



King County

Metropolitan King County Council Transportation, Economy and Environment Committee

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	13	Name:	Paul Carlson
Proposed No.:	2016-0092	Date:	February 2, 2016

SUBJECT

Proposed Motion 2016-0092 approves a work plan for improvements to bus stops where increased transfer activities are expected as a result of the University Link restructure of Metro bus routes.

SUMMARY

Proposed Motion 2016-0092 is one of three motions submitted by the Executive in response to requirements of Ordinance 18133, approving the restructure of Metro bus routes designed to integrate the bus routes with the University Link Light Rail extension to Capitol Hill and University of Washington Link Stations, effective March 26, 2016.

The bus restructure is expected to generate significant additional transfers between buses and between buses and Link Light Rail. Ordinance 18133, Section 2, therefore requires transmittal of a proposed motion approving a work plan for improving the transfer environment at 10 Key Transfer Locations.

The transmitted work plan includes information about on-going stop improvement efforts, bus-rail station area planning, improvements to be completed by March 2016, during the remainder of 2016, and in future year, cost estimates for the improvements, and an appendix with details about each Key Transfer Location.

BACKGROUND

University Link Restructure

In September-October 2015, the County Council reviewed the King County Metro proposal to restructure approximately 30 bus routes in conjunction with the opening of University Link, the extension of Sound Transit's Central Link Light Rail line to Capitol Hill Station and University of Washington Station adjacent to Husky Stadium. On October 19, 2015, the Council passed Ordinance 18133, approving the proposed restructure with some route modifications.

The Council evaluation of this major restructure identified several specific issues associated with the proposed restructure. Ordinance 18133 includes provisions addressing four of these issues:

- **Transfer environment.** The amenities at bus stops where the number of transfers is projected to increase, and requiring a motion approving a work plan for implementing planned improvements (Section 2 of Ordinance 18133);
- **Public outreach.** A joint public engagement campaign leading up to the March 26, 2016 effective date, carried out in collaboration with Sound Transit, the City of Seattle, and the University of Washington (Section 3 of Ordinance 18133);
- **Performance measures.** Evaluation of ridership impacts and customer response to the restructure, and requiring a motion approving a work plan for customized performance measures (Section 4 of Ordinance 18133); and
- **Montlake traffic study.** A study of the traffic impacts of installing a bus stop on northbound Montlake Boulevard NE, and requiring a motion approving a report on the traffic impacts study (Section 5 of Ordinance 18133).

The proposed motions required by Sections 2, 4, and 5 have been transmitted for Council review. The oral reports required by Section 3 were presented in committee in December and January.

Transfers

The U Link bus restructure is projected to increase transfers between bus routes and between buses and Link Light Rail, leading to the Council's request for information about plans to ensure that bus stops have capacity to deal with the increases. Section 2 of Ordinance 18133 is intended to ensure an evaluation of planned stop improvements:

SECTION 2. Consistent with the King County Metro Service Guidelines, Metro considers as part of its network planning locations where transfer opportunities could be provided and where provision of convenient transfers could improve the efficiency of the network. Metro strives to make transfers convenient, safe and accessible, and to work with partners to provide safe environments for pedestrians in a manner consistent with the goals of the City of Seattle Vision Zero Safer Streets for Seattle initiative. In order to help facilitate connections in locations where passenger transfers are expected to increase due to the proposed changes, the executive is directed to work with Sound Transit, the University of Washington and the city of Seattle to improve the transfer environment in such locations. Locations where transfers are expected to increase as a result of the proposed changes include, but are not limited to NE Northgate Way and Roosevelt Way NE, Roosevelt Way NE and NE 65th Street, NE Ravenna Boulevard and NE 65th Street, 25th Avenue NE and NE 65th Street, NE Campus Parkway and University Way NE, 19th Avenue E and E Madison Street, 23rd Avenue E and E Madison Street, and near the new Capitol Hill and University of Washington light rail stations, including each of the bus

stops planned near the University of Washington light rail station. A number of transfer locations are shown in Attachment B to this ordinance, Key Transfer Locations map. Amenities or treatments that would improve the transfer environment include, but are not limited to, shelters, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, wayfinding signage, digital signboards, customer information, crosswalks and changes to signalization.

The executive shall submit to the council a work plan describing specific improvements planned for each of these transfer areas and a timeline for implementation that shall include plans to be implemented by March 2016, as well as plans to be implemented during the course of 2016 and plans to be implemented between 2017 and 2020. The work plan shall identify the responsible party and funding source for each planned improvement and shall include any legislation needed to implement the improvements. These improvements shall be implemented as expeditiously as possible to help achieve the objectives of safe and accessible transfer environments. When transmitted to the council, the work plan shall be accompanied by a motion to approve the work plan. The executive shall transmit the work plan and motion by January 29, 2016, 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, the council chief of staff, the policy staff director and the lead staff for the transportation, economy and environment committee, or its successor.

The Key Transfer Locations Map mentioned in Section 2 is Attachment 3 to this Staff Report. The map shows 10 numbered Key Transfer Locations. The Work Plan uses these numbers in referring to the Key Transfer Locations.

Work Plan Overview

Council staff reviewed the Work Plan and found that it describes specific improvements for the Key Transfer Locations. Here is an overview of the Work Plan.

Following the Introduction and Summary, the Work Plan describes **On-Going Efforts** (page 3) including background on the factors that determine bus stop amenities – these include the number of boardings¹, specific site conditions, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and personal safety, traffic safety, and improvements that allow boarding and deboarding from the rear doors. There is also a discussion of Real Time Information Signs (RTIS) for bus arrival information, which are part of the RapidRide Station infrastructure and have been installed by the City of Seattle at some bus stops.

On page 4, **Bus-Rail Station Area Planning** describes the work of a joint King County Metro / Sound Transit Integration Steering Committee and inter-agency Station Area Planning staff work group. These bodies focus on intermodal (bus-rail) facilities such as the two new Link stations: Capitol Hill, Key Transfer Location #8 (also a terminus of the

¹ The King County Metro Service Guidelines state that “bus stop amenities should be installed based on ridership, in order to benefit the largest number of riders.” For non-RapidRide routes, consideration of amenities is recommended for bus stops with 50 or more boardings within the City of Seattle and 25 or more boardings outside Seattle.

City of Seattle's First Hill Streetcar); University of Washington, Key Transfer Locations #6-7; and the future Roosevelt Station, Key Transfer Location #3.

Pages 5-11 provide the specific information required by Section 2 of Ordinance 18133.

The Work Plan's Table 1, from page 5, is reproduced here to illustrate the estimated additional transfer activity at each location.

Table 1 – Estimated Increase in Transfer Activity

Transfer Location	Location Description	Estimated Increase in Transfer Activity following March 2016 Service Change ^A
1	NE Northgate Way and Roosevelt Way NE	60
2	NE Ravenna Boulevard and NE 65 th Street	80
3	Roosevelt Way NE and NE 65 th Street	80
4	25 th Avenue NE and NE 65 th Street	30
5	NE Campus Parkway and University Way NE	0
6/7	NE Pacific Street /Montlake Boulevard NE and ST Link University of Washington Station	1580
8	ST Link Capitol Hill Station (Broadway Avenue E and E John Street)	560
9	23 rd Avenue E and E Madison Street	90
10	19 th Avenue E and E Madison Street	0
^A Following the March 2016 transit service change, the estimated number of additional riders transferring to Metro bus routes each day at each transfer location.		

Note that the Work Plan groups Locations 6 and 7 together as part of the University of Washington Link Station-Montlake Triangle area and provides detailed information about each bus stop in the area. Location 10, East Madison Street and 19th Avenue E, was identified as a Key Transfer Location because Routes 8 and 11 were expected to turn between the two streets. These route changes will not be implemented because the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) did not approve the street modifications necessary to allow the buses to make the turn; accordingly, no additional transfer activity is projected at this location.

Table 2 lists improvements planned to be completed by March 2016; these are at Key Transfer Locations 1, 6-7, and 8. Total costs are \$1,454,000; King County costs are estimated at \$427,000 plus a share of \$182,000 yet to be allocated.

Table 3 lists improvements planned for completion during the rest of 2016; these are at Key Transfer Locations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 9. Total costs are \$335,000; King County costs are estimated at \$135,000. Installation of landing pads at Locations 1, 2, 4, and 9 is new work identified through development of this Work Plan; the work at Location 3 is an SDOT paving project on a separate schedule.

Table 4 lists improvements planned for the 2017-2021 time period; these are at Key Transfer Locations 2, 3, 5, 6-7, 8, and 9. Total costs are estimated at \$3,767,400; King County costs are estimated at \$1,420,000 plus a share of \$1,137,400 yet to be allocated. Some work at Location 3 is connected to the Northgate Link extension; work at Location 8 is part of a future northern extension of Seattle's First Hill Streetcar; work

at Location 9 is part of an SDOT project on 23rd Avenue; and RTIS projects depend on future budget decisions.

Table 5 identifies the Work Plan total currently estimated costs broken out by Key Transfer Location, completion timeframe, and allocation among the County, Sound Transit, and the City of Seattle. Through 2016, County costs are included in two Transit Capital Improvement Projects (Bus Safety Zone and Access, and Shelters and Lighting). For 2017-2018, the proposed transit budget is expected to request funding for the Work Plan activities in that year.

With respect to Real Time Information Signs, County policy is that RapidRide Line station amenities should include RTIS; this is one of the distinguishing features of RapidRide. The City of Seattle has provided RTIS capacity at some bus stops and the County has installed RTIS at the SR 520 stations; a County decision to further expand RTIS would require both a policy decision and appropriation of sufficient budget authority.

Appendix A to the Work Plan provides more detailed information on the Key Transfer Locations. For each Location, there is a map showing the area, the bus stops associated with the location, and the bus routes serving the location. There is a description of the location, expected transfer activity post March 2016, and an explanation of current and planned future amenities. A table lists each bus stop's direction and location, current boardings and deboardings ("ons" and "offs"), and passenger amenities expected in March 2016. The amenities are categorized as shelters, lighting, landing pads, bench, and RTIS.

It may be helpful to note that a landing pad is a paved area between curb and sidewalk (i.e. in the landscape strip) that allows passengers to alight from rear doors. Also, there are several types of bus shelters; for each Key Transfer Location description in Appendix A, the table has a footnote explaining what the shelter designations mean.

ANALYSIS

Adoption of Proposed Motion 2016-0092 will approve the bus stop improvements described in Attachment A, Work Plan for Improving the Transfer Environment at Locations Impacted by the University Link Bus Integration. The Work Plan identifies a series of planned and potential future improvements at Key Transfer Locations, each of which includes between four and seven bus stop locations. Future improvements are contingent on Council approval of budget authority for the 2017-2018 biennium. The proposed Work Program meets the requirements of Section 2 of Ordinance 18133.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Motion 2016-0092 (and its attachments)
2. Transmittal Letter
3. Ordinance 18133, Attachment B (Map of Key Transfer Locations)

INVITED

- Victor Obeso, Deputy General Manager Planning and Customer Service, King County Transit Division
- Marty Minkoff, Acting Manager Service Development, King County Transit Division
- Paul Roybal, Transportation Planner, King County Transit Division