



West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #8 – September 5, 2018

Meeting Notes

Agenda Item #1 – Welcome and introductions

Diane Adams, Facilitator, welcomed Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) members to the group's eighth meeting. She confirmed the agenda and stated the meeting's objective: reviewing the Level 2 alternatives and evaluation process. Diane noted that the group would not be asked to make recommendations on which Level 2 alternatives are carried forward into Level 3 at this meeting; those recommendations will be made at the September 26 SAG meeting.

Agency directors, project leads and staff in attendance were:

- Cathal Ridge, Central Corridor Director, Sound Transit
- Diane Adams, Facilitator
- Ron Endlich, Project Director, Sound Transit
- Stephen Mak, High Capacity Transit Development Manager, Sound Transit
- Kate Lichtenstein, Light Rail Development Manager, Sound Transit
- Leda Chahim, Government & Community Relations Manager, Sound Transit
- Andrea Burnett, Community Outreach Supervisor, Sound Transit
- Carrie Avila Mooney, Government & Community Relations Manager, Sound Transit
- Wesley King, Central Corridor Operations Director, Sound Transit
- Jim Parsons, Consultant Project Manager, HNTB
- David Shelton, Central Segment Lead, HNTB
- Jeanne Krikawa, Station Area Planning Lead, The Underhill Group
- KaDeena Yerkan, External Engagement Lead, EnviroIssues
- Harrison Price, External Engagement, EnviroIssues

SAG members in attendance were:

- Andres Arjona, Community Representative – Ballard
- Becky Asencio, Seattle Public Schools
- Bryce Yadon, Futurewise
- Deb Barker, Community Representative – West Seattle
- Erin Goodman, SODO Business Improvement Area
- Ginny Gilder, Force 10 Hoops/Seattle Storm
- Hamilton Gardiner, West Seattle Chamber
- Jon Scholes, Downtown Seattle Association
- Katie Garrow, Martin Luther King Labor Council
- Larry Yok, Community Representative – Chinatown-International District
- Maiko Winkler-Chin, Seattle Chinatown-International District Preservation & Development Authority
- Mike Stewart, Ballard Alliance
- Peter Schrappen, Northwest Marine Trade Association
- Robert Cardona, Community Representative – Uptown



- Savitha Reddy Pathi, Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience
- Steve Lewis, Alliance of People with disAbilities
- Walter Reese, Nucor Steel
- Warren Aakervik, Community Representative – Freight

NOTE – the following SAG members were not in attendance:

- Brian King, Community Representative – West Seattle
- Colleen Echohawk, Chief Seattle Club
- Dave Gering, Manufacturing Industrial Council
- Greg Nickels, Former Mayor of Seattle
- Julia Park, Community Representative – Ballard
- Kelsey Mesher, Transportation Choices Coalition
- Mark Nagle, Expedia
- Scott Rusch, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
- Ron Severt, Space Needle
- Willard Brown, Delridge Neighborhood Development Association

Agenda Item #2 – Previous meeting summary

Diane briefly reviewed the meeting summary from the July 16 SAG meeting, which focused on the additional alternatives in the SODO and Chinatown-International District areas.

Agenda Item #3 – Community engagement update

Andrea Burnett, Sound Transit, provided an update on ongoing and upcoming community engagement activities. She presented the monthly reports for June, July and August 2018. During those three months, Sound Transit attended 49 community briefings and 8 festivals throughout the project area. Andrea also highlighted the Station Charrettes, which were collaborative design sessions attended by agency partners and community stakeholders. Finally, Andrea invited SAG members to attend the second round of neighborhood forums, scheduled for September 8, 2018, September 11, 2018 and September 17, 2018 in West Seattle, Downtown Seattle and Ballard, respectively.

Agenda Item #4 – Alternatives development process

Cathal Ridge, Sound Transit, gave an overview of the alternatives development process and updated the group on the status. He reiterated the goal of identifying a Preferred Alternative by April 2019 and noted that reducing the number of alternatives coming out of Level 2 would support achieving that goal. After highlighting that all alternatives are being evaluated using the same evaluation criteria throughout the alternatives development process, Cathal explained how each evaluation measure is presented on a scale from “lower performing” to “higher performing”. As part of the Level 2 evaluation, Sound Transit also performed a cost assessment to inform the comparison of alternatives within any given segment.

Cathal provided an overview of what information would be included in the presentation for each study segment.



Agenda Item #5 – Level 2 alternatives and screening results

Following the update on the alternatives development process, Sound Transit staff presented the Level 2 alternatives and evaluation results. These presentations included a map of the alternatives, evaluation measures tables, key differentiators and a summary table noting key findings, cost comparisons and schedule comparisons. For additional details about each alternative, see the PowerPoint [presentation](#).

Interbay / Ballard

Kate Lichtenstein, Sound Transit, presented the Level 2 alternatives, evaluation tables, key differentiators and summary table for the below alternatives. See the PowerPoint [presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative and the analysis.

- ST3 Representative Project
- 15th/Fixed Bridge/15th
- 20th/Fixed Bridge/17th
- 20th/Tunnel/15th
- Armory Way/Tunnel/14th
- Central Interbay/Movable Bridge/14th
- Central Interbay/Fixed Bridge/14th
- Central Interbay/Tunnel/15th

Clarifying questions (Q) and comments (C), from SAG members, as well as answers (A) from Sound Transit staff, included the following:

Q: Does the travel time analysis assume no interruptions with a movable bridge?

A: Yes. Potential interruptions were addressed in the Potential Service Interruptions evaluation measure.

Q: Was the ST3 Representative Project evaluated to the same degree as the alternatives?

A: Yes. The goal was to establish a baseline to compare the alternatives to.

C: The center of the Ballard Urban Village is dependent on policy decisions made between now and 2035. Any decisions about where the station is located would impact those decisions.

Q: Could alternatives that rated higher performing for the schedule effects criterion be delivered before 2035?

A: The "Higher Performing" rating indicates that, based on the assessment to date, all the alternatives in the Interbay/Ballard segment could be delivered by 2035.

Following Kate's presentation, Sloan Dawson, Sound Transit, shared a recap of the Ballard and Interbay station charrettes. He explained the key points brought forth by agency partners and community stakeholders at the all-day planning events for each station area. For more details about the station charrette feedback, see the PowerPoint [presentation](#).

Clarifying questions (Q) and comments (C), from SAG members, as well as answers (A) from Sound Transit staff, included the following:



C: It would be difficult to access the 14th Avenue W station locations given the topography and difficulty crossing 15th Avenue NW. In addition, the industrial lands south of the 14th Avenue NW stations are vital because of their access to the waterway.

SAG members discussed the Ballard segment and key findings. Questions (Q) and comments (C) from SAG members, as well as answers (A) provided by Sound Transit staff, included the following:

C: If pursuing the Ballard bridge route, Sound Transit should keep in mind the infrastructure needed to support it.

C: The 17th Avenue NW elevated is preferred.

C: The Armory Way/Tunnel/14th and Central Interbay/Fixed Bridge/14th are decent alternatives but compared to the alternative on 17th Avenue and have lower ridership potential.

C: The 20th/Fixed Bridge/17th and 20th/Tunnel/15th alternatives are unnecessarily expensive.

C: The Central Interbay/ Movable Bridge/14th and Armory Way/ Tunnel/14th and Central Interbay/ Fixed Bridge/14th and Central Interbay/ Tunnel/15th don't have high enough potential ridership compared to the other alternatives.

C: Concern about the construction duration with the Central Interbay/Tunnel/15th alternative.

C: The ST3 Representative Project would best serve the community.

C: The Armory Way/Tunnel/14th and 20th/Fixed Bridge/17th alternatives seem to be about the same as far as level of service.

C: The Armory Way/Tunnel/14th and 20th/Fixed Bridge/17th alternatives seem to be about the same as far as level of service and potential ridership.

C: Concern about the grades around the Armory Way/Tunnel/14th stations, especially for ADA access.

C: What are the station elevations for each alternative?

A: The elevations of the Ballard terminus station options are all fairly similar (approximately 40' to 50').

C: Interested in whether the Armory Way/Tunnel/14th alternative could be modified to follow the 15th/Fixed Bridge/15th alternative.

C: Consider shifting Armory Way/Tunnel/14th away from the BNSF. It has the shortest tunnel crossing and proximity to 15th Avenue NW is a big deal for the neighborhood.

Q: Why does the 20th/Fixed Bridge/17th have a lower score for residential displacements, but a higher score for development potential?

A: It is a result of displacement of low-density residential development. There would be a need to acquire property.



Q: Is it more expensive to be near the tracks or further away?

A: The Level 2 alternatives include both elevated and at-grade sections along the BNSF tracks. The alternatives using 20th Ave W include long-spans to reach the western edge of the BNSF tracks, which potentially add costs. The Central Interbay and Armory Way alternatives include at-grade sections along the eastern edge of the BNSF tracks, which potentially lessen cost.

Q: Is it more expensive to tunnel under a waterway?

A: Tunneling is generally more expensive than elevated. There are some challenges related to tunneling under water that would need further study.

Q: Why does 20th/Fixed Bridge/17th score lower on future light rail expansion?

A: Building a future elevated structure east or north through more developed areas could potentially have more property effects.

Q: Does the ST3 Representative Project have to go into the EIS? Or could the Sound Transit Board eliminate it?

A: Not necessarily. The Board could identify other alternatives to study in the EIS that meet the intent of the ST3 Plan.

C: The Interbay station should support the east side of Interbay (closer to Queen Anne) due to the increased density.

Q: Is there any impact to the Port's operations by having the line closer to the cruise ship terminal?

A: The Port is looking into it. They want to make sure they have an understanding of the potential effects. They are interested in having a shuttle from the terminal to a future light rail station.

Q: Could complexity of the alternatives impact the schedule?

A: Additional complexity generally translates to higher construction costs. These would be more likely to impact the budget than the schedule in this segment.

C: Comparing costs is difficult because they are taken with current regulations. The potential benefits are more important than the associated additional costs.

Q: Do choices in one segment impact other segments?

A: Potentially, but this would need to be examined further in Level 3. During Level 2, the goal is to identify the more promising alternatives within each segment to inform the development of end-to-end alternatives in Level 3.

C: Living near one of the most underserved stations, having a station poorly positioned in a neighborhood has big consequences. There is a cost to putting stations in the wrong place.

Q: What is the pedestrian access like through Interbay?

A: The most traveled path is across W Dravus Street.

Q: Is Metro looking at adding any east-west buses on W Dravus Street?



A: We are currently engaging King County Metro about what bus service will look like in the future in the Interbay area.

C: This is a project that will be driving policy for the next several decades. For example, creating pressure to rezone industrial areas around 14th Avenue NW.

Downtown

Ron Endlich, Sound Transit, presented the Level 2 alternatives, evaluation tables, key differentiators and summary table for the below alternatives. See the PowerPoint [presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative and the analysis.

- ST3 Representative Project
- 5th/Harrison
- 6th/Boren/Roy
- 5th/Terry/Roy/Mercer

Following Ron's presentation, Sloan Dawson, Sound Transit, shared a recap of the South Lake Union area and Denny area station charrettes. He explained the key points brought forth by agency partners and community stakeholders at the all-day planning events for each station area. For more details about the station charrette feedback, see the PowerPoint [presentation](#).

SAG members discussed the Downtown segment and key findings. Questions (Q) and comments (C) from SAG members, as well as answers (A) provided by Sound Transit staff, included the following:

C: The stations in South Lake Union are mostly in flat areas so there is less of a concern about accessibility challenges.

C: Regarding a station under Harrison Street, there is concern about entrances on Harrison Street. The surface street southbound wasn't built with turning radius for trucks. Although, there are plans to fix those issues that should be considered for these alternatives.

Q: Where are the entrances planned for the Key Arena stations? What is the best location for the Key Arena station?

A: We have looked at where the entrances would be located relevant to the new Key Area development. There could be an entrance near the rooms on the northwest side of the building. There are many factors to consider.

C: I think we have to reconsider as Seattleites what is "walkable." Some options are more attractive if you walk a little further and they also serve the Uptown neighborhood.

C: I am intrigued by the Terry location for the Denny station. It looks like it has a lot of potential.

C: Boren is far out there and may be pushing the limits.

C: I like the idea of the brown alternative and ST3 Representative Project station locations. They serve Key Arena well.



Q: Do all the Midtown locations have underground connections to existing station?

A: There would be a connection between the new and existing stations at both Westlake and Chinatown-ID.

Q: Does the portal location in Queen Anne impact what is feasible in Interbay?

A: In general, the portals that are furthest north connect to alternatives on the east side of 15th Avenue W.

C: Mercer is a frustrating street to cross because of the signal timing. Having a station on Mercer Street would limit how many people can access the station by foot. In addition, people would likely use the station as a crossing of Mercer Street.

C: The station location on Republican Street is preferred. Seattle Center is looking more at how the existing buildings could be used and partnerships should be explored.

Q: What is driving the higher cost of the alternative with a station on Harrison Street?

A: There are likely to be additional property acquisition costs that would be required west of Seattle Center. Also, this station is coupled with a 5th Ave alignment through midtown which is likely to have greater costs associated with building foundations tiebacks.

SODO / Chinatown-International District

Ron Endlich, Sound Transit, presented the Level 2 alternatives, evaluation tables, key differentiators and summary table for the below alternatives. See the PowerPoint [presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative and the analysis.

- ST3 Representative Project
- Massachusetts Tunnel Portal
- Surface E-3
- 4th Avenue Cut-and-Cover C-ID
- 4th Avenue Mined C-ID
- 5th Avenue Mined C-ID
- Occidental Avenue

Clarifying questions (Q) and comments (C), from SAG members, as well as answers (A) from Sound Transit staff, included the following:

Q: Has the data been shared with the organizations in Pioneer Square and Chinatown-International District?

A: We are planning to meet with organizations in those neighborhoods in the coming weeks to make the information as broadly available as possible. In addition, the information will be presented at the upcoming public open houses/neighborhood forums; the Downtown neighborhood forum will be held on September 11 at Union Station. All of the information will also be available 24/7 via an online open house.

Following Ron's presentation, Sloan Dawson, Sound Transit, shared a recap of the Chinatown-International District area station charrettes. He explained the key points brought forth by agency



partners and community stakeholders at the all-day planning event for each station area. For more details about the station charrette feedback, see the PowerPoint [presentation](#).

Clarifying questions (Q) and comments (C), from SAG members, as well as answers (A) from Sound Transit staff, included the following:

Q: Who owns the 5th Avenue plaza?

A: Sound Transit has ordered a title deed and will update the group when the information is available.

SAG members discussed the SODO / Chinatown-International District segment and key findings. Questions (Q) and comments (C) from SAG members, as well as answers (A) provided by Sound Transit staff, included the following:

C: The Occidental Avenue S is preferred for the different station location in SODO.

C: The Occidental alternative removes a lot of industry, which might increase the property value for property owners.

C: The Massachusetts Tunnel option seems to be less impactful for a reasonable cost.

C: The mined tunnel and station options are preferred to the cut-and-cover options.

C: The 4th Avenue Cut-and-Cover option is not preferred.

Q: Can you explain more about the Massachusetts Tunnel Portal option?

A: The tunnel portal would be located further south than the portal for the ST3 Representative Project (just north of Holgate, east of the E3 transitway). The bored tunnel would follow 6th Avenue and then 5th Avenue. It would include a cut-and-cover station on 5th Avenue adjacent to the existing light rail station. The advantages include lessening the impacts to the WSDOT I-90 structures and lessening the extent of cut-and-cover construction along 5th Avenue in the Chinatown-International District.

Q: What is the benefit of a mined option on 5th Avenue? Does it result in less surface disruptions?

A: Yes, it results in less disruption of the 5th Avenue roadway. There would still be a need to build an access shaft and some other infrastructure on the surface on properties adjacent to 5th Avenue.

Q: What are the challenges to work around BNSF?

A: They have very active rail lines which run 24/7. A long span structure would be required to get over their rail yard in SODO.

C: The benefits of a 4th Avenue alignment are very attractive for Chinatown-International District. The potential intermodal connections would also be fantastic.

C: The neighborhood would like an option that is the least impactful during construction. The Massachusetts Tunnel Portal is attractive in that sense.

Q: Could a Massachusetts Tunnel Portal be combined with the Occidental alternative?



A: Not in the current configuration as it would eliminate the potential for track interconnections. If there is interest, the feasibility of this combination would need to be evaluated further.

Q: Who has priority for eminent domain? Sound Transit or King County Metro?

A: This is dependent on ongoing coordination with Metro. Additional discussions will take place if the option goes forward that would displace Ryerson Base.

C: At the SODO station charrette there was a lack of consensus about the grade separations. There were interesting points made about moving the stations closer to S Lander Street.

Q: With a new station or two in SODO, could there be a shuttle to move people throughout the neighborhood?

A: The SODO neighborhood has been working with King County Metro's Community Connections program to determine if a circulator bus is feasible. There is also a need to consider access needs during construction.

West Seattle / Duwamish

Stephen Mak, Sound Transit, presented the Level 2 alternatives, evaluation tables, key differentiators and summary table for the below alternatives. See the PowerPoint [presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative and the analysis.

- ST3 Representative Project
- Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel
- Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Elevated
- Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Tunnel
- Golf Course/Alaska Junction/Tunnel

Clarifying questions (Q) and comments (C), from SAG members, as well as answers (A) from Sound Transit staff, included the following:

Q: Are the costs noted in the presentation representative of Sound Transit's costs? Or do they include development costs associated with the alternatives?

A: The values are only representative of Sound Transit's cost to build the infrastructure.

Following Stephen's presentation, Sloan Dawson, Sound Transit, shared a recap of the Delridge, Avalon and Alaska Junction station charrettes. He explained the key points brought forth by agency partners and community stakeholders at the all-day planning events for each station area. For more details about the station charrette feedback, see the PowerPoint [presentation](#).

SAG members discussed the West Seattle segment and key findings. Questions (Q) and comments (C) from SAG members, as well as answers (A) provided by Sound Transit staff, included the following:

C: The Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle tunnel is preferred.

C: It is difficult to assess the alternatives without a full understanding of costs.



C: The tunnel station at Fauntleroy Way SW is not accessible.

C: The 42nd/41st Ave tunnel options are preferred to the other Junction station locations.

Q: How is freight mobility impacted by the Oregon Street/Alaskan Junction/Tunnel alternative?

A: The main effect would be associated with the north crossing option of the Duwamish. Close coordination with the Port would be required to locate columns and foundations in a manner that minimizes effects to the Port's operations (both during construction and in the permanent condition).

Q: Is there a preferred side of the West Seattle bridge for the Duwamish River crossing?

A: On the north side, there could be potential effects to the Port's operations, specifically truck movement, particularly during construction. On the south side, there are a number of constraints that would require complex structures as well as environmental effects (Pigeon Point greenbelt).

C: It is interesting to look at the cost differential between the Oregon Street/Alaskan Junction/Tunnel alternative and the Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Elevated alternative in comparison to the Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel alternative.

C: Sound Transit should look at the mix and match options, especially for different station locations in the Alaska Junction.

Q: Do the southern Duwamish River crossings (purple alternative) have less impact on the Port?

A: They would still result in impacts to Terminal 106 along with other facilities.

C: The discussion about tunnel locations were all very positive at the charrette. Any alternative that puts a tall structure or elevated guideway will impact the character of the neighborhood. The only elevated station we considered was the Fauntleroy station because of its potential for future development. The Avalon station location could result in some street closures.

C: From the community input to-date, everyone prefers a tunnel station in the Junction and everyone wants the terminus facing south.

C: There should be considerations in SODO for how the crossings would impact the businesses on 1st Avenue S in the southern part of the neighborhood.

Agenda Item #6 – Next steps and next meeting

Diane Adams thanked the SAG members for attending the meeting and encouraged them to attend the upcoming neighborhood forums in their respective neighborhoods.

Cathal Ridge reiterated that the goal coming out of Level 2 is to identify a subset of more promising alternatives to facilitate more in-depth analysis and stay on target to identify a Preferred Alternative and other EIS alternatives by April 2019.

Final questions (Q) and comments (C), from SAG members, as well as answers (A) from Sound Transit staff, included the following:



C: Without bounds on what is financially feasible, it will be difficult to make decisions based on the cost comparisons.

Q: How many alternatives would be feasible to move into Level 3 screening?

A: Ideally, we would have three alternatives in Level 3 screening, including the ST3 Representative Project.

Diane Adams thanked SAG members for attending the group's eighth meeting. The next SAG meeting is scheduled for September 26 at Union Station.