

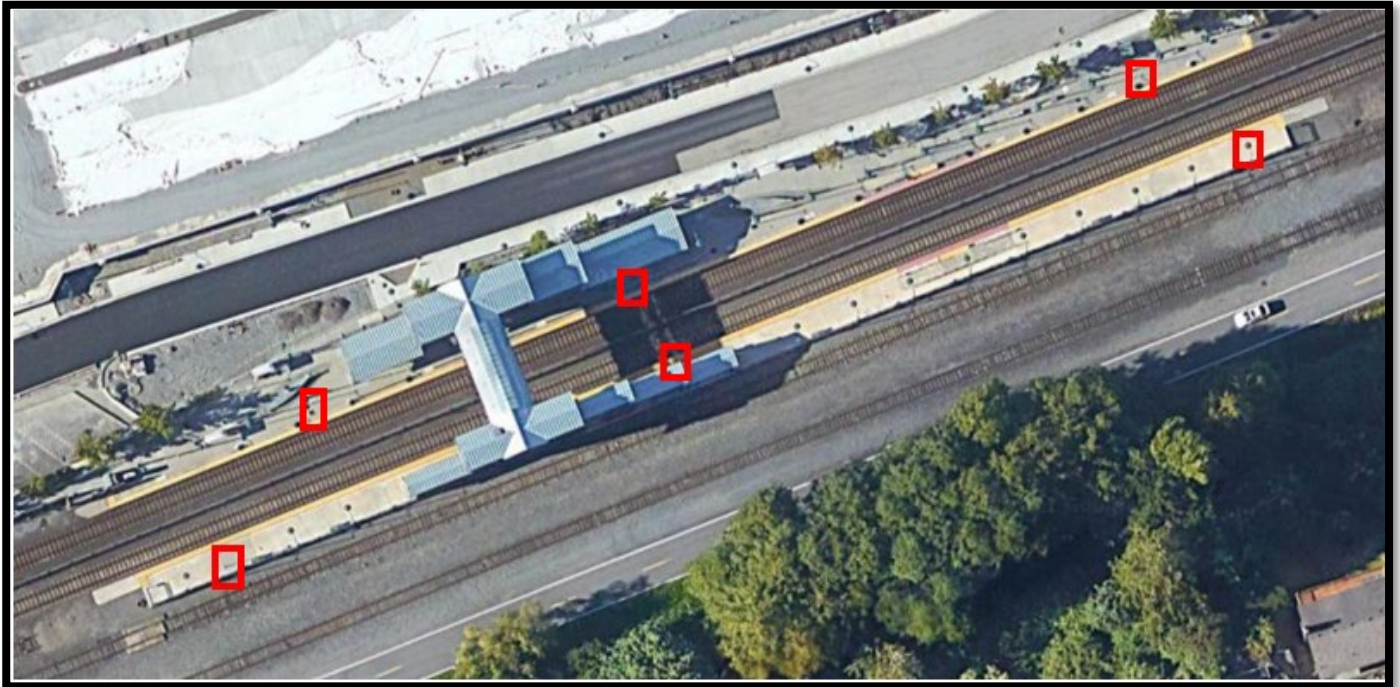
November 3, 2022
City of Mukilteo
Planning Department
11930 Cyrus Way
Mukilteo, WA 98275

Subject: Sound Transit Sign Variance Application

Project Description:

Sound Transit is applying for a sign variance from Mukilteo Municipal Code (MMC) 17.25B.80, Waterfront Zoning Design Standards applying the criteria for variance from MMC 17.80.170. The purpose of the variance is to install Variable Messaging Signs (VMS) at its Commuter Rail Station in Mukilteo. The Mukilteo Sounder Station has not had VMS sign installed in order to alert passengers of the timing of the next train. Under this variance, three new single-sided signs and three new double-sided signs for a total of six variable messaging signs will be installed, see Figure 1 below for locations at the station.

Figure 1. Locations of the proposed new variable messaging signs at Mukilteo Sounder Station.



On the West Platform, the 3 signs will be installed at existing Light Pole locations. The existing light poles are not strong enough to carry the load of the signs, so the existing poles will be replaced by new stronger light poles. The new light poles will match the existing light poles. An arm will be installed to the light poles 12' 6" from the platform floor. The existing light pole foundations are adequate for the new poles so no ground work will be required. The light poles will be mounted to existing anchor bolts. This work will require the use of a boom truck for one or more days to dismantle the existing poles and bring in the replacement poles.

On the East Platform, 2 signs will be located at each end of the platform on a new signpost installed to hold up the sign. The signpost will be 12' 6" tall. The base of the post will be attached to the existing concrete platform. Due to the East Platform's location in the middle of the trackway, these signs are Single Sided signs, facing the platform. Also on the East Platform, one double sided sign will be located on the overhead canopy at the bottom of the staircase coming down from station overpass. Installation of the signs on the East Platform will not require a boom truck.

Sound Transit is upgrading existing and installing new Variable Messaging Signs (VMS) located at its Sounder Commuter Rail Stations from the north to south corridors. The existing signs are reaching their end of life and sourcing parts has become problematic. This is also an opportunity to install signs with the latest technology to meet current Passenger Information Management System objectives, providing real time passenger information such as scheduled arrivals, departures, delays or other critical safety and security information to Sounder passengers.

Funding is available to install Variable Messaging Signs at stations where they have not yet been installed, such as Mukilteo. The timing of the installation at Mukilteo also coincides with recent Washington State Ferries upgrades at Mukilteo as well. The new signs will provide real time Sounder Train arrival information to passengers coming from the ferry terminal. The illustration below (Figure 2.) depicts the proposed pedestrian path from the ferry to Sounder. Pedestrians will be able to see the new signs installed along the tracks from the sidewalk.

Installation will require some preparatory work, which will include the installation of 3 new light poles to handle the weight of the signs and 2 dedicated sign poles and data and power cables. Some of this work will require specialty contractors for the structural and electrical work.

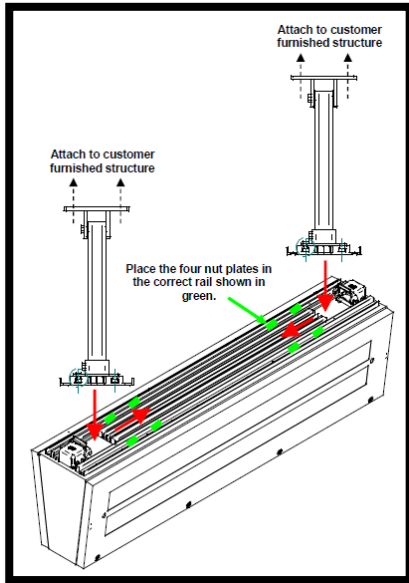
Figure 2. WSDOT Ferry Passenger Pedestrian Connection to Mukilteo Sounder Station.



Sign Mounting and Display

The Display is mounted using two vertical bracket assemblies. Each assembly has a mounting bracket at either end. The bottom bracket has four holes that accept the bracket bolts, spring washers, and siding nuts. The four sliding nuts are then placed inside the mounting rail, two on either side as shown in Figure 1 below. The bottom bracket is placed on top and slid toward the center of the display as shown by the red arrows below. The bracket assemblies are placed on the structure, (light pole arm, sign pole or overhead station structure).

Figure 3. Sign Mounting and Display Assembly



Schedule:

The Construction Schedule depends on the Contractor, which has not been selected. However, the construction work consists of new weldments and poles, and pulling data and power cable. The new signs will be installed later.

Criteria for Sign Variances MMC 17.80.170

Any person may apply for a variance from the requirements of this chapter. The sign variance shall be processed in the same manner as zoning variances as described in the zoning code, Chapters 17.13 and 17.64. A fee will be charged based on processing costs as provided for by the city's most current fee resolution. In making any favorable decision on a variance application, the permit authority must adopt findings of fact and conclusions based on those findings that meet the following criteria:

- A. *The variance does not conflict with the purpose and intent of the sign regulations;*

The variance requested does not conflict with the purpose and intent of the sign regulations for Waterfront Zoning Design Standards. The variance is requested for adjustment of the Waterfront Zoning Design Standards in order for the Sound Transit Mukilteo Sounder Station to install internally illuminated signage to inform passengers regarding train arrival and departure. The signage will be consistent with the existing character of the station which meets the intent of 17.25B.080(A) public transportation signage shall have its own character and the intent of 17.25B.080(H) signage shall be placed facing primary pedestrian streets.

The request is consistent with the use of the surrounding properties which include a Washington State Ferry Terminal, Bus Loop, and parking lot and provide ease of transfer between modes of transportation. The new signs will be installed adjacent to the recently upgraded sidewalk between the Sounder Station and the Ferry Terminal (See Figure 2. Above). The signs will have a downward facing shield that will prevent light spill over to the above residential properties.

- B. *The variance shall not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitation upon signage of other properties that have had to conform to the provisions of this title;*

The Variance requested is not a special privilege inconsistent the limitation upon signage of other properties that have had to conform to the provisions of this title. The requested variance will allow for the installation of internally illuminated signage at the Mukilteo Sounder Station which will provide passengers from the ferry or Mukilteo/Edmonds communities' real time train arrival/departure information.

- C. *There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applicable to the property involved, or to the intended use of the property, that are not contemplated or provided for by this chapter;*

The is necessary as Sound Transit is an Essential Public Facility with funding available to provide the commuters of Mukilteo, Edmonds, and those communities served by the Ferry, with real time information signage about the arrival of the Sounder Trains. This variance will allow Sound Transit and Washington State Ferries to better serve their ridership in the Mukilteo Community.

- D. *The granting of such variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity and zone in which the subject property is situated; and*

The requested variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity or zone in which the Mukilteo Sounder Station is located. The proposed variance will allow for signage to a real time variable messaging system to inform the public of train arrival/departures. Sound Transit is also complying with the 2006 Notice of Decision for the Mukilteo Station Condition 10 states: All exterior lighting, shall be directed downward onto the site and shall be shielded and directed away from other nearby neighborhoods and shoreline properties. Security lighting shall be designed to minimize glare to the night sky, surrounding community, and marine resources to reduce the visual impact.

- E. *Conditions may be imposed upon the application as deemed necessary to ensure compatibility with this chapter. No variance may be granted that would increase the number of signs allowed by this title or that would allow a type of sign that is prohibited by this title. (Ord. 1256 § 4 (part), 2010)*

According to MMC 17.80. 050 Prohibited Signs, the exception in (B) Animated and Moving Signs is electronic changing message signs, which are the signs Sound Transit is proposing to install at the Mukilteo Sounder Station. The Variance requested is for the installation of electronic messaging signs in the Mixed Use Waterfront zone, which according to MMC 17.25B.080 (M) cannot be internally illuminated.