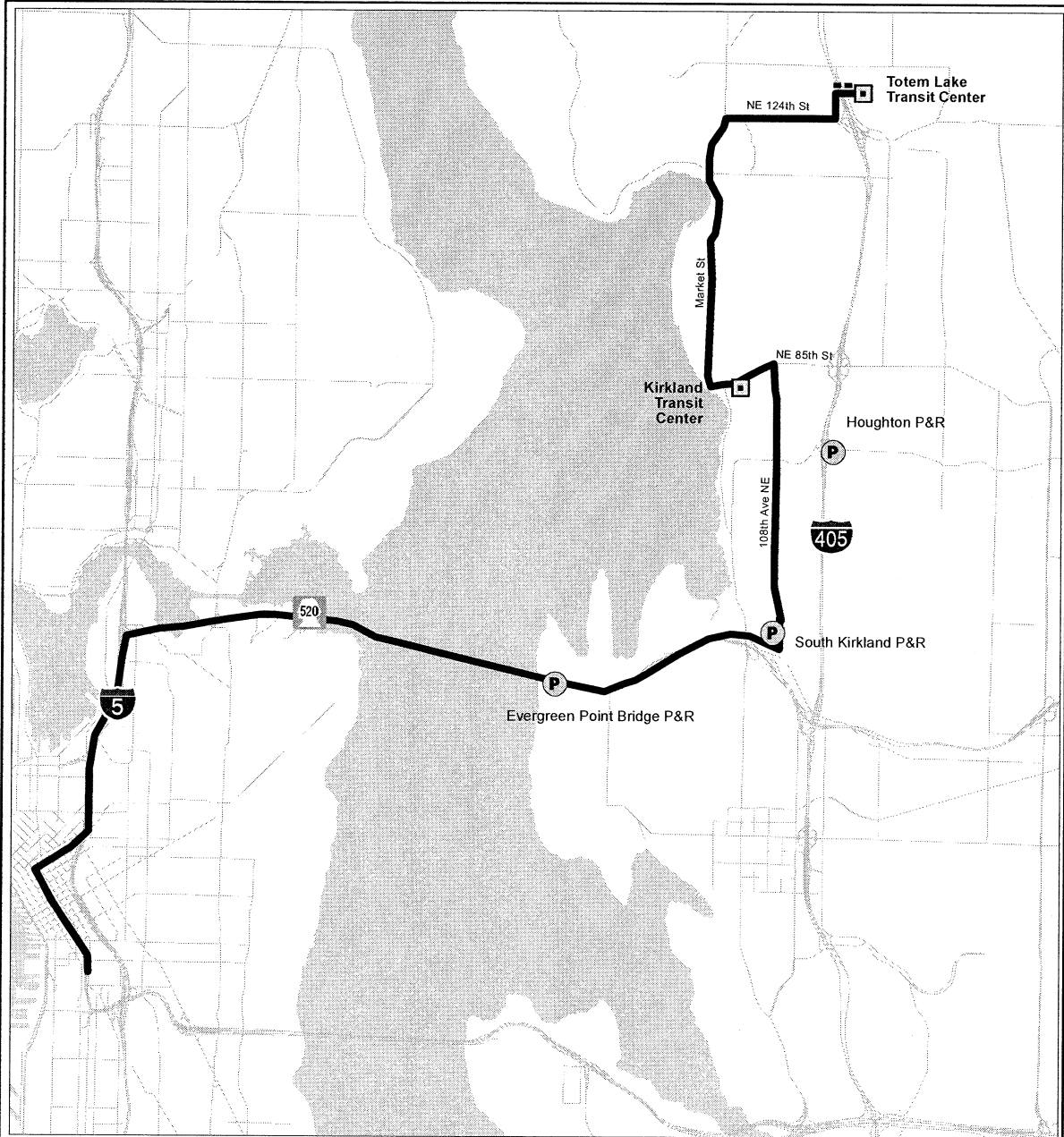
Kingsgate, Totem Lake, Juanita, Kirkland, Montlake, Downtown Seattle

SERVICE CHANGE:

In September 2010, start the a.m. trips that currently start at the Kirkland Transit Center at the Totem Lake Transit Center and extend p.m. trips that currently end at the Kirkland Transit Center to Totem Lake Transit Center



In February 2011, improve weekday service frequency between 116th Avenue NE / NE 128th Street in Kirkland and International District Station in both directions to provide 10 to 20 minutes headways instead of every 30 minutes. Service levels will reflect the direction of travel demand during specific periods of the day.

The Route 255 service investment in October 2010 and February 2011 will not exceed 9,500 annual service hours. The Route 255 enhancements are part of a group of transit improvements on SR-520 by Sound Transit and King County Metro Transit under the Urban Partnership Agreement that together add at least 90 one-way peak period trips across the SR-520 Bridge relative to 2007 service levels.

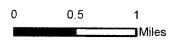


Route 255

Totem Lake Transit Center

-  Route 255TB
-  New Routing to/from Totem Lake TC

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ROUTE: 265

OBJECTIVES:

In support of the Urban Partnership Agreement between the United States Department of Transportation, the Washington State Department of Transportation, King County, and the Puget Sound Regional Council. Mitigate the affects of tolling by increasing the attractiveness of transit through service enhancements in the SR-520 corridor. (*Strategy S-9 Partnerships, Develop partnerships with local jurisdictions, employers, and institutions to increase public transportation services and improve service effectiveness; Strategy F-2 Grants, Pursue grants to fund projects that have been identified as necessary to support system service priorities or maintain the system as outlined in this plan; and Strategy F-3 Financial partnerships, pursue opportunities for partnerships and economic development with communities, employers, other transit agencies, federal and state governments and vendors to expand resources to support transit services and supporting capital facilities.*)

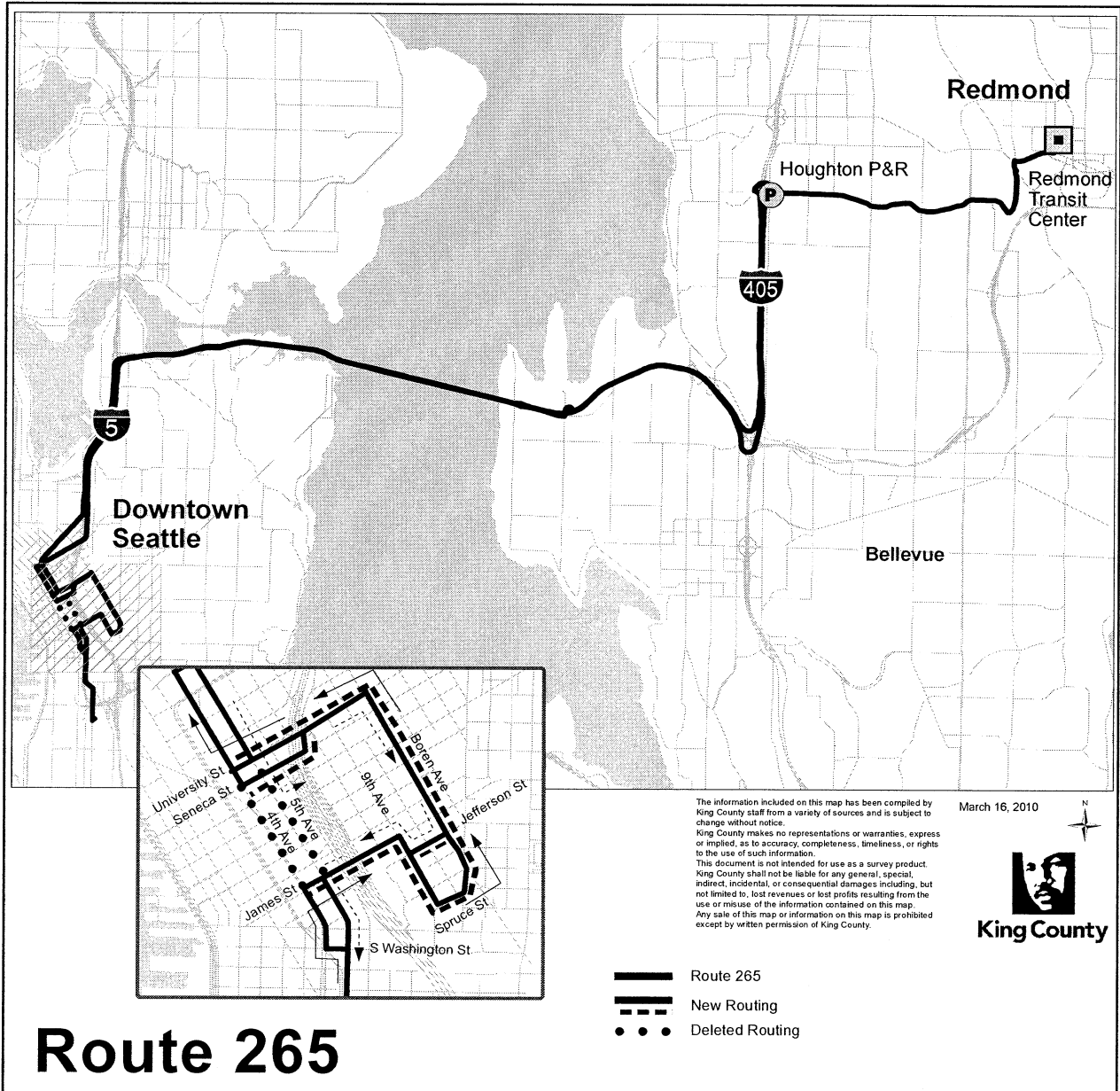
IMPACTED SERVICE AREA:

Houghton, Montlake, Downtown Seattle, First Hill

SERVICE CHANGE:

Provide direct service to First Hill area employers by extending all Route 265 trips from downtown Seattle to First Hill. During weekday peak periods, add up to three morning trips and three afternoon trips between Houghton Park-and-Ride and First Hill via downtown Seattle. Implement the changes to Route 265 in October 2010.

The Route 265 service investment in October 2010 will not exceed 1,700 annual service hours. The Route 265 extension to a new market and new trips are part of a group of transit improvements on SR-520 by Sound Transit and King County Metro Transit under the Urban Partnership Agreement that together will provide a net increase of at least 90 one-way peak period trips across the SR-520 Bridge relative to 2007 service levels.



ROUTE: 271

OBJECTIVES:

In support of the Urban Partnership Agreement between the United States Department of Transportation, the Washington State Department of Transportation, King County, and the Puget Sound Regional Council. Mitigate the affects of tolling by increasing the attractiveness of transit through service enhancements in the SR-520 corridor. (*Strategy S-9 Partnerships, Develop partnerships with local jurisdictions, employers, and institutions to increase public transportation services and improve service effectiveness; Strategy F-2 Grants, Pursue grants to fund projects that have been identified as necessary to support system service priorities or maintain the system as outlined in this plan; and Strategy F-3 Financial partnerships, pursue opportunities for partnerships and economic development with communities, employers, other transit agencies, federal and state governments and vendors to expand resources to support transit services and supporting capital facilities*)

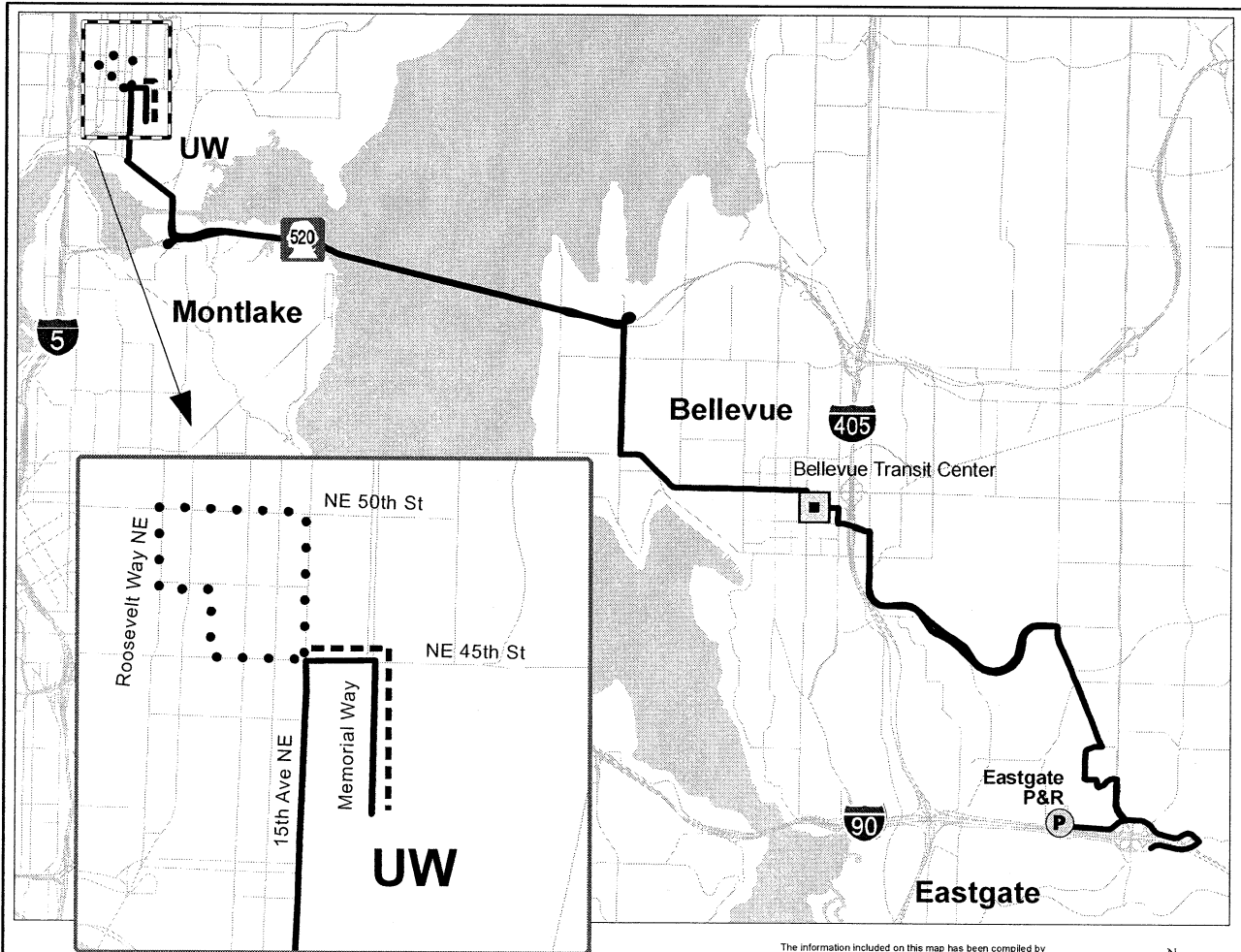
IMPACTED SERVICE AREA:

Eastgate, Bellevue Community College, Bellevue Transit Center, University of Washington and Seattle's University District

SERVICE CHANGE:




In February 2011, improve weekday service frequencies between Eastgate Park-and-Ride and Seattle's University District. Improve frequency of service in both directions from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to provide 10 to 30 minute service instead of every 15-30 minutes provided currently, and from 6:00 p.m., to approximately 12:00 midnight provide 30-60 minute service to the extent that the budget allows instead of 60-minute service. Scheduled service frequencies will reflect the direction of travel demand during specific periods of the day.

The Route 271 service investment in October 2010 will not exceed 13,700 annual service hours. The Route 271 enhancements are part of a group of transit improvements on SR-520 by Sound Transit and King County Metro Transit under the Urban Partnership Agreement that together add at least 90 one-way peak period trips across the SR-520 Bridge relative to 2007 service levels.



Route 271

Eastgate - University District

-  Route 271 Turnback
-  New Routing
-  Deleted Routing

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King County

March 15, 2010

ROUTE: 311

OBJECTIVES:

In support of the Urban Partnership Agreement between the United States Department of Transportation, the Washington State Department of Transportation, King County, and the Puget Sound Regional Council. Mitigate the affects of tolling by increasing the attractiveness of transit through service enhancements in the SR-520 corridor. (*Strategy S-9 Partnerships, Develop partnerships with local jurisdictions, employers, and institutions to increase public transportation services and improve service effectiveness; Strategy F-2 Grants, Pursue grants to fund projects that have been identified as necessary to support system service priorities or maintain the system as outlined in this plan; and Strategy F-3 Financial partnerships, pursue opportunities for partnerships and economic development with communities, employers, other transit agencies, federal and state governments and vendors to expand resources to support transit services and supporting capital facilities.*)

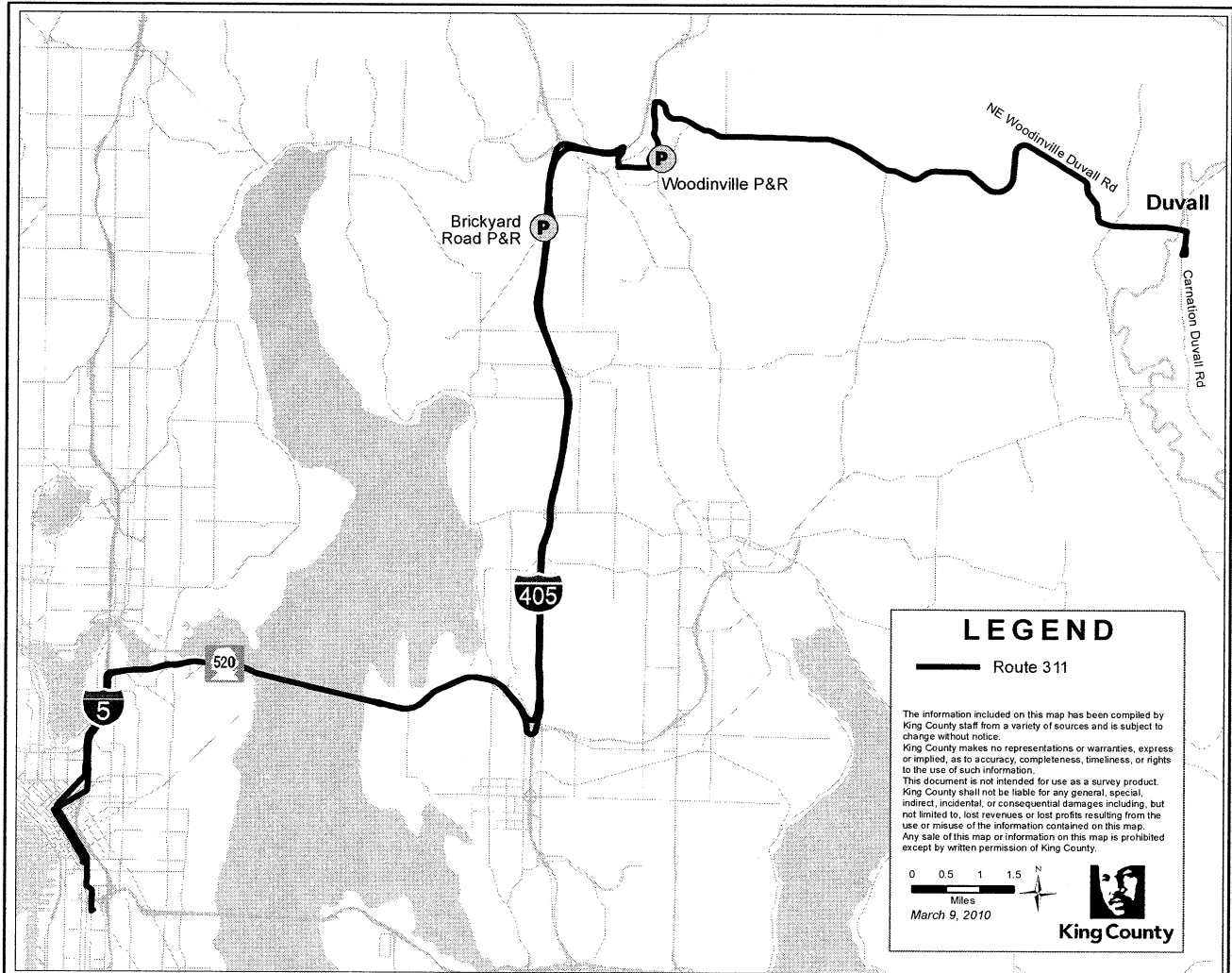
IMPACTED SERVICE AREA:

Woodinville, Brickyard Park-and-Ride, Montlake, and Downtown Seattle

SERVICE CHANGE:

During weekday peak hours, add up to three morning trips from Woodinville to downtown Seattle, and add up to three afternoon trips from downtown Seattle to Woodinville. Implement the additional trips on Route 311 in February 2011.

The Route 311 service investment in February 2011 will not exceed 3,100 annual service hours. The new Route 311 trips are part of a group of transit improvements on SR-520 by Sound Transit and King County Metro Transit under the Urban Partnership Agreement that together will provide a net increase of at least 90 one-way peak period trips across the SR-520 Bridge relative to 2007 service levels.



Route 311 - No Routing Change

ROUTE: 309 (new)

OBJECTIVES:

To mitigate the projected diversion of trips to the SR 522 corridor resulting from tolls implemented on State Route (SR) 520 through the Urban Partnership Agreement between the United States Department of Transportation, the Washington State Department of Transportation, King County, and the Puget Sound Regional Council. Increasing the attractiveness of transit by providing direct service for commuters to South Lake Union and First Hill, two designated urban centers with substantial current employment that are forecasted to see sizable continued growth in jobs. (*Strategy S-7 Community Mobility, Improve community options through increased service levels on existing routes or through the creation of new services in transit supportive higher household and/or employment densities...*)

IMPACTED SERVICE AREA:

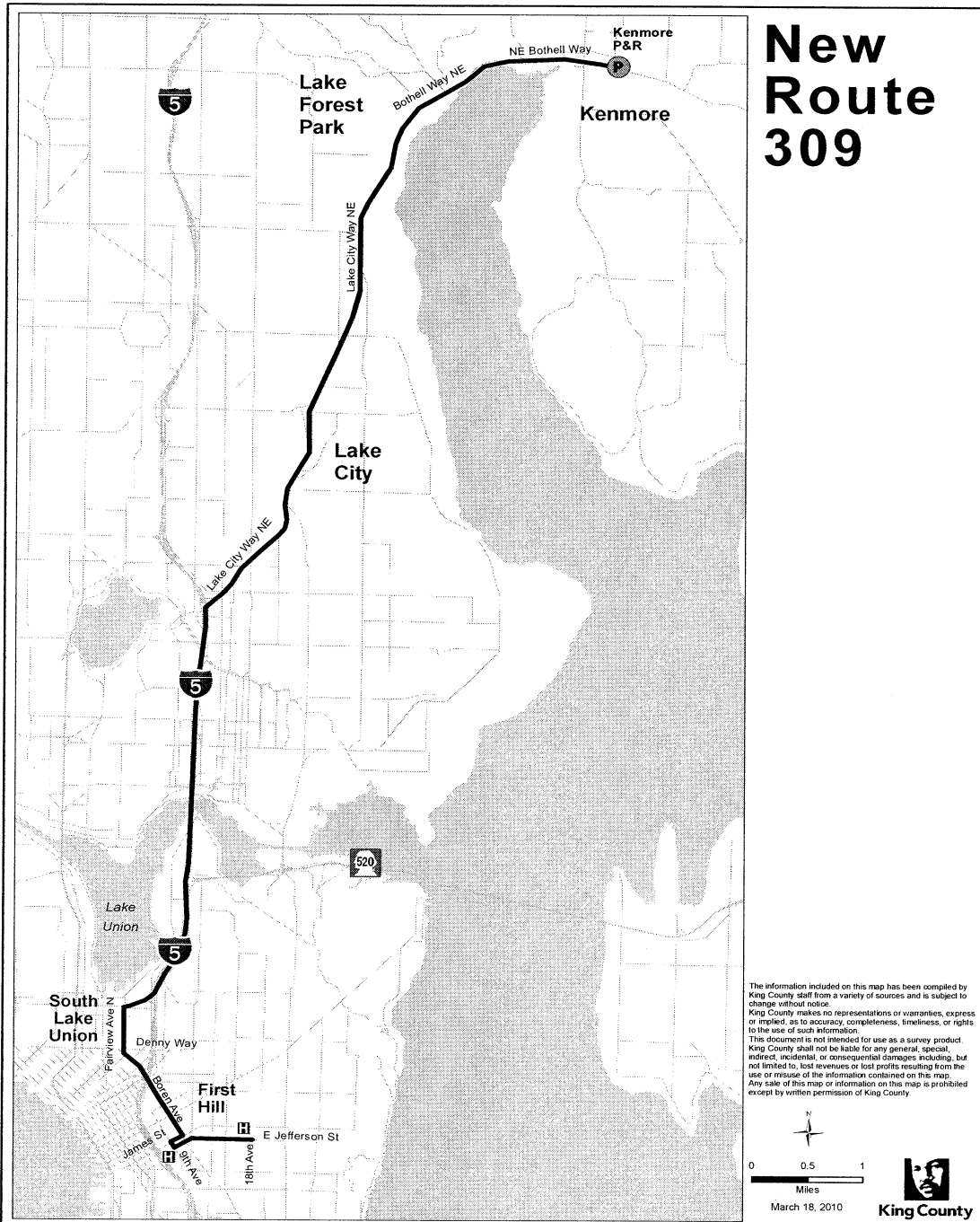
Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Lake City, Maple Leaf, South Lake Union, and First Hill

SERVICE CHANGE:

In February 2011, implement a new direct SR 522 commuter route from the Kenmore park-and-ride to South Lake Union and First Hill employment centers in the morning peak period and from the employment sites to the Kenmore park-and-rides during the afternoon peak-period. Route 309 will travel via Bothell Way and Lake City Way (SR 522), I-5 Express Lanes, Mercer Street, Fairview Avenue, and Boren Avenue.

Add up to six new trips, up to three southbound in the morning and up to three northbound in the afternoon between the Kenmore Park-and-Ride and First Hill. Schedule the new Route 309 trips so they complement other bus service operating in the SR 522 corridor, particularly routes 306, 312, and 522.

The Route 309 service implementation responds to 2010 Budget proviso P5. The Route 309 service investment in February 2011 will not exceed 3,000 annual service hours.



New Route 309

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Miles
March 18, 2010
