

Appendix B:

Comments

All comments in this section represent transcribed comments from flip charts and comment forms received at the open house or comments submitted by mail or email. The name of each commenter is provided, as available, in relation to the comment. Original copies are stored in the project records.

Comment Forms

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

Re: typical alignment cross sections "Trench-Center Running" type. If you are going to dig a ditch, put a lid on it! A bus or a semi could slip on ice and go over the jersey barriers and possibly land right on top of a passing train. I don't think it would be that much more expensive, especially considering the added safety.

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

If at all possible, add on "I-5 station" that could pick up and drop off I-5 traffic passengers (bus and car access only). Car access would need a park & ride of course. However, I'm told that would not be feasible at the I-90/I-5 conjunction area. But even bus only access might be feasible, if there are enough Metro routes that go on I-5 without going through downtown Seattle, past I-90.

Name: Marshall Curtins

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

Consider a spur to the Crossroads shopping (Enter which could extend south from the Overlake Village station or better yet, have shuttle service to Crossroads shopping center from the Overlake village station to save \$.)

Name: Anonymous

If you are a property owner, do you have development plans that could be impacted by the light rail project?

Yes Seg D, a slight north curve to rails G 5' to 10' Leave my facility possibly untouched; this will also save part of Evans property by utilizing some of sand and grave llot. Thanks.

Name: Raymond "Al" Kelley

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

1. It is not necessary
2. It is not cost effective
3. It should be replaced by bus rapid transit

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

1. The line should be routed from downtown Bellevue north to SR 520 then parallel SR 520 (just

south of SR 520 roadway) to the Overlake Transit Station.

2. The line should not be routed through the Bel-Red corridor.

3. There should only be one station in the Bel-Red area; it should be located at approximately the intersection of SR 520 and 130/132nd NE.

If you are a property owner, do you have development plans that could be impacted by the light rail project?

I don't have development plans, but the East Link routing through the Bel-Red corridor will decrease my property values.

Name: David F. Plummer

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

It may be called Sound Transit. Avoid Whistles.

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

Encourage stores we can walk to such as drug stores, card, and restaurant adjacent to stations. Choose types transit users patronize. Town center would be a good Redmond choice unlike today's transit center.

Name: Anonymous

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

I would hope that Sound Transit takes the time to get the best ideas and keep speeds high and impacts the least to existing properties unlike San Jose that is having to re-do their rail line because they tried to do it cheaply in the short term but much costlier long term. Portland learned that the best and most cost effective use of public \$ was to use existing ROW and eliminate/reduce impacts to properties adjacent to the line.

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

Would strongly desire line to start elevated climb, before turning north on 136th Place, reducing property acquisitions/impacts to PNB facility, a cornerstone to Bellevue's vision for arts district. An at-grade crossing at NE 20th would be very detrimental to cross traffic since its one of the only three East-West arterials and over 25,000 cpd. Keep it elevated whenever possible, it reduces the property acquisition costs and delay of condemning adjacent properties.

If you are a property owner, do you have development plans that could be impacted by the light rail project?

Have 150,000 SF of managed space all throughout the corridor that will be directly or indirectly affected. My main concern is the future accessibility to those properties and the takings, partial or whole of these same.

Name: Eric Nickols

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

Need improvements to large plan profile sheet that shows clearly and quickly what segments are at-grade including the future expanded street network of Bel-Red sub area plan. Need better/additional exhibit maps showing bike route network in relation to LRT alignment.

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

Your aerial alternative (#?) at 148th and Overlake Village should be designed to allow future 520 EB off-ramp expansion alternative. City of Bellevue oblique/aerial drawings of long range developments need some street names to help viewers' orientation. Alignment at 120th Ave and NE 20th should be changed to grade-separated crossings! (re safety, delay, capacity for both light rail, motor traffic, and pedestrian/bike concerns).

Name: Anonymous

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

East Link will be great! It can't come quickly enough.

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

The new alternative alignment along SR 520 in Overlake Village looks excellent. It should cost less to build and improve operations. Sound Transit should share some of the cost benefits with Redmond by funding a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over SR 520.

Name: Anonymous

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

I rely heavily on Metro, but on a round trip coast straight to California takes me more miles than 500 metro trips. I want money spent on long distance high speed rail.

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

One Overlake stop should be near new bridge. Put grocery and other stores in or beside the station. Stations need benches, rain protection, restrooms, bus connections.

Name: Anonymous

Please share your comments regarding the East Link project.

I am so thrilled to see that Sound Transit is preventing the same mistake they made on MLK (at-grade center light rail). Almost the entire East Link needs to be a clear distance from the road. The downtown line needs to be underground a cut and cover tunnel. We need to do this line right since we only have one chance. You have the opportunity, put it underground.

Please share your comments or concerns regarding light rail routing, property impacts and/or station design.

I am concerned that Sound Transit will build their light rail at grade, and that would be a tremendous mistake. It needs to be underground. I am hoping that this light rail is placed underground using the London Tube as a role model.

Name: Anonymous

Flip Chart Notes

130th Station - do not build park-and-ride because it doesn't fit with the area's land use vision.

ST should not purchase property adjacent to the station; ST should lease the property.

Grade separate @ 120th and 124th

130th Station – need the park-and-ride

Grade separate @ NE 20th

Suggest 2nd entrance @ 40th if pedestrian bridge is not built. Pedestrian access to station from NE 40th!

Bus-train connection awkward

Overlake Village – move to east side of 152nd to provide access to new development

Remove barrier between mainline and WSDOT maintenance road. Move to create shoulder.

April 7, 2010

Sound Transit Capital Committee
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

**SUPPORT FOR RETAINED CUT
STATION CONFIGURATION
AT 120TH STREET STATION**

Dear Chair Butler and Committee Members:

We'd like to indicate our enthusiastic support for the Sound Transit staff's recommendation that the Board update the Segment D preferred alternative to incorporate a "retained cut" configured station (in lieu of an "at-grade" configured station) into the revised "Northern" alignment across The Spring District property. We also support the provision for future cooperative public/private partnership agreements between Sound Transit and The Spring District into the revised Segment D preferred alternative.

Wright Runstad & Company, together with its partner Shorenstein Properties, owns the 36 acre (16 city block) property in the Bel-Red corridor known as The Spring District that is designated as the location for the 120th Street station of the Eastlink LRT line. The City of Bellevue recently modified the zoning of the Bel-Red corridor to enable transit-oriented development to occur at the planned Sound Transit LRT station locations. The Spring District is now zoned to accommodate over four million square feet of residential, office and hotel development in a pedestrian- and transit-friendly urban environment much like the Pearl District in Portland. This means that over 14,000 potential riders will live and work within walking distance of The Spring District LRT station.

We have also executed a long term Development Agreement with the City of Bellevue that further incents The Spring District to develop a robust mix of housing and office space in support of high transit ridership. The combination of the construction of LRT by Sound Transit, the zoning actions by the City of Bellevue, and our development master plan make The Spring District one of the most significant Transit Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities in the nation.

We have had a productive dialogue with Sound Transit since late 2006 in an effort to realize the full ridership potential of The Spring District station at the lowest cost. The topography of the site, which is significantly higher than the properties on either side, offers a unique opportunity to configure the station in a retained cut instead of keeping the station at-grade. Last May, the Sound Transit Board resolved to study a retained cut configuration for the Spring District Station

as an alternative to an at-grade alignment. In addition, there were a number of grade crossing and adjacent property related issues that required additional study before settling on an alignment and station configuration. The Board further resolved that if a retained cut station became the preferred alternative, that a public/private partnership should be studied as a way to achieve Sound Transit's objectives. We thank the Board for authorizing the study of both the retained cut and a public/private partnership.

Last fall, a working group consisting of The Spring District, Sound Transit staff and the City of Bellevue staff was convened to evaluate the various alignment and station alternatives. The working group first undertook an evaluation of alignment alternatives to balance the various requirements and interests of each party. A very positive and productive collaborative environment ultimately yielded a completely new alignment alternative that achieved multiple objectives in addition to enhancing the transit orient development potential of the property. Although we will face our own redesign costs to implement it, we believe the "Northern" alignment, particularly when combined with a retained cut station configuration, represents the best possible balance of Sound Transit, the City of Bellevue and our own long term interests.

The combined working group also evaluated both at-grade and retained cut configurations of the "Northern" alignment for the roughly 1,200 foot section across The Spring District. All three parties recognized the benefits of the retained cut configuration because it provides for greater Sound Transit operating efficiency, fewer vehicular conflicts and greater pedestrian safety. It provides the City with better traffic flow on arterial streets and better opportunities to balance roadway and urban design objectives. Finally, we believe it enhances the urban character of the station area and can be designed to provide for a better neighborhood experience for the residents, workers and visitors at The Spring District. Ultimately, the entire East Link system should benefit from better transit-oriented development in the station area, greater system operating efficiency and a more positive rider experience that will, in the end, generate more riders for the system.

In addition to the technical evaluation undertaken by the working group, the ST staff also prepared comparative cost estimates. The working group looked holistically at the cost impacts of the retained cut vs. at-grade configurations including all variable components of cost (not just those on The Spring District property). The comparisons indicated that there was less than an 8% difference between the cost of both configurations, representing some \$15-19 million. This difference falls well within the 15% variability assigned to estimates at this stage of design.

The retained cut configuration offers the highest potential to realize savings from a public/private partnership with the Spring District because the excavation, utility work, storm water management and public space development are more integrated. It makes sense that a partnership would have the greatest potential to generate cost efficiencies for all parties through a single combined approach to design, scheduling and construction. However, we'd like to propose an expanded partnership that also engages the private sector to deliver public facilities as a way to generate even more savings.

Wright Runstad & Company has partnered with the State of Washington, King County, Port of

Seattle and the City of Redmond to develop over \$691 million in essential public facilities over the past twelve years. We'd propose that a similar partnership be established with Sound Transit and The Spring District utilizing 63-20 financing to develop the station and portions of the alignment directly related to The Spring District. We believe that cost savings of between 20% and 25% of the portion of the station and alignment designed and constructed by The Spring District may be realized through this well tested method of delivery. In addition, the structure of a 63-20 financed partnership enables costs to be fixed at an early stage of design, shifts cost overrun risk to the private sector partner (The Spring District in this case) and requires prevailing wages be paid.

To support a Board decision to adopt the retained cut configuration, The Spring District would commit to continuing our work with the Sound Transit staff and City of Bellevue staff to produce an acceptable design for the retained cut station on the "Northern" alignment. We would also work towards outlining the terms of a public/private partnership with Sound Transit once the retained cut design reached the interim PE level of design (the same level as where the at-grade alternative stands now) and ultimately come to terms on a Development Agreement following completion of environmental review.

We understand that adopting this recommendation in an effort to reduce overall cost would force all parties to expend additional funds in the near term to redesign the portions of their work that had been previously designed. We see the current cooperative and productive working relationship bearing fruit in the long run and are willing to expend the resources to modify The Spring District's master plan (which we estimate in excess of six figures) to further the partnership.

We'd like to reiterate our thanks to the Sound Transit Board for instituting the process to explore a public/private partnership at The Spring District station. We'd also like to compliment the Sound Transit staff on working hard to balance the requirements of all parties involved and we look forward to working together in the future.

Sincerely,



Gregory K. Johnson
President

From: Hans and Patti
Sent: Monday, April 05, 2010 10:42 PM
To: eastlink@soundtransit.org
Cc: Rodney Tom; Ross Hunter; Deb Eddy; Tricia Thomson
Subject: 04/01/10 Open House on East Link Light Rail

My compliments to Sound Transit for a very informative outreach effort to communities directly and indirectly affected by light rail expansion projects.

My primary concern is directed towards what I perceive as a lack of focus on light rail's role as a centerpiece in a regional transportation system.

My view is that light rail must have the capacity to move commuters faster and at less costs per trip throughout the system than a solo driver in a car, e.g. from Redmond to Federal Way, from Issaquah to Lynnwood, etc. [Across both floating bridges and around Lake Washington, then extension to surrounding cities.] This is how we achieve true mobility within the region.

Commuters measure travel time from the moment they leave their homes till they arrive at their destination. A major challenge is therefore to incorporate the car as part of the system by changing the destination for the car trip from the ultimate destination to the nearest light rail station, where a seamless transfer makes this both cost-effective and efficient. All stations must be a hub serving the local community with frequent local feeder buss transit and offer park&ride, bike paths and pedestrian friendly access.

Travel time is dependent on the system' velocity and throughput. Light rail must strike a delicate balance between the frequency of stops and convenience of easy access. Too many stops extend travel time, too few stops reduce the number of travelers - there is no hard answers, just reasonable judgment about rout selection and trying to identify and reach major destination areas. Local communities may be "greedy" about the number of stops. Sound Transit must always take a "system's" view and consider efficiency for the future totality, not just a part thereof.

Just as important is where to lay the tracks. If they are laid down in the streets [like in Rainier Valley], the general traffic will determine the speed, even if traffic lights give light rail preference. Increasing congestion with population growth will likely make this even more pronounced then today. Light rail is then transformed into a streetcar, which has an entirely different objective - frequent local stops and short travel distance [e.g. South Lake Union]. If we are trying to get commuters out of their cars and off the road; why then are we placing the rails in the streets?

Another consequence of allowing the tracks to follow streets is sharp curves to turn corners at up to 90-degree angels. This slows the train's speed even further and raises the noise level as the train's wheels follow the tracks around the curves. Light rail will lose its primary advantage as an efficient people mover over the solo driver by succumbing to near-term cost differences between using existing right-away in streets at grade over routes separated from main thoroughfares at or above grade. Let us not forget that we are building a transportation system that will serve the region for centuries to come. If short-term funding issues force compromises that render the total system uncompetitive, the region will bear the burden of an unnecessary tax burden to subsidize its operating costs - driven by less riders, and congestion with its adverse environmental and health effects would likely be far worse than it could have been.

We are now in the light rail system's formative years. It will be decades until we have a true "system", and we shall be adding to that system in perpetuity. Let us not go down the convenient path of least resistance now at a tremendous future irreversible opportunity cost.

Respectfully

Hans Gundersen

Public transportation enthusiast who has lived with top-notch systems