



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
Department of Public Works  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** David Godfrey, P.E., Transportation Engineering Manager  
Pam Bissonnette, Interim Public Works Director

**Date:** May 9, 2013

**Subject:** Sound Transit Study Session

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that City Council conduct a Study Session with Sound Transit staff. Three items are recommended for discussion:

- Sound Transit 3 Planning
- Cross Kirkland Corridor Master Plan coordination
- Sound Transit Route 540

### **BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:**

#### *Previous Sound Transit Investments*

In 1996 Puget Sound voters approved Sound Move, the first set of investments in Sound Transit infrastructure and operations. Projects programmed in Kirkland were:

- Up to two HOV lane direct access ramps on I-405
- Route 540 service
- A transit center in Totem Lake

One of the direct access ramps was constructed at NE 128th Street and included a new crossing of the freeway. Sound Transit invested \$80.3 million in the project that was opened in February 2011. After reviewing several options, a suitable second direct access site could not be located. NE 85th Street was a desirable location, but Sound Transit budget was not sufficient to construct the necessary improvements as the project would have required a complete rebuild of the interchange.

In place of the second direct access facility, Sound Transit and the City of Kirkland agreed on two alternate projects; a downtown transit center and investments that would improve transit speed and reliability along the route of ST Express Bus 540. The Transit Center opened in February 2011 and Sound Transit invested \$13.3 million in the project.

Funding for the transit speed and reliability improvements totals \$5.1 million. A breakdown of the funding is as follows:

- NE 85th Street Corridor Project \$3.7 million
- Intersection improvements \$1.4 million
  - NE 85th Street/114th Avenue NE
  - 108th Avenue NE/NE 68th Street
  - Central Way/6th Street S.
  - Central Way/3rd Street S.
  - Kirkland Way/3rd StreetS.

Note that Route 540 originally operated between the Bear Creek Park and Ride and the U-District via NE 85th Street, downtown Kirkland, NE 68th Street and the South Kirkland Park and Ride. It was originally operated as an all-day two-way route.

The Totem Lake Transit Center was integrated into construction of the DeYoung Pavilion on the Evergreen Hospital campus and completed in October of 2008 for a cost of \$7.7 million.

### *Sound Transit 3 Planning*

Sound Transit staff intends to review planning for the next phase of Sound Transit expansion (ST3). This presentation will include elements of the presentation given to the Sound Transit Board on April 28, 2013. [Video of that presentation](#) is available on the Sound Transit website. Discussion of future planning begins at 1:43:20 on the video. Of particular interest to the Council may be the studies that Sound Transit is planning in consideration of connections to Totem Lake and additional revenue authorization that will be needed to fund ST3.

The Council has requested that Kirkland staff return to a June Council meeting with a resolution expressing Kirkland's interests in ST 3. Staff will be looking for Council direction on interests to include in the resolution after Council has heard the information presented at the study session.

Councils in the past have approved resolutions supporting the first Sound Transit ballot measure (1996) and a "Roads and Transit" ballot measure (2007). In 2008, Council took a position officially supporting the Sound Transit 2 ballot measure. In the future, the Council may also wish to formally express a desire to include specific connections to Totem Lake or transit technology preferences in ST 3 and/or to support a Sound Transit funding authorization request to the state on one of Kirkland's future state legislative agendas.

### *Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC) Master Plan coordination*

Kirkland envisions the Cross Kirkland Corridor as a multi-use corridor as described in the Interest Statement that Council approved in 2011 which includes transit. Sound Transit owns a portion of the Eastside Rail Corridor in Bellevue and owns a transit easement along the entire corridor in King County, including along the Cross Kirkland Corridor. As the CKC Master Plan process contemplates future transit on the CKC, it will be important to continue to factor in future needs for Sound Transit.

Kirkland and Sound Transit have been sharing information and interests about the corridor through the Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Advisory Committee and staff meetings. Kirkland

staff have requested Sound Transit to further describe how Sound Transit will work with Kirkland on the CKC Master Plan at the Study Session.

### *Sound Transit Route 540*

As described earlier, one of the initial set of Regional Express Bus routes in Sound Move was Route 540 that ran between Bear Creek Park and Ride and the University of Washington via NE 85th Street, downtown Kirkland, the South Kirkland Park & Ride and SR 520. Due to low ridership relative to other Sound Transit Routes, Route 540 is being trimmed in routing, frequency and span of service. Route 540 is now a peak only route running on weekdays between Downtown Kirkland and the University of Washington. Service is oriented to the University in the morning and to Kirkland in the afternoon.

The latest set of ST service reductions will go into effect this fall, reducing peak hour peak direction service from 15 minute frequency to approximately 20 minute frequency.

At the study session, Sound Transit staff will describe the rationale behind these reductions and how they've coordinated with King County Metro. The Council may want to discuss the future of Route 540 and Sound Transit service in Kirkland.

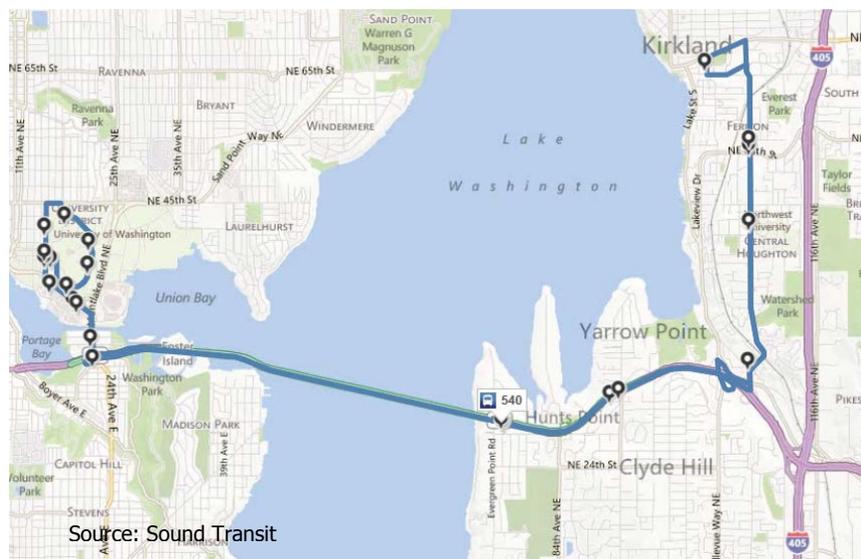


Figure 1, Sound Transit Route 540. Route Shown in Blue, black markers indicate stops.