

Below is a list of answers to questions frequently asked of Sound Transit during the Mercer Island listening tour.

1. What is being done with the listening tour comments?

All comments were reviewed by the City of Mercer Island, Sound Transit, King County Metro and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and catalogued into a list of identified issues. That document is available on [Sound Transit's Mercer Island listening tour website](#). In the coming weeks, each issue will be assigned a responsible agency or agencies with next steps and a timeline for those next steps to occur. That information will be published through email alerts and the listening tour website. Stay informed by [subscribing to East Link – Mercer Island email alerts](#).

2. Why don't you expand the existing park-and-ride facility?

The existing park-and-ride was designed to comply with the codes and regulations at that time including a limitation on height. Utilities as well as tie-backs that support the I-90 walls extend beneath the site, making it difficult and expensive to have additional levels of parking below grade. As a result, the eight-year old facility would have to be torn down and rebuilt in order to increase capacity.

3. Why don't you make the existing park-and-ride facility limited to Mercer Island residents only?

The Mercer Island Park-and-Ride is a federally-funded facility, making it available to the general public.

4. Is Sound Transit introducing some sort of permit at the park-and-ride?

To make more efficient use of park-and-rides, Sound Transit will offer permit parking at its busiest lots and garages across the region starting in 2016. Mercer Island is a designated site and discussions between the City and Sound Transit are ongoing. For more information about how the program will work, visit [Sound Transit's permit parking website](#).

5. What's going to happen when the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride is closed for construction? Are all of those cars going to come to Mercer Island?

During the closure of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride, Sound Transit will be leasing replacement parking facilities in Bellevue and Renton. Sound Transit will actively direct customers to both the new leased parking, as well as currently-underutilized eastside park-and-rides with available parking space, rather than Mercer Island. Upon completion of the South Bellevue Station and parking garage, the parking capacity at that site will triple from the current ~500 stalls to ~1,500 stalls.

6. Is integrated transit service (bus - light rail) still on the table for Mercer Island?

The Mercer Island City Council has rejected the initial five concepts previously presented by Sound Transit and King County Metro. The idea of integrating bus and light rail service remains a topic of conversation across the region and on Mercer Island. The Mercer Island listening tour will serve as a starting point for all conversations between the agencies moving forward. If a new concept is developed, it will include public input.

7. Why don't you integrate all of the buses at South Bellevue?

Sound Transit and King County Metro are working to integrate bus and light rail service across the region. The east corridor plan as initially proposed included integrating bus and light rail service at both the South Bellevue and Mercer Island stations. Five bus routes would be intercepted at Mercer Island and four bus routes would be intercepted at South Bellevue. This configuration was pursued to maximize efficiency in the regional transportation system, making best use of taxpayer dollars. Here's an example of how that would work:

- Commuter A: currently rides the bus from Renton to Seattle:
 - With integrated bus and light rail service, commuter A would take a bus to the South Bellevue station and transfer to light rail before continuing his/her trip to Seattle. That bus would be redeployed and turned back to the I-405 corridor, avoiding duplicative service with light rail across I-90, bus service hours that could potentially be redeployed elsewhere.
- Commuter B: currently rides the bus from Eastlake to Seattle:
 - With integrated bus and light rail service, commuter B would take a bus to the Mercer Island station and transfer to light rail before continuing his/her trip to Seattle. That bus would drop-off and pick up passengers and return east on the I-90 corridor, avoiding duplicative service with light rail across I-90, bus service hours that could potentially be redeployed elsewhere. Despite the transfer, that rider would enjoy a faster travel time than they experience today as a result of access to the congestion-free light rail system.
 - This concept would result in approximately the same number of buses traveling to Mercer Island as you see today. There would be an increase in the number of buses during the peak AM and PM hours. Buses would not be stored on Mercer Island.
 - To integrate all bus service at South Bellevue, busses traveling west along I-90 would have to cross three lanes of I-90 traffic from the HOV lanes to the Bellevue Way exit, travel from the exit onto Bellevue Way and enter and exit the South Bellevue station before getting back onto Bellevue Way and I-90 and continuing their trip to Seattle. These would present an increase in travel time, discouraging use of the regional transportation system.

8. Will light rail increase noise on Mercer Island/I-90? If so, what are you going to do about it?

The [East Link Final Environmental Impact Statement \(FEIS\)](#), published in 2011, evaluated existing I-90 noise levels at three island locations and modeled future light rail noise. Existing noise levels measured at the three sites on Mercer Island ranged from 54 to 65 dBA (24-hour Ldn in decibels or dBA). Future project-related noise levels would range from 55 dBA to 58 dBA on the west end of the island and 58 dBA on the east end of the island. These projected noise levels are below the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) impact criteria of 63 dBA. Electric train noise would not exceed FTA criteria for noise impacts and no mitigation is proposed. For more information, see [chapter 4.7 of the FEIS](#).