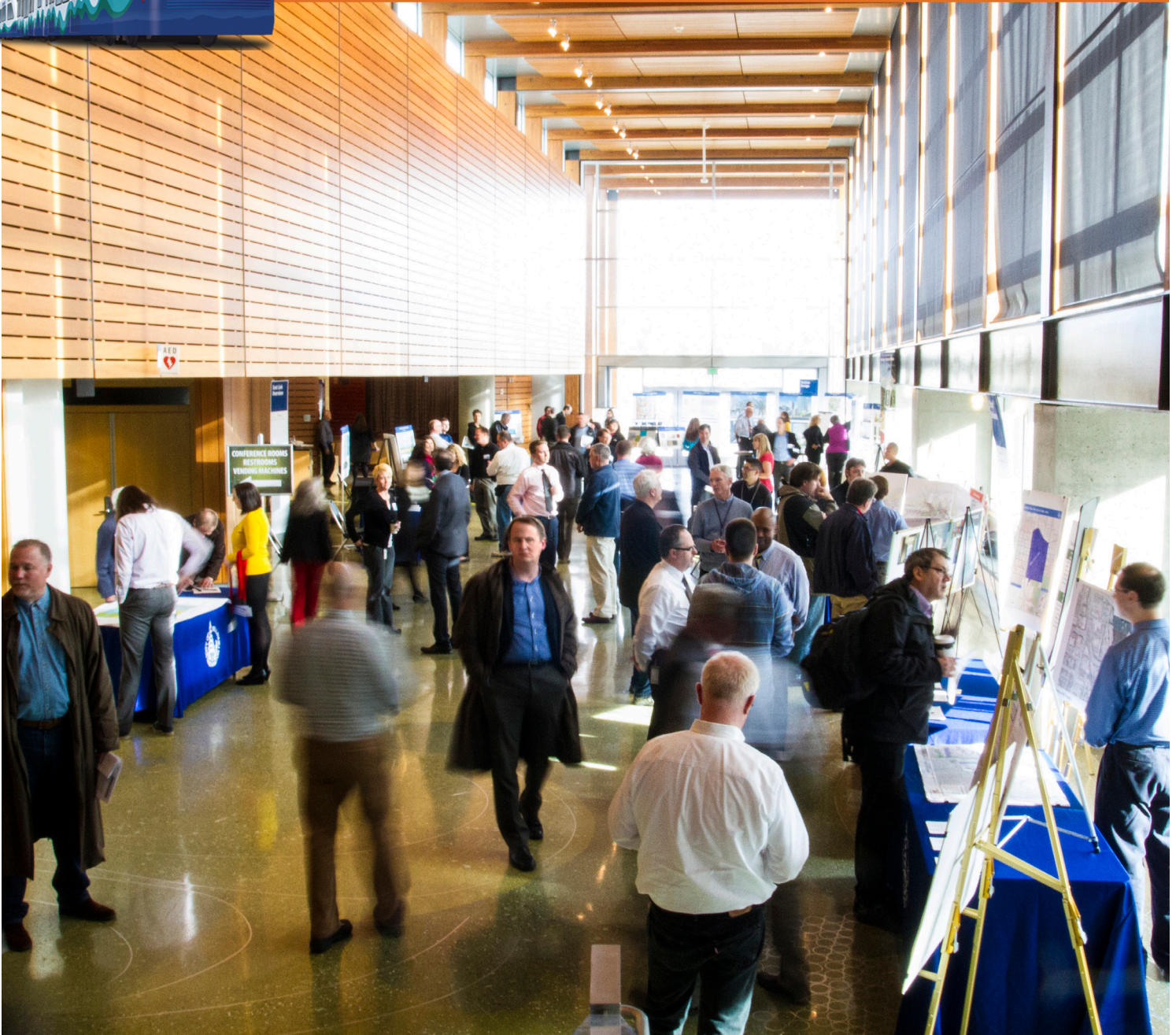




## East Link Extension



March 25, 2014

## Downtown Bellevue Segment 60% Design Open House Public Involvement Summary

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# Background

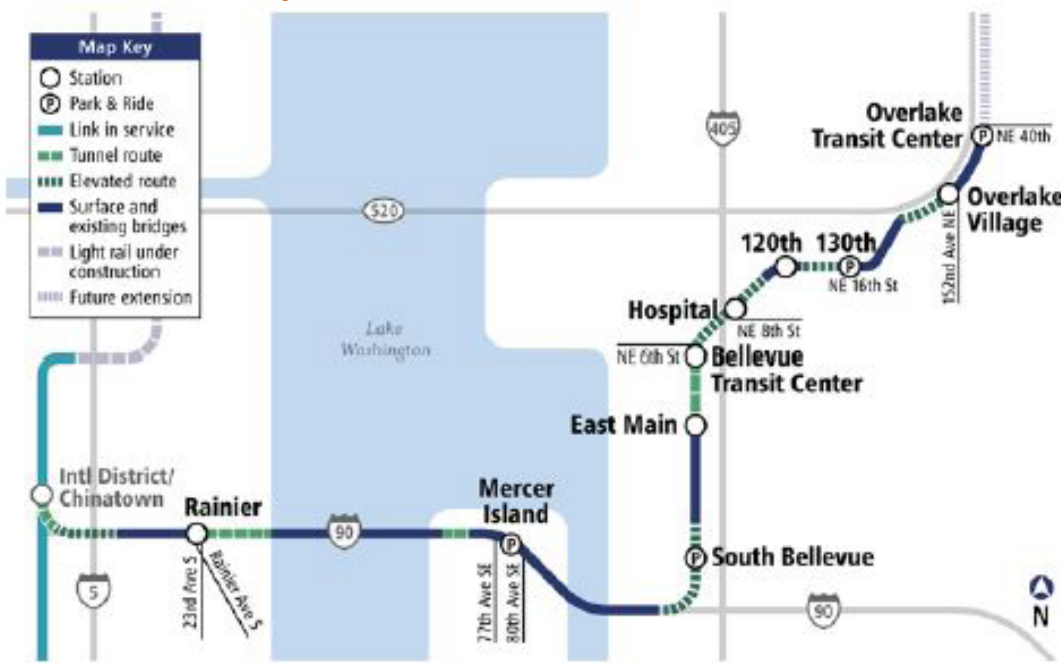
East Link Extension is a key element of the regional mass transit system approved by voters in 2008. This 14-mile light rail line will benefit local communities and support regional growth with fast, frequent and reliable light rail service, connecting Seattle to the Eastside's biggest population and employment centers.

The project builds on the Central Link light rail system running between Sea-Tac Airport and downtown Seattle and the University Link and S. 200th Link Extensions that are scheduled to open in 2016. East Link is part of the new light rail extensions being built north, south and east from Seattle. When East Link opens around 2023, 10 stations, serving Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, South Bellevue and Overlake in Redmond will become a part of a regional light

rail system stretching more than 50 miles. By 2030, about 50,000 riders will use East Link every day.

East Link is advancing in final design. During this phase, project architects and engineers define the light rail system, determining the technical specifications for the stations, bridges, tracks and other elements as well as construction methods and sequencing. The Sound Transit art program, STart, also begins work to select station artists and artworks during final design. Sound Transit hosted a public meeting in June 2013 to share design plans in the Downtown Bellevue area, and we have since advanced design to approximately 60 percent completion. There are multiple opportunities for the community to help influence design elements and stay informed as East Link moves forward.

## East Link route map



## Timeline





# Overview

On March 25, 2014, Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue's Light Rail Permitting Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) hosted an open house to inform the public of design progress on the Downtown Bellevue Segment of East Link Extension, from Main Street to 120th Ave NE, including the Bellevue Transit Center and Hospital stations. The meeting served to educate the community on design details, provide an overview of the project schedule, benefits, and final design elements; and present and gather comments on 60 percent design plans for the Downtown Bellevue Segment. The open house was held at Bellevue City Hall from 5 to 7 p.m.

Light rail travels in a tunnel under 110th Avenue NE, turning east at NE 6th St. to Bellevue Transit Center Station. The route transitions to an elevated profile south of NE 6th St. to cross I-405 and 116th Ave. NE. It turns north along the former BNSF Railway corridor to cross NE 8th Street and reaches the elevated Hospital Station with entrances on the north side of NE 8th St., transitioning to an at-grade alignment before turning east to cross under 120th Ave NE.

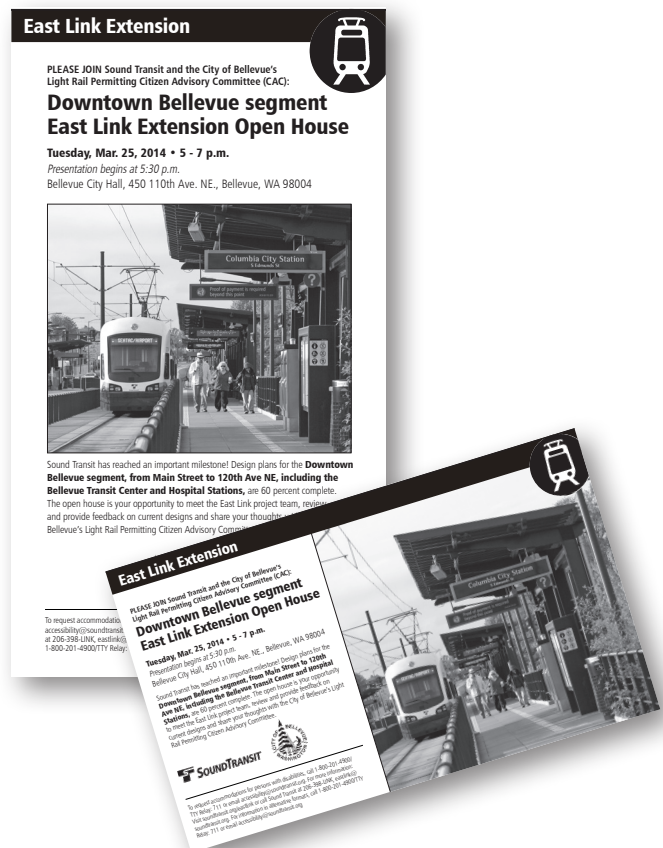
## City of Bellevue Light Rail Permitting Citizen Advisory Committee

Appointed by the Bellevue City Council, the CAC is comprised of 9 Bellevue residents charged with representing community perspective on the design and mitigation process for East Link. All comments submitted to Sound Transit at the open house will be shared with the CAC. The CAC meets regularly and all meetings are open to the public. Visit [www.bellevuewa.gov/light-rail-permitting-cac-meetings](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light-rail-permitting-cac-meetings) for more information.

# Notification

The open house was widely publicized through the following channels:

- Display advertisements in the Bellevue Reporter, Seattle Chinese News, Korea Daily, Russian World, La Raza, and Phung Dong Times.
- Postcards mailed to over 13,500 residents and businesses
- A press release to local papers and blogs
- Email notification to approximately 5,800 subscribers of the East Link Extension listserv, 850 subscribers of the Bellevue Gov Alert, neighborhood newsletter, and other agency or community group listservs
- Announcements on the Sound Transit and City of Bellevue project web pages
- Announcement on the Sound Transit Facebook page
- Announcement to City of Bellevue CAC distribution list



## Open house overview

Approximately 120 people attended the open house to learn about updated design plans for the Downtown Bellevue Segment and provide comments. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in and provided with a Community Guide to Final Design, segment fact sheet, and comment forms. Display boards and roll plots featured information about East Link, the final design process and updated design plans for the Downtown Bellevue Segment, from Main Street to 120th Ave NE, including the Bellevue Transit Center and Hospital stations.

An overview presentation was held at 5:30 p.m. Project staff were available throughout the meeting to answer questions and explain design details to the public. Attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts on the design plans. All meeting materials and electronic versions of the comment forms were made available on the East Link project website following the open house.





## Comment summary

Sound Transit accepted public comments in person at the open house, and by mail, email and electronically on the East Link website. The Light Rail Permitting Citizen Advisory Committee provided a stenographer at the open house to take public comment. All comments submitted were shared with Sound Transit and the CAC. The following section is a summary of verbal feedback collected at the open house as well as 25 comments received between March 25 and April 8, 2014. Transcribed comments are italicized below to highlight the tone of public feedback.

### General comments on the Downtown Bellevue Segment:

- *Design and location looks good. Would prefer a Park and Ride near either station.*
- *Looks great.*
- *Security and access for hearing impaired and visually impaired.*
- *There is no need for the Hospital Station and the 130th Street Station. These stations should be eliminated to reduce costs.*
- *ST needs to work more closely with Bellevue on station access, particularly bicycle access. This cannot be an afterthought after stations are 90% design complete.*
- *You will want amenities with restrooms. Pocket shops are even fine. Look at Tom Douglas' Tanakasan, Flower shop, bike shop, Assembly Hall, Melrose Market near Denny Triangle.*
- *Open LR services between Seattle and South Bellevue Park and Ride early – by 2021!*
- *Planning with county and BNSF Trail connecting to Kirkland.*
- *Please rezone to increase density around the stations. I hope this will lead to more apartments, condos, pedestrian traffic, etc.*
- *While the designs include bicycle facilities at the stations, there does not appear to be any planning focused on getting riders to and from the stations.*
- *A couple items I hope are being considered by the city as the new stations are planned include: (1) High-capacity transit works best with transit-oriented development and I hope that appropriate, high densities are being planned around the future stations (except where single family neighborhoods would be harmed by a nearby station); (2) High levels of feeder transit service by King County Metro will be needed to carry those of us who live in East Bellevue to the Hospital and BTC stations.*

## Bellevue Transit Center Station design

### General comments on station design, features and amenities:

- *A center loaded platform would be much more sleek and unimposing. That would reflect Bellevue character.*
- *Just use the space to its fullest use. They do this well in Europe.*
- *In looking at the station, I'm struck with how un-pretty it is. While not ugly, it certainly is not attractive. It looks like a lego machine that might be used for mining moon rocks. Why not a center-loaded platform so inglorious structures on the outside of the alignment do not have to be created.*

- *Instead of glass causeway, could place a building on top with amenities like a coffee shop or bike repair. They could have bathrooms.*
- *Need a 24/7 restroom available out downtown transit center.*
- *Electronic information at transit center.*

### Comments on pedestrian access to the station:

- *Get the underground tunnel to the BTC platform.*
- *At the Bellevue downtown station, or any other station, which at any point crosses the grade of a sidewalk, should allow for at least emergency exits for wheelchairs and such people, allowing them to go directly from the platform out onto existing city sidewalks, or in the case of the downtown station a possible new sidewalk on the south side.*
- *At the 30 percent open house there were comments made about a possible underpass under 110th Avenue NE to access the downtown Bellevue station.*

### Comments on bicycle access to the station:

- *Runnels on the sidewalks.*
- *Bellevue needs a bold plan for AAA bicycle access to stations.*

- *Need to show that one can get there from all directions.*
- *Looks really hard, unsafe.*
- *Bike routes – downtown is hard to bike.*
- *Need all ages and abilities bicycle access to downtown stations from South Kirkland P&R, 520 Trail, I-90 Trail, East Bellevue.*
- *Severe lack of bicycling improvements, the boards show next to nothing – especially Bellevue's.*
- *Need to get City of Bellevue to actually provide real bike routes that are reviewed by a committee, such as Cascade Bike Club.*
- *\$ budget for art vs. \$ spent on how to safely get there via bike?*

### Comments on vehicle drop-off and parking:

- *Would like to see more public parking near Downtown Station. Perhaps "new building" can provide that and have a circulator for all of Downtown Bellevue.*
- *Provide drop-off at Bellevue Transit Center.*
- *Off-street pick-up and drop-off locations integrated with a downtown building.*



## Hospital Station design

### Station design and amenities:

- Looks great.
- Thanks for maximizing design of the creek into a presence for the station.
- Plans we have should improve the flow and vitality. Your landscaping will be important too. This is a great view point so this station should have lots of glass.
- Protect and enhance the water. We are already underway with Lake Bellevue drainage basin enhancements and you can help with that. Signage for wayfinding is important and I like the bright red ticketing areas.
- Nice, clean and contemporary design. When will the tree and planting plans be available?
- Are the elevators enclosed, or do they have windows?
- Station looks very exposed, why no windscreens at edges of platform structure?
- I really hope that there will be an intentional integration with the trail that will continue onto the current Burlington Northern/Santa Fe right-of-way because Kirkland is going to be spending a lot of money improving it for regular use. There will end up being a lot of people who use it, particularly because it intersects directly with the hospital station. It should be recognized that a lot of people could be taking their bikes from Kirkland to get onto Sound Transit. The hospital station is the least dense stop in Bellevue.

### Interest in the City's station area planning efforts:

- It may take a serious increase in density in the area in order to make the station work. There will need to be riders, people either going to work or coming from home on their way to work. Some people will use the station to get to and from the hospital, but that will not be a large number.
- Increase zoning density around the Hospital Station to support ridership.

### Comments on pedestrian access:

- An overpass over 8th seems most practical and tie into future trail that would use same path.
- Crosswalk under the station to reach SB bike path or EB bus stop.
- Overpass over NE 8th at Hospital Station for pedestrians and bikes.
- Review ped crossing at 8th close to station.
- Is the pedestrian path ADA accessible?
- Dangerous access from south of 8th.
- Consider pedestrian/bike overpass over NE 8th at the Hospital Station.
- I would like to see an at grade ped/bike crossing across 8th at the south of the Hospital Station. This would link the trail north/south at this point and would provide a convenient crossing for eastbound B Link buses and the south side of 8th.



### Comments on bicycle access:

- City of Bellevue bike plans are inadequate.
- Crosswalk under the station to reach SB bike path or EB bus stop.
- Not much history of bikes in this area. Too dangerous, probably bikes should be directed to the trail.
- Play up bike access to this site. Include bike lanes in the regional trail and a large bike parking area at the station (you may already be doing this). Make sure that the bike lanes are well connected to other bike routes. Bikers would appreciate not having to go into downtown to catch the train.
- Want to see a site plan with focus on bikes, not pedestrians.
- What is the status and timeline for the rail to trail project in relation to East Link?

### Comments on vehicle drop-off and parking:

- If you have drop off, add another lane or large turnaround area or traffic will be a mess. How about a golf-cart-like shuttle between the station and hospitals, especially for older people. It is a long walk.
- More parking at Hospital and Downtown stations.
- Park and Ride near either station

- Vehicle access to this site is limited. It is difficult to drive to (right in/right out on NE 8th only), so it currently serves only residences and businesses in walking distance. As a result, to recoup the community's investment in the station, the immediate area should be zoned for a very high density.
- Create a viable Kiss & Ride access, which means mostly creating a second street connection so people can go back east easily. I know the Lake Bellevue-ites are adamantly against this idea, but when the density in the area is increased (as it must be), the new street will be essential and it could be designed to provide a buffer for the Lake Bellevue residences and offices

## Construction Impacts

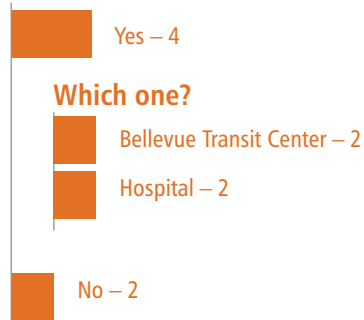
### General comments:

- When will ST share more about construction?
- What are construction impacts during construction?
- Vibration from construction on peat-I have already noted that initial work and tests around the area are transmitting vibration into our buildings, which means actual construction could be a problem.



# How do you plan to use East Link?

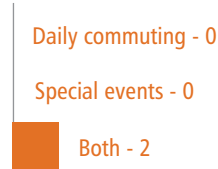
## Do you live or work near a station?



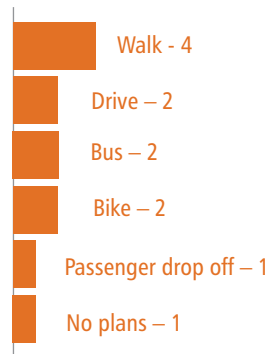
## How often do you anticipate using the station?



## Do you intend to use light rail for daily commuting, special events, or both?



## How do you plan on accessing the station?



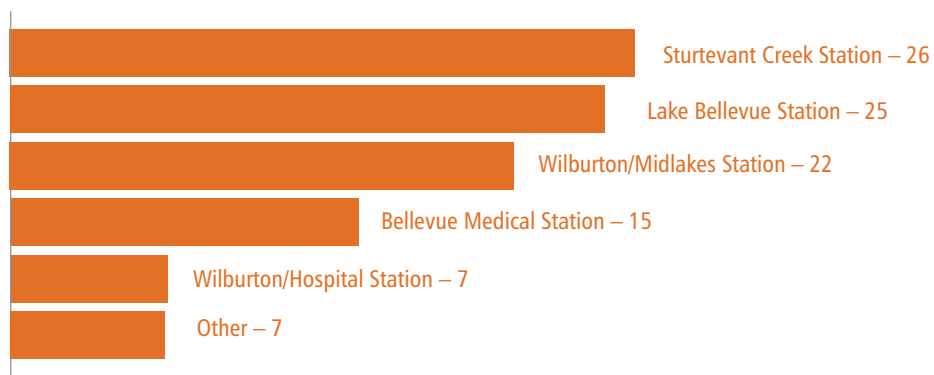
## Permanent station naming comment summary

A separate comment form was provided to gather input on permanent station names for the Downtown Bellevue segment. Sound Transit Board policy states that permanent station names should reflect the neighborhood environment, avoid commercial references and comply with ADA guidelines. Following the meeting, an online survey was posted to the project website. A total of 98 responses were received. The following is a summary of public feedback on permanent station names. The Sound Transit Board is anticipated to select station names in late 2014.

### What is your preference for the Bellevue Transit Center Station name?



### What is your preference for the Hospital Station name?





**Please indicate any comments or questions you have about the Bellevue Transit Center permanent station names:**

- Whatever people think of Bellevue now (i.e. Bellevue Square); this is eventually going to be the center of Downtown Bellevue.
- I strongly support keeping the “downtown” in the station name. Bellevue Downtown Station is easily understood, puts the city’s name first and relates well to the neighborhood/geography it serves
- *Bellevue transit center is already a known destination; shouldn’t we make things easy?*

**Please indicate any comments or questions you have about the Hospital Station permanent station names:**

- *Something like “Medical Station” would be better than proposed “Lake Station” which is misleading. Most people will be looking for the hospital, not a lake.*

- “Hospital Station” is not an appropriate name.
- I do not like “Hospital Station”. It is not indicative to the area.
- It should reflect the neighborhood and this neighborhood is Lake Bellevue
- It would be nice to avoid stations with multiple names (i.e., “Wilberton/X”)
- With support from the local businesses and owners, we are forming the Lake Bellevue neighborhood. It is the most prominent geographic feature in this micro neighborhood and best matches your guidelines Wilburton/Midlakes is a good option.
- While this is a hospital area now, who knows how long it will just be hospitals, thus please name it more generically.
- I do not like the name “Hospital Station” at all. Please do not consider this as a station name.

## Next steps

Sound Transit is working to advance design of the Downtown Bellevue Segment to 90 percent completion. The next opportunity to provide formal public comment will occur at the 90 percent design milestone. Please continue to visit the project website for the latest news: [www.soundtransit.org/eastlink](http://www.soundtransit.org/eastlink). For more information or to request a briefing for your organization, please contact Sound Transit Community Outreach staff at [eastlink@soundtransit.org](mailto:eastlink@soundtransit.org) or 206-398-LINK.





