

April 29, 2021

MEMORANDUM

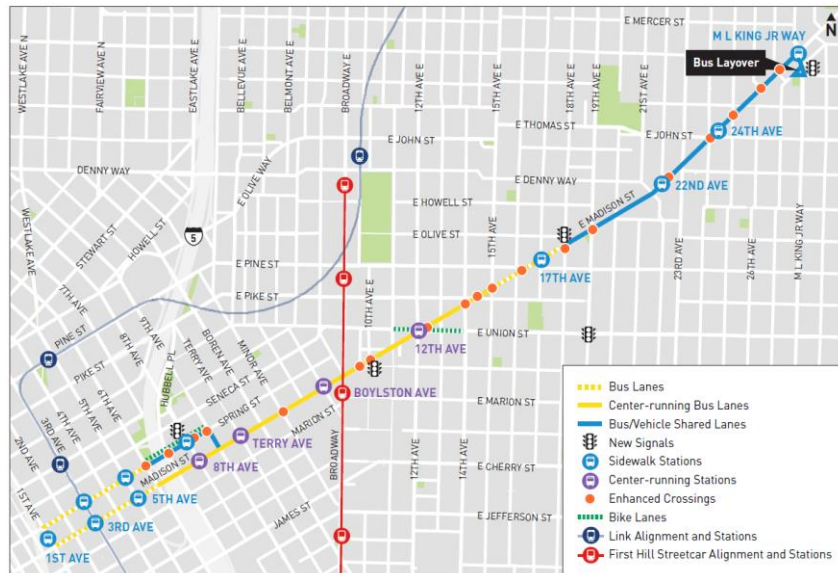
To: Transportation and Utilities Committee
From: Calvin Chow, Analyst
Subject: Madison BRT Grant Acceptance and Property Acquisition Legislation

On May 5, 2021, the Transportation and Utilities Committee will consider and possibly vote on two Council Bills related to the Madison Bus Rapid Transit (Madison BRT) [project](#). The first Council Bill (CB) would accept \$65 million in federal grants for the project, and the second would accept two property easements necessary for project implementation. Both CBs are anticipated to be on the May 3, 2021 Introduction and Referrals Calendar.¹

Background

Planning for improving transit in the Madison corridor was first authorized in the 2013 Adopted Budget, and the Madison BRT project was later established in the 2014-2019 Adopted Capital Improvement Program. In 2016, Council approved a locally preferred alternative for the Madison BRT corridor and endorsed efforts to seek external grant and partnership funding to implement the project ([Resolution 31647](#)).

The Madison BRT project will be implemented as the RapidRide G Line in partnership with King County Metro and Sound Transit, and runs from Downtown Seattle to Madison Valley, connecting through First Hill, Capitol Hill, and the Central District. The route primarily runs along Madison Street, with a one-way couplet extending along Spring Street from 1st Avenue to 9th Avenue in Downtown Seattle.



¹ Council Bill numbers for the proposed legislation are not available at the time of this writing.

The project includes transit priority lanes (including center-running bus lanes and stations in the most congested portion of the route), bus stop improvements, and new hybrid diesel-electric bus vehicles (allowing for left and right-side boarding). The project will require extensive repaving along the 2.3 mile route to incorporate new lane channelization, sidewalk and crossing improvements, curb bulbs, relocation of poles and wires, and repair of existing utilities in the right-of-way.

In 2020, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) completed a project readiness review which identified the need for additional risk contingency and cost escalation to match the current project schedule. In September 2020, Council authorized budget changes to account for an additional \$4.9 million of City funding and \$7.3 million of external partnership funding to fully fund the project ([Ordinance 126175](#)). On April 5, 2021, the FTA announced the [award](#) of a \$59.9 million Small Starts grant for the Madison BRT project.

Federal Grant Acceptance Legislation

The first piece of Madison BRT legislation would authorize SDOT to accept the \$59.9 million FTA Small Starts grant as well as a \$4.8 million Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) grant for the project. The necessary appropriations to support acceptance of both grants were anticipated and authorized in the 2021 Adopted Budget.

Property Easement Legislation

The second piece of Madison BRT legislation would accept two property easements necessary for construction of the project. These include:

- an easement for signal poles and trolley wire on Seattle University property in the vicinity of E Madison Street and 11th Avenue, and
- an easement for a public sidewalk on adjoining property in the vicinity of E Madison Street and 13th Avenue.

With approval of this legislation, SDOT anticipates that the Madison BRT project would begin construction in Fall 2021, with service commencing in 2024. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

cc: Dan Eder, Interim Director
Aly Pennucci, Policy and Budget Manager