

**Madison Street BRT  
Seattle, Washington  
Small Starts Project Development  
(Rating Assigned November 2020)**

Summary Description	
<b>Proposed Project:</b>	Bus Rapid Transit 2.3 Miles, 11 Stations
<b>Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):</b>	\$133.38 Million
<b>Section 5309 CIG Share (\$YOE):</b>	\$59.90 Million (44.9%)
<b>Annual Operating Cost (opening year 2024):</b>	\$6.45 Million
<b>Current Year Ridership Forecast (2015):</b>	12,300 Daily Linked Trips 3,685,800 Annual Linked Trips
<b>Horizon Year Ridership Forecast (2035):</b>	17,600 Daily Linked Trips 5,255,500 Annual Linked Trips
<b>Overall Project Rating:</b>	High
<b>Project Justification Rating:</b>	Medium-High
<b>Local Financial Commitment Rating:</b>	High

**Project Description:** The City of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) proposes to construct an east-west bus rapid transit line along Madison Street connecting downtown Seattle in the west to the Madison Valley neighborhood in the east. SDOT expects 1.4 miles of the proposed project to be in dedicated transit lanes. The project includes transit signal priority, a real-time bus arrival information system, and the purchase of nine low-floor diesel electric buses. On weekdays, service is planned to operate every six minutes during daytime hours, and every 15 minutes during evening periods. On weekends, service is planned to operate every 15 minutes.

**Project Purpose:** The Project corridor includes highly dense neighborhoods in downtown Seattle, First Hill, Capitol Hill, the Central Area, and Madison Valley. SDOT expects the project to improve transit capacity, travel time, mobility and reliability in this crowded transit corridor. It provides a vital east-west connection through rapidly growing neighborhoods, while making related improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access to stations. It also provides multi-modal connections with the Seattle Streetcar System, Washington State and King and Kitsap County ferries at Colman Dock, Sound Transit's Link light rail system, and other Metro RapidRide BRT services.

**Project Development History, Status and Next Steps:** The project was adopted into the region's fiscally constrained long-range transportation plan in June 2015. SDOT formally adopted a locally preferred alternative in February 2016. The project entered Small Starts Project Development in April 2016. SDOT completed the environmental review process with receipt of a Categorical Exclusion from FTA in December 2017. SDOT anticipates receipt of a Small Starts Grant Agreement in 2021, and the start of revenue service in September 2024.

**Significant Changes Since Last Evaluation (November 2019):** The capital cost increased from \$121.18 million to \$133.38 million due to an extended project schedule and scope changes

including an additional station. The CIG funding request remained the same, causing the CIG share to decrease from 49.4 to 44.9 percent.

<b>Locally Proposed Financial Plan</b>		
<b><u>Source of Funds</u></b>	<b><u>Total Funds (\$million)</u></b>	<b><u>Percent of Total</u></b>
<b>Federal:</b>		
Section 5309 CIG	\$59.90	44.9%
FHWA Flexible Funds (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program)	\$9.65	7.3%
<b>State:</b>		
Connecting Washington Grant	\$2.55	1.9%
<b>Local:</b>		
Sound Transit Sales and Use Tax, Motor Vehicle Excise Tax, Property Tax and Rental Car Tax Revenues and Bonds	\$35.78	26.8%
Levy to Move Seattle Property Tax Revenues	\$19.72	14.8%
King County Local Sales Tax Revenue	\$3.46	2.6%
City of Seattle Real Estate Excise Tax, Vehicle Licensing Fee, Development Mitigation Fee and Other Transportation Revenues	\$2.32	1.7%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$133.38</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**NOTE:** The financial plan reflected in this table has been developed by the project sponsor and does not reflect a commitment by DOT or FTA. The sum of the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

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**LAND USE RATING: Medium-High**

The land use rating reflects population density within one-half mile of proposed station areas, employment served by the line, and the share of legally binding affordability restricted (LBAR) housing in the station areas compared to the share in the surrounding county.

- The population density in station areas is about 16,100 persons per square mile, corresponding to a High rating by FTA benchmarks. Total employment in the station areas is about 132,800 jobs, corresponding to a Medium rating. The typical daily maximum parking cost in the central business district is \$30, corresponding to a High rating. The ratio of station area to county LBAR housing is 3.60, corresponding to a High rating.
- Downtown Seattle is characterized by mid- to high-rise mixed-use office, residential, and institutional buildings. East of Interstate-5, mid-rise residential, office, and institutional uses continue in the First Hill neighborhood. East of Broadway, the character becomes more residential and density decreases but development is still primarily multi-family residential with retail along major streets. The surrounding residential neighborhoods consist of small-lot single-family units and clusters of two- to three-story apartment buildings and townhouses.
- The corridor is highly walkable with pedestrian facilities and a compact street grid.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RATING: High**

**Transit-Supportive Plans and Policies: High**

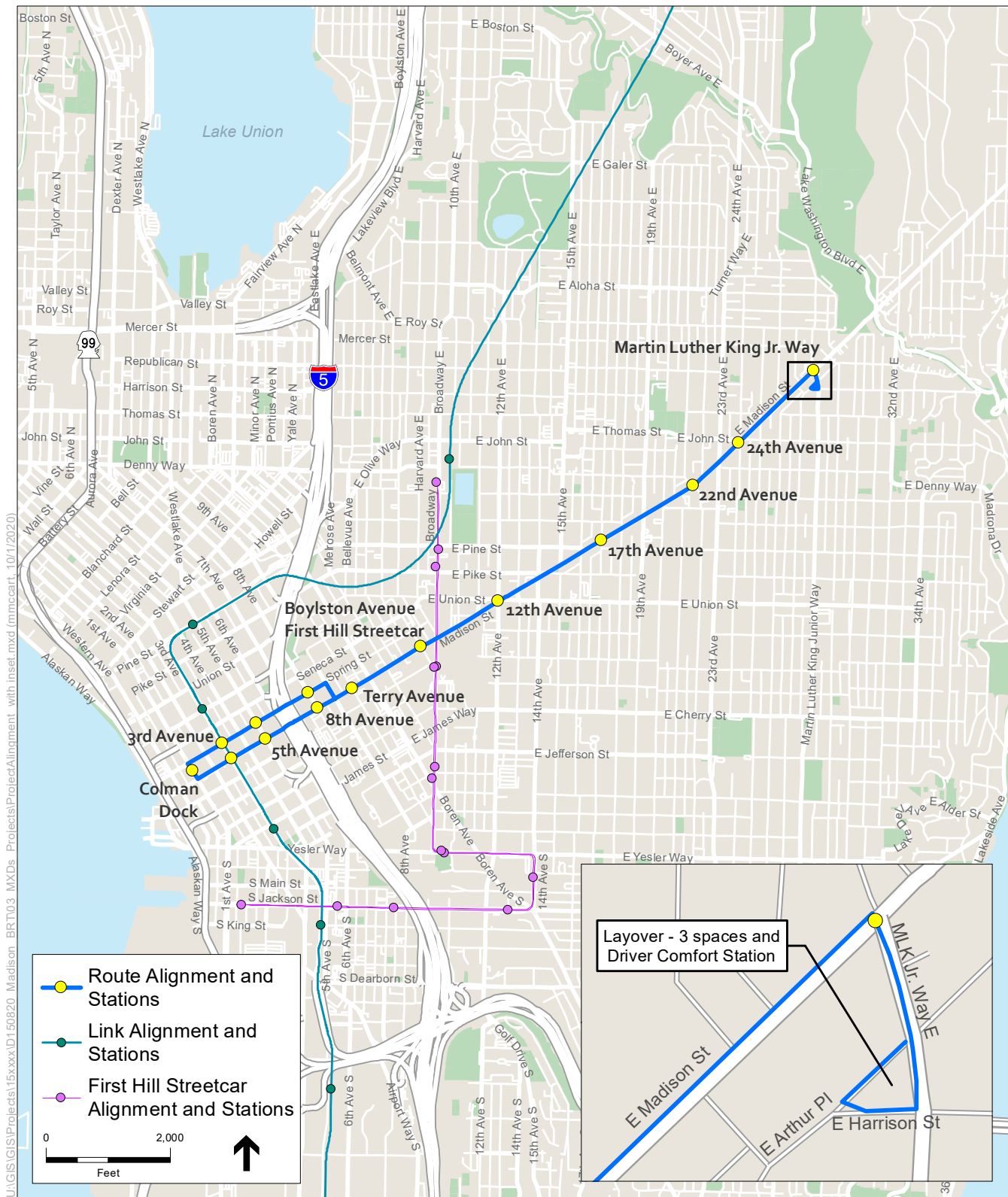
- *Transit-Supportive Corridor Policies:* The City of Seattle and King County plans and policies emphasize transit-oriented development (TOD). The City’s comprehensive plan directs growth into urban centers and urban villages that are found along the project corridor. Neighborhood plans and design guidelines encourage a pedestrian-oriented streetscape. The City invests in pedestrian facility and safety deficiencies. Parking policies include residential permit zones, on-street priced parking, and prioritizing curb space for transit.
- *Supportive Zoning Regulations Near Transit Stations:* The downtown segment of the corridor includes the densest zoning districts and incentivizes greater development by awarding density bonuses for the provision of public amenities and use of transfer of development rights (TDR). East of the downtown, zoning density rates Medium-High to High with design requirements for small setbacks, restricted parking, and prominent pedestrian entryways. Designed pedestrian zones limit auto-oriented uses along much of Madison Street. Parking maximums exist for all non-residential development and minimums are eliminated in designated locations including transit corridors.
- *Tools to Implement Land Use Policies:* Regional and local government agencies have led transit-supportive planning with a focus on developing policies and tools for building TOD. Seattle has a multi-family tax exemption program for developments with affordable housing in transit station areas. A plan-level environmental impact review streamlines state-level review requirements for major projects.

**Performance and Impacts of Policies: High**

- *Performance of Land Use Policies:* Between 2014 and early 2020, 122 projects were completed in the corridor, including over 3,300 housing units. Commercial, mixed use, and multi-family residential projects consistently exhibit strong urban design characteristics, such as being built to the street and having active frontages along commercial streets. As of 2020 there are 120 projects approved for development and/or under construction in the corridor, including 23 mixed-use projects.
- *Potential Impact of Transit Investment on Regional Land Use:* The corridor is heavily built up, but recent infill redevelopment indicates that there is potential for further development. Over 100 parcels totaling about 62 acres were identified as “redevelopable” within the corridor.

**Tools to Maintain or Increase Share of Affordable Housing: Medium-High**

- The City is developing new policy goals to direct new affordable housing into transit communities, and the comprehensive plan includes housing production targets by income category. The City uses a portion of TDR proceeds, a housing tax levy, and a multi-family tax exemption to incentivize construction and preservation of affordable housing. Seattle also provides density bonuses for the construction of affordable housing.



SOURCE:  
 City of Seattle, 2019; Wa. Dept. of Ecology, 2016; ESA,  
 2016; OSM, 2015; Sound Transit, 2020

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