

**THE NORTHWEST SEAPORT ALLIANCE**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**MANAGING MEMBERS**  
**STAFF BRIEFING**

<b>Item No.</b>	5A
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	April 3, 2018

**DATE:** March 26, 2018

**TO:** Managing Members

**FROM:** John Wolfe, CEO

**Sponsor:** Sean Eagan, Government Relations Director

**Project Managers:** Lindsay Wolpa, Local Government Relations, North Harbor  
Geri Poor, Regional Transportation Manager

**SUBJECT:** ST3 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Project Briefing

**A. BRIEFING REQUESTED**

Sound Transit CEO Peter Rogoff will provide an overview of his agency's planned ST3 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions that will deliver light rail connections to residential and job centers, including a proposed new downtown Seattle Light Rail Tunnel, connecting the two extensions. As the project may have problematic impacts on both Port of Seattle and North Harbor NWSA Managed Properties, Managing Members will have the opportunity to learn more about the project and ask questions about related development processes.

**B. SYNOPSIS**

In early 2018, Sound Transit launched its extensive stakeholder process related to the ST3 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions project. Using "representative" alignments presented during the 2016 voter-approved ballot measure, Sound Transit is seeking consensus around a "preferred" alignment for the project before launching the project's environmental review in early 2019. The nexus between Port of Seattle and Northwest Seaport Alliance operations and the project's representative alignment is significant. Through construction and subsequent operations, this project has the potential of impacting many port facilities:

- Terminal 5 (adjacent to West Seattle)
- Terminal 18 (Harbor Island)
- Terminal 46 (near Colman Dock)
- Terminals 30 and 25 (south of T-46 and north of Spokane St)
- Terminals 102, 104 and 106
- Grain terminal (Terminal 86)
- Old Tsubota Steel site (near Magnolia Bridge)
- Interbay/Magnolia cruise and fishing terminals (Terminals 90 and 91)
- Fishermen's Terminal
- Salmon Bay Marina (adjacent to Fishermen's Terminal)

Sound Transit's overview of the West Seattle and Ballard Extensions at the Managing Members' April 3 meeting is a key first step in providing commissioners with a solid understanding of this significant Seattle area infrastructure project and showing how NWSA and the Port of Seattle must remain closely engaged with project development as the planning and stakeholder efforts move forward.

These extensions could significantly improve transportation in our region; however, given the route of the current representative alignment, there could be significant negative impacts to the region's maritime and industrial sectors if key issues are not appropriately addressed. An analysis of potential port impacts can be reviewed in the attached early scoping comments submitted on March 5, 2018.

### **C. BACKGROUND**

Sound Transit's mission is to plan, build and operate mass transit service throughout central Puget Sound. The initial phase of the regional mass transit system, called Sound Move, was approved by voters in 1996. The second phase, Sound Transit 2 (ST2), was approved in 2008. Under these plans, the regional light rail system will more than double in length from just over 20 miles today to over 50 miles by 2023. Service is also increasing on the 83-mile Sounder commuter rail line from Everett to Lakewood, and ST Express buses continue to serve major highways in the region.

Sound Transit 3 provides the next phase of high-capacity transit improvements for central Puget Sound. On November 8, 2016, voters of the Central Puget Sound region approved the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) ballot measure. With this plan, the light rail system will more than double again to 116 miles with over 80 stations. Light rail will expand north to Everett, south to Federal Way and Tacoma, east to downtown Redmond, south Kirkland, and Issaquah and west to Ballard and West Seattle, building 62 new miles of light rail. Sound Transit 3 will also invest in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in two corridors: connecting Lynnwood to Burien via I-405 and SR 518 to serve Eastside cities as well as Tukwila and Burien; and on SR 522 between Bothell and Shoreline with service extending to Woodinville and connecting to Link light rail via Northeast 145th Street. The plan also includes a program to improve bus speed and reliability in specific corridors. Finally, the plan will expand Sounder commuter rail, including an extension at Tillicum to serve Joint Base Lewis-McChord and DuPont.

The ballot measure included a "representative project alignment," essentially acting as a baseline and budget for further development of the link extensions. The "representative" project for the West Seattle Link Extension builds light rail from West Seattle's Alaska Junction neighborhood to downtown Seattle primarily on an elevated guideway with a new rail-only fixed span crossing of the Duwamish River. The West Seattle Link Extension will connect to existing Link service, continuing north to Lynnwood and Everett. The "representative" projects for the Ballard Link Extension and downtown Seattle Light Rail Tunnel build light rail from Ballard's Market Street area through downtown Seattle with both tunneled and elevated alignments and a rail-only movable bridge over Salmon Bay. These connect to Link service, continuing south to Tacoma.

Sound Transit launched a broad stakeholder process in early 2018 with the goal of building consensus around a "preferred project alignment" for the West Seattle and Ballard

Extensions in advance of starting the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in 2019. That process includes the formation of an Elected Leadership Group (ELG), interagency staff group and a Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG).

Port of Seattle Commissioner and NWSA Managing Member Stephanie Bowman is representing NWSA and Port of Seattle interests on the ELG. She sits on the group along with six Seattle councilmembers, King County Executive Dow Constantine, Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan and King County Council Chair Joe McDermott. Port staff is represented on the interagency group and is also closely monitoring the SAG and other Sound Transit outreach efforts.

#### **D. CURRENT STATUS**

Sound Transit early scoping comment period on the ST3 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions closed on March 5. The agency's requested feedback asked for comments on the representative alignment, additional alignments that should be studied as the process moves forward and reactions to Sound Transit's outlined "purpose and need" statements for the project and elements of the environment. Joint Port of Seattle-NWSA submitted comments are attached.

Leading up to the next ELG meeting on May 17, Sound Transit staff is reviewing the early scoping comments to consider throughout their initial Level 1 screening process. As ST and Port staffs are meeting regularly, Managing Members will receive regular updates through local government relations monthly memos and in greater detail when requested.

#### **E. ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST**

1. Port of Seattle and Northwest Seaport Alliance Early Scoping Comments, submitted to Sound Transit on March 5
2. Sound Transit Slide Presentation