



MEMORANDUM

To: Seattle City Council Transportation Committee
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Chair
Councilmember Bruce Harrell, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Jean Godden
Councilmember Tim Burgess

From: Tony Mazzella and Allison Schwartz, SDOT

Date: February 24, 2012

Subject: Transit Master Plan Summary of Public and Agency Comments

Since August 2010, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has been developing a Transit Master Plan. Following a year-long process, which included monthly meetings with an appointed citizen advisory committee and a technical committee, a Draft Transit Master Plan (TMP) Summary Report was developed and submitted to City Council in September 2011. Following the publishing of the Draft TMP, SDOT launched a three-month outreach process that encouraged the public to provide feedback on the plan through open house meetings and on-line comment submittal. Concurrently, SDOT briefed partner agencies, other city departments, several boards and commissions, and community organizations to seek input on the draft report.

This memo provides a brief overview of the outreach process, key themes, and changes that have been made to the TMP to address public and partner agency comments. Also attached is a spreadsheet of all internal and public comments, as well as information on how comments were responded to and incorporated into the final plan.

Overview of Public Outreach and Agency Review Process

A total of 110 people attended five draft TMP open houses held in October and November 2011 at various locations in Seattle. About 23% completed comment cards at the open houses. During this same time frame, SDOT received e-mail comments from 27 individuals. In December 2011, an additional meeting ("Transform Seattle") was held jointly with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE), and the Department of Neighborhoods (DON). This meeting covered several long-range city planning issues, including transportation, and was attended by over 160 people from historically underrepresented communities and eight language groups.

Partner agencies and other City departments involved in the planning process were provided three months to review and comment on the Draft TMP. Numerous departments provided comment on the draft. Additionally, the City Planning Commission offered a letter of support along with suggestions to better coordinate the TMP with land use planning efforts. As of the date of this memo, King County Metro has provided a number of comments and informed the project team that it will also provide a letter of support. Sound Transit provided a letter of support for the TMP that included a commitment to



work with Seattle on future high capacity transit planning. Cascade Bicycle Club and Spokespeople (an organization advocating for neighborhood greenways) also submitted letters offering overall support for the plan, along with valuable suggestions for enhancing plan policies and project recommendations.

All comments received through from the public, partner agencies, and interest groups were carefully considered and where appropriate, comments are addressed in the Final TMP. A log was kept to track comments and responses (see attachment).

Key Themes from Public Outreach and Agency Review

Key themes from the public outreach and partner department/agency comment process are summarized in the following sections, along with a brief summary of how each comments is addressed in the Final Transit Master Plan. Comments offered by specific agencies and groups have been identified as such.

Plan Overview and Introduction (Chapter 1)

- COMMENT: Draft plan includes many excellent policies and project recommendations, but it is hard to quickly determine top priorities for the City (Planning Commission).
 - RESPONSE: New executive summary section titled “Priority Strategies” outlines six top priority initiatives and implementation strategies.
- COMMENT: TMP needs to more clearly explain why City should invest in transit supportive programs, service buys, and capital development.
 - RESPONSE: A new section was added to Chapter 1, describing a number of ways in which the City of Seattle benefits from transit.

Policies and Programs / Funding (Chapters 2 and 6)

- COMMENT: Some confusion regarding relationship between the TMP and King County Metro’s current route restructuring.
 - RESPONSE: Final plan will best reflect King County restructuring proposals; Metro staff attended public outreach meetings to answer specific service design questions.
- COMMENT: Concern that funding would not be available to implement TMP recommendations.
 - RESPONSE: Final plan presents an updated funding strategy and includes the most recent information regarding federal grants and local funds available to support transit planning and projects.

Transit Corridors/Service (Chapter 3 and 4)

- COMMENT: Along with proposals for citywide priority bus corridor improvements, more detail is needed for Center City bus corridors including Pike/Pine, Seattle Center East, Yesler/Jefferson, and Jackson (TMP Public Advisory Group).
 - RESPONSE: A new page in Chapter 3 highlights these four Center City bus corridors and provides recommendations for corridor speed and reliability improvements.
- COMMENT: Discussion of bicycle safety along streetcar tracks. Cascade Bicycle Club’s letter noted that while “we and our constituents have concerns about streetcar and bicycle facility

integration,” it sees benefits in streetcars for traffic calming and supporting walking and biking and is “eager to see how the Broadway design works.”

- *RESPONSE*: Added language to clarify that any in-street rail services will require an extensive design process and stressed importance of an integrated, multimodal design process for all major street-running transit projects.
- *COMMENT*: Strong support for TMP approach to modal integration (i.e., Mobility Corridors approach), focus on improved cross-town transit service, and expansion of electric trolley bus network.
 - *RESPONSE*: No major adjustments required.

Places: Access and Connections (Chapter 5)

- *COMMENT*: Support for wayfinding and passenger information improvements.
 - *RESPONSE*: Draft TMP policies were updated to strengthen recommendations for wayfinding improvements and a recommendation was added for the City of Seattle to develop and lead an inter-agency advisory committee to deal with system legibility issues.
- *COMMENT*: Support for TMP policies and project recommendations supporting bicycle access and connections. However, while some were strongly supportive others expressed concerns and reservations about integration of bicycles and transit on Seattle streets. Particular concerns were expressed regarding the introduction of in-street rails and the use of transit lanes by bicyclists.
 - *RESPONSE*: Over a dozen individual comments related to bicycle access and prioritization of transit and bicycle infrastructure in street rights-of-way were incorporated, responding directly and positively to comments from Cascade Bicycle Club, Spokespeople, and residents. As SDOT proceeds with the Bicycle Master Plan update, some of the comments received on better bicycle-transit integration can be addressed in this project as well.

Final Steps in Completing the TMP

SDOT will transmit copies of the Final Transit Master Plan Summary Report to Council and their staff on February 24, 2012. A City Council Transportation Committee briefing regarding the Final TMP Summary Report and recommendations will be held on March 13. Adoption of the TMP by the full City Council will follow, pending a recommendation by the Transportation Committee.