

July 6, 2015

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Council action on establishing priorities related to the Sound Transit Phase 3 (ST3) System Plan for the City of Bellevue and other Eastside cities.

STAFF CONTACT:

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POLICY CONSIDERATION:

How can ST3 best serve the future transportation needs of Bellevue and the Eastside?

Comprehensive Plan

Bellevue's *Comprehensive Plan* calls for working with Eastside jurisdictions, transit providers and other agencies on regional transportation projects to carry out the City's transportation and land use goals.

Bellevue Transit Master Plan:

The Bellevue *Transit Master Plan* identifies transit service and capital investments needed to serve Bellevue and connect to other parts of the region. The *Transit Master Plan* serves as an important reference document for collaboration with transit service providers and partner jurisdictions.

Bellevue Future High Capacity Transit Interest Statement:

The City's 2005 "Future High Capacity Transit (HCT) Interest Statement" highlights Bellevue's role as an economic hub for the region and the Eastside in particular and supports expansion of the regional HCT network.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:

X Action
X Discussion
___ Information

Staff is seeking Council action tonight on the following:

- Draft Bellevue "ST3 System Plan Interest Statement" (Attachment 1);
- Draft Bellevue comment letter to the Sound Transit Board on the ST3 Draft Priority Projects List (Attachment 2); and,
- "Joint Eastside ST3 Interest Statement" that was developed in collaboration with Kirkland, Redmond and Issaquah per Council direction at the joint Bellevue/Kirkland Council meeting on May 11 (Attachment 3).

Council action on these items is needed in order to provide comments on the Priority Projects List to Sound Transit by the July 15, 2015 deadline.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The second phase of Sound Transit's regional HCT network (ST2) is well underway. In 2013 and 2014, Sound Transit updated its Long Range Plan as a first step in preparing a new system plan of regional transit system projects (e.g. light rail extensions, commuter rail improvements, bus rapid transit and express bus service). The Long Range Plan is unconstrained in terms of time and budget, so it represents a list of all possible projects that could be included in any future system plan. The Sound Transit Board adopted the Long Range Plan Update in December 2014 and directed Sound Transit staff to prepare a new system plan (ST3) that could be considered by voters as early as 2016.

Sound Transit staff presented the Draft Priority Projects List (List) at the June 8 Council meeting. The List (Attachment 4) includes projects for expanding the regional HCT system which will be prioritized by the Sound Transit Board for possible inclusion in the ST3 System Plan. Sound Transit is soliciting comments on the List until July 15, 2015. The Sound Transit Board will refine the List at its August 27, 2015 Board meeting. In the fall, Sound Transit will conduct technical analysis on the refined List related to costs, ridership and other factors.

City of Bellevue Interest Statement and Comment Letter

At the June 8, 2015 Council meeting, Bellevue staff requested direction from Council on preparing an interest statement and comment letter on the City's priorities for the ST3 System Plan. Council directed staff to update and revise the 2014 draft interest statement on the Sound Transit Long Range Plan by prioritizing the statements and emphasizing the importance of connecting Eastside cities with each other and with the region through expansion of the high capacity transit network, a higher level of bus service and greater access to the network overall.

The City of Bellevue ST3 Interest Statement (Attachment 1) uses high-level policy statements to establish the City's overall direction and priorities for future transit service for Bellevue and the Eastside. The interest statement will provide guidance to the Council and City staff when working with Sound Transit and other agencies throughout the development of the ST3 System Plan.

Bellevue's comment letter (Attachment 2) complements the interest statement by identifying specific projects from the List that further the objectives of the City. The comment letter states Bellevue's preferred projects prior to the Sound Transit Board selecting the projects for additional analysis this fall. The projects identified in the attached draft comment letter were selected based on the City's adopted *Comprehensive Plan*, *Transit Master Plan*, the draft interest statement on the Sound Transit Long Range Plan update and previous Council direction.

Joint Eastside Cities Interest Statement

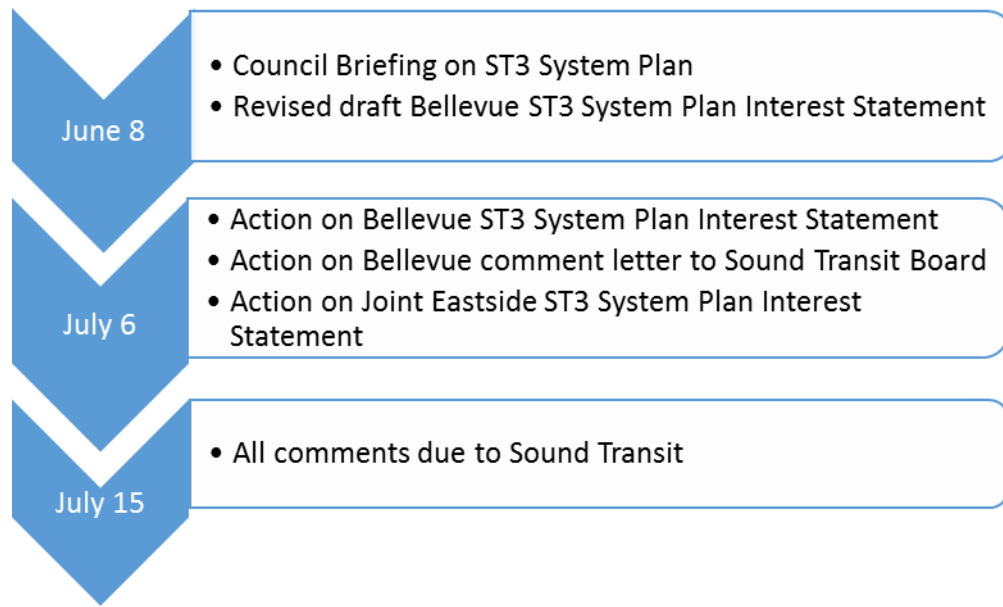
At the joint Bellevue/Kirkland Council meeting on May 11, staff was directed to develop a joint interest statement and include Redmond and Issaquah. Staff from the four Eastside cities collaborated and reached agreement on the draft included as Attachment 3. This draft is consistent with Council policy and direction.

By design, the joint interest statement is more general in order to reflect the broader interests of the Eastside cities. More specific interests and requests of each city will be addressed in individual interest statements and comment letters to Sound Transit. The Councils of the four cities will be reviewing the joint interest statement at their respective Council meetings on July 6 and 7. Given the immediate deadline for providing comments and the collaborative efforts of the four cities in preparing the joint interest statement additional modifications to the language are

not practical. The joint interest statement is consistent with Bellevue's interests at the broader level. Bellevue's specific interests and projects are addressed in the City's individual interest statement and comment letter.

NEXT STEPS:

The following graphic highlights the content and purpose of tonight's requested actions on the interest statements and comment letter to the Sound Transit Board on the Priority Projects List:



Sound Transit will issue a draft system plan for public comment in early 2016 before development of a Final ST3 System Plan for adoption by the Sound Transit Board in June 2016. The plan could be placed on the ballot for a public vote as early as November 2016.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

If approved, the Motions become effective immediately upon Council adoption.

OPTIONS:

1. Finalize and approve the City of Bellevue ST3 System Plan Interest Statement and City of Bellevue comment letter; and, in a separate motion, approve the Joint Eastside ST3 System Plan Interest Statement.
2. Do not approve one or more of the items listed in Option 1 and provide alternative direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

Option No. 1.

MOTIONS:

1. Move to approve the City of Bellevue ST3 System Plan Interest Statement and comment letter; and,
2. Move to approve the Joint Eastside ST3 System Plan Interest Statement.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – City of Bellevue Draft “ST3 System Plan Interest Statement”

Attachment 2 – City of Bellevue Draft outline for Council comment letter

Attachment 3 – “Joint Eastside ST3 Interest Statement”

Attachment 4 – Sound Transit Draft Priority Projects List