



Everett Link Extension

SEPA EIS Scoping Outreach Summary

Jan. 23 – March 10, 2023

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Scoping: Public Involvement Summary

EIS Scoping Period: Jan. 23 – March 10, 2023
 Project Phase: Alternatives Development

Participation by the numbers

1 OVERVIEW

The Everett Link Extension project will add 16 miles of light rail and six Snohomish County stations to the growing Link light rail network. We are also studying an additional provisional¹ station at SR 99/Airport Road. In addition, the project will include the essential Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) North that is needed to receive, store and service a larger train fleet to support the light rail extension as well as overall system operation. The project will travel through the communities of Lynnwood, unincorporated Snohomish County and Everett.

The next phase of this project will be environmental review, which includes the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. In preparation, Sound Transit conducted scoping under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the Everett Link Extension project from Jan. 23 to March 10, 2023. This report outlines public involvement efforts conducted throughout scoping, which provided opportunities to offer input on:

- The project’s purpose and need statement,
- Which light rail route/stations and OMF North site alternatives to continue to study, and

¹ Provisional stations are those with funding for planning, preliminary engineering and environmental review, but not for design



Nearly **11,000** users participated in an online open house from Jan. 23 – March 10 that was available in four languages



Three project email updates sent to **4,486** subscribers



More than 33,700 mailers sent to homes, apartments and businesses within a half-mile of the project area



1,207 comments gathered from online comment forms, emails and letters, including a petition with 353 signatures



9,910 users reached on Sound Transit’s **Facebook posts**; two Facebook ad runs garnered over 200,000 impressions and 4,440 clicks



638 engagements, nearly 21,500 impressions and 290 clicks observed on Sound Transit’s **Twitter posts**



350 posters distributed to community gathering places throughout the project area between Lynnwood and Everett



Print and online display advertisements placed in **nine** local publications, in multiple languages including English, Spanish, Korean and Russian

and construction. Sound Transit will utilize the initial work if funds become available for design and construction.

- Topics or issues to study in the environmental impact statement (EIS)

Scoping comments both inform the upcoming environmental review process and are shared with the Interagency Group, Community Advisory Group and Elected Leadership Group to inform their recommendations. Based on this input, the Sound Transit Board will identify alternatives — and possibly a preferred alternative for stations, alignments and the OMF North — to study in the Draft EIS. Project alternatives will undergo much more detailed analysis, with future opportunities for public comment.

2 OUTREACH METHODS AND TOOLS

2.1 Notifications

Sound Transit advertised the scoping comment period and associated Participate.Online online open house (P.O site) through various notifications starting Jan. 20. This is a summary of notifications; additional detail can be found in the Scoping Summary Report (review **Appendices A-I** for examples of each notification).

2.1.1 GovDelivery project email updates

Three project email updates were sent during the comment period on Jan. 25, Feb. 6 and Feb. 28 to announce the P.O site was live, encourage scoping comments and advertise public meetings (review **Appendix A**).

- Jan. 25 project email update:
 - 4,265 recipients
 - 39% open rate
 - 4% click-through rate
- Feb. 6 email update:
 - 4,357 recipients
 - 38% open rate

- 3% click-through rate
- Feb. 28 email update:
 - 4,486 recipients
 - 34% open rate
 - 3% click-through rate

2.1.2 Emails to partners

To continue building relationships with community organizations, businesses and jurisdictional partners along the corridor, Sound Transit sent emails to the stakeholder lists compiled over the first two years of the project, starting with early engagement efforts in spring and summer 2021 and added to through additional engagement and outreach. The emails invited recipients to submit scoping comments, attend a virtual or in-person public meeting or other scoping outreach events, and spread the word with their communities about the comment period's opening. Emails were sent to jurisdictions, community organizations, businesses and service providers, and agency partners (review **Appendix B**, including list of organizations):

- Jan. 26 – Announcement of the beginning of the scoping comment period to agencies, jurisdictions, community organizations, and key contacts .
- Jan. 31 – Announcement of the beginning of the scoping comment period to community organizations, businesses, and service providers.
- Jan. 31 – Announcement to partner agency and jurisdiction public information officers and community engagement staff.
- Jan. 31 – Invitation to agency partners to participate in and table at the in-person public meeting.
- Feb. 15 – Reminder of the in-person meeting and a follow-up thank you email to jurisdictions, agency partners, community organizations, businesses, and service providers.

2.1.3 News release

Sound Transit distributed a news release on Jan. 23 to invite scoping comments, invite recipients to attend a virtual or in-person public scoping meeting and share information about recent technical analysis for the Everett Link Extension project (review **Appendix C**).

2.1.4 Digital and print display ads

Digital display and print advertisements were directly placed in the following publications and locations from Jan. 24 to March 10 (review **Appendix D**):

- [Live in Everett](#)
- [Russian Town Seattle](#)
- [The Korea Times](#)
- [The Daily Herald](#) (print and online)
- [La Raza del Noroeste](#)
- [M Radio](#) (Spanish)
- [Inside Lynnwood newsletter](#)
- Alderwood Mall (ad displayed on screens in the mall)

A retargeted digital display ad campaign also ran from Jan. 24 to March 10. Ads were targeted to zip codes in the project area and to English, Korean, Russian and Spanish speakers via several local, multicultural media outlets. Campaign performance (**review Appendix D**):

- Over 3,000,000 total impressions
- Over 2,500 click-throughs
- Over 3 million impressions; for a Snohomish County population under 1 million, this indicates that ads served impressions to locals multiple times
- Translated ads outperformed English ads, which is in line with previous Everett Link ad campaigns
- Korean and Russian ads saw the strongest click-through rates (CTR), with 0.11% and 0.10% respectively

Table 3 Retargeted ad campaign results, by language

Language	Impressions
English	2,086,942
Spanish	578,323
Korean	235,598
Russian	480,662
Total	3,381,525
Language	Clicks
English	1,367
Spanish	501
Korean	266
Russian	461
Total	2,595
Language	Click-Through Rate
English	0.07%
Spanish	0.09%
Korean	0.11%
Russian	0.10%
Total	0.077% (average)

2.1.5 Social media

Sound Transit notified the community about the scoping comment period and the P.O. site through Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. Posts advertised open house events and linked to the P.O site, which included detailed project information and asked for public feedback on route, station and OMF North alternatives (review **Appendix E**).

2.1.5.1 Facebook posts

Sound Transit shared four organic Facebook posts on Jan. 24, Feb. 2, Feb. 9 and Feb. 21 that encouraged viewers to learn more and share feedback on the scoping P.O site and advertised the in-person and virtual public scoping meetings. The posts received:

- 132 likes
- 38 comments
- 32 shares
- 660 clicks
- 9,910 reach
- 5.31% engagement rate

2.1.5.2 Facebook ads

Sound Transit ran two Facebook ads during the campaign. Each ad featured a short video clip rather than a static image. The project team targeted audiences within zip codes along the project corridor (98037, 98036, 98026, 98087, 98012, 98275, 98204, 98208, 98203, 98201, 98205).

- Ad run #1 (Jan. 24 - Feb. 6)
 - 104,860 impressions
 - 42,300 reach
 - 2,781 clicks
 - 2.65 click-through rate
 - \$0.25 cost per click
- Ad run #2 (Feb. 22 - March 8)
 - 104,401 impressions
 - 44,568 reach
 - 1,659 clicks
 - 1.59 click-through rate
 - \$0.42 cost per click

The Sound Transit social media team typically aims for a cost per click of under \$1 for English ads and noted that these ads performed very well. Typically, when ads do this well it's because the messaging and interest for the target audience resonates well with the timing of the ad.

2.1.5.3 Twitter

Sound Transit shared four tweets during the campaign:

- Jan. 24 Tweet
 - 6 likes
 - 3,604 impressions
 - 6 retweets
 - 98 engagements (2.64% engagement rate)
 - 49 clicks
- Feb. 2 Tweet
 - 18 likes
 - 3,616 impressions
 - 2 retweets
 - 112 engagements (3.04% engagement rate)
 - 45 clicks
- Feb. 9 Tweet
 - 52 likes

- 11,197 impressions
- 20 retweets
- 389 engagements (0.44% engagement rate)
- 187 clicks
- Feb. 21 Tweet
 - 7 likes
 - 3,048 impressions
 - 3 retweets
 - 39 engagements (1.25% engagement rate)
 - 9 clicks

2.1.6 Poster

The project team developed, printed and placed 350 posters at retail, small businesses, restaurants and telephone poles primarily within a half mile to a mile of proposed station areas along the project corridor. Posters included translated information in Korean, Russian and Spanish and linked via QR code to the P.O site in the appropriate language (review **Appendix F**).

2.1.7 Mailer

Sound Transit mailed 33,744 mailers to homes, apartments and businesses within a half mile of the project area. Mailers provided project timeline and background information in English, Korean, Russian and Spanish and directed recipients to the scoping P.O site (review **Appendix G**).

2.1.8 Flyer

The project team coordinated with PosterGiant to develop, print and distribute 160 doorhanger flyers between five Housing Hope low-income apartment buildings to announce two dedicated drop-in sessions on Feb. 3 (review **Appendix H**).

2.1.9 Earned media

At least 17 items were published in local media about the scoping P.O site and public meetings. In addition to articles about opportunities for readers to share feedback on the latest analysis of route, station and OMF North alternatives, a handful of local media outlets penned op-eds regarding the project, and others covered the large church contingency at the in-person public scoping meeting. Publications also included calendar listings and letters to the editor about the project (review samples in **Appendix I**).

2.2 Participate. Online Site

Sound Transit hosted a P.O site for the 45-day scoping comment period (Jan. 23 – March 10, 2023) for stakeholders to learn more about the latest technical analysis of alternatives and provide feedback on the project's purpose and need, what to study in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and potential route, station and OMF North alternatives.

The P.O site provided information about the project's background and environmental review process, the project's purpose and need, the latest technical analysis of potential route, station and OMF North location alternatives, as well as online comment forms for submitting coping comments. The P.O site was available in English, Korean, Russian and Spanish. The site was accessible with screen readers, including descriptions of all maps, figures, and images available in the four languages.

The project team used the P.O site's survey component as a vital means for collecting scoping comments in addition to comments received at the Feb. 15 in-person open house and via email, mail, and voicemail.

2.2.1 Engagement

For the scoping P.O sites (review **Appendix J**), 8,744 users visited the English site, 562 users visited the Korean site, 765 users visited the Spanish site and 756 users visited the Russian site (review site analytics reports in **Appendix K**).

On average, visitors spent nearly two minutes and thirty seconds on the English site, while visitors spent much less time on the Korean, Russian and Spanish sites (approximately a minute on the Spanish and Korean sites, but nearly 30 seconds on the Russian site). The bounce rate for the English site was about 31% whereas the bounce rate for the Korean, Russian and Spanish sites were consistently around 88%. The difference in the average session duration and bounce rate may be due to a larger percentage of visitors to the in-language sites being automated bots or spiders.

Most of the visitors to the English site sought it out through Facebook (39%) and directly through the URL (29%), whereas over half of the visitors to the Korean, Russian and Spanish sites sought the sites out directly through the sites' URLs.

2.3 Public meetings

The project team held one in-person public scoping meeting, two virtual public scoping meetings and a scoping meeting for Tribes and federal, state and local agencies during the scoping comment period. At the meetings, project team members shared information about the project, the environmental review process, how to provide scoping comments and responded to questions.

2.3.1 In-person public scoping meeting

Approximately 1,600 people attended the in-

person public scoping meeting held on Feb. 15, 2023, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Cascade High School (801 E Casino Rd, Everett, WA 98203). Cascade High School was selected because it is a recognizable location for the community and is located near the potential station location for the SR 526/Evergreen station. The school is accessible by the Swift Blue Line and local buses.

The meeting was an open house format with no formal presentation. Refreshments were provided to attendees, and there were activities at specific tables for children. Interpreters were available in American Sign Language, Korean, Russian and Spanish. Printed displays and handouts provided information on the project, potential route, station and OMF North location alternatives, and how to provide scoping comments. Many project staff members were in attendance to share information and answer questions throughout the meeting. Several partner organizations (Everett Transit, City of Everett, Community Transit, City of Lynnwood, Snohomish County) also staffed tables at the meeting with information on their own programs.

Questions asked to project team members during the in-person public scoping meeting were not considered scoping comments. Multiple comment opportunities were offered at the meeting, including paper comment forms, laptops with access to the online open house and online survey, and speaking to a court reporter. Attendees could also submit comments via email, mail or voicemail.

- **Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2023, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**
 - In-person public scoping meeting
 - 1,625 attendees
 - Five partner organizations in attendance

2.3.2 Virtual public scoping meetings

The two virtual public scoping meetings were conducted via Zoom webinar. Members of the public could join the meetings at everettlink.participate.online and from Sound Transit’s project website.

Both meetings offered live closed captions in English and live interpretation in Korean, Russian and Spanish. The virtual meeting on March 1 also included American Sign Language interpretation, as requested by a community member.

At both virtual meetings, the project team shared the same live presentation, which provided information on the project, timeline and potential route, station and OMF North location alternatives, an overview of analysis results, and how to provide scoping comments.

The team accepted questions throughout the presentation via the Zoom webinar Question & Answer function. The team responded to as many questions as possible throughout the meeting, and attendees were encouraged to email questions directly if they were not addressed during the meeting. Questions asked during these meetings did not count as scoping comments. Attendees were encouraged to submit feedback via the online survey, email, mail or voicemail.

A recording of the February 7 meeting was posted to the P.O site for anyone to view. [A video combining the presentation with Q&A portions from both meetings](#) was added to the P.O site after the scoping period was complete so people who missed a meeting could still view it.

- **Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.**
 - Virtual public scoping meeting
 - 73 attendees

- 79 questions during Q&A
- **Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.**
 - Virtual public scoping meeting
 - 54 attendees
 - 82 questions during Q&A

2.3.3 Tribal and agency scoping meeting

The project team hosted a virtual Tribal and agency scoping meeting to share the latest analysis of alternatives and answer questions from Tribes and federal, state and local agencies. The meeting was held via Zoom webinar. Attendees were encouraged to submit comments via online survey, email, mail or voicemail.

- **Monday, Feb. 13, 2023, 2:30 - 4 p.m.**
 - Tribal and agency scoping meeting
 - 17 agency attendees from 10 agencies

2.4 Tabling Events

The project team staffed eight outreach and tabling events at various community destinations in areas previously identified as minority, low-income and limited-English-proficiency population areas. The goal of these events was to continue building trust with historically underserved populations and reach these groups where they naturally gather through drop-in style tabling events. Sound Transit was intentional about advertising the scoping opportunity to these identified communities prior to and during the public comment period. Tabling and outreach events included:

- Snohomish County Black Heritage Committee MLK Day March and Rally on January 13

- Mariner Community Campus and Sno-Isle Libraries Toddler Story Time and drop-in session on January 24
- LETI TeVe (Facebook Live format) briefing on February 2 (event in Spanish)
- Hopeworks and Housing Hope Station Place building drop-in on February 3
- Los Gavilanes (grocery store) on February 4 (staffed with Spanish interpreter)
- Pacific Market (grocery store) on February 4 (staffed with Vietnamese interpreter)
- Connect Casino Road vet clinic on February 24 (staffed with Spanish interpreter)

2.5 Materials

The following materials were linked as community resources on the P.O site:

- **Project scoping introduction video:** The pre-recorded video presentation included an overview of the project and alternatives development process and explained opportunities to share feedback. <https://youtu.be/HxAwjfDdcvI>
- **Project factsheet:** A high-level project factsheet highlighting project background, the representative project and project schedule. Available in English, Korean, Russian and Spanish (review **Appendix L**).
- **Community Engagement factsheet:** A one-page factsheet underscoring the community engagement process, community engagement's importance and project partners (review **Appendix M**).

- **Community Engagement Guide:** A comprehensive guide underlining Sound Transit’s commitment to equitable public engagement as well as the various outreach tools being used in the alternatives development process (review **Appendix N**).
- **Frequently Asked Questions:** A document sharing high-level responses to frequently asked questions related to the project (review **Appendix O**).
- **Property Owner Guide:** A handout providing information regarding how Sound Transit works with owners of potentially affected properties (review **Appendix P**).
- **Community Guide to Alternatives Development:** A one-page handout explaining the alternatives development process. Available in English, Korean, Russian and Spanish (review **Appendix Q**).
- **Community Guide to Scoping:** A one-page handout explaining EIS scoping. Available in English, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Khmer, Lao, and Vietnamese (review **Appendix R**).
- **Quickscreens:** Large printed displays providing information on the project, potential route, station and OMF North location alternatives, and how to provide scoping comments (review **Appendix S**).
- **Scoping Information Report:** A [detailed report](#) providing an overview of the EIS scoping process, the project’s purpose and need, alternatives to be evaluated and topics proposed for study in the EIS.
- **Existing Conditions and Purpose and Need report:** A [detailed technical memorandum](#) used to identify issues and needs for the project corridor and define the purpose of proposed transit in the area.
- **SEPA Determination of Significance:** A legally required public notice under SEPA used to identify potential significant adverse impacts and announce scoping.
- **Early Scoping Summary Report:** A [detailed report](#) describing how Sound Transit and FTA conducted early scoping between Nov. 1, 2021 and Dec. 10, 2021 and summarizing comments received from local and regulatory agencies.
- **Level 1 Evaluation Report:** A [detailed report](#) outlining Level 1 technical analysis of potential route, station and OMF North alternatives.
- **Level 2 Evaluation Report:** A [detailed report](#) covering Level 2 technical analysis of potential route, station and OMF North alternatives. Technical analysis grew progressively more detailed from Level 1 to Level 2.

2.6 Comment collection

All materials advertising the scoping comment period encouraged the community to submit scoping comments. The project team also helped and supported visitors to the P.O site and attendees of the agency scoping meeting, in-person public meeting and virtual public meetings submit scoping comments through multiple avenues:

- **P.O site survey:** Site visitors were able to share feedback about the latest technical analysis of the route, station and OMF North alternatives.

- **Comment form:** In-person public meeting attendees could fill out a comment form and drop handwritten comments into designated comment boxes. The comment form was available in English, Korean, Russian and Spanish (see **Appendix T**).
- **Court reporter:** In-person public meeting attendees were able to have a court reporter record their verbal comments.
- **Email:** Scoping comments were collected via email.
- **Phone:** Comments were collected via the project’s voicemail line.
- **Mail:** Scoping comments could be mailed to the Sound Transit office.

3 WHAT WE HEARD

A total number of 1,207 scoping comments were received from the survey, online comment forms, letters, emails and voicemails. Included in this total is a petition written in both Spanish and English by Connect Casino Road that had 353 signatures. In-language comments received include a comment form in Spanish, two voicemails in Vietnamese and another voicemail in Russian. For a detailed summary of all scoping comments and feedback themes, refer to the [Scoping Summary Report](#).

4 NEXT STEPS

All scoping comments gathered from the public were shared with the project team, Community Advisory Group, Interagency Group and Elected Leadership Group to help inform advisory group recommendations to the Sound Transit

Board. Based on this input, the Sound Transit Board will identify alternatives and preferred alternatives for stations, alignments and the OMF North to study in the Draft EIS.

There will be ongoing opportunities for the public to share feedback as design advances and as environmental evaluation work continues. When the Draft EIS is published, now anticipated in late 2025, a formal public review and comment period for the document will be provided. Public input on the Draft EIS will be considered in preparation of a Final EIS.

4.1 How to stay engaged

Get involved



Request a briefing or meeting.



Participate in future outreach opportunities.

Contact us



Call the project line at 206-370-5533 to speak with a community engagement specialist.



Email: everettlink@soundtransit.org.

Go online



Learn about the project: soundtransit.org/everettlink.



Respond to online surveys.



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