



Legislative Department Seattle City Council Memorandum

Date: February 10, 2015
To: Transportation Committee
From: Anthony Auriemma, Office of Councilmember Tom Rasmussen
Subject: Seattle Transit Advisory Board Proposal

Introduction

On November 4, 2014, voters approved Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) Proposition 1, which authorized the STBD to collect an estimated \$45 million annually for the purchase of bus service from King County Metro Transit (Metro). The authorizing legislation for Proposition 1 was STBD Resolution 12, passed by the STBD Board on July 17, 2014. Section 8 of Resolution 12 stated that the STBD intended for the City to “appoint a public oversight committee to advise on spending of Transportation District revenues collected under this Resolution.”

The draft resolution before the Transportation Committee would create a Seattle Transit Advisory Board to fulfill the public oversight committee responsibilities outlined in Resolution 12 of the STBD. The Board would additionally be tasked with advising the Mayor, Council, and City departments on matters related to transit generally throughout the City, similar to the advisory functions of the Seattle Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Freight Advisory Boards. This memo summarizes key elements of the proposed Transit Advisory Board.

Seattle Transit Advisory Board: Functions and Responsibilities

Sections 1-5 of the draft resolution outlines the functions and responsibilities of the Board. Four of the Board’s key responsibilities would include:

- 1) **Provide oversight of Proposition 1 revenues.** This would likely include:
 - *Oversight of transit service spending*, such as whether the annual or semi-annual adjustments made to service in Seattle using Proposition 1 revenues are consistent with the Metro Transit Service Guidelines and the Seattle Transit Master Plan.
 - *Oversight of non-transit service spending*, such as how funds are being spent on access to Metro’s low-income fare, the Vehicle License Fee low-income rebate program, and whether an appropriate amount of Proposition 1 revenues are being dedicated to reserves.
 - *Review of the STBD’s annual report to the public.*

- *Review of Metro-proposed restructures of STBD-funded routes.*
- *Participate in discussions on the future of Proposition 1.*

2) Serve as the unofficial “public steward” of the City’s Transit Master Plan.

A public steward of a city master plan ensures proper monitoring of the progress being made to implement the plan. When the 2012 Transit Master Plan was developed, a 12 month, term-limited Advisory Group was created to work with SDOT but was disbanded after the Plan was adopted. The Board’s role as steward in this case would be similar to the role the SPAB and SBAB’s play in relation to the city’s respective master plans.

3) Advise the Council, Mayor, and City departments on all other matters related to transit within Seattle.

The City is making a number of investments in transit beyond Proposition 1. The Board would play a role in bringing accountability and oversight in this area. This includes:

- *Review of Seattle’s streetcar system.*
- *Review of SDOT’s transit capital improvements.*
- *Review of other City department actions on transit.*
- *Review of Seattle’s position on regional transit policy and plans from King County, Sound Transit, and others.*

4) Report annually on the status of the Board’s work program and the achievement of its goals.

Seattle Transit Advisory Board: Structure

Sections 6-8 of the draft resolution outlines the structure of the Board, which would be similar to the structure of the Seattle Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Boards. Key elements of the Board would include:

- Membership would be limited to 12 Board members total. Six would be appointed by the Mayor, five by the Council, and one through the Get Engaged program.
- Members would serve two-year terms, with the exception of six original members serving initial three-year terms in order to keep terms staggered. There would be no limit on the number of terms a Board member could serve.
- An intent that every Council district should be represented on the Board.
- An intent that Board members should be representative of different transit rider groups, transit modes, and/or maintain an interest in improving transit conditions within the City.