

Meeting Overview

Subject: Elected Leadership Group Meeting #8

Date: April 25, 2023

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual, Zoom

Meeting purpose: To recommend a preferred alternative and other alternatives to continue studying

in the EIS.

Attendees

ELG Members:	Sound Transit and Project Team:
☐ Cassie Franklin, Co-Chair, Everett Mayor	☑ Don Billen, Executive Director, Planning,
☐ Dave Somers, Co-Chair, Snohomish County	Environment, and Project Development
Executive	☑ Chelsea Levy, Acting Deputy Executive Director of
☑ Nancy Backus, Auburn Mayor, Sound Transit	Capital Project Development
Non-Subarea Board member representative	☑ Eric Widstrand, North Corridor Development
☐ Christine Frizzell, Lynnwood Mayor	Director
☑ Julie Meredith, WSDOT Assistant Secretary	□ Lauryn Douglas, Deputy Project Director
☑ Shannon Sessions, City of Lynnwood	☑ Erik Ashlie-Vinke, Government & Community
Councilmember, Position 7	Relations Director
☑ Strom Peterson, Snohomish County	☑ Kathy Fendt, East & North Corridor Environmental
Councilmember, District 3	Manager
☐ Ben Zarlingo, City of Everett Councilmember,	☑ Angie Thomson, Thomson Strategic Consulting,
District 5	Facilitator
	☑ Paul Danielson, Kimley-Horn, Project Manager
	☑ Jessa Gardner, Envirolssues, Notetaker

Agenda

Time	Topic
9:00 a.m.	Introductions, meeting objectives and schedule update
9:10 a.m.	Input from public scoping
9:20 a.m.	Station alternatives • West Alderwood • Ash Way • Mariner • SR 99/Airport Road
10:20 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Station alternatives (continued) SW Everett Industrial Center SR 526/Evergreen Broadway alignment Everett Station
11:30 a.m.	OMF North
11:50 a.m.	Next steps
12:00 p.m.	Adjourn



Materials:

 Everett Link Extension Elected Leadership Group Meeting 8 agenda and PowerPoint presentation (distributed in advance)

Summary

Welcome and introductions

The eighth Elected Leadership Group (ELG) meeting began with a brief introduction from Don Billen, Sound Transit Executive Director of Planning, Environment and Project Development. Don thanked ELG members for their engagement through the early stages of the project. Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers and Everett Mayor Cassie Franklin, co-chairs of the ELG, also shared their appreciation for the group's time and attention.

Schedule update and meeting objectives

Eric Widstrand, North Corridor Development Director, reminded ELG members of the recently completed scoping period and shared next steps for the project process. At this meeting, the ELG will provide comments and, if desired, develop recommendations for the ST Board on a preferred alternative and other alternatives to evaluate in environmental review. The full ST Board will meet in June to consider the ELG's recommendations.

Input from public scoping

Erik Ashlie-Vinke, Sound Transit Government & Community Relations Director, shared a brief summary of the 45-day public scoping period that closed on March 10. The scoping period included an online open house website for the public to learn about the project and share their comments. There were over 10,000 unique visits to the online open house, and Sound Transit received 643 responses to the site's online alternatives preference survey. There were also two virtual public scoping meetings with 127 combined attendees, and one in-person public scoping meeting with over 1,600 attendees that generated 327 written comments. Sound Transit also received 212 emails, 10 letters, and 15 voice mails, for a total of 1,207 comments during the public scoping period. This included comments from six agencies and two tribes, the Tulalip Tribes and Stillaguamish Tribe.

The presentation moved to an editable recommendations table, which included technical information on each alternative, public input from scoping, and Community Advisory Group (CAG) recommendations. The ELG discussed each station area, starting at the south and finishing with the OMF North, and reviewed the public, agency, and tribal feedback received for each alternative.

Station alternatives:

West Alderwood

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that three alternatives and two alignments are being considered in West Alderwood.

Sound Transit heard from Alderwood Community Church during the public scoping process about possible property impacts to their church. Sound Transit has been in discussion with church representatives and is considering design options to reduce or avoid impact to their property.



Generally, public comments reflected a preference for ALD-D and ALD-F over ALD-B. ALD-D received slightly more support than ALD-F. People preferred ALD-D and ALD-F for similar reasons around access to surrounding neighborhoods and the mall, although it seemed that accessibility of ALD-D to residential neighborhoods to the west was of greater value to the public. The owner of the mall property preferred the ALD-D station location. ALD-D is the alternative preferred by the City of Lynnwood. The City of Everett supported study of ALD-D and ALD-F in the EIS but did not state a preference for one alternative.

The CAG recommended ALD-D as the preferred alternative, continued study of ALD-F and no further study of ALD-B.

Executive Somers concurred with the recommendations of the CAG.

Mayor Frizzell concurred with the CAG but understood the need to keep ALD-B as an option to provide a reasonable range of alternatives for study.

Councilmember Sessions also preferred ALD-D, and suggested that further consideration of ALD-B may not be necessary. She also affirmed her support for routes avoiding Alderwood Community Church and applauded the strong communication between Sound Transit and Alderwood Community Church.

Mayor Franklin supported the CAG recommendation.

Councilmember Peterson affirmed his support of the CAG recommendation, including the choice to no longer study ALD-B.

Executive Somers asked Sound Transit staff if a third alternative needed to be studied.

• Chelsea Levy, Acting Deputy Executive Director of Capital Project Development, shared that the goal is to advance a reasonable range of alternatives to the Draft EIS, in the event that further study reveals risks in moving forward with any particular alternative.

Mayor Frizzell pointed out the similarity of ALD-D and ALD-F, suggested advancing ALD-D and ALD-B, and noted that continuing to study ALD-B would result in a broader range of alternatives moving forward.

• Chelsea Levy affirmed that there is no exact number of alternatives that need to be carried forward and encouraged the ELG to balance continued study of a range of alternatives with narrowing the number of alternatives given the information at hand.

Mayor Franklin questioned the value of dropping ALD-F, in case of potential risks with ALD-B that might be revealed during the Draft EIS process.

ELG recommendation for Alderwood Station:

Preferred alternative: ALD-D
 Continue to study: ALD-F
 Study only if needed: ALD-B

Ash Way

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that there are two station alternatives for Ash Way and because there are only two, we expect both to be studied during the EIS. Public response showed a preference for ASH-A due to the connection to the Park-and-Ride and perceived fewer property impacts.



However, due to the availability of public right-of-way east of I-5, the ASH-A alignment had more property impacts than ASH-D. Community Transit shared their concerns regarding potential ASH-A impacts to transit operations at the Park-and-Ride.

People who preferred ASH-D commented that it has strong development potential and connection to the Interurban Trail. Many comments expressed concerns about potential impacts to the Mill Creek Foursquare Church, impacts to the Interurban Trail, how to connect to the Park-and-Ride, and – although costs are similar between both options – people were concerned about the cost and construction challenges for ASH-D. Community Transit noted that pedestrian access across I-5 would be necessary for ASH-D. Snohomish County identified ASH-D as their preliminary locally favored option and envisioned ASH-D adding important transit connections to the east side of the county.

The CAG recommended ASH-D as the preferred alternative, with continued study of ASH-A.

Executive Somers supported both alternatives moving forward with no preferred alternative given the outstanding issues to be worked out with both alternatives.

Mayor Franklin concurred with Executive Somers that there is no reason for a preferred alternative at this station.

Mayor Frizzell concurred as well and mentioned interest in the cost estimates for both options during future planning stages.

Councilmember Sessions also concurred that both station alternatives should move forward with no preferred alternative. She noted that a good station location would enhance the use and value of the Interurban Trail.

Councilmember Peterson agreed to move both alternatives forward without a preferred alternative.

ELG recommendation for Ash Way:

Continue to study ASH-A and ASH-D

Mariner

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that there are three station alternatives being considered in this area. Scoping comments showed a preference for MAR-A and MAR-B over MAR-D. People generally like MAR-A and B for similar reasons (closer to transit stops, residential areas, and businesses than MAR-D) and have similar concerns about each (traffic, business displacements, especially around the Safeway and small businesses on the south side of 128th). People appreciated that MAR-B had fewer potential residential displacements.

In their comment letters, the City of Everett does not support continuing study of MAR-A and Community Transit notes that the distance from the Park-and-Ride is an issue for pedestrians both for MAR-A and MAR-B. Snohomish County and the City of Everett both support continuing study of MAR-B and MAR-D. Community Transit supports MAR-D due to the nearby Park-and-Ride transit connections.

The CAG recommended MAR-B as the preferred alternative, continued study of MAR-D, and no longer studying MAR-A.



Mayor Franklin recommended continuing to study MAR-B and MAR-D, since they both have different strengths, without designating a preferred alternative, and no longer studying MAR-A.

Mayor Frizzell agreed that MAR-A should not continue for further study.

Councilmember Zarlingo noted the need for a pedestrian crossing of I-5 may affect the desirability of MAR-B over MAR-D.

• Sound Transit staff confirmed they are coordinating with Snohomish County staff who are studying I-5 crossings and will keep decision makers updated on progress.

Mayor Franklin noted that MAR-B serves almost double the residential population as MAR-D, including connections to the Green Swift Line serving Mill Creek to Boeing. MAR-D serves Silver Firs neighborhood commuters going to Lynnwood and Seattle. There is significant likelihood that these stations will boost the population of the area.

ELG recommendation for Mariner:

- Continue to study MAR-B and MAR-D
- No longer study: MAR-A

SR 99/Airport Rd

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that two station alternatives are being considered in this station area, and because there are only two, we expect both options will be studied during the EIS. Scoping comments generally preferred AIR-A, mostly due to better transit connections and connections to the north/east neighborhoods. However, some people noted that the alignment at Mariner would affect the alignment at SR 99/Airport Rd, and that regardless of the alternative, crossing the busy streets here would be the primary issue to address.

The City of Everett and Snohomish County support moving both alternatives forward. Everett prefers AIR-A because of its better transit integration. The Tulalip Tribes commented on this station area, noting that both station alternatives require crossing Swamp Creek, and this stream crossing would require careful planning to avoid impacts. Sound Transit will continue consulting with the Tribes as planning continues.

The CAG recommends AIR-A as the preferred alternative, with continued study of AIR-B.

Mayor Franklin supported the recommendation of the CAG. She also requested that ST study a turn-back at the SR 99/Airport Rd station rather than at Mariner station in anticipation that this station will be funded. Increased frequency would facilitate transfers to Paine Field so she requested that this also be considered as a transfer location for shuttles to Paine Field.

• Executive Somers noted that both alternatives have strengths and weaknesses and suggested not designating a preferred alternative.

Mayor Franklin shared her support of the recommendation to not have a preferred alternative.

ELG recommendation for SR 99/Airport Rd:

Continue to study AIR-A and AIR-B



SW Everett Industrial Center

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that there are three station alternatives being considered in this area. Public support of SWI-A was based on connections to the Boeing campus and connections to residential communities on Casino Road. SWI-B was often second choice from the public behind SWI-A or SWI-C. For those that preferred SWI-B, it tended to be due to connections to existing public transit. The public also continues to support SWI-C due to its connection to the airport, although all station alternatives would require shuttles to the airport and the Boeing campus. There were some concerns from the public about SWI-C's proximity to airport property and wetlands.

In their scoping comment letter, the City of Everett identified SWI-A as their preferred alternative because it would serve the nearby residential community as well as Boeing. Everett also supported continuing to study SWI-B due to its easy connections to Swift and local bus service. The City of Everett does not support continuing to study SWI-C. Community Transit noted that SWI-A has no potential for direct connections to existing bus routes, meaning they would require deviations, while SWI-B is near an existing Swift station. They also note that SWI-C could connect to existing routes but would require some changes to stop locations.

The CAG recommendation was mixed, with lack of agreement on which alternatives to continue studying.

Mayor Franklin shared the City's strong preference for SWI-A, stating that this station area was the reason for the alignment to curve west to serve the Boeing campus, one of the largest employers in the area. Boeing has verbally committed to building a pedestrian bridge from the station to their campus. She also noted the value of SWI-A in serving the Casino Road community with less potentially negative impact to the community.

Executive Somers supported Mayor Franklin's preference for A and keeping B, and added that he would support study of C if needed for the environmental review process.

• Sound Transit staff suggested that with only a single alignment in this area it may be valuable to study all three options in the EIS.

Councilmember Zarlingo noted that after listening to the CAG meeting and community feedback, there are a few factors that favor SWI-A. First, for Boeing employees, the convenience of a shuttle and pedestrian bridge may be desirable due to the inconvenience of navigating the giant Boeing parking lots. Second, the difference for shuttle to the airport is not significant in terms of access and transfer times. The potential for riders from Boeing employees is much greater than from potential growth at Paine Field. These factors weigh heavily in support for SWI-A.

Mayor Frizzell concurred with the value of designating SWI-A as the preferred alternative and keeping all options for study.

Mayor Franklin clarified being comfortable continuing to study SWI-C but also expressed some concern with continuing to study it because it may convey a false sense of potential to be able to directly access the Paine Field passenger terminal, when that's not possible. It also does not serve residential community at all.



Mayor Backus shared her support for continuing to study SWI-C only if needed and focusing on SWI-A as the preferred alternative, given its ability to access Boeing and the nearby residential community.

Executive Somers also affirmed his support for SWI-A and to study SWI-C only if needed.

Mayor Frizzell expressed her desire for information as to whether or not there is a need for a third alternative in this area.

 Sound Transit staff agreed to follow up with ELG members to clarify what is meant by a reasonable range of alternatives at this station.

ELG recommendation for SW Everett Industrial Center:

Preferred alternative: SWI-A
 Continue to study: SWI-B
 Study if needed: SWI-C

SR 526/Evergreen

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that five alternatives are currently being considered in this area. There was public support for EGN-A, and Sound Transit received letters from local businesses, community organizations, and residents, including a petition with over 300 signatures, sharing a strong preference for EGN-A. Sound Transit had several meetings with the local organization Connect Casino Road and reports that the Casino Road community understands the challenges around this option but have told Sound Transit that their desire is to study a station that avoids the most direct impacts to their community.

Many people liked the location of EGN-B because it is in close proximity to businesses and residential areas. People also noted the development potential of the area around EGN-B. The letters and petition mentioned above noted that they did not want an option that displaced Casino Square, such as EGN-B or EGN-C, due to Casino Square's important connection to the community and the difficulty of maintaining the affordability and co-location of the businesses if they had to move. There was generally less support for EGN-C, though people who did prefer it liked that it was close to the high school.

Many people supported EGN-D because it is close to residential areas and local businesses but avoids the direct displacement of the Casino Square businesses. People noted similar benefits of EGN-E as EGN-D and liked that EGN-E requires fewer acquisitions than EGN-D.

In their scoping letter, the City of Everett said they would not oppose continuing to study EGN-A but would not recommend it as they have concerns with the station being a viable connection point for pedestrians, those with mobility impairments, bus riders and pick up and drop off riders. Additionally, the school district noted concerns about impacts of EGN-A to their property, and Community Transit noted that this station has the most challenging bus transfers.

The City of Everett supports further study of EGN-B, but they conveyed concern for the direct displacement of Casino Square and committed to working with businesses to create permanently affordable commercial space nearby if this moves forward. Community Transit notes the need for pedestrian improvements with EGN-B as well as EGN-C.



The City of Everett does not support continuing to study EGN-C or EGN-D, citing that they did not score well against the project's evaluation criteria. Community Transit notes that EGN-D and EGN-E have the best potential transit integration. The City supports further study of EGN-E, since it avoids Casino Square and limits other property acquisitions, while still performing well against the evaluation criteria.

Sound Transit is committed to seeking to avoid or minimize direct and indirect displacements in this area, as well as building a safe and accessible transit area for pedestrians and bikers.

The CAG recommendation was for continued study of EGN-B, EGN-D, and EGN-E, with mixed support for continued study of EGN-A. No further study was recommended for EGN-C.

Mayor Franklin shared that the City of Everett wants to continue studying EGN-A, EGN-B, and EGN-E, despite the poor scoring of alternative EGN-A in accessibility, walkability, and relative distance to the residential community. The City of Everett is committed to working with the Casino Road and Casino Square community to mitigate impacts to businesses in the area. The preferred option of City of Everett in this area is EGN-B.

Councilmember Zarlingo affirmed the need to locate and preserve permanently affordable spaces for the local business community in this area.

Executive Somers concurred with continuing to study EGN-A, EGN-B, and EGN-E, noting that there is a need to continue studying station alternatives near EGN-A in order to address the possibility of an alignment north of SR 526.

Councilmember Peterson advocated for continuing to study EGN-A in order to address community concerns.

Mayor Franklin suggested the value in identifying EGN-B as the preferred option. All station locations will impact the local community and she affirmed that the City of Everett is committed to addressing displacement in the area.

Councilmember Zarlingo reminded the ELG that there is a cost-savings at EGN-B due to less expensive crossings.

The facilitator noted the overall lack of support for EGN-C and suggested that it no longer be studied, which the ELG agreed to.

Mayor Franklin recommended that because EGN-D and EGN-E are so similar and EGN-E is more strongly preferred, ENG-D no longer be considered.

Councilmember Sessions agreed to the stated recommendations and affirmed her support for Mayor Franklin and the City of Everett's suggestions as experts on their local community.

Mayor Frizzell noted that the tour of the area organized by Sound Transit helped her understand the nature of the community and suggested that spaces could be created for the local community to continue to exist together in the area. She supports Mayor Franklin's assessment.

Mayor Franklin affirmed that EGN-A should continue to be studied, and EGN-B and EGN-E would be preferred options.



ELG recommendation for Evergreen/SR 526:

• Preferred alternative: options on the south side of SR 526 (EGN-B or EGN-E)

• Continue to study: EGN-A

• No longer study: EGN-C or EGN-D

I-5/Broadway alignment

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that there are two alternatives being considered in this area. There were limited scoping comments but overall comments favored the I-5 alignment because it has less disruption to residential neighborhoods. There were no agency comments on these alignment options.

The CAG recommended the I-5 alignment as the preferred alignment, with continued study of the Broadway alignment.

Mayor Franklin expressed her support of both alternatives moving forward in order to provide a reasonable range of study, with a strong preference for the I-5 alignment.

ELG recommendation for I-5/Broadway alignment:

• Preferred alternative: I-5 alignment

• Continue to study: Broadway alignment

Everett Station

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that three stations and three route alternatives are being considered in this station area. Public scoping comments expressed a preference for EVT-A because it has the best transit connections and would be less disruptive to the surrounding community and businesses. EVT-C and EVT-D were less popular than EVT-A, but were still supported due to downtown access, TOD potential, and walkability. Some comments noted that EVT-A's distance from downtown could make the station less accessible. The Downtown Everett Association, which is a local non-profit organization, noted their preference for EVT-C or EVT-D, with a McDougall Avenue alignment.

Community Transit noted EVT-A has potential impacts to existing bus service during construction and will likely require operational changes. EVT-D could affect the planned Swift Gold line and have some impacts to travel time. EVT-C has the best transit integration, in terms of being able to serve both downtown and the existing Everett Station.

The City of Everett's scoping letter supported continuing to study all three options, and listed EVT-C and EVT-D as preferred alternatives for station locations, but with an alignment along McDougall Avenue. Sound Transit is exploring the potential for EVT-D to be combined with a McDougall alignment based on conversations with the City of Everett and public feedback received to date.

Sound Transit is also exploring a modification of EVT-A to relocate across from the existing Everett Station, as further consideration has shown that it would be difficult for potential future light rail extensions to navigate around the Everett Station building and cross Hewitt Avenue. The City of Everett's comment letter lists this modified "A" location as the EVT-A location to move forward into the EIS.



The CAG recommended EVT-D with McDougall alignment as the preferred alternative, with continued study of EVT-C, and no longer studying EVT-A.

Mayor Franklin expressed that the City of Everett recommends no longer studying the Broadway alignment due to the impact on local businesses and the Broadway corridor. The City of Everett supports continued study of the McDougall alignment with EVT-C and EVT-D, as well as a revised EVT-A option across the street from the existing EVT-A alternative.

Councilmember Zarlingo noted that the topography in the area is such that the elevated tracks on the McDougall alignment would be lower than those on the Broadway alignment, so the tracks would be less visible.

ELG recommendation for Everett Station:

- Preferred alternative: EVT-C and EVT-D (McDougall Avenue alignment)
- Continue to study: revised EVT-A with modification to avoid impacts to existing Everett Station

OMF North

Erik Ashlie-Vinke shared that there are four sites currently being considered for the OMF North. Public scoping comments showed support for sites B1, B2 and E, because they are already zoned industrial or commercial. Job displacement was a concern stated about sites B1 and B2, while wetland and residential impacts were a concern for site E. There were concerns about residential displacement for site F and there was little public support for this option.

The City of Everett has shared concerns about the displacement of industrial businesses required at B1 and B2 and does not support further study of these alternatives. Snohomish County supports continued study of all four sites. The Tulalip Tribes shared their concerns with site E because of wetland and stream impacts but did not give a recommendation beyond continuing close coordination on this work.

Concerns were raised by a manufacturing company regarding sites B1 and B2 during public comment. The facility that would be displaced by these options manufactures a large volume of specialized plastic films, including medical supplies. In the property owner's letter to Sound Transit, they estimated a very high cost and tight schedule constraints to relocate this facility, which were not considered in the Level 2 evaluation.

The CAG recommended continued study in the general vicinity of site B, as well as sites E and F. This recommendation of a single hybrid site between B1 and B2, along with site E and site F reduces the number of OMF sites to three alternatives.

Mayor Franklin agreed with the need to continue studying all three alternatives. She expressed her concerns regarding impacts to regional businesses near the location of the current B alternatives. There is a limited ability to move manufacturing and industrial businesses, and if displaced those businesses are unlikely to stay in Washington. The significance of the aerospace manufacturing suppliers and skilled labor directly next to the Boeing facility cannot be overstated. She supports looking at a third (B3) alternative that reduces impact to businesses. The City of Everett's preferred alternative is site E, with continued study of site F due to the need for multiple alternatives.



Executive Somers supported continued study of all current alternatives but shares the concerns regarding business displacement around the current B sites and environmental constraints around site E. For this reason, he supports the continued study of site F despite its relatively poor performance in the evaluation.

Mayor Franklin restated the business and environmental impacts of site B, and suggested that mitigating environmental impacts in the area near site E may be more feasible than moving any businesses in the area near site B.

Councilmember Zarlingo noted that there is a long lead time needed to relocate specialized manufacturing businesses.

• Sound Transit staff confirmed that the time needed to support business relocation is considered as part of the process.

Executive Somers noted his concern that there are limited reasonable alternatives in this area, which could lead to future delays if none of the current sites are feasible. There is a possibility that the environmental impacts at site E are unable to be resolved, leaving only site F as an option, which performs poorly according to established metrics. With this in mind, he recommends continued study of all three site alternatives.

ELG recommendation for OMF North:

• Continue to study: an alternative location in the general area of B1 and B2, as well as E and F

Next steps

After the meeting today Sound Transit will document the recommendations and comments shared by the ELG. A table of ELG recommendations will be a part of the briefing to the Sound Transit System Expansion Committee (SEC) in May. The SEC will make a recommendation at their following meeting in June. Both meetings are open for the public to make comments.

The SEC recommendation will go to the full ST Board in June 2023 for their decision on a preferred alternative and other alternatives for environmental review. This meeting is also open to the public for comment.

Members of the ELG took a moment to express their appreciation of the work done by Sound Transit throughout the process and thanked the Everett Link Extension team for their hard work.