



King County

Metropolitan King County Council Transportation, Economy and Environment Committee

STAFF REPORT

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| Agenda Item: | 12 | Name: | Paul Carlson |
| Proposed No.: | 2016-0089 | Date: | February 2, 2016 |

SUBJECT

A motion approving a report on the traffic impacts of a new bus stop on northbound Montlake Avenue North in the vicinity of Hec Edmundson Pavilion.

SUMMARY

Proposed Motion 2016-0089 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.

This proposed motion approves a study of the traffic impacts resulting from a new bus stop on northbound Montlake Boulevard NE near Hec Edmundson Pavilion. Route 65 serving Lake City via 35th Avenue NE and Route 78 serving Seattle Children's Hospital would pick up northbound passengers at this stop. Attachment A to Ordinance 18133, defining the revisions to the bus routes, includes in the descriptions of Routes 65 and 78 the requirement that the Montlake bus stop may only be used if the proposed motion has been approved.

An amendment has been prepared to replace the transmitted traffic study with a revised version; references in this staff report are to the revised report.

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.

Montlake Boulevard Bus Stop

Passenger facilities near the University of Washington Link Station have been upgraded to allow for increased transfers between buses and light rail as well as improved access to the UW campus. Most transfers will be to or from stops on NE Pacific Street. A proposed new bus stop on Montlake Boulevard NE near Hec Edmundson Pavilion would be the only bus stop on the same side of Montlake Boulevard NE as the Link station. Up to eight buses per hour could pick up and drop off passengers at this stop. Section 5 of Ordinance 18133 is intended to ensure an evaluation of the traffic impacts of this stop:

SECTION 5. To ensure a full understanding of the potential traffic impacts in the vicinity of the University of Washington light rail station, before the installation of a bus stop on Montlake Boulevard NE near Hec Edmundson Pavilion, the council must pass a motion approving a report to be transmitted by the executive. The report shall summarize the results of a traffic impact analysis of a new bus stop on Montlake Boulevard NE near Hec Edmundson Pavilion with an assessment of the impact of that stop on general purpose traffic travel time on Montlake Boulevard NE from Boyer Avenue East to NE 45th Street and impact on the level of service and performance of intersections at Montlake Boulevard NE with NE Pacific Street and NE Pacific Place. The executive shall transmit the report and motion 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 Report

Attachment A to the proposed motion is a report on the evaluation of travel times between Boyer Avenue E and 24th Avenue E and Montlake Boulevard NE and NE 45th Street – as shown in a map on page 2 of the Report.

The travel time analysis used software, described in Appendix B, to assess afternoon peak period travel conditions. The impacts on general purpose traffic and transit traffic were evaluated for eight buses per hour in the afternoon peak, based on 10-minute peak service on Route 65 and 30-minute service on Route 78. Results include travel time on the corridor and intersection delay at two intersections, Montlake Boulevard NE/NE Pacific Street and Montlake Boulevard NE/NE Pacific Place.

On page 3, Table 1 shows the results that northbound travel time for general purpose traffic would not be affected and northbound travel time for transit would increase slightly. The increased transit time is the result of passengers boarding and deboarding at the new stop. The report notes that northbound traffic at the NE Pacific Street light would experience some friction if a bus was at the new stop, as right lane vehicles merged left, but states that overall there is very little to no impact.

Table 2 shows the current Level of Service (LOS) and seconds of delay at the two intersections. The model shows no impact at the intersection of Montlake Boulevard NE/NE Pacific Street (LOS D/52 seconds) and a slight decrease at Montlake Boulevard NE/NE Pacific Place (LOS F/119 seconds vs. LOS F/116 seconds). Appendix A is a table of LOS standards, which come from the Highway Capacity Manual, developed by the Transportation Research Board.

ANALYSIS

Approval of the proposed motion would approve the report finding no significant impact on traffic from establishment of a bus stop at the location described.

The City of Seattle Department of Transportation has written to concur with the results of the traffic study and to commit to continue to work with Metro to monitor traffic in the area to ensure transit benefits are realized. (See Attachment 4.) Please note that the Seattle Department of Transportation is preparing infrastructure in the vicinity and anticipates beginning work necessary to prepare the potential bus stop area the weekend of February 6, but that the bus stop would not be flagged or used unless the proposed legislation is adopted by Council.

AMENDMENT

Attachment 2 is an amendment to insert a revised report. The amendment will correct a heading in Table 2 and will modify the street segment evaluated for travel time impacts to reflect the requirement of Section 5 of Ordinance 18133. This change in the length of

the segment evaluated results in a change in the travel times listed in Table 1 but there is no change to the finding of no significant impact to travel times on the street segment.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Motion 2016-0089 (and its attachments)
2. Amendment
3. Transmittal Letter
4. City of Seattle Letter

INVITED

- Victor Obeso, Deputy General Manager Planning and Customer Service, King County Transit Division
- Marty Minkoff, Acting Manager Service Development, King County Transit Division
- Owen Kehoe, Engineer, King County Transit Division