



East Link Extension



September 12, 2013

Rainier final design open house Public involvement summary

Table of contents

- 1 Background
- 2 Overview
- 2 Notification
- 3 Open house overview
- 4 Comment summary
 - 4 Rainier segment design
 - 8 Construction
 - 9 Permanent station naming
- 10 Next steps

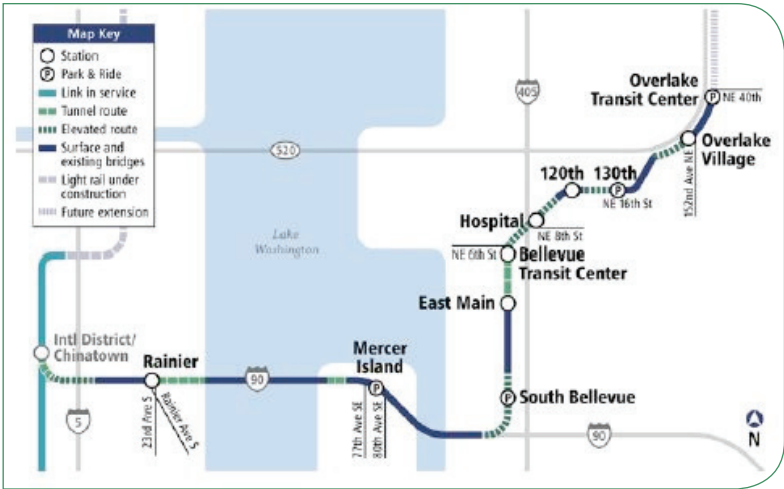
Background

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. East Link is part of the new light rail extensions being built north, south and east from Seattle. When East Link opens, with a targeted date of 2023, 10 stations, serving Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, Bel-Red 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.

In 2011, Sound Transit completed environmental review and received a federal Record of Decision to build East Link. The project team began final design in 2012. During final design, 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. There are multiple opportunities for the community to help influence design elements and stay informed as East Link moves forward.



East Link Timeline



I-90 Seattle segment

Light rail travels east from Seattle across Lake Washington on the I-90 floating bridge. East Link serves the Seattle segment with a station in the center roadway of I-90. Riders will enter the station at Rainier Avenue South and 23rd Avenue South.

Overview

On September 12, 2013, Sound Transit hosted an open house to present current design concepts for the Seattle portion of East Link Extension. The meeting served to introduce Sound Transit's team of engineers, architects and community outreach staff to the projects' community and neighbors and to present and gather comments on 30 percent design plans for the Seattle segment. In addition, project staff had an opportunity to brief the community on the final design process, including what to expect and how to stay informed. The open house was held at the Northwest African American Museum in Seattle from 6 to 8 p.m.

Notification

The open house was widely publicized through the following channels:

- Display advertisements in the Phuong Dong Times, Korean Daily, The Facts, Russian World, CentralDistrictNews.com, CapitolHillSeattle.com, Crosscut.com, Seattle Transit Blog, La Raza, and Seattle Chinese Post
- Postcards mailed to over 14,000 Seattle residents and businesses
- A press release to local papers and blogs
- Email notification to approximately 5,400 subscribers of the East Link Extension listserv, neighborhood newsletter, WSDOT's eastside Transportation News, and the Sound Transit bicycle information listserv
- Announcements on the East Link Extension web page
- Targeted outreach to social service providers

Postcards mailed to over 14,000 Seattle residents and

Kick Off to final Design

PLEASE JOIN US!
East Link Open House • Seattle I-90 Neighborhoods

East Link Extension has entered final design, the process that advances design work from approximately 30 percent to 100 percent completion. Final design offers many opportunities for residents, neighborhood organizations, property owners and businesses to get involved. **Attend the open house to learn more about the Rainier Station.**

Northwest African American Museum
 Sept. 12, 2013 • 6 - 8 p.m.
 2300 S. Massachusetts St., Seattle
 Presentation at 6:30 p.m.

LEARN ABOUT:

- Station design
- Public art
- Permanent station names
- Related projects

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Visit www.soundtransit.org/eastlink or contact Sound Transit at 206-398-LINK, eastlink@soundtransit.org or for information in alternative formats, call 1-800-201-4906/TTY Relay: 711 or email accessibility@soundtransit.org

Get involved!
 There's plenty to do before construction begins. During final design, community input is critical. This open house will focus on the segment. Additional opportunities will be available as final design progresses.

Sound Transit is focused on working with local jurisdictions and the community to deliver East Link Extension on time and within budget.

Sound Transit plans, builds and operates regional transit systems and services to improve mobility for Central Puget Sound.

Open house overview

Approximately 65 people attended the open house to learn about design plans for East Link in the I-90 Seattle segment area and provide comments. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in and provided with a Community Guide to Final Design, fact sheet, and comment forms. Display boards and roll plots featured information about East Link, the final design process and design plans for the Seattle segment, including the Rainier station and track.

An overview presentation was held at 6:30 p.m., followed by an opportunity to ask questions. Project staff members 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 as well as permanent station names. All meeting materials and electronic versions of the comment forms were made available on the East Link project website (www.soundtransit.org/eastlink) 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 following section is a summary of verbal feedback collected at the open house as well as 45 comments received between September 12 and September 24, 2013. Transcribed comments are italicized below to highlight the tone of public feedback. A full record of the comment transcription is included in Appendix B.

Rainier station design

- **General interest and feedback on design and station features:**
 - *Please add 'next train arriving in x minutes' reader boards and landscaping on platform...*
 - *Looking airy and open. Hope it will be a pleasure to have in the community and not a magnet for trouble.*
 - *I like the viewpoint on the east head house.*
 - *Overall, I think it looks great.*
 - *Good intersection for a station.*
 - *This is a confusing stop. Why not have the station along Dearborn west of Rainier? Zoning there will allow far greater population density...*
 - *Open, functional.*
 - *It's unclear just how long the pedestrian bridge is from 23rd to the platform - that may need to have benches or other facilities for folks who have difficulty walking that far without a break.*
 - *Please erect huge, but attractive, walls that block out as much noise as possible from the highway. Highways repel people! Try to allow passengers to pretend the freeway isn't there!*
 - *There will need to be a way to distinguish the SeaTac trains from the East Link trains for people who are deaf blind.*
 - *The design looks good and I like the access from both Rainier, 23rd, and the Mountains to Sound Trail.*
- **Interest in safety and security:**
 - *Keep glass/transparent wall concepts. Important for security, lighting and ambience.*
 - *Please consider the "other" bike paths (and walking) other than the main [for lighting and features]... For instance, the paths which now pass around and up near the skate park and the hard courts (basketball too) are currently without any lights at night. A very, very dark area, which is also a "main" path to new said station.*
 - *Please don't underestimate the need to make the entrance on Rainier Ave. inviting. Right now the I-90 overpass is someplace we avoid! Even painting the pillars (i.e. Jackson and King streets) would help with perceived safety.*
 - *Bike parking should have surveillance cameras.*
 - *Safety/lighting/emergency light should be ample and evident.*
- **General feedback on access to the Rainer Station:**
 - *I'd imagine [this will cause vehicle] back-ups in traffic on Rainier.*
 - *Many West Seattle people park here, then bus to Bellevue and a park and ride would help.*
 - *This is a huge improvement over the current bus stop. Great work!*
 - *Appreciate the emphasis on bike accessibility.*
 - *I don't like the pedestrian crossing to get to the platform. Why don't you widen the distance between*

the tracks and make the platform bigger, safer and more spacious. Then twist/rotate the Rainier entry so pedestrians access the platform directly without having to cross tracks.

- *It would be nice to have a street level entrance on Rainier near the bus stops that provides easy access to the light rail platform.*
 - *I think it looks great.*
 - *The sightlines for riders crossing the WB tracks at grade creates a potential safety issue. I'd move the west end of the north sound wall back (towards the north) so peds can get a better view of trains leaving the station.*
 - *West end access to the station is somewhat sub-optimal because it requires that riders cross the WB LR tracks at grade. It would be preferable if these riders approached the station from between the WB and EB LR lines (but this would probably entail excavation).*
- **Interest in bike and pedestrian access:**
 - *Pleased that bike, bus and pedestrian access are prioritized!*
 - *Need to improve northbound pedestrian facilities on east side of Rainier, also, pedestrian crossing at Rainier/Jackson – long waits – long travel distance to cross-short opportunity to begin cross.*
 - *Convenient pedestrian access from both Rainier and 23rd Ave is critical.*
- *I hope that at least one access point can allow for bike access without using an elevator- a ramp would be ideal (perhaps from 23rd Ave), but a bike-friendly staircase (with runnel) would also work.*
 - *The I-90 bike trail that goes through Judkin's Park and across 23rd towards the I-90 bridge is heavily used and very important. . . It'll be important to think through implications for trail access carefully*
 - *The MTS trail needs to connect to the existing busway ramps and to the new station platform at Rainier. A simple loop would be fine. West side of rainier would be best for users, but either side is doable.*
 - *I'm delighted that the station is right there on the trail, though it may make things a little more challenging for pedestrians entering the station and cyclists just trying to use the trail to get to the I-90 bridge, for example.*
 - *The station appears to prioritize the look and feel of the station over good pedestrian access. This bad access also impacts the ability to transfer between bus and train services. The at-grade crossing from the west side should be grade separated. Access across Rainier to the other bus stop is inadequate.*
 - *Accessing the Rainier station by bike can be tricky. Would be great to coordinate with the bike master plan and SDOT to provide a protected cycle track on Rainier - at least between Rainier and Jackson - before the 2023 station opening!*



Entrance from Rainier Ave looking east

- The Cascade Bicycle Club submitted a comment letter to Sound Transit CEO, Joni Earl encouraging Sound Transit to partner with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to improve bicycle access.
 - *Sound Transit should work with SDOT to install a signalized crosswalk on Rainier Avenue South, directly across from the west station entrance. Partner with SDOT to support implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan, specifically Sound Transit should help fund protected separated bike accommodations on 23rd Ave S. and Rainier Ave S from 12th St to the Mount Baker Station to support station access.*
- **Support for bicycle amenities:**
 - *Bike friendly stairs are needed.*
 - *Add a bike runnel to the stairs.*
 - *Please include a functional bike runnel in the stairs!*
- *Will bike capacity on trains be increased? Make sure space is available to expand bike parking as demand grows!*
- *Would love to know more about how the bike cage will work at the 23rd entrance. Is it locked? Staffed? How does it make bikes any more secure than regular racks or, ideally, lockers?*
- *The bike cage should be much bigger. The cages are inexpensive to make larger and there is plenty of space for a larger one.*
- **Mixed feedback on vehicle access and kiss and ride:**
 - *Kiss and ride access should be provided on both Rainier and 23rd Avenue.*
 - *There should be none. All stations within the Seattle*

The Cascade Bicycle Club expressed support for identifying space at Rainier Station for future additional short and long-term parking along with Puget Sound Bike Share racks. “Cascade was pleased to see the easily accessible bike cage at the 23rd Avenue S. entrance to the station, however we believe demand will quickly fill the cage and bike lockers. A big part of people’s decision making to ride a bike is knowing whether they will have a safe place to park during the day.”



- city limits should only have paid street parking nearby*
- *Kiss and ride at 23rd would make sense, if permitted.*
 - *It seems that kiss and ride use may conflict with the bus transfer use.*
 - *There should be no vehicle access at this station.*
 - *Yes [parking is needed] at both ends, plus short-term parking to wait for arrivals*
 - *Assume there is no parking lot or kiss and ride associated with this station, which is just fine.*
 - *Drop-off areas on 23rd should be plenty, I think, given that this is already a community that is turning toward transit, bikes, and walking. Ten years from now, that will be even more true... I don't see any point in providing parking for a station in this neighborhood, and applaud the lack of it.*
 - *Kiss-and-ride should be done from 23rd or another side street where an off-street area can be build with a turnaround circle or something. There's no room on Rainier for this, and it would interfere with a Metro Stop.*
 - *There is no parking in the station design. Please keep it that way.*
- **Concern for parking in adjacent neighborhoods:**
 - *Parking should be strictly enforced in the surrounding residential area and parks. People will inevitably try to park close by to access light rail, which should be discouraged.*
 - *I am concerned though about parking in the neighborhood and how can we apply to have zones so people won't park for longer than 2 hours?*
 - **Interest in weather protection at the station and along the walkway:**
 - *I am very disappointed to discover that much of the approach to the boarding area of the station platform would still be exposed to the elements (e.g., rain). Please improve the design to provide more cover/shade from the rain, snow and sun.*
 - *The walkways to/from the stations should be covered.*
- *Covered walkway from Rainier Ave S to platform.*
 - *Good protection from the elements and due safety in mind.*
 - *The platform needs to be covered not just 1/3rd of the platform.*
- **Interest in transit connections and service:**
 - *I like the fact that the HOV lanes will remain for buses, however, I wonder how many buses will remain long term and whether the lanes will end up underused in a few years.*
 - *It's very important to coordinate buses/trains access. I use the Mt. Baker station and the buses are across Rainier, which is very busy. I often miss the #14 – it's pulling away while I'm waiting for the light to change to cross Rainier. The buses should be on the west side of the street or an overpass provided.*
 - *Good for north-south buses. Not so good for east-west (freeway) buses, but I'm not sure how much demand there will be for that.*
 - *Improve bus stop amenities on Rainier.*
 - *It seems that it will be difficult to transfer to or from eastbound buses. This should be improved.*
 - *I don't see any plan for accommodating buses that currently stop at the existing Rainier Freeway station. How will bus riders access buses that traverse I-90 if they no longer have access from Rainier Avenue? It looks like the existing bus ramps will be removed. How will I get on the ST554 to Issaquah from Rainier or 23rd Avenue South?*
 - *Keep access to I-90 buses!*
 - *#7 bus going north on Rainier is often delayed. Please don't make it worse!*
 - *Bus stops should be located to be as close to the station entrances as possible.*
 - *...right now, there are numerous buses that stop right at convenient spots for station access*
 - *Providing access for both the 48 and the 7 is great, but the walking environment needs to be better to make the transfer easy.*

- **Support for reflecting community character and the diverse history of the neighborhood in station design:**
 - *I feel like there are three priorities: 1). African American Museum 2) Jimi Hendrix 3) BIKES!! (The cap parks and trails!) and a very present influence.*
 - *Signage to local businesses at station exits would be helpful in building community. Maybe even a live feed of one bus away showing adjacent bus routes on a monitor.*
 - *Rainier was a Native American trail before it was a city arterial. A nod to that history would be appropriate. Also artwork that incorporates local botanicals used by Native peoples (western red cedar, Douglas Fir, Pineapple weed, etc.)*
 - *The station could be brick colored to match the local surroundings. An artist should put mural on the rainier avenue retaining wall. Art deco?*
 - *Something reflecting the whole community, not just certain groups (African-American). Rainier Valley has an important heritage of 1920s architecture and layout a "streetcar suburb." A retro or art deco look would be better than modernist long, straight lines and right angles.*
 - *Love the different look of this station, if it stays post-modern and solid!*
 - *Kid magnet/ art feature at center of platform. Draw and hold their attention away from platform edge...*
 - *Add color to rainy, gray Seattle.*
 - *Inviting Rainier Station to counteract the starkness and alienation of the overhead freeway.*
 - *This area has a rich history across various demographics. I think it's particularly important that the station reflect the strong African-American history in the neighborhood, but I'd also like to see some inclusion of the Japanese Americans who were displaced from the neighborhood during WWII. This is a more diverse neighborhood than most in Seattle, and the station design should reflect and celebrate that.*

- *The neighborhood is all about sustainability. That means incorporating solar production into the station design, such as panels on all roofs. Recycling bins are essential. Plantings should be natives and/or edibles. Rainwater detention should include rain gardens.*
- **Interest in station concessions and concurrent City of Seattle station-area planning efforts to improve user experience:**
 - *Including electrical and water connections for a possible express cart on the Rainier side could both attract riders and add a level of safety.*
 - *Please provide kiosk, small business (eg coffee shop) and other support amenities for passengers at the station ends. There is no nearby retail opportunity!*

Construction

- *Clear info and maintenance of walking and bike trails, paths and road access [during construction].*
- *If greenery/trees must be removed for construction, please replace onsite (not at a different station area) and better yet add to the foliage with dramatically increased traffic in the area, the respite of green is even more necessary. Also, please leave the grand old trees (an evergreen and a willow) at the SW corner of 23rd and Judkins...*
- *Build it fast!*
- *This community was devastated with the loss of hundreds of homes when I-90 punched through. ST should recognize that displacement because of their project should be minimized.*
- *Consider sponsoring some street fairs (Chinatown night market) with local businesses to improve community building during construction. Maybe in Sturgis Park.*

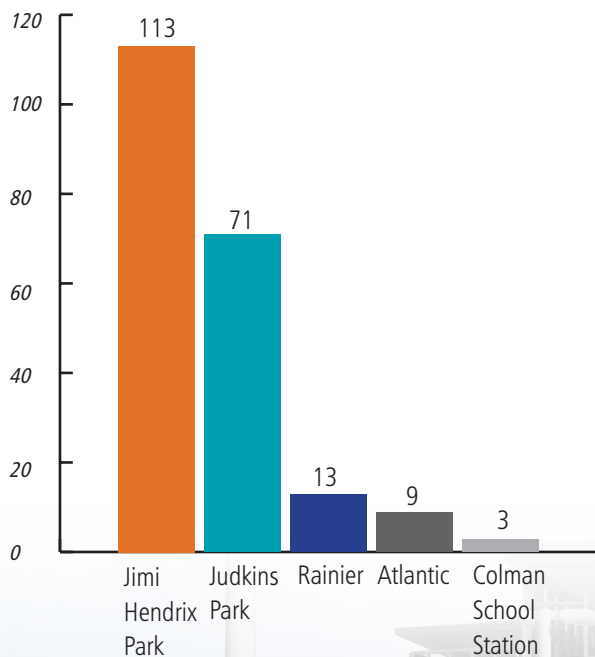
Permanent Station Names

A separate comment form was provided to gather input on a permanent station name for the Rainier station. Following the meeting, an online survey was posted to the project website and generated 209 responses. The following is a summary of public feedback on permanent station names.

- Other names included: Parklands, 23rd Ave, Rainier Parks, Sam Smith Park, NWAAM, Old Canal, Jackson Place, Garlic Gulch, Mt. View, Gateway, Station 90, Thurgood Marshall, Bike Polo, Parks of Eight, Hendrix, and Little Italy.

“Atlantic is the old name for the neighborhood, before I-90 cut it in two. Let’s reunite the neighborhood with this station.”

What is your preference for the Seattle station name?



General feedback on permanent station names:

- I understand the need to keep “park” in the name but it flows better as Jimi Hendrix station and honors an important Seattleite
- I like Judkins Park or 23rd Ave. Jimi Hendrix Park is too obscure and Rainier is too confusing given that Central Link runs so close to Rainier.
- While I think Jim Hendrix Park Station is unique, I also think it’s bulky and confusing geographically.
- Talk about putting the Jimi Hendrix Park on the map as a destination! The station name alone would increase ridership.
- Jimi Hendrix Park isn’t a landmark yet so it’s not recognizable.
- It seems that the station should choose one park over another. It might be better to use another landmark.



- *Jimi Hendrix – music icon, Seattle native, Central area resident, park is next to station.*
- *Really appreciate some effort to make one station name very local – it will be a huge part of our identity going forward.*
- *Rainier station is simple, easy to read and is the best fit for this area.*
- *(Old Canal Station) This valley is man-made due to the 1890s failed re-grading project to complete a shipping canal to Lake Washington to Elliott Bay.*
- *Hendrix is iconic – well recognized and easy to remember.*
- *The parks are too small and insignificant to be a station name. The name should reflect the whole neighborhood. Also, it's easier to say, "Go to Rainier Station" than "Go to _____ Park Station."*
- *Please consider naming the I-90 station between 23rd and Rainier "Judkins Park" as great deal of the people using the station will be walking from this neighborhood. It also better describes the vicinity considering there is already another stop named Rainier much further down the line in Central Link. The identity of the neighborhood the station serves as opposed to the arterial it crosses should determine the station's name. It will also help tourists and people unfamiliar with the system from taking the wrong train.*
- *Do not name this station Rainier Station, there is already a station with Rainier in the name. This will cause confusion to riders unfamiliar with the system, causing them to get on the wrong train.*
- *Prefer naming after the neighborhood location, not an individual (not helpful for visitors or those unfamiliar with the area). Judkins Park is the name of the neighborhood, and is fairly well known by people who live in the Central District and North Rainier Valley. I live less than a mile from this station site and have never heard of Jimi Hendrix Park. Neither have friends who live 3 blocks from it. Go with the more common name - the name of the neighborhood.*
- *Sound Transit has consistently chosen thematic and/or neighborhood station names over those identifying streets (Angle Lake, Rainier Beach, Othello, Columbia City, Mt Baker, Beacon Hill, Sodo, Int'l Dist, Capitol Hill, UW, U District, Roosevelt, Northgate). Exceptions are University Street Station, which predates ST, and Tukwila Int'l Blvd. For consistency, "Judkins Park" is highly preferable. Jimi Hendrix Park is relatively obscure, but Judkins Park refers both to the park and the neighborhood. Alternatively, there is also the little-used but historic neighborhood name of Atlantic. Atlantic Station would work well too. Please avoid anything such as: I-90 Freeway Station, I-90/Rainier, or Rainier/23rd.*

Next Steps

Sound Transit is will incorporate public comments to the extent possible while working to advance design of the Seattle portion of the I-90 segment to 60 percent completion. The next opportunity to provide formal public comment will occur at the 60 percent design milestone. Please continue to visit the project website for the latest news: 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 or **206-398-LINK**.

