

4.4 Social Impacts, Community Facilities, and Neighborhoods

4.4.1 Introduction to Resources and Regulatory Requirements

This section evaluates how the East Link Project might affect communities and neighborhoods in the area. Consistent with guidance from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), four key neighborhood and community issues are considered when addressing the affected environment and potential impacts of a transportation project: changes in neighborhood quality, barriers to social interaction, impacts on community resources, and impacts on safety and security. The analysis also considers demographics of potentially affected areas.

The study area for social impacts, community facilities, and neighborhoods consists of a 0.5-mile radius from the centerline of alternatives, with emphasis around the stations. Neighborhoods adjacent to the stations are more likely to be directly and indirectly influenced, positively and negatively, by project construction and operation. Much of the impact analysis for this section overlaps with issues evaluated in other sections, so the following sections may be consulted where appropriate:

- Section 4.2, Land Use, describes land uses and zoning in the study area.
- Section 4.3, Economics, details population, housing, and impacts on property values.
- Section 4.6, Air Quality, describes local and regional air quality.
- Section 4.7, Noise and Vibration, describes potential noise and vibration impacts.
- Section 4.14, Public Services, details information on fire, emergency medical, police, schools, and postal services (locations of public services are shown in exhibits in this Section 4.4).
- Section 4.17, Parkland and Open Space, describes the study area recreational resources.
- Chapter 3, Transportation Environment and Consequences, describes impacts on regional and local traffic, transit, and nonmotorized transportation.
- Appendix C, Environmental Justice, describes impacts on minority and low-income populations.

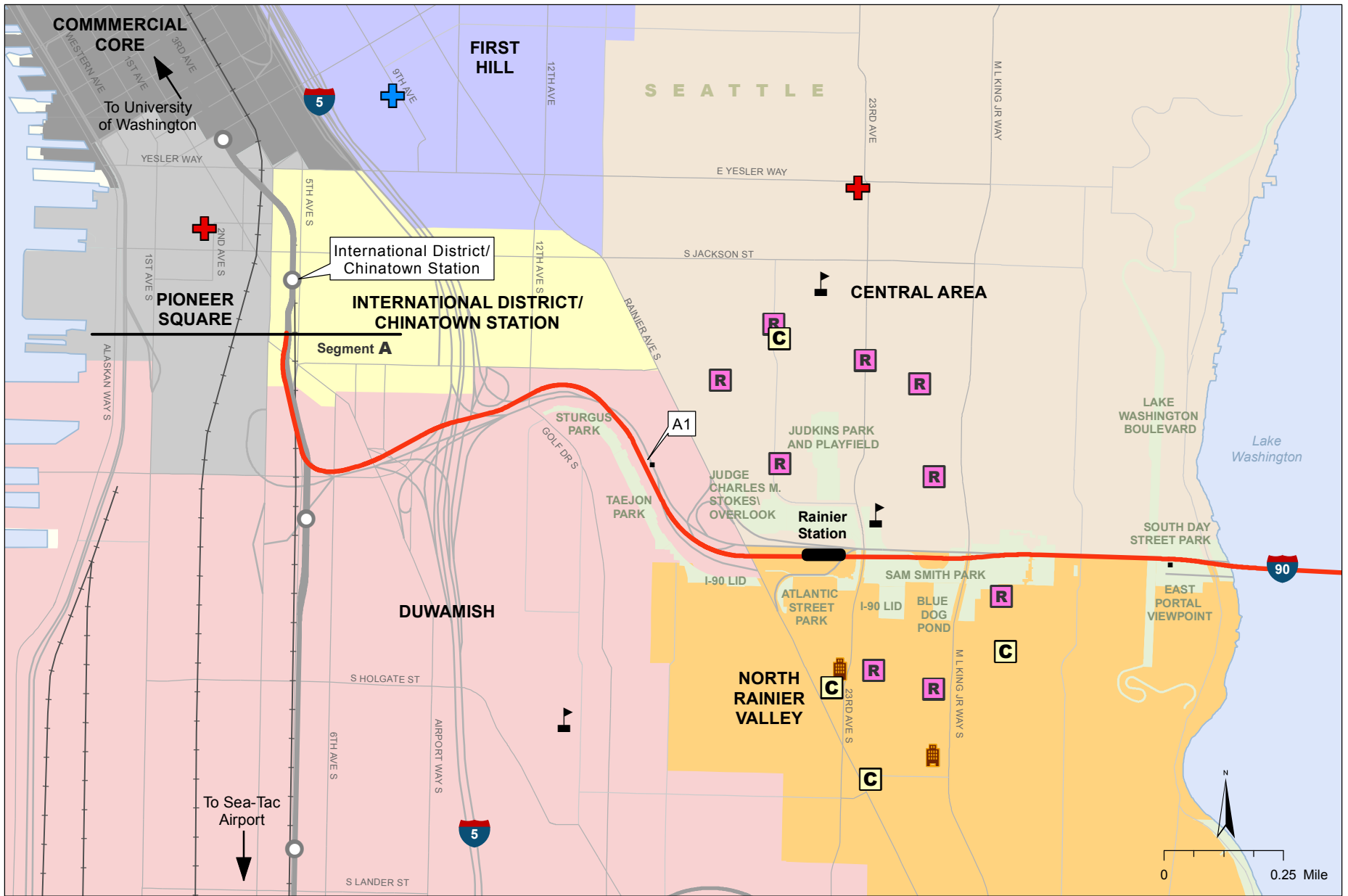
4.4.2 Affected Environment

The East Link Project would connect to Central Link at the International/Chinatown Station in Seattle and provide light rail service to the Eastside communities via Interstate 90 (I-90). The East Link alternatives pass through Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, and Redmond. This section describes neighborhood characteristics, including location, development pattern, demographics, community resources, economic characteristics, safety and security, and accessibility. Neighborhoods located within the study area are identified by segment in Exhibits 4.4-1 to 4.4-6. The exhibits also identify the locations of community facilities, including parks, schools, religious institutions, social services, and public service facilities. A general description of neighborhoods by segment follows.

The demographic makeup of populations in areas within 0.5 mile of the stations for each project alternative is shown in Table 4.4-1. These estimates are based on a geographic information system (GIS) extraction of 2000 Census data for the Census Blocks and Census Block Groups within each station area. The population data for residents living within the station areas were then aggregated to create a demographic profile of the total population that would be affected by the project. The demographic information in the table includes information on the total population within 0.5 mile and the percentage of the total population that is minority, low-income, senior citizens, or households with no vehicle who reside within 0.5 mile of the stations. Based upon the information in the table, Segment A includes the highest percentage of minority, low-income, and households with no vehicle that would have access to the stations, and the stations in Segment C contain the highest percentage of senior citizens within 0.5 mile of the stations.

4.4.2.1 Segment A, Interstate 90

The study area for Segment A includes portions of four City of Seattle neighborhoods and Mercer Island. I-90 is a barrier between the neighborhoods in Seattle and bisects Mercer Island. However, the lids and the public recreation facilities over the freeway provide connections in both cities allowing residents to interact and travel easily across I-90 at several locations. The prominent north-south arterials include Airport Way South, Rainier Avenue South, 23rd Avenue South, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way in Seattle, and Island Crest Way on Mercer Island.



- C Community Facility/ Social Service
- + Hospital
- + Public Safety Facility
- R Religious Institution
- School
- Affordable Housing
- At-Grade Route
- Elevated Route
- Retained-Cut Route
- Retained-Fill Route
- Tunnel Route

Source: Data From CH2M HILL (2007), City of Seattle (2002), King County (2006), and Sound Transit (2007).

- Traction Power Substation
- Proposed Station
- Central Link Alignment and Station
- Park/Open Space

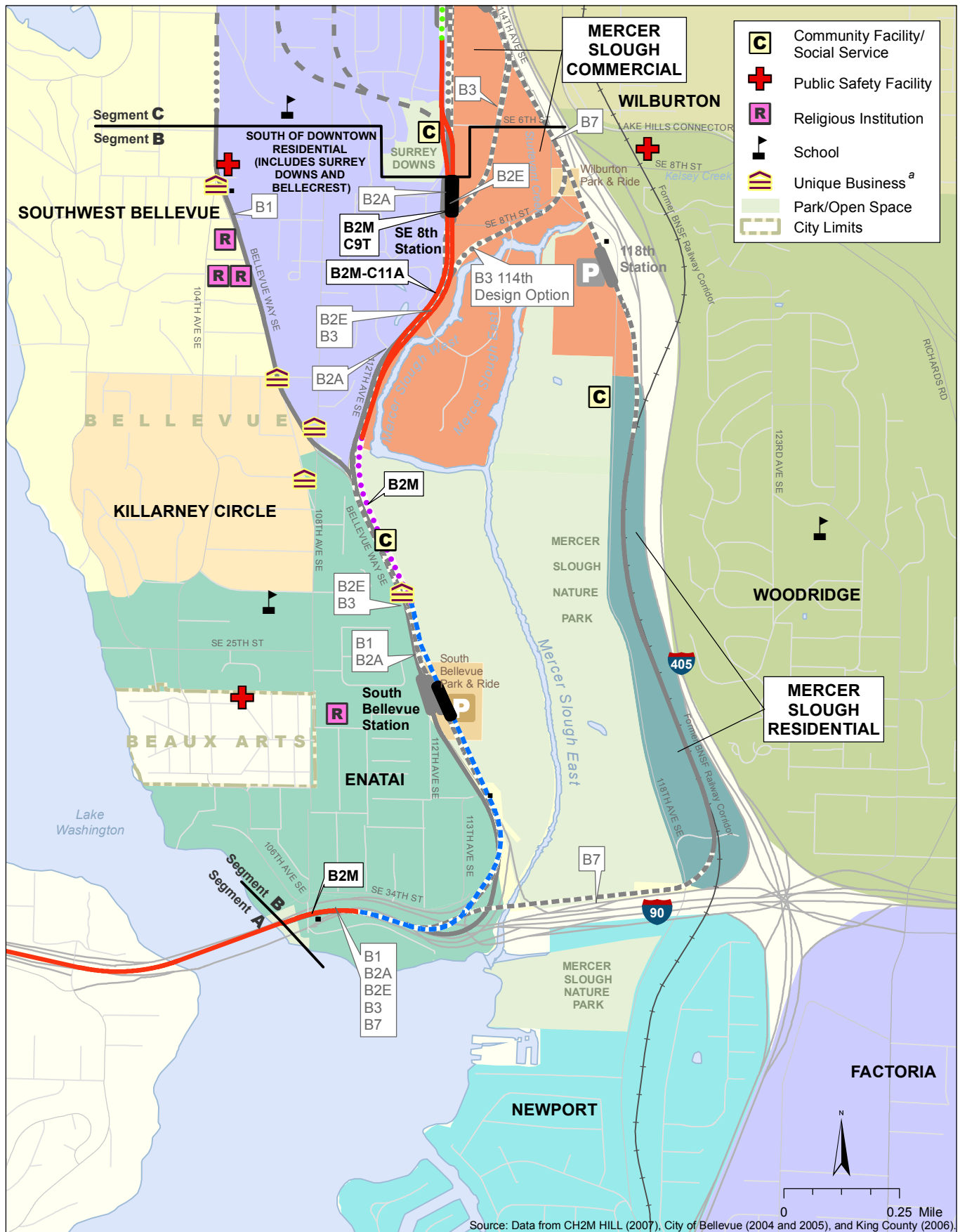
Exhibit 4.4-1
Neighborhoods and Public Services
Segment A - Seattle
East Link Project



- At-Grade Route
- - - Elevated Route
- Retained-Cut Route
- Retained-Fill Route
- - - Tunnel Route
- Traction Power Substation
- Proposed Station

Source: Data from CH2M HILL (2007), City of Mercer Island (2006), and King County (2006).

Exhibit 4.4-2
Neighborhoods and Public Services
Segment A - Mercer Island
East Link Project



- C** Community Facility/Social Service
- +** Public Safety Facility
- R** Religious Institution
- 🎓** School
- 🏠** Unique Business^a
- 🌳** Park/Open Space
- City Limits

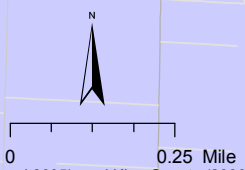
Source: Data from CH2M HILL (2007), City of Bellevue (2004 and 2005), and King County (2006).

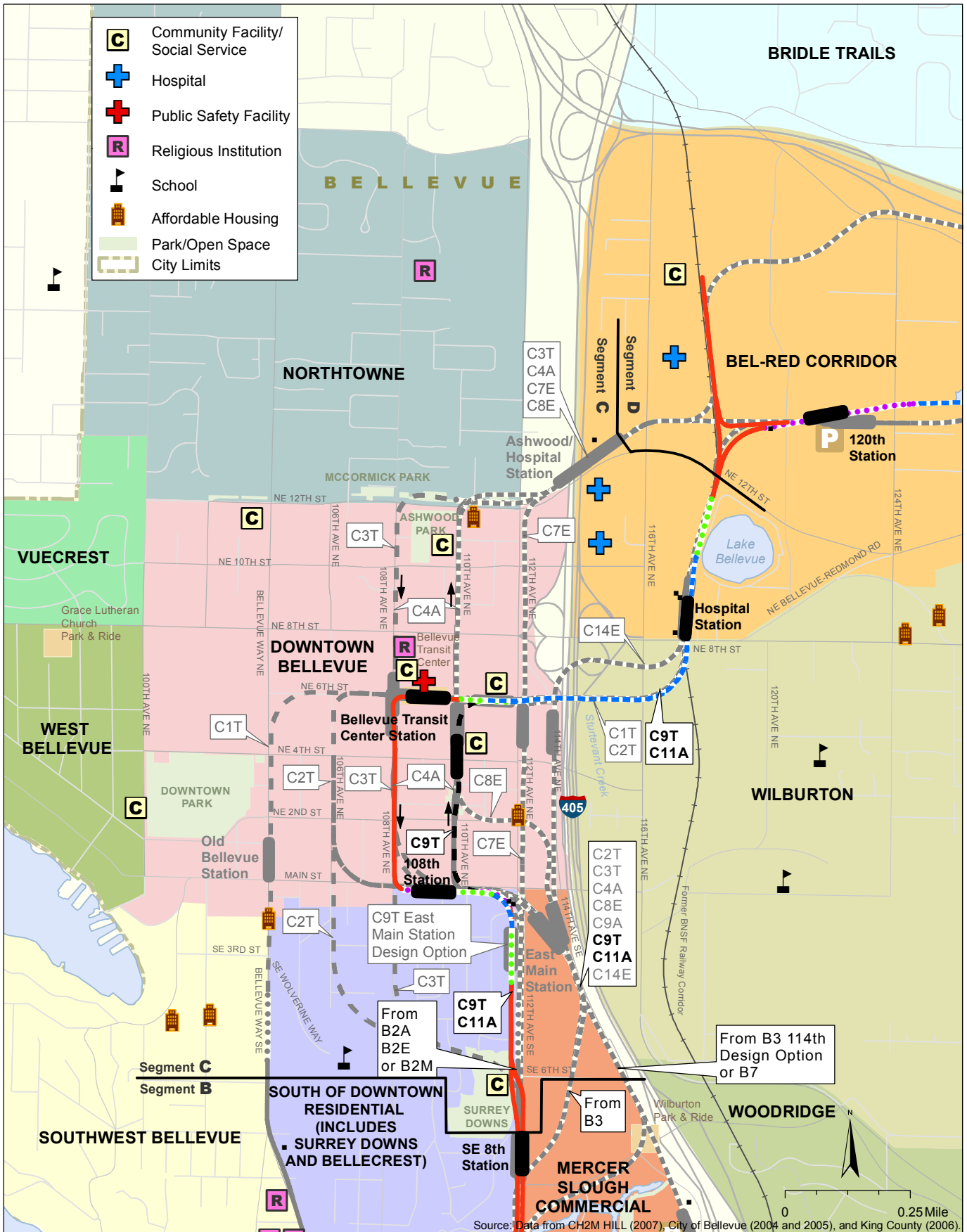
- Preferred Alternative**
- At-Grade Route
 - - - Elevated Route
 - - - Retained-Cut Route
 - - - Retained-Fill Route
 - - - Tunnel Route

- Other Alternatives**
- At-Grade Route
 - - - Elevated Route
 - - - Retained-Cut or Retained-Fill Route
 - - - Tunnel Route

- Traction Power Substation
 - P** Proposed Station
 - P** New and/or Expanded Park-and-Ride Lot
- ^a = Those that provide a sense of place and continuity or is the only service of that kind within the surrounding neighborhood.

Exhibit 4.4-3 Neighborhoods and Public Services
Segment B
 East Link Project





Source: Data from CH2M HILL (2007), City of Bellevue (2004 and 2005), and King County (2006).

Preferred Alternative

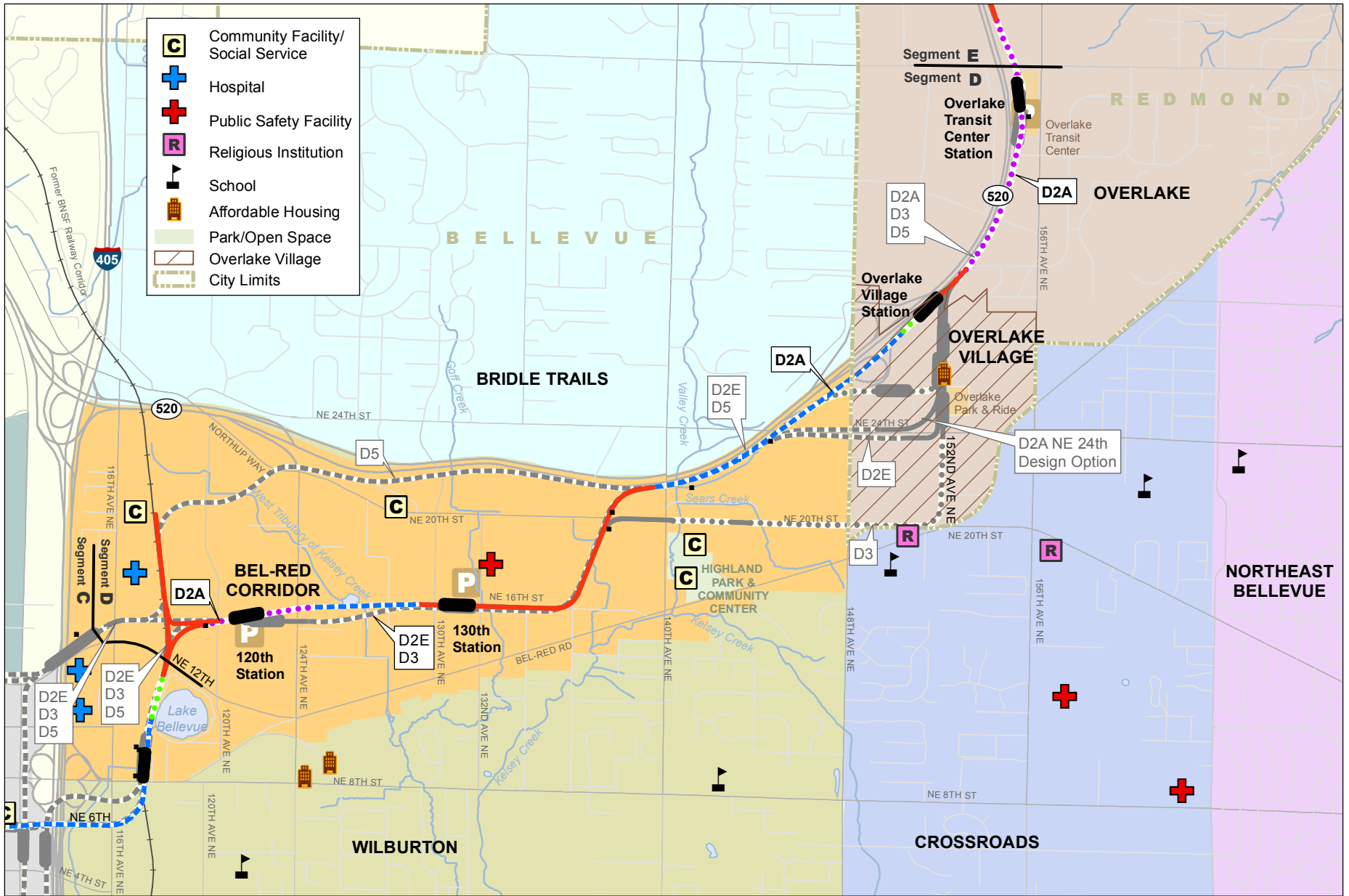
- At-Grade Route C9T
- - - Elevated Route
- - - Retained-Cut Route
- - - Retained-Fill Route
- - - Tunnel Route

Other Alternatives

- At-Grade Route C14E
- - - Elevated Route
- - - Retained-Cut or Retained-Fill Route
- - - Tunnel Route

- Traction Power Substation
- Proposed Station
- P New and/or Expanded Park-and-Ride Lot

Exhibit 4.4-4 Neighborhoods and Public Services Segment C East Link Project



- C** Community Facility/Social Service
- +** Hospital
- +** Public Safety Facility
- R** Religious Institution
- ▲** School
- 🏠** Affordable Housing
- 🌳** Park/Open Space
- 🏘️** Overlake Village
- 📏** City Limits

- Preferred Alternative**
- At-Grade Route **D2A**
 - - - Elevated Route
 - ⋯ Retained-Cut Route
 - ⋯ Retained-Fill Route
 - - - Tunnel Route

- Other Alternatives**
- At-Grade Route **D3**
 - - - Elevated Route
 - ⋯ Retained-Cut or Retained-Fill Route
 - - - Tunnel Route

- Traction Power Substation
- 🚉** Proposed Station
- P** New and/or Expanded Park-and-Ride Lot

Source: Data from CH2M HILL (2007), City of Bellevue (2005), City of Redmond (2005), and King County (2006).

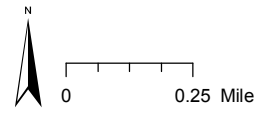
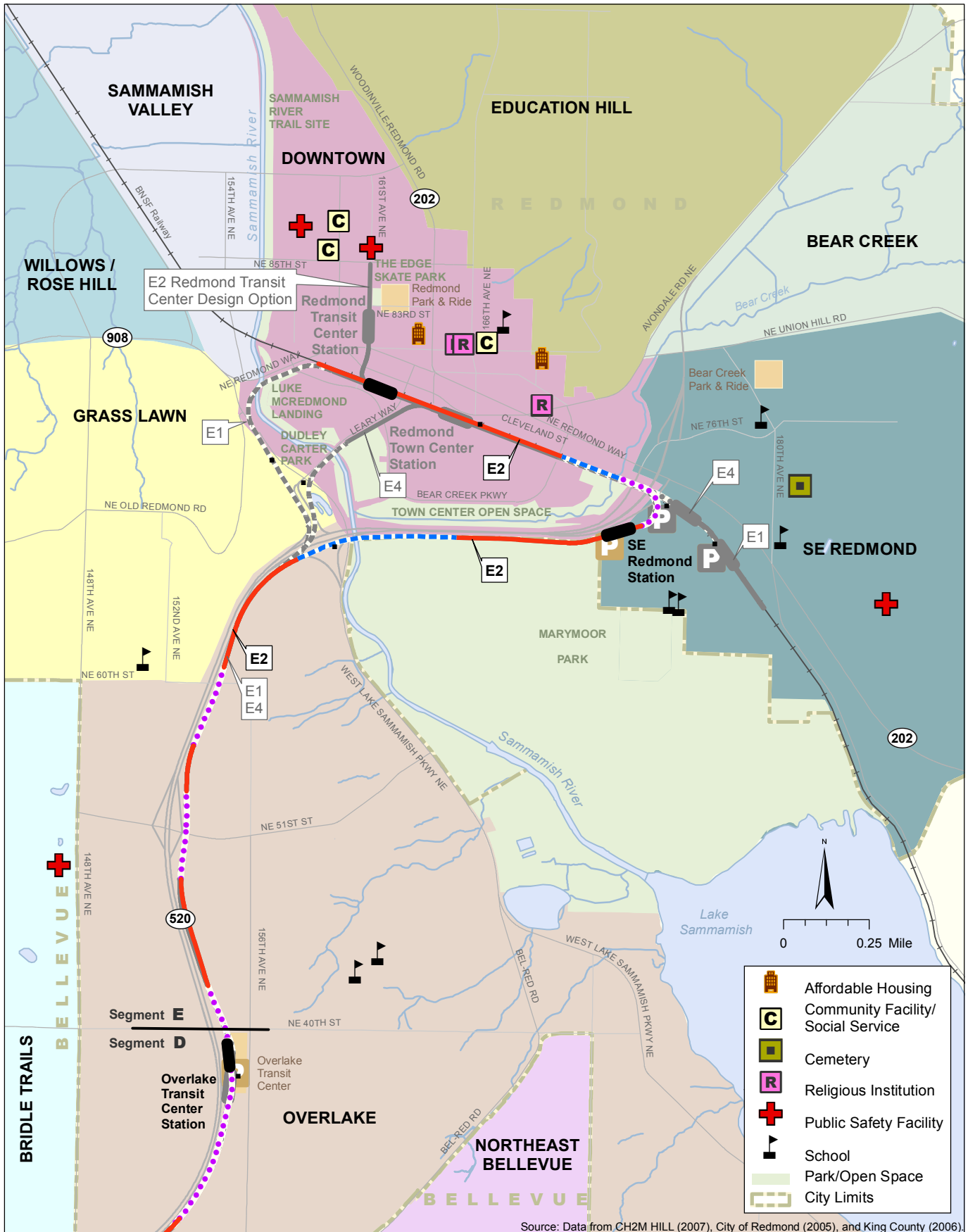


Exhibit 4.4-5
Neighborhoods and Public Services
Segment D
East Link Project



- Preferred Alternative**
- At-Grade Route
 - Elevated Route
 - Retained-Cut Route
 - Retained-Fill Route
 - Tunnel Route
- Other Alternatives**
- At-Grade Route
 - Elevated Route
 - Retained-Cut or Retained-Fill Route
 - Tunnel Route
- Traction Power Substation
- ▬ Proposed Station
- P New and/or Expanded Park-and-Ride Lot

Exhibit 4.4-6 Neighborhoods and Public Services
Segment E
 East Link Project

TABLE 4.4-1
Demographics within 0.5 Mile of the Project Alternative Stations

Alternative and Connector		2000 Census Block Population	Minority Population ^a (percent)	2000 Low-Income Population ^b (percent)	Senior Citizens Population ^c (percent)	No. of Households with No Vehicle ^c (percent)
Segment A, Interstate 90						
<i>Preferred Interstate 90 Alternative (A1)</i>		12,114	50.7	13.7	19.3	16.8
Segment B, South Bellevue						
<i>Preferred 112th SE Modified Alternative (B2M)</i>	to C11A	2,747	14.8	4.7	14.8	2.3
	to C9T ^d	5,664	18.7	5.5	17.3	4.3
Bellevue Way Alternative (B1)		2,810	14.4	4.7	14.8	2.3
112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A)		5,417	18.8	5.6	17.5	4.5
112th SE Elevated Alternative (B2E)		5,589	18.6	4.9	15.1	2.5
112th SE Bypass Alternative (B3) ^e		2,747	14.8	4.7	14.8	2.3
BNSF Alternative (B7)		3,024	19.5	4.5	13.7	2.4
Segment C, Downtown Bellevue						
<i>Preferred 108th NE At-Grade Alternative (C11A)</i>	B2M	9,264	24.1	7.8	19.8	7.6
	B3/B7	9,264	24.1	7.8	19.8	7.6
<i>Preferred , 110th NE Tunnel Alternative (C9T)^f</i>	B2M	5,393	23.8	7.2	21.2	7.9
	B3/B7	7,027	24.0	6.7	19.8	6.8
	C9T - East Main Station Design Option ^d	7,371	25.4	7.4	19.2	7.3
Bellevue Way Tunnel Alternative (C1T)		10,289	22.7	7.0	21.5	7.7
106th NE Tunnel Alternative (C2T)	B2A/B2E ^{g, h}	7,095	23.8	6.8	21.8	7.8
	B3/B7 ^{g, h}	9,003	23.6	6.3	20.4	6.8
108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T)	B2A/B2E ^{g, h}	6,557	21.5	6.5	22.8	8.2
	B3/B7 ^{g, h}	8,523	22.4	6.1	21.1	7.1
Couplet Alternative (C4A)	B2A/B2E ^{g, h}	6,755	21.4	6.5	22.8	8.2
	B3/B7 ^{g, h}	8,721	22.3	6.1	21.1	7.1

TABLE 4.4-1 CONTINUED
Demographics within 0.5 Mile of the Project Alternative Stations

Alternative and Connector		2000 Census Block Population	Minority Population ^a (percent)	2000 Low-Income Population ^b (percent)	Senior Citizens Population ^c (percent)	No. of Households with No Vehicle ^c (percent)
112th NE Elevated Alternative (C7E)	B2A/B2E ^{g, h}	5,242	23.3	7.0	22.3	8.4
	B3/B7 ^{g, h}	6,352	23.0	6.4	20.6	7.1
110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E)	B2A/B2E ^{g, h}	4,526	20.8	7.0	22.3	8.4
	B3/B7 ^{g, h}	6,492	22.2	6.4	20.6	7.1
110th Avenue NE At-Grade Alternative (C9A)	B2A/ B2E	5,024	25.0	7.2	21.2	7.9
	B3/B7	6,900	24.4	6.7	19.8	6.8
114th Avenue NE Elevated Alternative (C14E)	B3/B7	5,659	25.0	7.7	21.5	8.2
Segment D, Bel-Red/Overlake						
<i>Preferred NE 16th At-Grade Alternative (D2A)</i> ⁱ		14,352	40.0	7.6	13.3	8.5
D2A - NE 24th Design Option		17,652	40.8	8.0	13.3	10.5
NE 16th Elevated Alternative (D2E)/NE 20th		12,158	42.2	8.8	12.9	11.0
Alternative (D3)		15,548	42.2	8.8	12.7	11.3
SR 520 Alternative (D5)		8,243	42.7	8.9	13.4	9.9
Segment E						
<i>Preferred Marymoor Alternative (E2)</i>		8,692	27.5	8.2	7.4	5.7
E2 - Redmond Transit Center Design Option		9,824	26.5	8.2	7.4	5.5
Redmond Way Alternative (E1)/Leary Way Alternative (E4) ^g		8,637	28.0	9.3	8.3	5.98

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

^a Being of African, Hispanic, Asian- American, American Indian or Alaskan descent.

^b Those with a median household income that is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guideline as defined by U.S. Department of Transportation Order 5610.2, § Appendix 1(b)

^c Each alternative has the same population shown.

^d C9T – East Main Station Design Option connecting from *Preferred Alternative B2M* would eliminate the Segment B SE 8th Station; therefore, the demographics are the same as *Preferred Alternative B2M* to *Preferred Alternative C11A*.

^e B3 – 114th Extension Design Option impacts would be the same as those for Alternative B3.

^f C9T - East Main Station Design Option connecting from *Preferred Alternative B2M* would not result in a change to impacts for either *Preferred Alternative C9T* or *B2M*.

^g Population totals are for those census block groups and census blocks with more than 90 percent of the census area within the station radius; overlapping station radii have been clustered by alternative to capture the whole urban cluster and avoid double counts.

^h Population data are based on the 2000 Census Block population.

ⁱ D2A – 120th Station Design Option impacts would be the same as those for *Preferred Alternative D2A*.

The International District was the original home of Seattle's Chinese residents and is now the heart of the Asian community. Other focal points in the International District include the Uwajimaya Shopping Center, Union Station, and religious facilities. Land uses adjacent to the alternative within this neighborhood include a mixture of commercial and offices, many unique to the Asian cultures present there.

The Duwamish and Pioneer Square neighborhoods contain regional activity centers of Qwest Field and Events Center, King Street Station, and Safeco Field. The residential areas along Segment A within Seattle are older medium-density neighborhoods with a mixture of mostly single-family and some multifamily housing, although the International District contains some pockets of high-density housing.

Public recreation facilities in the Central Area and North Rainer Valley neighborhoods include Judkins Park and Playfield, Sam Smith Park, and the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Trail (I-90 Trail), which parallels I-90. The primary commercial area in these neighborhoods is adjacent to Rainier Avenue and 23rd Avenue South. The newly opened Northwest African American Museum (see Exhibit 4.4-1) is located in the historic Colman School, located at South Massachusetts Street and 23rd Avenue South. The building also contains 36 units of mixed-income rental housing managed by the Housing Resources Group.

Segment A travels through Mercer Island, and the Mercer Island Station would be located adjacent to the Town Center Neighborhood (see Exhibit 4.4-2). The Town Center is the commercial core of Mercer Island and includes a mixture of commercial, office, and multifamily residential uses.

Recent mixed-use developments within the 76-acre Town Center have led to greater densities and a more walkable community. Low-density, single-family residential subdivisions surround the Town Center. Community facilities within the study area include public recreation facilities located to the south, the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Trail (I-90 Trail) to the north, the Community Center at Mercer View, and Ellsworth House senior housing. Access from I-90 is provided at Island Crest Way, 77th Avenue, West Mercer Way, and East Mercer Way. Island Crest Way is the main arterial traveling to the south end of the island from I-90.

4.4.2.2 Segment B, South Bellevue

The Segment B study area includes portions of eight City of Bellevue neighborhoods (see Exhibit 4.4-3). The alternatives follow existing local roadways and

transportation infrastructure (Bellevue Way SE, 112th Avenue SE, former BNSF Railway corridor, and I-405), which currently act as boundaries between the study area neighborhoods. The Segment B study area also contains the highly used South Bellevue Park-and-Ride on Bellevue Way SE (520 parking stalls) and the Wilburton Park-and-Ride (186 parking stalls), located at the I-405/SE 8th Street interchange.

The Enatai, Killarney Circle, and Southwest Bellevue neighborhoods are bounded to the east by Bellevue Way SE. These neighborhoods primarily comprise well-established suburban, single-family residences. Community resources include Enatai Elementary School, and Southwest Bellevue's churches serve the residents of the immediate area as well as the larger community. Religious and community events provide many opportunities for residents to come together. The South of Downtown Residential Neighborhood is bounded between Bellevue Way SE and 112th Avenue SE and encompasses the Surrey Downs and Bellecrest neighborhoods. North of the Bellevue Way SE and 112th Avenue SE intersection, land uses consist of a mixture of commercial and retail to the east, and some multifamily, and to the west it is single family transitioning to multifamily.

There are established neighborhood businesses along Bellevue Way SE, which provide a sense of place and continuity for residents in a fast-changing city. Identified by the community as unique businesses (Exhibit 4.4-3), Chace's Pancake Corral, Triangle Swim Club, the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm, the Chevron Station, and the Bellevue Nursery are located close to these neighborhoods and are among the businesses that have for many years contributed to the unique quality of life of Bellevue residents.

The Mercer Slough residential and commercial neighborhoods are linear neighborhoods located along I-405. The Mercer Slough residential neighborhood consists of a mixture of multifamily residences and office buildings. The only community facility is the Environmental Education Center at Mercer Slough Nature Park. The Mercer Slough commercial neighborhood is located between 112th Avenue SE and I-405 and is composed of commercial buildings, office buildings, and three hotels. The Wilburton Park-and-Ride is also located within the neighborhood. The Mercer Slough Nature Park is located between Bellevue Way SE and the Mercer Slough residential neighborhood, and Winters House and Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm are located within the park (refer to Section 4.17, Parkland and Open Space, for a description of the park and its facilities).

The Woodridge and Wilburton neighborhoods are located east of I-405, separated from the study area by the freeway.

4.4.2.3 Segment C, Downtown Bellevue

The Segment C study area is located primarily within the Downtown Bellevue neighborhood, with outlying sections located in or adjacent to it, including the South of Downtown Residential, Northtowne, Wilburton, and Bel-Red Corridor neighborhoods (see Exhibit 4.4-4). For the most part, the alternatives follow the existing roadway grid between SE 6th Street and NE 12th Street. The Bellevue Transit Center straddles NE 6th Street between 108th and 110th Avenues NE.

Within the South of Downtown Residential neighborhood is the Surrey Downs neighborhood, which consists of primarily single-family residential homes. There are some small businesses located adjacent to Main Street in the northern portion of the neighborhood. Community facilities include Bellevue High School, King County District Court, and Surrey Downs Park located on the site of the Surrey Downs Elementary School, which closed in 1981.

As the name implies, the Downtown Bellevue neighborhood forms the core of Bellevue. Downtown Bellevue, once a suburban business district, is now a large urban center with nearly 6,500 residents and a regional employment center with nearly 45,000 workers (BDA, 2010). Downtown Bellevue includes the regional commercial centers of Bellevue Square, Lincoln Square, and The Shops at Bravern. The new residences in the Downtown Bellevue neighborhood are primarily condominiums and apartments. Land uses in the neighborhood include a mixture of commercial, office, and multifamily residences located in a number of high-rise towers. The area around the Bellevue Transit Center provides transit-oriented development (TOD) with higher densities of residential, commercial, and office development close to the transit center. This area is highly urban with large city blocks, but due to the mixed uses, the neighborhood is walkable. Community facilities within the neighborhood include the Bellevue First Congregational Church, Bradford Center, Meydenbauer Center (events and exhibition facility), the Bellevue Regional Library, the Bellevue Arts Museum, and Bellevue City Hall.

The Northtowne neighborhood consists primarily of single-family residences. McCormick Park is located within this neighborhood and provides a buffer between Northtowne and Downtown Bellevue. Although Downtown Bellevue includes several north-

south arterials, only Bellevue Way SE, 108th Avenue NE, and 112th Avenue NE provide access through downtown and into the Northtowne neighborhood. There are no other community facilities located nearby.

The Wilburton and Bel-Red Corridor neighborhoods are located east of I-405. Land uses within the Wilburton neighborhood in this area are primarily auto-oriented commercial, with a number of auto dealerships located along 116th Avenue NE, and also include retail and commercial uses. The Bel-Red Corridor neighborhood within the study area comprises mainly medical-related office buildings and the Overlake Hospital and Group Health Medical Centers. No community facilities are located within these portions of the neighborhoods.

4.4.2.4 Segment D, Bel-Red/Overlake

The Segment D study area includes the Bel-Red Corridor and is generally bounded between SR 520 to the north and Bel-Red Road to the south. SR 520 acts as a barrier between the Bridle Trails neighborhood and the light rail project alternatives. Aside from SR 520, major east-west arterials include NE 20th Street and Bel-Red Road.

The focal area of Segment D is the Bel-Red Corridor in Bellevue, which is predominantly industrial and commercial establishments, and the Overlake Village in Redmond, which consists of commercial retail establishments, hospital services, and senior housing and office parks (see Exhibit 4.4-5). The Bel-Red Corridor in this area is primarily commercial and industrial land uses, including a King County Metro bus base and distribution facilities. The Overlake neighborhood contains a mix of multifamily and single-family housing. The Microsoft campus in Overlake is a major employment center for the region. The Overlake Transit Center serves the Microsoft office campuses as well as the adjacent neighborhood communities.

As discussed in Section 4.2, Land Use, the Bel-Red and Overlake areas have adopted changes in the future land use that would support light rail. These changes also include TOD, which would cause an increase in the overall density and change the character of the neighborhood through mixed-use development of commercial, office, and residential uses.

4.4.2.5 Segment E, Downtown Redmond

The Segment E study area is primarily along SR 520 and ends in the Downtown Redmond neighborhood (see Exhibit 4.4-6). SR 520 is the only freeway to and from Redmond, and it connects to major roadways that serve communities beyond Redmond, including

West Lake Sammamish Parkway NE, SR 202, Redmond Way, and Avondale Road. Otherwise, the Downtown Redmond grid street pattern is interrupted by the former BNSF Railway corridor that runs diagonally through the town center. Redmond Transit Center is located at 161st Avenue NE and NE 83rd Street near the Redmond City Hall.

Neighborhoods within the study area include SE Redmond and Downtown Redmond as well as a large portion of Marymoor Park (Exhibit 4.4-6). The Downtown Redmond neighborhood developed around the former BNSF Railway train station and track, which bisects the town into northern and southern commercial areas. Downtown Redmond includes a mixture of medium-density, multifamily housing and retail uses and a civic center that includes Redmond City Hall, Redmond Library, and the Redmond Police Department. For surrounding communities, downtown is a shopping destination and includes the Redmond Town Center, a mixed-use facility that includes a regional shopping center, a hotel, and office buildings. Other draws to Downtown Redmond include Marymoor Park and open spaces, trails, and the Redmond Saturday Market, an open air market that operates from May to October. The Southeast Redmond neighborhood contains both low-density single-family residential development and a corridor of retail and light industrial commercial uses along SR 202. One regional activity center in Segment E is Marymoor Park, a large regional public recreation and events facility owned and operated by King County.

Located north of Downtown Redmond, the Education Hill and Bear Creek neighborhoods consist primarily of single-family residences. On a bluff west of Downtown Redmond there is an area of primarily multifamily residential units that is part of the Grass Lawn neighborhood. A small portion of the Sammamish Valley is also located within the study area and consists of mostly business parks, with no community facilities located within the study area.

4.4.2.6 Maintenance Facility Surroundings

In Segment D, the maintenance facilities (116th [MF1], BNSF [MF2], and SR 520 [MF3]) are located in the Bel-Red Subarea neighborhood of Bellevue. In Segment E, the SE Redmond Maintenance Facility (MF5) is located within the SE Redmond neighborhood. Sections 4.4.2.4 and 4.4.2 provide information on these neighborhoods.

4.4.3 Environmental Impacts

The analysis of potential impacts of the East Link Project on neighborhoods considers the following key

neighborhood and community issues: changes in neighborhood quality, barriers to social interaction, impacts on community resources, and impacts on public services, safety, and security. Much of the impacts evaluation in this section is based on analyses conducted for other sections of this Final EIS, including Chapter 3, Transportation Environment and Consequences; 4.1, Acquisitions, Displacements, and Relocations; 4.2, Land Use; 4.3, Economics; 4.5, Visual and Aesthetic Resources; 4.6, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases; 4.7, Noise and Vibration; 4.14, Public Services; and 4.17, Parkland and Open Spaces. Impacts from these resources do not automatically constitute an adverse social impact or impact on neighborhood cohesion. Rather, these impacts are evaluated collectively with mitigation measures for their impact on community facilities and neighborhoods. Cohesion is defined as the extent to which residents have a sense of belonging to their neighborhood and considers the interactions between the residents and the resources located in that neighborhood.

Appendix C, Environmental Justice, addresses impacts to minority and low-income populations. Overall, the project would not result in disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations, but it would provide substantial benefits that would positively affect minority and low-income populations in the areas surrounding the light rail stations. These benefits include improved access to transit; a safer, more reliable, and more efficient transportation system; improved mobility through the project vicinity; transit travel time savings; improved accessibility to employment; and extended transit service hours.

4.4.3.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would avoid the property acquisitions and other related changes associated with light rail construction and operation. Those who reside in or travel to and from neighborhoods in the study area would not be provided with a reliable mode of transportation and increased transit accessibility. There would be no change to neighborhood quality.

4.4.3.2 Impacts during Operation

This section addresses the impacts, both positive and negative, that would affect neighborhoods as a whole and is followed by a segment-by-segment analysis of the impacts that would occur within each segment and project alternative.

Neighborhood Quality

A new transportation mode operating on a fixed-rail system has the potential to affect neighborhood

quality. Federal guidance states that neighborhood quality impact analysis should be a “qualitative discussion of [the] cumulative impact of” the following factors: property acquisitions and land use changes (including consistency of new development with existing neighborhoods), visual or physical intrusion of the new facility on traffic and parking, and noise and vibration.

In general, neighborhoods served by light rail stations would benefit both from increased transit access and from potential development within station areas in a manner consistent with neighborhood land use goals and plans. Neighborhoods (particularly those portions near station areas) might experience increased vitality in terms of improved access, residential infill, growth in employment base, and greater patronage of local businesses. Goals for regional, local, and station area planning emphasize reducing reliance on automobiles and providing increased pedestrian access and pedestrian-oriented design.

The East Link Project would result in impacts on a number of properties located along neighborhood boundaries. Those nearby might be affected by the changes due to the East Link Project. However, the overall neighborhood quality would not change because the project alternatives travel along existing arterials, which in many instances already act as boundaries for the neighborhoods.

Property Acquisitions and Land Use Changes

Overall, the property acquisitions required for each segment represents a small portion of the land available in adjacent neighborhoods and would not result in changes in the existing neighborhood’s intactness or character. Aside from Segment A, all of the alternatives would acquire and displace residential and commercial properties. Although the project would acquire residential dwellings in the neighborhoods, none of the displacements would result in the neighborhoods being bisected or separated from other portions of the neighborhood. Property acquisition impacts would not adversely affect neighborhood quality because the project is primarily located along the edge of the neighborhoods and either on or adjacent to existing roads, which does not create barriers.

Under many alternatives, several businesses might be displaced. Most commercial properties that would be displaced by the East Link alternatives do not provide unique services to the surrounding neighborhoods (i.e., corner store, cafe, coffee shop) and tend to be either office complexes or light industrial uses that are likely to draw employees from the surrounding region. Because most of the commercial properties are

not unique to the surrounding neighborhoods, the impacts on the neighborhood character and quality would be minimal.

Some of the properties that would be acquired could be redeveloped consistent with existing zoning after construction. Also, TOD consisting of higher density residential and mixed-use development, typically around the proposed stations, could potentially result as an indirect impact (see Section 4.2, Land Use). These redevelopment opportunities would only occur where allowed by comprehensive and neighborhood plans and where stations can support TOD. For those areas that are primarily single-family residential development, TOD is not allowed under current zoning. TOD allows for creating compact, walkable communities that provide increased transit ridership and reduced traffic congestion and driving. Section 4.2 gives information on potential TOD and identifies those areas where redevelopment would be encouraged and those areas where it would not be encouraged. Redevelopment near stations could enhance economic activity by expanding neighborhood business districts. Section 4.3, Economics, give additional information on the economic benefits from redevelopment near stations.

Visual or Physical Intrusion

Visual changes would be noticeable from some residences located adjacent to or with views of the East Link Project, especially in areas where the alternatives would be elevated above the existing transportation infrastructure or where vegetation would be removed. When possible, vegetation removed for the project would be replaced and landscaping would be provided to screen sensitive visual environments and/or sensitive viewers where necessary, which would minimize the visual impacts. While the East Link Project would introduce another form of transportation, the project would be located primarily within heavily developed urban areas and the alternatives would be located along major transportation facilities where light rail is generally compatible (e.g., local roads, freeway infrastructure, powerlines, tall buildings), so the impacts related to visual quality would generally not adversely affect neighborhood quality for the entire neighborhood. Section 4.5, Visual and Aesthetic Resources, provides complete information on the visual impacts associated with the East Link Project.

Transportation and Parking

Overall, impacts on property access and circulation would be generally limited to the loss of some midblock, left-hand turn movements and turning restrictions of right-in/right-out for alternatives in the

roadway's median. Some travelers might be affected by the loss of left turns and the need to travel a more circuitous route. For alternatives that are at-grade or elevated, U-turns would be provided at signalized intersections to minimize the impact on traffic circulation. The Couplet Alternative (C4A) would convert 108th and 110th Avenues NE from two-way streets to a one-way couplet, which would change circulation patterns. Elevated sections would cause minimal access issues because access could be maintained under the guideway.

Traffic impacts that would result from the East Link Project can be mitigated. Park-and-ride lots associated with the stations would be expected to attract more traffic and could impact traffic operations more than if the project were not constructed. In addition, because the alternatives are mostly located within or adjacent to existing arterials, the traffic impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods are expected to be minimal.

Neighborhoods could be affected as a result of light rail riders parking in neighborhoods adjacent to stations. The potential exists for hide-and-ride (when transit users park in neighborhoods surrounding the transit stations), and the best ways to mitigate the impact are unique to each station and the surrounding areas (see Chapter 3 for more information). In neighborhoods where parking does not currently have restrictions, Sound Transit would work with the applicable jurisdictions to implement prevention strategies (i.e., time limits or neighborhood permit programs) in order to maintain neighborhood quality.

The East Link Project would provide a reliable mode of transportation and result in improved transit accessibility and connections for riders between the study area neighborhoods and community facilities within 0.5 mile of the stations, as well as provide connections to regional destinations (i.e., Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and the University of Washington). Overall, the project would improve transit travel times, reliability, and convenience. No alternatives would have negative impacts on pedestrian and bicyclist movements (see Chapter 3 for more information).

Noise and Vibration

The number and severity of noise impacts would vary along each segment and alternative. Where alternatives are at-grade and the roadway must be widened to accommodate the light rail system, traffic noise impacts could increase. However, after noise mitigation has been introduced (e.g., sound walls, special trackwork, and/or building insulation), no adverse noise-related impacts would occur, and noise

would not negatively affect the overall neighborhood quality for the entire neighborhood. In addition, there are locations within Segments C and E where vibration impacts might not be mitigated to levels below FTA criteria. Sound Transit would refine analysis of these locations during final design to further minimize or eliminate the impacts. Section 4.7, Noise and Vibration, provides information on potential noise and vibration impacts and potential mitigation measures.

Social Interaction

None of the project alternatives would create new barriers to interaction because they travel along existing arterials that already act as a barrier along the fringe of existing neighborhoods. Stations on these arterials could enhance the cohesion as new meeting points for adjoining neighborhoods. Where portions of the project would be at-grade, crossing points would be maintained at existing signalized intersections to allow continued access within and between communities. Where tunnel alternatives are proposed, there would be no impacts on community cohesion because the trains would be located beneath the neighborhood. In addition, the East Link Project could improve cohesion with increased transit access and TOD, which might indirectly enhance the walking experience and safety of the neighborhoods.

Community Resources

The East Link Project is not expected to result in long-term operation impacts on the civic community resources (e.g., parks, churches, and schools) located within the study area, except for a few park resources where portions of the resource would be permanently impacted, as described in Section 4.17, Parkland and Open Space. These impacts would primarily be felt by those close to the facilities and would not result in permanent adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Safety and Security

Maintaining safety and security at the stations, park-and-ride lots, and the neighborhoods surrounding these facilities is another important consideration for many residents within surrounding neighborhoods. As described in Section 4.14, Public Services, incidences of crime are most likely to occur at the stations; however, crime is not expected to increase as a result of operation of the stations. Typically, crime around stations mirrors crime rates in the surrounding neighborhoods. In the areas around all but one of the proposed stations (Rainier Station), crime is low compared to the surrounding jurisdictions of King County and Washington. Sound Transit would employ security personnel, but also as a matter of

practice, Sound Transit implements Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles directed at reducing crime incidents at stations and park-and-ride lots. Other measures to minimize crime would include using equipment (i.e., closed circuit TV, sealed fareboxes, and automatically sealed exits), using anticrime programs such as antigraffiti programs, and using security personnel. Because these design elements would be integrated throughout the East Link Project, there would not be the potential for project-related safety and security impacts in adjacent neighborhoods.

Segment A

Overall, operating *Preferred Interstate 90 Alternative (A1)* in Segment A would have little impact on neighborhoods because it is located in the center lanes of I-90 and would be similar in character to the areas through which it would pass. There would be no displacements nor land use changes that would affect neighborhood quality. The two proposed stations (Rainier and Mercer Island) would be consistent with the visual character of the areas where they are located and would not reduce visual quality. Noise from light rail operations is not expected to cause a change in the overall noise levels in the adjacent neighborhoods because I-90 would continue to be the dominant noise source. The station would provide enhanced accessibility to Mercer Island neighborhoods. Because *Preferred Alternative A1* travels primarily within existing Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) I-90 right-of-way, no new barriers would be created that would affect community cohesion or access between community resources, and public services. *Preferred Alternative A1* would not negatively affect neighborhoods in Seattle or Mercer Island.

Segment B

The Segment B alternatives follow existing local roadways and transportation infrastructure (Bellevue Way SE, 112th Avenue SE, and former BNSF Railway corridor), which currently act as boundaries along the fringe of adjacent study area neighborhoods (see Exhibit 4.4-3). None of the alternatives would travel through existing neighborhoods but rather would travel along the edges of neighborhoods along existing arterials. The Segment B alternatives would acquire some property acquisitions, displace some residences and businesses, result in some minor changes in property access, remove vegetation, and add new structures; these impacts can negatively affect nearby residents and businesses. These impacts are not expected to markedly alter the overall land use or development character of the neighborhoods located within Segment B because the neighborhoods are well

defined, with roadways such as Bellevue Way SE and/or 112th Avenue SE serving as an existing boundary. Therefore, the project is not expected to interrupt neighborhood social interactions. Although there would be impacts associated with the East Link Project, the overall neighborhood quality in the affected study area would not likely change. Table 4.4-2 summarizes the factors used to assess impacts on neighborhoods by alternative. In addition to assessing how the project might change neighborhood quality, the following discusses possible changes to social interaction, community resources, and safety.

Along Bellevue Way SE, *Preferred 112th SE Modified Alternative (B2M)* is located farther east and, therefore, farther away from the Enatai neighborhood than other Segment B alternatives that travel along Bellevue Way SE and would not affect neighborhood quality. There would be fewer visual impacts because *Preferred Alternative B2M* transitions to a retained cut after leaving the South Bellevue Station. However, constructing the retained cut would remove vegetation from the intersection at 112th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way, which would be a visual change until the new plantings and remaining vegetation mature. *Preferred Alternative B2M* would result in the highest permanent park impacts on the Mercer Slough Nature Park; however, the alternative would not substantially affect park use, features, activities, and attributes, and existing park community resources would be maintained. *Preferred Alternative B2M* would not add new barriers to social interaction.

For *Preferred Alternative B2M* to C11A, the landscaped median along 112th Avenue SE would be removed, and the light rail elements would be more visible than with the connection to C9T. *Preferred Alternative B2M* to C9T would remain east of 112th Avenue SE connecting to the SE 8th Station, which would enhance neighborhood access to transit. If the C9T – East Main Station Design Option were selected, then the SE 8th Station would not be built, but the residents would still be served by the East Main Station, which would be located farther north. SE 15th Street might be closed, which would result in vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists needing to enter and/or exit the Bellefield Office Park off of SE 8th Street.

Just one of the businesses that would be affected by Bellevue Way Alternative (B1) was identified as important to the neighborhood. The Chevron station located on the corner of Bellevue Way SE and 108th Avenue SE provides an important service to the area, which is not provided by other business in the immediate vicinity.

TABLE 4.4-2
Factors Considered in Assessing Impacts on Neighborhoods Within Segment B

Alternative	Potential Impacts by Alternative			
	Displacements	Visual/Physical Intrusion	Noise Impacts	Traffic/Access Changes
<i>Preferred 112th SE Modified Alternative (B2M) to C11A</i>	0 businesses 1 residence	Removing vegetation and adding other project components (e.g., retained cut and overhead guideway) would result in visual change along Bellevue Way SE to the Bellevue Way/112th Avenue SE interchange but not result in visual impact. Lower profile of the guideway minimizes visual impacts along Bellevue Way SE. In addition, light rail would be more visible to residences along 112th Avenue SE than <i>Preferred Alternative B2M to C9T</i> .	Noise impacts would be mitigated using a combination of sound walls, track lubrication at curves, building sound insulation, or special trackwork at crossovers and turnouts.	Right-in/right-out on 112th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way SE Design options to include signals and U-turn movements to preserve access south of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride
<i>Preferred 112th SE Modified Alternative (B2M) to C9T^a</i>	0 businesses 1 residence	Removing vegetation and adding other project components (e.g., retained cuts and overhead guideway) would result in visual changes impacts along Bellevue Way SE to the Bellevue Way/112th Avenue SE interchange.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M</i> .	Potential loss of access to SE 15th Street Design options to include signals and U-turn movements to preserve access south of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride
Bellevue Way Alternative (B1)	2 businesses 12 residences	Intrusions would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M to C9T</i> ; in addition, retaining walls on the west side of Bellevue Way SE would result in visual impact.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M</i> .	Right-in/right-out on Bellevue Way SE Design options to include signals and U-turn movements to preserve access south of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride
112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A)	0 businesses 4 residences	Intrusions would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M to C9T</i> ; in addition, elevated structures on Bellevue Way SE would be more visible from nearby residences than with Alternative B1, resulting in a visual impact. Removing vegetation from the west side of Bellevue Way SE would open up views east for some residents. Light rail in the median along 112th Avenue SE would alter visual character of the area for those in close proximity.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M</i> .	Impacts would be the same as Preferred Alternative B2M to C11A
112th SE Elevated Alternative (B2E)	0 businesses 1 residence	Intrusions would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M to C9T</i> . In addition, elevated structures on Bellevue Way SE would be more visible from nearby residences and would impact eastward views towards the Mercer Slough Nature Park, resulting in a visual impact. Elevated structures on 112th Avenue SE would be more visible than with <i>Preferred Alternative</i> but generally consistent with the existing boulevard-like character.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M</i> .	Design options to include signals and U-turn movements to preserve access south of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride
112th SE Bypass Alternative (B3)	0 businesses 4 residences	Intrusions would be the same as Alternative B1.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M</i> .	Right-in/right-out on 112th Avenue SE Design options to include signals and U-turn movements to preserve access south of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride
B3 - 114th Extension Design Option	14 businesses 4 residence	Intrusions would be the same as Alternative B1.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M</i> .	Design options to include signals and U-turn movements to preserve access south of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride.
BNSF Alternative (B7)	6 businesses 0 residences	Elevated structures passing north of I-90 Trail (part of Mountains-to-Sound Greenway) would be viewed by trail users and residences along 118th Avenue SE.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative B2M</i> .	No changes

^a The C9T - East Main Station Design Option connecting from *Preferred Alternative B2M* would not result in a change to impacts for either *Preferred Alternative C9T* or *B2M*.

which is not provided by other business in the immediate vicinity.

Relocating this business would result in an impact on those in the surrounding neighborhood who use this business, resulting in additional travel for gasoline purchases, but this impact in combination with other neighborhood impacts would not degrade neighborhood quality. No new barriers for social interaction would be created by this alternative.

Impacts on community and public services would be minor. Although Alternative B1 travels directly in front of the Bellevue Fire Department Station 1, it would not result in impacts on access and egress because there would be a signal with left-turn access allowed into and out of the fire station. Because constructing sound walls would not be feasible in all locations, Alternative B1 would result in the greatest number of noise impacts compared with the other Segment B alternatives.

Table 4.4-2 lists impacts on the neighborhood quality from 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A), which would be generally minor and have two additional residential displacements compared with *Preferred Alternative B2M*. North of the 112th Avenue SE intersection, widening would remove the existing landscaped median from 112th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way. A longer portion of this median is removed under Alternative B2A than *Preferred Alternative B2M to C11A*. All existing community resources would be maintained. There would be increased neighborhood access to transit through the SE 8th Station.

112th SE Elevated Alternative (B2E) would have similar impacts on neighborhood quality and generally follows the same route as Alternative B2A, except that it continues elevated all the way to the station at SE 8th Street. Alternative B2E would not create any new barriers to social interaction or traffic circulation. Alternative B2E would have the same number of displacements as *Preferred Alternative B2M* (i.e., no businesses and one residence) but would offer more of a visual and physical presence along Bellevue Way SE. North of 112th Avenue SE intersection, Alternative B2E would be elevated and retain the landscaped median, thus maintaining the general boulevardlike character of 112th Avenue SE. All community resources would be preserved, and neighborhood quality would be slightly affected by visual changes for residences on the edges along Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue SE.

For the most part, 112th SE Bypass Alternative (B3) follows the same route as *Preferred Alternative B2M*.

Neighborhood impacts would be generally the same, except it would not add the SE 8th Station and, thus, would not provide new accessibility for surrounding residents. At the northern end, it would pass through parking lots, behind office buildings, across an undeveloped open area, and remove some landscaped parking strips. No community resources would be affected, nor would new barriers to social interaction result. Neighborhood quality would be maintained.

The impacts from Alternative B3 - 114th Extension Design Option would be similar to those described above under *Preferred Alternative B2M* until approximately SE 15th Street. North of SE 15th Street, the alternative would curve to the east away from the residential neighborhood and through the Bellefield Office Park, displacing some businesses. There is no SE 8th Station associated with the B3 - 114th Design Option. No community resources would be affected, nor would there be any new barriers to social interaction.

Overall, Alternative B7 would have little impact on neighborhood quality because much of it would follow the I-90 and former BNSF Railway corridors. There would be no changes in access or circulation, and visual and physical intrusion would be minimal because, for the most part, the project would be consistent with the existing rail corridor and the I-90 structure over the Mercer Slough Nature Park. This and all other community resources along this route would remain intact and accessible. Neighborhood quality and social interaction would be maintained.

Segment C

Because the Downtown Bellevue area is densely developed, it was considered important to identify the staging areas needed to construct Segment C to evaluate the associated potential impacts. Segment C staging areas would be located at either end of the segment in Downtown Bellevue and at each station (refer to Chapter 2 for information on staging area locations). Staging areas would acquire properties in different areas, depending on the alternative selected and the specific connection from Segment B. The impacts from the use of the staging areas are discussed later in this section under Section 4.4.3.3. Following construction, most of these areas would be available for redevelopment. For the most part, the Segment C alternatives would follow the existing roadway grid of the highly urbanized Downtown Bellevue. There would be displacements of residences and businesses, some minor changes to property access, the removal of vegetation, and the addition of new structures, which can affect neighborhood quality. The Segment C alternatives that involve tunneling would have

minimal impacts because they would be underground and most of the impacts, such as displacement, are anticipated only in the station areas and staging areas. Most of the Segment C alternatives would have minimal property access impacts. Impacts on pedestrian and bicycle circulation within Downtown Bellevue are expected to be minimal because existing pedestrian crossings and bicycle routes would be maintained and the alternatives would not alter the location of future bicycle routes identified in the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan. Overall, the impact of direct property acquisitions, lower visual quality, and access revisions are not expected to markedly alter the overall land use or development character of the neighborhoods in Segment C. There would be no indoor noise impacts after mitigation for any of the Segment C alternatives. Table 4.4-3 summarizes the factors used to assess impacts on neighborhoods by Segment C alternative, and a discussion follows.

Preferred 108th NE At-Grade Alternative (C11A) would result in changes to the Surrey Downs neighborhood along 112th Avenue SE and Main Street but would not result in any negative impacts on the overall neighborhood quality. *Preferred Alternative C11A* would acquire residential properties, including 6 single-family and 41 multifamily units that currently face 112th Avenue SE. The light rail guideway would be consistent with the arterial transportation character of 112th Avenue SE. Currently, 112th Avenue SE acts as a boundary for the eastern portion of the neighborhood. While widening the transportation corridor to include light rail would change the edge of the community, acquiring these residences would not bisect the neighborhood and not negatively affect the overall quality of the Surrey Downs neighborhood.

Most residences that would be acquired are not in character with the overall Surrey Downs neighborhood, and due to their position facing 112th Avenue SE with no direct access into the Surrey Downs neighborhood, relocating them would not impact the larger neighborhood's cohesion. After construction there would be a buffer of approximately 50 feet between the light rail project and the neighborhood. This buffer would include landscaping and provide a visual buffer and a potential open-space amenity for nearby residents. Sound walls would be installed on the guideway or retained fill along the west side of 112th Avenue SE to mitigate noise impacts.

Preferred Alternative C11A would close the SE 4th Street access to 112th Avenue SE. Residents that use this access would need to use alternate access at SE 1st Place or elsewhere in the neighborhood. Additionally,

residents accessing Main Street via 110th Place and 110th Street would be redirected to the intersection at 108th Avenue. These changes would require some residents to use a more circuitous route, but the low number of trips that this would redirect would not result in traffic impacts that would affect neighborhood quality or social interaction.

Visual changes would be noticeable to some residents adjacent to the project, especially near the intersection of 112th Avenue SE and Main Street where the alternative would be elevated; however, the alternative would not lower the corridor's overall visual quality and, therefore, would not impact the overall neighborhood quality. *Preferred Alternative C11A* would impact one community facility by acquiring a portion of Surrey Downs Park, and would require reviewing and amending of the City's adopted master plan for the park.

The 108th Station would be adjacent to the neighborhood, and no other land use changes would be expected of the single-family residential zoning. For those near the station, there would be benefits associated with increased transit access. In addition, the neighborhood is an established Residential Parking Zone, which minimizes the possibility of hide-and-ride parking. There would be no noise impacts on the residences in the Surrey Downs Neighborhood after mitigation. There would also be a landscaped buffer and transition area south of Main Street and the commercial area to the north, which is consistent with the City of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan policy S-DT-125. This policy has to do with transitions between downtown and the residential neighborhood to the southeast. East of the Bellevue Transit Center Station the trackway would be located in a commercial area and there would be no negative impacts within the Wilburton or Bel-Red neighborhoods associated with the East Link Project.

Preferred 110th NE Tunnel Alternative (C9T) would result in similar impacts to those identified above for *Preferred Alternative C11A*. Impacts on the Surrey Downs neighborhood along 112th Avenue SE would be the same as those described above under *Preferred Alternative C11A*.

The differences would be in neighborhood access from 112th Avenue SE – the 108th Station is not associated with *Preferred Alternative C9T* – and impacts on Surrey Downs Park. *Preferred Alternative C9T* would close access to 112th Avenue SE from SE 1st Place, and SE 4th Street would be redirected to a new access point at the intersection of SE 6th Street and 112th Avenue SE with signalized access to 112th Avenue SE. Impacts

TABLE 4.4-3
Factors Considered in Assessing Impacts on Neighborhoods Within Segment C

Alternative	Potential Impacts by Alternative			
	Displacements ^a	Visual/Physical Intrusion	Noise Impacts	Traffic/Access Changes
<i>Preferred 108th NE At-Grade Alternative (C11A)</i>	39 to 40 businesses 0 to 46 residences	Vegetation and residences would be removed on west side of 112th Avenue SE and south of Main Street, but the area would be landscaped.	Noise impacts would be mitigated using a combination of sound walls, track lubrication at curves, sound insulation, or special trackwork at crossovers and turnouts.	Changes in circulation in Surrey Downs neighborhood
<i>Preferred 110th NE Tunnel Alternative (C9T)^b</i>	17 to 18 businesses 0 to 46 residences	Vegetation and residences would be removed on west side of 112th Avenue SE and south of Main, but the area would be landscaped.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative C11A</i> .	Changes in circulation in Surrey Downs neighborhood
Bellevue Way Tunnel Alternative (C1T)	21 businesses 91 residences	Intrusion would be minimal because much of the route is underground.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative C11A</i> .	Minimal because light rail system operates below ground
106th NE Tunnel Alternative (C2T)	13 to 20 businesses, 0 to 12 residences	Intrusion would be minimal because much of the route is underground.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative C11A</i> .	Minimal because light rail system operates below ground
108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T)	15 to 22 businesses, 7 to 19 residences	Mature vegetation would be removed in McCormick Park, and the presence of the light rail transition would result in visual impacts that could be fully mitigated.	There would be no impacts after mitigation.	Changes in access to and from the Northtowne Neighborhood.
Couplet Alternative (C4A)	36 to 37 businesses, 8 residences	Intrusions would be the same as Alternative C3T.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative C11A</i> .	Changes in circulation along 110th Avenue NE and 108th Avenue NE in Downtown Bellevue Neighborhood
112th NE Elevated Alternative (C7E)	29 to 30 businesses, 0 residences	Intrusions would be minimal due to the scale and design of the surrounding facilities, including I-405.	There would be no impacts after mitigation.	Minimal because light rail system operates above ground
110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E)	33 businesses, 2 residences	Intrusions would be the same as with Alternative C3T. In addition, an elevated structure (trackway and station) would be introduced over 110th Avenue NE, which would be out of context with the pedestrian environment near the Bellevue Transit Center and the parklike setting near Bellevue City Hall.	There would be no impacts after mitigation.	Right-in/right-out on 110th Avenue NE
110th Avenue NE At-Grade Alternative (C9A)	17 to 18 businesses, 0 to 1 residences	South of Main Street, the elevated trackway and straddle bents would be out of context with the area, resulting in visual impact.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative C11A</i> .	Right-in/right-out on 112th Avenue NE and 110th Avenue NE
114th Avenue NE Elevated Alternative (C14E)	24 businesses, 0 residences	Intrusions would be similar to Alternative C7E. The elevated walkway and tent structures would block views to the east.	There would be no impacts after mitigation.	Minimal because light rail system operates above ground

^a The range reflects differences between connectors from Segment B alternatives.

^b The C9T - East Main Station Design Option connecting from *Preferred Alternative B2M* would not result in a change to impacts for either *Preferred Alternative C9T* or *B2M*.

related to access would require a more circuitous route for some residents, but the low number of trips that this would redirect would not result in traffic impacts that would affect neighborhood quality. There also

would be permanent property acquisition impacts on Surrey Downs Park. *Preferred Alternative C9T* would realign SE 4th Street through the park, but no active recreation facilities would be affected. C9T - Main

Street Station Design Option would provide additional accessibility to residents in this area. Impacts east of the Bellevue Transit Center Station would be the same as those described for *Preferred Alternative C11A*. Impacts from the East Main Station Design Option would be similar to those in C9T.

The Bellevue Way Tunnel Alternative (C1T) would have the highest number of displacements due to the displacement of three multifamily buildings. Because of the urban nature of Downtown Bellevue and surrounding area, however, relocation opportunities are expected to be readily available within a number of mixed-use developments and multifamily units existing, currently planned, or under construction. Given the abundance of available residential dwellings, both single-family and multifamily, in the surrounding area, even if the residents decided to move elsewhere, there would be no negative impact on the neighborhood's cohesion.

Much of the C1T route would be underground (including the Old Bellevue and Bellevue Transit Center stations) and therefore would not change social interaction. The transition of the alternative from tunnel to elevated along NE 6th Street would be visible but consistent with the existing character and visual quality of the area nearby. Traffic movements could become slightly more circuitous to Meydenbauer Center and City of Bellevue offices, but access to these community resources would not be diminished. Neighborhood quality would be enhanced with improved transit accessibility and reliability from two to three light rail stations serving downtown neighborhoods.

Neighborhood impacts and benefits with 106th NE Tunnel Alternative (C2T) would be generally the same as with *Preferred Alternative C9T*, the primary difference being fewer displacements. Regardless of which connector and staging area is used, this alternative would result in the least number of displacements in comparison to the other alternatives in Segment C, and project components would be consistent with the visual character of the surrounding areas. Alternative C2T would have access and circulation impacts similar to those described for Alternative C1T.

Neighborhood impacts and benefits with 108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T) would be generally the same as with *Preferred Alternative C9T* and Alternative C2T. Like other tunnel alternatives, this alternative is mostly underground, and impacts would occur primarily at the staging areas (see Section 4.4.3.3, Impacts During Construction, below). Along NE 12th Street, Alternative C3T would alter McCormick Park

and result in visual impacts that could not be fully mitigated. This park serves as a neighborhood buffer from downtown business traffic and activities. Following construction, the park would be enlarged by converting the staging area; therefore the buffer would be replaced and the neighborhood quality preserved. A cul-de-sac with access from NE 12th Street would be redirected to access 108th Avenue NE. This would buffer some homes from traffic and generate a few more traffic trips from the redirected residents. No other changes to property access and circulation would be necessary because Alternative C3T mainly operates underground; therefore, no barriers to social interaction would be created.

The Couplet Alternative (C4A), while aboveground, would have similar impacts and benefits as the tunnel alternatives. Although the changes would be more noticeable, the at-grade profile and location in the existing street right-of-way through downtown is consistent with the urban environment and streetscape. Also, the at-grade light rail stations would be more accessible to users than the elevated tunnel alternatives because there are no stairs or elevators. The impacts from the portion of the alternative that would pass along NE 12th Street would be similar to those described for Alternative C3T. While community resources such as McCormick Park would be impacted by the presence of light rail, they would also benefit from increased accessibility. The vibration impact described under Alternative C3T would also occur with Alternative C4A.

Alternative C4A would affect traffic circulation along 110th Avenue NE and 108th Avenue NE in Downtown Bellevue. For the safety of light rail and traffic movement, light rail would travel counterflow to traffic, north along 110th Avenue NE, and south along 108th Avenue NE. There would be some inconveniences of restricted turning movements, but for the most part access would be preserved and no barriers created. For emergency access, the trackway would have mountable curbs. Overall, the neighborhood quality would be enhanced with new transit access by this alternative without adverse impacts on quality of life.

North of Main Street, the 112th NE Elevated Alternative (C7E) elevated profile and pedestrian crossing structure would pass along 112th Avenue NE and would be noticed, but it would be consistent with the character of this section of 112th Avenue NE because of the visual association with large transportation features, such as access to and from I-405. Because Alternative C7E is elevated along 112th Avenue NE, there would be minimal impacts on

property access and circulation along this alternative and therefore no impact on social interaction. Overall, this alternative would not impact community resources or add barriers to social interaction, and it would enhance transit accessibility and offer a benefit to neighborhood quality.

The 110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E) elevated profile and stations at the Bellevue Transit Center would affect the visual environment for residents in nearby multifamily buildings. Circulation impacts would be minor because U-turn movements would be allowed at signalized intersections. For the multifamily residential units located along 110th Avenue NE between NE 10th Street and NE 12th Street, noise impacts would be mitigated, but the visual intrusion cannot be fully mitigated. These impacts would not change the overall neighborhood social interaction, affect community resources, or adversely reduce the neighborhood quality.

Operations impacts on the Bellevue Transit Center from 110th NE At-Grade Alternative (C9A) would be similar to *Preferred Alternative C11A*, except light rail would be located on 110th Avenue NE. East of the

Bellevue Transit Center, Alternative C9A would be the same as *Preferred Alternative C11A*.

Impacts during light rail operations from 114th NE Elevated Alternative (C14E) would be similar to Alternative C7E except the guideway is located farther east adjacent to 114th Avenue NE and crosses over I-405 north of NE 6th Street. The Bellevue Transit Center Station would be 1,300 feet away from the existing Bellevue Transit Center, which reduces the accessibility for transit transfers.

Segment D

The Cities of Bellevue and Redmond have updated their comprehensive and neighborhood plans to encourage TOD within the Bel-Red Corridor and Overlake Village area of the Overlake Neighborhood (see Section 4.2, Land Use, for further description of plans and policies). This analysis compares the impacts of Segment D alternatives with the intent of these neighborhood plans while considering impacts on immediate neighborhood uses. Table 4.4-4 summarizes factors considered in assessing impacts on neighborhoods from Segment D alternatives.

TABLE 4.4-4
Factors Considered in Assessing Impacts on Neighborhoods Within Segment D

Alternative	Potential Impacts by Alternative			
	Displacements ^a	Visual/Physical Intrusion	Noise Impacts	Traffic/Access Changes
<i>Preferred NE 16th At-Grade Alternative (D2A)^b</i>	34 businesses, 0 residences	Intrusion would be minimal because the light rail system would be consistent with the urban environment.	There would be no impacts after mitigation; noise impacts would be mitigated using a combination of sound walls, track lubrication at curves, building sound insulation, or special trackwork at crossovers and turnouts.	Right-in/right-out on NE16th Street and 136th Avenue NE where light rail system is at-grade
D2A - NE 24th Design Option	69 businesses 0 residences	Intrusion would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Driveways along the west side of 152nd Avenue NE and the north side of NE 24th Street are closed
NE 16th Elevated Alternative (D2E)	42 businesses, 0 residences	Intrusion would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Minimal because light rail system is elevated
NE 20th Alternative (D3)	74 businesses, 0 residences	Intrusion would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Right-in/right-out on NE16th Street and 136th Avenue NE where light rail system is at-grade and restricted along NE 20th Street
SR 520 Alternative (D5)	79 businesses, 0 residences	Intrusion would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative D2A</i> .	Minimal because light rail system is located off local roadways.

^a The range reflects differences between connectors from Segment C Alternatives (either from former BNSF Railway or from NE 12th Street).

^b Impacts with D2A - 120th Station Design Option would not vary from those of *Preferred Alternative D2A*.

The new light rail stations have a potential to act as a catalyst for redevelopment consistent with recently adopted plans. Adjacent residential neighborhoods would benefit from increased mobility options and additional services created from station development. Like the stations located in Bellevue, a station located within the Overlake Village area would support the City of Redmond in implementing the recently adopted land use plans. The Overlake Transit Center Station would support the existing land use and increase mobility for expanding numbers of Microsoft and other nearby office employees.

Overall impacts on property access and circulation in Segment D are expected to be focused along NE 15th/16th Street, NE 20th Street, and 152nd Avenue NE.

Preferred NE 16th At-Grade Alternative (D2A) would have little impact on existing neighborhood quality because the trackway would primarily be parallel to and north of the new NE 15th Street corridor and adjacent to the SR 520 right-of-way. Property acquisition would not be adverse to the neighborhood because of the planned land use changes for the area.

There would be no differences in impacts on community resources between *Preferred Alternative D2A* and the D2A - 120th Design Option. The D2A - NE 24th Design Option would displace additional businesses compared with *Preferred Alternative D2A*. With the D2A - NE 24th Design Option, driveway access from the north side of NE 24th Street to commercial business between 148th Avenue NE and 151st Place NE would be permanently removed to prevent left-turning vehicles from crossing the at-grade track. Similarly, western access to and from the business park along 152nd Avenue NE between NE 24th Street and NE 28th Street would be closed. Vehicle circulation within surrounding office parks would likely be rerouted onto 151st Place NE.

Although this would affect access to businesses, it is not considered a barrier to social interaction. The new transit stations at planned TOD nodes are considered new centers for increasing social interaction. No community resources would be affected. The influence of *Preferred Alternative D2A* on the neighborhood quality of the area would be minimal to the existing neighborhood and would support the planned mix-use development for the Bel-Red neighborhood.

NE 16th Elevated Alternative (D2E) is an elevated version of *Preferred Alternative D2A* and would have little impact on neighborhood quality. The elevated stations in the western part of the alternative would be compatible in character and would not change the

visual quality. Impacts in the eastern portion would be similar to those described for *Preferred Alternative D2A* and D2A - NE 24th Design Option except the lost driveway access would be on the south side of NE 24th Street.

Under Alternative D2E, the route runs along the side of NE 16th Street and 136th Avenue NE, thus minimizing impacts on property access and circulation. Access from NE 24th Street to commercial businesses between 148th Avenue NE and 151st Place NE would be affected as described for *Preferred Alternative D2A*. Like *Preferred Alternative D2A*, there would be no impact on community resources and no barriers to social interaction, but rather enhanced centers for social interaction. Neighborhood quality is expected to improve with D2E.

West of approximately 140th Avenue NE, the impacts of NE 20th Alternative (D3) would be essentially the same as those described for *Preferred Alternative D2A*. Alternative D3 would affect access and circulation along NE 16th Street and 136th Avenue NE similar to those of *Preferred Alternative D2A*, but Alternative D3 would have more property access and circulation issues because it would operate in the median along NE 20th Street and 152nd Avenue, affecting low-density commercial establishments. Although this would affect access to businesses, it is not considered a barrier to social interaction. Also, major intersections would preserve the ability to access businesses on either side of NE 20th. The new transit stations at planned TOD nodes are considered new centers for increasing social interaction. No community resources would be affected. The influence of Alternative D3 on the existing neighborhood quality of the area would be minimal, if not beneficial over time.

The SR 520 Alternative (D5) would have no adverse impacts on neighborhood quality, social interaction, or community resources because it would primarily follow the former BNSF Railway corridor and the south side of SR 520. Alternative D5 also would have the least property access and circulation impacts because most of the alternative is outside the roadway right-of-way.

Similar to *Preferred Alternative D2A* with the NE 24th Design Option and to Alternative D2E, the western driveway access along 152nd Avenue NE between NE 24th Street and NE 28th Street would be closed. However, this alternative would not offer the same neighborhood benefits of the other Segment D alternatives because it does not include the 120th and 130th Stations associated with *Preferred Alternative D2A*. The presence of light rail for this alternative may not have as much influence on Transit Oriented

Development in the Bel-Red Neighborhood, and therefore less benefit on the neighborhood quality.

Segment E

Table 4.4-5 summarizes factors considered in assessing impacts on neighborhoods from Segment E alternatives. A large portion of the light rail alternatives in this segment travels parallel to SR 520 and, therefore, would not affect property access or adjacent neighborhoods. Because all alternatives use the same route in this section of Segment E, the discussion focuses on differences after the alternatives diverge at West Lake Sammamish Parkway NE. Also, all Segment E alternatives use a substantial portion of the former BNSF Railway corridor parallel to NE Redmond Way, so access to and circulation around the Redmond Town Center and surrounding businesses and neighborhoods would not be affected.

Preferred Marymoor Alternative (E2), Redmond Way Alternative (E1), and Leary Way Alternative (E4) would not affect pedestrian circulation on sidewalks within or surrounding the Redmond Town Center or Downtown Redmond.

With *Preferred Alternative E2*, the route along Marymoor Park would be scarcely visible north of SR 520 because of the screening effect of trees that follow Bear Creek and the fact that the alternative would be constructed at-grade on the south side of the raised embankment on which SR 520 is built. The alternative would impact 2.0 acres of Marymoor Park and would be more visible from parts of Marymoor Park, particularly the sports fields at the north end of the park. *Preferred Alternative E2* would be similar in

character to SR 520 (but less visible). The alternative would also realign and relocate a planned extension of the East Lake Sammamish Trail, but project operation would not affect access or impair views from the trail.

The Downtown Redmond Station with *Preferred Alternative E2* would enhance transit accessibility to the Redmond Saturday Market that occurs near the intersection of Leary Way NE and the former BNSF Railway corridor, in the northwest corner of the Redmond Town Center.

The E2 - Redmond Transit Center Station Design Option would have a greater impact on properties than the other alternatives due to the displacement of a 60-unit and 62-unit apartment buildings. It would also have more impact on property access and circulation than the other alternatives because it proceeds at-grade in the median of 161st Avenue NE between Cleveland Street and NE 85th Street. Midblock property access would be restricted to only allow right turns in and out of the driveways. To minimize vehicle recirculation, NE 83rd Street and 161st Avenue NE would be signalized, and this intersection as well as NE 80th Street and NE 85th Street would allow U-turn movements.

While these are more impacts on the neighborhood than other Segment E alternatives, this terminus station would augment the Redmond Transit Center, and therefore would be compatible with the neighborhood when in operation. There would be no adverse impacts on community resources, neighborhood quality, or social interaction – only benefits of increased accessibility to reliable transit.

TABLE 4.4-5
Factors Considered in Assessing Impacts on Neighborhoods within Segment E

Alternative	Potential Impacts by Alternative			
	Displacements	Visual/Physical Intrusion	Noise Impacts	Traffic/Access Changes
<i>Preferred Marymoor Alternative (E2)</i>	8 businesses, 2 residences	Intrusion would be minimal because the light rail system would be consistent with the urban environment.	Noise impacts would be mitigated using a combination of sound walls, track lubrication at curves, building sound insulation, or special trackwork at crossovers and turnouts.	Changes would be minimal because light rail primarily within existing transportation right-of-way
E2 - Redmond Transit Center Station Design Option	23 businesses, 126 residences	Intrusion would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative E2</i> .	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative E2</i> .	Right-in/right-out on 161st Avenue NE
Redmond Way Alternative (E1)	7 businesses, 2 residences	Intrusion would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative E2</i> .	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative E2</i> .	Minimal because light rail primarily within existing transportation right-of-way
Leary Way Alternative (E4)	7 businesses, 2 residences	Removing vegetation would temporarily impact the visual quality along Leary Way.	Impacts would be the same as <i>Preferred Alternative E2</i> .	Minimal because light rail primarily within existing transportation right-of-way

The other Segment E alternatives would also be near the Redmond Saturday Market, but no impacts are anticipated, and the Redmond Town Center Station would provide improved accessibility. The other alternatives would also require minor realignment of the East Lake Sammamish Trail but would not affect access.

Alternative E1 would not adversely impact adjacent neighborhoods because it would result in only two residential relocations and only minor visual impacts as it travels between SR 520 and NE Redmond Way. The route along West Lake Sammamish Parkway NE would require removing a number of trees on the hillside in front of a large condominium complex. This would change the character of the residences at the edge of this neighborhood but would not diminish the overall neighborhood quality.

This structure and the removal of the trees on the south edge of Luke McRedmond Landing Park would result in visual change, but the visual character of the park itself and transportation facilities adjacent to the park would not change. No other impacts on community resources would result from this alternative.

Alternative E1 would not create barriers to social interaction because it would operate almost fully outside the roadway right-of-way. Property access on the south side of Redmond Way, near the 159th Place NE intersection, may have their access altered to accommodate this alternative. The overall neighborhood quality would not be adversely affected.

Alternative E4 would have impacts similar to those of Alternative E1 along West Lake Sammamish Parkway NE, except that the light rail along Leary Way would require the removal of trees along the south side of Leary Way NE, which is the formal entry into Downtown Redmond, and the relocation of the Justice White House, an important historic resource in the settlement of Redmond. The relocation would not negatively impact the neighborhood because it would be relocated in the same general vicinity. There would be a visual impact for a portion of the neighborhood due to the removal of mature trees along a portion of Leary Way NE in the Town Center open space. However, Sound Transit is proposing mitigation that would partially screen the light rail guideway, and minimize the visual effect on appearance of the Leary Way NE entry into Downtown Redmond. While the removal of the trees would impact those who travel along Leary Way NE, it would not result in adverse impacts on the overall neighborhood quality.

Alternative E4 would also have minimal impact on property access and circulation because the alternative operates almost fully outside the roadway right-of-way. This would require removing some land from the Redmond Saturday Market, but it would be able to operate, and the Redmond City Center Station would provide improved accessibility to the market. No barriers to social interaction would be created, and the alternative would provide enhanced transit access. Because the impact would be on only one building, there would be no adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. The impacts of Alternative E4 would not reduce the neighborhood quality, and the increased accessibility would enhance the neighborhood.

Maintenance Facility

The MF1 would require relocation of the Bellevue Public Safety Training Center, but this would not result in negative impacts on fire and emergency medical services because this facility is primarily used for training and therefore more easily relocated. The MF2, MF3, or MF5 would not result in negative impacts on community facilities. The presence of a maintenance facility in Bellevue (MF1, MF2, or MF3) might limit the anticipated TOD that is identified in the Bellevue comprehensive and neighborhood plans for this area. But the sites have been located in areas that can be screened and would not impact the continuity of the surrounding neighborhood cohesion. No additional impacts on neighborhoods or community facilities are anticipated as a result of the maintenance facilities during operation.

4.4.3.3 Impacts During Construction

Impacts Common to All Alternatives

Similar to the impacts during operation, impacts from construction activities would potentially affect neighborhood quality, social interaction, community resources, and safety and security.

Construction would temporarily affect neighborhood quality. Construction of East Link would affect any given neighborhood for approximately 2 to 5 years, where tunnel construction is generally longer than at-grade and elevated construction (See Chapter 2 for more detail information). Activities related to building the project would include the presence and movement of equipment and materials, clearing and exposure of soils, introduction of lights for nighttime work, storage of construction materials, and general visual changes in the viewed landscape during the period of building the project.

Temporary increases in noise, dust, and traffic congestion would occur along the corridor and at

staging areas during construction. Adjacent neighborhoods may experience increased difficulty accessing residential, commercial, and office properties because of road closures, construction equipment, and retained cut construction activities. Roadway closures or lane closures could result in detours and cut-through traffic through neighborhoods and community facilities. Construction would affect nearby neighborhoods to varying degrees for varying amounts of time.

Construction would also require a substantial amount of earthmoving, particularly for the tunnel alternatives. The average number of truck trips per day and per hour for each alternative is discussed in Chapter 3. Haul trucks are expected to arrive and depart from I-90, I-405, and SR 520 to access local construction sites. Truck trips would be required to follow designated haul routes to minimize impacts on neighborhoods. It is anticipated that the primary arterials would be used for the haul routes, and because these arterials are located along the edge of the neighborhoods, no impacts on the overall neighborhood are anticipated.

Although some residents and businesses in the immediate area of construction would experience impacts, the overall neighborhood cohesion would not be permanently affected. Sound Transit would implement measures to minimize construction-related parking and travel in the adjacent residential neighborhoods to the extent possible. During construction, Sound Transit would implement measures (i.e., advertisements and signage) to help businesses maintain open accessible conditions as well as continue to perform public outreach (i.e., public involvement meetings, website, and telephone to allow residents and businesses to voice their concerns and for Sound Transit to respond to any concerns). Refer to Section 4.3, Economics, for additional information on mitigation measures intended to reduce the impacts of construction on businesses.

In general, Sound Transit would maintain access to adjacent properties and prevent barriers to social interaction during construction to the extent possible. Because the alternatives follow major arterials, short-term impacts to pedestrian and vehicular circulation are not considered a barrier to interaction. Noise, dust, and congestion might affect the use of some community resources, and to some extent, the quality of the neighborhood's edge would be reduced for a period of time. Construction would temporarily affect portions of park resources to allow for construction or for staging areas. These closures would affect social interaction during construction, especially if the entire

park or large sections of the park are affected. Section 4.17, Parkland and Open Space, describes the resources that would be impacted during construction. As described in Section 4.14, Public Services, Sound Transit would coordinate with public service providers prior to construction on detour routes and lane closures to ensure access for emergency response vehicles is maintained and minimize impacts on response times. The following outlines specific impacts on the neighborhoods by project segment.

Segment A

Neighborhoods would not be affected in Segment A. There could be negative impacts for those who reside close to construction activities; however, because construction activities and construction staging would be within the I-90 right-of-way and because I-90 is lower than the surrounding area, impacts are expected to be minor. Access for construction vehicles and haul routes would be from I-90, and construction traffic through the adjoining neighborhoods would be limited.

Segment B

Construction for the Segment B alternatives would primarily be located within existing transportation rights-of-way. Detour routes are available, with the exception of Bellevue Way SE south of 112th Avenue SE. Neighborhood traffic intrusion is expected to be low, with the exception of Bellevue Way SE heading north of the Y west of 112th Avenue SE. Increased traffic congestion as a result of the construction-related traffic disruptions could temporarily affect transit reliability and auto travel times on the local arterials.

Construction activities associated with *Preferred Alternative B2M* would be located farther east along Bellevue Way when compared to other Segment B alternatives along Bellevue Way SE. Because *Preferred Alternative B2M* is located east of Bellevue Way SE, it would minimize impacts on traffic on Bellevue Way due to lane closures. One lane along Bellevue Way SE would likely be closed for most of the construction period, with periods where additional lane closures could be required, depending on construction activity. It would also temporarily relocate the retail activities associated with the blueberry farm and the Eastside Heritage Center located in the Winters House. Other trail and park activities would be detoured to new points of access, but access would be maintained throughout construction.

Of the other alternatives in Segment B, Alternative B1 is predicted to require the most haul truck trips due to the relatively high amount of excavation and asphalt concrete pavement required. Alternative B1 would result in the greatest impacts on neighborhoods

during construction due to the amount of new right-of-way required along Bellevue Way SE, which would disrupt those in the adjoining neighborhoods.

Alternative B7 would result in the fewest impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods because much of the construction would be within the former BNSF Railway corridor. Alternatives B2A, B2E, and B3 would result in similar impacts as *Preferred Alternative B2M* because these alternatives follow essentially the same route along Bellevue Way SE and 112th Avenue SE.

Segment C

Construction would require mostly lane and/or road closures. Tunnels and underground stations may include cut-and-cover construction, tunnel-boring construction, and sequential excavation mining construction. Tunnel construction would likely last longer than construction for an elevated or at-grade section, creating a longer period of disruption to adjacent communities and supporting businesses.

Within Segment C, local, minor, and principal arterials would be affected by construction. Road closures range from none at staging areas and partial road closures for short-term durations, to full road closures. Detour routes would be available in the central business district, but commercial vehicles would have limited access in some cases. Construction vehicle traffic ranges from low to high, and neighborhood traffic intrusion would range from low to moderate.

Because Downtown Bellevue is so densely developed, it was considered important to identify the staging areas needed to construct Segment C in order to identify the associated potential impacts. Staging areas would be located at the northern and southern ends of Downtown Bellevue within Segment C to facilitate construction. The Segment C alternatives would also include a staging area at the stations (see Exhibits 2-52 through 2-60 in Chapter 2 for location of staging areas). Staging areas at the southern end of Alternatives C2T, C3T, or C4A would depend on the specific connection from Segment B.

The staging area locations with the greatest potential to affect neighborhoods are staging areas on the north half of Surrey Downs Park where the King County District Courthouse is located, the property southwest of Main Street/112th Avenue NE, the property along 112th Avenue NE, and property at McCormick Park. These staging areas are located adjacent to existing residences that could be affected by the noise, dust, and activity related to construction. Depending on the sensitivity of the surrounding land uses, a barrier could be used to buffer the adjacent land uses from noise and visual impacts where practical. Both the

permanent impacts and the temporary construction impacts are discussed below for each alternative within Segment C.

Constructing *Preferred Alternative C11A* would potentially result in impacts related to construction activities near residences along 112th Avenue SE and Main Street. Although some residences would experience impacts, the overall neighborhood cohesion would not be affected. The area where properties would be acquired along 112th Avenue SE and Main Street would also be used for staging areas and to store building materials, equipment, and excavation materials. Construction would result in a temporary closure of a portion of Surrey Downs Park and users might experience increased noise, but access to the park would be maintained.

Because *Preferred Alternative C11A* follows 112th Avenue SE and Main Street, any short-term impacts on pedestrian and vehicular circulation are not considered a barrier to social interaction. Also, Sound Transit would maintain access to adjacent properties to the extent possible. Construction periods would comply with local noise ordinances. Where possible, mature trees would be preserved and noise barriers could be constructed prior to beginning construction. After construction, this area would be restored and would act as a buffer between light rail and the neighborhood. Within Downtown Bellevue, construction activities associated with the Bellevue Transit Center Station would require the temporary relocation of the transit bus bays.

Construction impacts with *Preferred Alternative C9T* would be located in similar areas of Surrey Downs Park and in a shorter-distance area along Main Street as those discussed under *Preferred Alternative C11A* but would involve cut-and-cover construction. Cut-and-cover construction activities have the potential to affect how neighborhood residents access businesses along 110th NE Avenue up to the Bellevue Transit Center. There would be times when roadways are closed due to excavation activities. Some portions of the roadway could possibly be temporarily covered (i.e., using steel plates), thus allowing work to continue below while traffic has access above. The properties used for staging are surrounded by mixed use and commercial uses within the urban downtown area, and would have no impact on single-family residential neighborhoods.

Alternative C1T would have the same construction impacts as *Preferred Alternative C9T*, except that the tunnel is longer and could affect access to Bellevue Arts Museum and the pedestrian path at approximately NE 6th Street between Bellevue Way

and the Bellevue Transit Center. Alternative C1T would also relocate the transit bus bays during construction. The properties used for staging are surrounded by mixed use and commercial uses within the urban downtown area, so they would have no impact on single-family residential neighborhoods.

Like *Preferred Alternative C9T* and Alternative C1T, Alternative C2T would have similar construction impacts. Two of the possible staging areas at the south end, however, could potentially affect Surrey Downs located in the South of Downtown residential neighborhood. The first might affect the Surrey Downs neighborhood due to its location at the King County District Courthouse site and temporarily disrupt the quality of residential land uses during tunneling activities. However, this staging site would reduce the number of residential relocations with other connectors. After construction, the staging area would be available for redevelopment consistent with the master planning efforts for Surrey Downs Park.

If the connector from Alternative B2E is used, the relocated businesses and residences, which are isolated from the remaining residences in the neighborhood, would not be considered a negative impact on the overall neighborhood cohesion. Nearby residences would experience temporary disruption from adjacent project construction. When construction is completed, the land could be restored or used to create a park that would provide a buffer to transition between the Surrey Downs and Downtown neighborhoods as recommended in the Downtown Implementation Plan.

The third possible staging area for the southern end of Segment C is located at the East Main Station and is primarily within a commercial area and would not affect residential neighborhoods.

In addition to the possible staging areas and impacts on the Surrey Downs neighborhood described for Alternative C2T, Alternative C3T would use property at its north end that would potentially affect the Northtowne neighborhood. The staging area at McCormick Park would remove six single-family residences along the north side of the park. This represents a small area of the neighborhood. The impact would result in the temporary loss of the park to patrons as well as disruption of the buffer transition between the Northtowne and Downtown neighborhoods. Alternative C3T would include redesigning and reconstructing the park upon completion of the project. Nearby residents in the Northtowne neighborhood would have temporary disruption from adjacent project construction.

Alternative C4A would use primarily the same staging areas (i.e., south of Main Street and at McCormick Park) as Alternative C3T, with similar impacts. South of Main Street, Alternative C4A would require a smaller area.

The properties used for staging for Alternative C7E are surrounded by commercial uses within the urban downtown area, so they would have no impact on existing residential neighborhoods.

Alternative C8E would use the McCormick Park staging area, and impacts would be similar to those described for Alternative C3T. In addition, construction along 110th would affect several multifamily residences.

Impacts resulting from Alternative C9A would be similar to those described for Alternative C4A.

Impacts resulting from Alternative C14E would be similar to those described for Alternative C7E.

Segment D

Construction activities associated with *Preferred Alternative D2A* and the D2A - 120th Station Design Option would have no or limited impacts on neighborhoods because the area is associated with commercial- and industrial-related land uses, and there are no residential neighborhoods or community facilities nearby. Much of the western portions along this alternative may be under redevelopment at or following the construction of East Link. Collector, local, minor, and principal arterials would be affected by construction. Road closures would range from partial closures for short-term durations to full closures for long-term durations. Neighborhood traffic intrusion and construction vehicle traffic would be low because detours are generally available. A large segment of the alternative would be located adjacent to WSDOT right-of-way, thus minimizing the impacts on the local roadways. The D2A - NE 24th Design Option would require construction within the Overlake area, but the adjacent land uses are primarily commercial related and impacts would be the same as those described for above.

The other alternatives in Segment D would have similar impacts as those described for *Preferred Alternative D2A*. Impacts on neighborhoods would be minimal because these roads are surrounded by primarily industrial and commercial uses. Alternative D5 might result in even fewer disruptions because the route is mostly adjacent to SR 520 and away from the commercial corridors and major arterials.

Segment E

All Segment E alternatives travel along the south side of SR 520 and under NE 40th Street, NE 51st Street, and NE 60th Street in a retained-cut profile and then return to at-grade down to West Lake Sammamish Parkway NE. Within Segment E, local and collector arterials as well as state highways would be affected by construction. Barriers, such as road closures, would range from partial closures for short-term durations to full closures for long-term durations. Construction vehicle traffic is expected to be moderate, as would neighborhood traffic intrusion, because detour routes are generally available. In general, large portions of construction would be along or alongside of arterial or collector roads where noise is expected. Construction within the former BNSF Railway corridor is not expected to disrupt neighborhoods.

Preferred Alternative E2 would not likely result in any neighborhood impacts during construction because this alternative is primarily adjacent to the existing SR 520 right-of-way and within the former BNSF Railway corridor. The residential neighborhoods to the east of SR 520 might experience some noise impacts, but cohesion would not be affected. Users of the adjacent park facilities might experience increased noise, but access to and use of the facilities would not be impacted. The E2 - Redmond Transit Center Design Option would also impact the skate park near the existing Redmond Transit Center. This design option would close 161st Avenue NE during construction, which might affect access to businesses and some residential units, but all uses along this roadway have other access points.

In addition to the impacts with all Segment E alternatives, construction activities at the intersection of Leary Way NE and the former BNSF Railway corridor that would result from Alternative E4 may require temporary relocation of the Redmond Saturday Market and affect some multifamily residences. Because the market consists primarily of portable fixtures, temporary relocation elsewhere within the Redmond Town Center or Redmond is not expected to result in adverse impacts. Alternative E1 might affect traffic flow and business access on West Lake Sammamish Parkway and the residents on the bluff above the roadway, but no impacts on community cohesion are anticipated.

Maintenance Facility

No adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods are anticipated from the construction of the maintenance facility alternatives because the facilities would be located within areas having primarily industrial uses. However, in the instance of

MF1, which is close to the Children's Hospital Bellevue Clinic and Surgery Center and other medical and office land uses, there could be an increase in noise impacts. The only other exception is MF5, which would be constructed within an area surrounded by existing light industrial uses but could create noise and dust impacts near the Lake Washington Technical College Redmond Corporate Campus. This is not considered an adverse impact on the neighborhood quality.

4.4.4 Potential Mitigation Measures

Sound Transit would incorporate measures to try to minimize the impacts on neighborhood quality, social interaction, and safety and security. The East Link Project would primarily provide net benefits to neighborhood quality during operation, and therefore no mitigation would be necessary beyond mitigation described in other sections of the Final EIS. Project construction would result in temporary reduction of neighborhood quality due to construction barriers and reduced convenience in access and may result in impacts on use of community resources during construction.

Specific mitigation measures during project operation and construction are described in detail in other sections of this Final EIS, including Chapter 3 and Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.17. No additional mitigation measures related to social impacts, community, and neighborhoods would be required.