



# Seattle Design Commission

Greg Nickels  
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*Chair*

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Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Mary Johnston

Juanita LaFond

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Darrell Vange

Darby Watson

Guillermo Romano  
*Executive Director*

Valerie Kinast  
*Coordinator*

## APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING August 7, 2008

Convened: 8:30am  
Adjourned: 4:30pm

### Projects Reviewed

Blume Yale Campus Woonerf & Swale  
Downtown Stormwater Demand Management  
Woodland Park Zoo West Entry  
King County Metro RapidRide

### Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair  
Tasha Atchison  
John Hoffman  
Juanita LaFond  
Norie Sato  
Darrell Vange  
Darby Watson

### Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino



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7 August 2008

**Project:** King County Metro RapidRide

**Phase:** Briefing

**Last Reviews:**

**Presenters:** Liz Krenzel, King County Metro, Transit Division  
Karen Rosenzweig, King County Metro, Transit Division  
Sharon Slebodnick, King County Metro, Transit Division

**Attendees:** Christine Alar, SDOT  
Christie Chacko, USC  
Bob Corwin, Resident  
Jonathan Dong, SDOT  
Sheila Mariano, USC  
Lee Roberts, Planning Commission  
Katie Sheehy, Planning Commission  
Jodie Vice, City Council

Time: 1.5 hours

(SR121 /RS02032)

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## SUMMARY

The Design Commission made the following comments on the RapidRide briefing:

- **Appreciates King County Metro briefing to the DC.**
- **Strongly encourage providing trash receptacles and benches at all stops.**
- **Would like more design consideration to shelter prototypes, especially when looking at the longevity of the project.**
- **Consider orienting RapidRide signs perpendicular to the sidewalk.**
- **Encourage the project team to return to the Commission for support in the shelter design and corridor wide design.**
- **Excited about RapidRide potential in the City of Seattle.**
- **Explore the viability of newspaper kiosks before actually pursuing the idea.**

## Project Presentation

### *Project Background*

The goal of RapidRide is to provide more effective transit service that is timely, convenient and more flexible. Funding for the project is being provided through Bridging the Gap and Transit Now, among other sources.

There are five RapidRide Corridors.

- A-Line from Tukwila link station to Federal Way transit center
- B-Line from Bellevue transit center to Redmond transit center
- C-Line from Westwood Village in West Seattle to downtown Seattle
- D-Line from Ballard from NW. 85<sup>th</sup> St. to downtown Seattle
- E-Line from Aurora Village Transit Center at N 200<sup>th</sup> St. to downtown Seattle (along Aurora Ave N.)

In total there will be 53 miles of lines, which will be a major arterial corridor type bus service. Exact alignments will be approved by King County Council after community processes are completed. The corridor improvements will also include 100 new buses. They will be hybrid and designed to move people in, out and around the bus quickly. There will be three doors, and more space for standing with 47 seats and 24 standing spaces. Features like bike racks, wifi and security cameras will also be included. Metro is

currently negotiating with cities for signalization and fiber optic use. Metro is looking at using a Coordinator in the control center that focuses on RapidRide service and who manages bus spacing.

A new fare payment system will be tested on the A-Line. Passengers can pay at the station before boarding and only riders that are paying cash need to go through the front doors. Metro police will periodically check for fare payment.

Bus service will be frequent, running at 10 minute intervals during peak and 15 minutes during off-peak hours. There is a reliability issue because RapidRide will operate on arterials. However, roadway improvements, signal priority, and BAT lanes are all measures to ensure the timeliness of the buses. The RapidRide plan proposes half-mile spacing between stops, eliminating about half of the stops currently in the same corridors. Three types of passenger stops are proposed. A set of amenities that use readily available parts have been chosen and can be used depending on the type and location of the stop. In total 65 stations and 75 other stops are proposed. All stations have a standard passenger activated signal beacon to signal the bus driver that someone is waiting.

*Station* has the highest number of amenities, which include a shelter, tech pylon with fare station, real time sign, and newspaper kiosk. Shelter elements can be added as needed depending on use. Shelter design allows people to wait both under the roof and outside and the waiting area will be between 8-12 feet deep. The structure will be silver and gray tubes with red glazing frames. Uplighting within the structure and lighting of shelter blade sign will be provided. The technology pylon contains real time sign, map case, and ticket processor. Overall design is still in development.

*Enhanced Stop* includes a smaller shelter, lighting, vertical sign, but not a pay station. Shelters could be added and grouped together as ridership increases. An example of a location for an *Enhanced Stop* would be on a curb bulb.

*Standard Stop* would consist of a stand alone blade sign, a bus stop flag & post but no shelter and no tech pylon.

Service and facilities in the three RapidRide lines in Seattle (C, D, and E) are scheduled to be implemented between 2011 and 2013. Route recommendations for these lines will be submitted to King County Council for approval after the route structures are determined.

The C-Line is a 12 mile long route that runs from Westwood Village to downtown via Fauntleroy, Alaska Junction and the Viaduct. Metro has partnered with the City of Seattle and is currently in the design process the street improvements to include bus bulbs, shelter footings, fiber installation and signal upgrades. Around 20 stations would be installed as well as approximately 15 will get the enhanced or standard level of amenities. Implementation would take place in 2011.

The D-Line is a 7.5 mile long alignment that will run between NW 85<sup>th</sup> in Ballard through uptown, lower Queen Anne to downtown. Routing north of the Ballard Bridge is still undetermined; alternatives include 15<sup>th</sup> NW and 24<sup>th</sup> NW. The route structure is still undetermined; the possibility of connecting it to the C-Line for a continuous route is being explored. Around 20 stations would be installed as well as approximately 30 will get the enhanced or standard level of amenities. Implementation would take place in 2012.



Metro has partnered with the City of Seattle for the street improvements to include bus bulbs, shelter footings, fiber installation and signal upgrades. Under the Bridging the Gap Program, Metro partnered with the City for improvements along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue where bus street panels were recently

The E-Line, a 12.5 mile long route will run from the southern end of downtown to Aurora Village Transit Center in Shoreline, where it will connect to Swift service to Everett, Community Transit's BRT service, scheduled for implementation at the end of 2009. It will virtually replicate the current 358 Metro bus route. Around 30 stations would be installed as well as approximately 25 will get the enhanced or standard level of amenities. Implementation would take place in 2013.

All lines will converge at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue downtown. Bus stop pattern options will be exclusive stops or shared bus stops and will be within a few blocks of both streetcar and light rail stations. Metro and SDOT will conduct a traffic study to examine street operations and capacity. A recommendation by the end of this year--on the RapidRide stop pattern will be coordinated with Viaduct replacement planning which will determine the role transit will play in mitigating construction impacts.

The relationship of RapidRide to downtown planning is important. Metro will work with City Design to achieve the shared objective of providing head coverage for transit customers that blends into the streetscape- wherever possible. Neither Real Time Information Signs nor Ticket vending machines are planned for downtown stops.

There is a program to replace all Metro stop signage; the program includes RapidRide. The new signs are meant to be easier to see and use, and will create compatibility with Metro's brand color palette. New sign family has been developed for the entire Metro system, including signs of different sizes for downtown, urban centers and neighborhood bus stops. The example shown on the slide would replace existing kiosks in downtown. New signs would include destination information for routes and connecting information for other modes of transportation, both of which are not presently available on signs today. Prototype review by stakeholders and SDOT have been carried out. Metro will be reviewing structural specs for permitting and begin fabrication this fall an 18 month implementation to begin in 2009.

## **Public Comments**

### **SDOT**

- Involved in C-Line and intend to be involved in each of other lines to partner on project. Working closely on roadway and sidewalk improvements that City can carry out to help move the RapidRide project along.

## **Commissioners' Comments**

- What makes this more train-like and differentiates this from other bus service?
  - Metro currently has existing BRT elements, like the bus tunnel and queue jump at Montlake Bridge, but RapidRide will employ BRT elements in a coordinated fashion along the whole corridor. The design of the bus itself as well as reliability because of frequency, signal priority, special lanes, and payment system.
- Will other lines be eliminated and replaced by this?
  - Yes, where it would be redundant to have both. Fewer deviations, more straight and easy to understand.
- Additional standing room is great. Is the bus able to kneel?
  - Yes, there will be kneeling and a ramp at the front entrance. The design of the front area will be wider and easier to maneuver through.
- Why are we waiting until 2011 if no new tracks or roadways are needed?
  - Transit plan funding is over a ten year period. Also, started with A and B lines while determining the details of what to do in downtown Seattle.

- Simple stop with info pylon, bench etc. may be problematic because it doesn't have a trash receptacle.
- The shelter design is not inspiring. Overlake shelter has zip. Tubular steel is bland. Considering this is a prototype it leaves much to be desired. The stop in front of Union Station a bit more interesting.
- Why is RapidRide signage along street side fascia? Who can see it there? Wouldn't it be more meaningful perpendicular to sidewalk?
- Shelters look remarkably similar to today's, except higher windscreens. The shelter will be opportunity for brand. After work with Sound Transit this design appears stodgy. Opportunities with tubular steel include going up such as artwork or angles.
  - Will take comments back to Hewitt. Higher roof, metal not transparent roof, overhangs and vertical elements and uplighting will create much better place for pedestrians. Also considering budget for the whole project. What shops can accomplish is also a constraint.
- Problem not with circulation and function but how to make it match the sophistication required in this area. Materials are an issue.
- In West Seattle are you coordinating with wayfinding system there?
  - The information between the West Seattle group and Metro is being exchanged. Not much overlap.
- Is lighting typically Metro?
  - Options are based on location. If community can take over maintenance there is the option of other lighting.
- Illumination of station will have a good effect.
- Facility improvements to make this a more reliable corridor are a lot of work. If you need a community resource the Commission looks at projects, such as the Aurora corridor, and facilitates coordination.
- How does this mesh with light rail system?
  - Coordination of signage information.
- When will shelter design be finalized?
  - At concept design stage. Physical design of shelter just starting.