

RESOLUTION NO.

BY REQUEST OF MAYOR WOODARDS

A RESOLUTION relating to transportation; providing recommendations to Sound Transit on route alignment and station location alternatives and other significant issues to be evaluated in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement process for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension Project.

WHEREAS the Sound Transit 3 ("ST3") high-capacity transit system expansion, approved by voters in November 2016, includes a variety of projects to be implemented over the next 25 years, and

WHEREAS the ST3 plan includes the Tacoma Dome Link Extension ("TDLE") Project, which includes two key elements: (1) the Central Link light rail expansion from Federal Way to the Tacoma Dome area; and (2) a Light Rail Operations and Maintenance Facility along the Federal Way-to-Tacoma corridor, and

WHEREAS Sound Transit has determined that the project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects and an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS") is needed, and

WHEREAS Sound Transit has developed potential EIS alternatives through an early scoping process and two levels of alternatives evaluation conducted in 2018-2019, and is expected to define the scope of work for the EIS in summer 2019, and

WHEREAS the City of Tacoma has entered into a Partnership Agreement with Sound Transit, as authorized in Resolution No. 39981, adopted by the City Council on April 10, 2018, for the purpose of enhancing coordination on the planning, design, and construction of the TDLE project, and

WHEREAS the City of Tacoma has been actively participating in the above-referenced early scoping and alternatives evaluation processes, and operating under the framework and guidelines as set forth in the Partnership Agreement, and

WHEREAS many jurisdictions, agencies, community groups, and stakeholders in the greater Tacoma area have also been actively participating in the TDLE project, including but not limited to: the Puyallup Tribe, Pierce County, the Port of Tacoma, Pierce Transit, the Dome Business District, as well as City Council appointed citizen advisory groups such as the Tacoma Planning Commission, the Tacoma Transportation Commission, and the Sustainable Tacoma Commission, and

WHEREAS the City Council acknowledges that the Tacoma Planning Commission, the Tacoma Transportation Commission, and the Sustainable Tacoma Commission have submitted scoping comments on the TDLE to Sound Transit on, respectively, April 17, April 24, and April 25, 2019, and that the City Manager has also provided comments on May 1, 2019, expressing City administration's concerns and suggestions, and

WHEREAS the City continues to recognize and support the Puyallup Tribe's critical role in this project, which crosses much of its traditional lands and resources, and acknowledges the Puyallup Tribe of Indians' letter to Sound Transit, dated May 1, 2019, providing their input as part of the scoping process, and that letter expresses significant concerns about potential impacts to the Tribe's cultural resources from this proposed project; and

WHEREAS in resonating with the community's sentiment, the City Council also wishes to provide recommendations to Sound Transit on the route alignment and station location alternatives as well as other significant issues that should be evaluated in the EIS, and

WHEREAS it is critical to recognize that the TDLE project, comparable with many high-capacity transportation systems around the world, is a 50-plus-year decision on investments that are made only once every few generations and which can and will have a dramatic effect on this community, and

WHEREAS while collaborating with Sound Transit in making such an important decision, the City of Tacoma relies on the core values and guiding principles as set forth and articulated in the aforementioned Resolution No. 39981 that can be summarized and reiterated as follows:

- (1) Tacoma is a destination of the region, not just a terminus of the TDLE line.
- (2) Streets are the "family rooms" of an urban area like Tacoma – the place where people come together, interact and congregate, and where urban vibrancy lives. The urban fabric must not be compromised with the introduction of this significant infrastructure.
- (3) For the TDLE to truly function as a catalyst for transit-oriented development, the system, and particularly the stations, must be developed as "development-oriented transit" – a system designed to maximize the opportunities for dense development and limit the impacts to the function of the urban environment, particularly in well-established, high-intensity, mixed-use urban areas and neighborhoods such as the Dome District of Tacoma's Downtown Regional Growth Center.
- (4) Connectivity and accessibility are keys to the success of the TDLE.
- (5) Equity must be a key principle.
- (6) The TDLE must be consistent with the *One Tacoma* Comprehensive Plan, the South Downtown Subarea Plan, and the Transportation Master Plan.
- (7) Tacoma treasures the partnerships with Sound Transit and all cooperating jurisdictions in developing the TDLE.

WHEREAS specifically with respect to Transit-Oriented Development ("TOD"), the City Council recognizes that recent investments in regional and local transportation facilities, specifically, the TDLE project, the Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT") service, and the City's pending Puyallup Avenue design project, have created TOD opportunities in neighborhoods and business districts, and that there is an imminent need to adequately engage and consult residents and business owners near these TOD areas, and for that reason has adopted Resolution No. 40303 on April 16, 2019, initiating the establishment of a broad-based Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group ("TODAG") that would provide the broader experience necessary to review these major projects for concurrence with the City's adopted transportation and land use plans and policies, and

WHEREAS more specifically, based on the above-referenced core values and guiding principles, the underlying intent and purpose of the proposed TODAG, the community feedback received by the City Council, and deliberations among the Council Members, the City Council recommends that the following issues be evaluated by Sound Transit in the EIS for the TDLE project:

- (1) For the East Tacoma Station area:
 - (a) Alternative "ET-3A/B" appears to be a community preference and should be further studied.
 - (b) Pedestrian connections, especially with the area south of I-5, are key to ensuring the best utilization of the station and must be accommodated in a safe, efficient, comfortable and attractive manner via properly designed pathways under and/or over I-5.
 - (c) The station must be able to facilitate appropriate connections to future planned high-capacity transit along Portland Avenue, and bike corridors and trails.
 - (d) The lack of parking to serve the station area must be addressed and properly mitigated.
 - (e) Sound Transit should recognize the planned development of the Tideflats Subarea Plan and coordinate with the City to identify and address its potential impacts to the TDLE.
 - (f) Sound Transit should recognize the station development will generate opportunities for significant change and partner with the City in focused-area planning to evaluate land use, transportation networks, and infrastructure improvements in the area.
- (2) For the Tacoma Dome Station area:
 - (a) Alternatives "TD-2" and "TD-4 East 26th Street In-street" appear to have received more community preference than some other alternatives and should be further studied.
 - (b) However, recognizing the Puyallup's Tribe's concerns about the current TD-4 options and the community's interest in better orienting with East D Street, which is the primary corridor connecting the station area with the Tacoma Dome, McKinley Hill, the Foss Waterway and many other destinations, as this station moves forward for further analysis its location should be shifted west so that it is not adjacent to the Tribe's property and is more in-line with East D Street.
 - (c) As strongly recommended by multiple community groups and individuals, the "Underground" alternative, or commonly referred to as the "Cut-and-Cover" option, should be further explored so that a more complete understanding about the costs, benefits, and potential impacts of such an option, in comparison with the costs, benefits and potential impacts of elevated alternatives, can facilitate a more fully informed decision about this significant infrastructure investment.
 - (d) The City wholeheartedly agrees with the Puyallup Tribe's concerns about the potential for cultural resource impacts from above or below-ground options and the critical need for Sound Transit's pending environmental review to fully assess such potential impacts
 - (e) The "Over-the-Sounder" alternative that has also received considerable interest from the community should be further studied, for it could provide a viable alternative to elevated facilities that are problematic to the urban fabric or a more feasible alternative to underground facilities that could ultimately prove technically and financially challenging or to result in unreasonable impacts.

- (f) In anticipation of the potential cost increase associated with an "Underground" alternative, should such an alternative prove feasible and desired, the City recognizes the potential impact to the project budget and commits to collaborating with Sound Transit to exploring partnerships, grant opportunities and other funding strategies.
 - (g) Parking in the existing Tacoma Dome Station area that is already challenging is likely to become more problematic with the introduction of the TDLE. The issue should be properly addressed through such means as demand-supply management and operational and financial partnerships with appropriate agencies.
 - (h) Sound Transit should recognize that Freighthouse Square is an iconic structure and avoid physical destruction to it, unless it can be functionally and aesthetically incorporated and enhanced as it was through the Amtrak Station project.
 - (i) Sound Transit should ensure designs of the track and station facilities do not compromise future southward extension of TDLE to the Tacoma Mall area.
- (3) For the whole project area within Tacoma:
- (a) Minimize visual impacts of the facilities.
 - (b) Maximize TOD opportunities.
 - (c) Optimize multimodal connections.
 - (d) Collaborate with the TODAG as design proceeds.

WHEREAS Tacoma is committed to a project design and station locations that directly promote ridership and efficient service while also catalyzing transit-oriented development and supporting multimodal access and connectivity, economic opportunity, housing affordability, social equity, healthy communities, environmental sustainability, and the preservation and support of unique cultural and community character, and

WHEREAS, the decision making process for the TDLE must ensure the validity and strength of the resulting decisions by making them only after significant analysis of the various alternatives and the potential benefits, costs and tradeoffs; Now Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

1. That the Recitals of this Resolution and Resolutions No. 39981 and No. 40303, specifically relating to the City of Tacoma's core values and guiding principles and the identified issues, are hereby recommended to Sound Transit for consideration for evaluation in the Environmental Impact Statement process for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension Project.
2. That the proper officers of the City are hereby directed to continue carrying out the Partnership Agreement with Sound Transit for the purpose of enhancing coordination on the planning, design, and construction of the Tacoma Dome Link Extension Project.