I-405 BRT Corridor Visual and Aesthetic Resources Technical Memorandum

September 2020

SoundTransit

Consultant Quality Control Form

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Version	Title	Date	Originator/ Drafted by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Notes, as required
6	11.02 Visual and Aesthetic Resources Technical Memorandum	9/11/2020	Larissa King Rawlins	Ed Reynolds (tech edit) Sandi Wise (QC Review)	Chris Wellander	Final review and revisions before publishing

Summary

This Visual and Aesthetic Resources Technical Memorandum provides an assessment of changes in visual resources, visual character, and visual quality as a result of the proposed I-405 Bus Rapid Transit Project. This assessment uses the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's *Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects* to evaluate changes to the natural, cultural, and project environments from specific project components and how those changes would be perceived by viewers.

For the following seven project components, specific viewer groups were identified and how they would perceive the project components was discussed:

- Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements
- Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements
- South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements
- Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover
- Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage
- Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements
- Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements

This memorandum assesses each individual project component and viewers of that project component. However, in the aggregate, the project components would have similar visual characteristics such as vegetation, materials, colors, form, height, and shape as existing visual elements and would be consistent and compatible with the existing conditions. Thus, viewers would generally not experience adverse negative impacts and the project would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AVE	Area of Visual Effect
BRT	bus rapid transit
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
ETL	electronic toll lane
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
Project	I-405 Bus Rapid Transit Project
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
ST3	Sound Transit 3 Plan
TSP	transit signal priority
TVM	ticket vending machine
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The I-405 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project would provide BRT service, primarily operating in managed and bus-only lanes within the I-405 and SR 518 corridors for 37 miles between Lynnwood and Burien. The project alignment as well as proposed transit stations and park-and-ride garages are shown in **Figure 1-1**. The new BRT service is planned to operate as two high-capacity transit lines, inter-connecting at the Bellevue Transit Center near the future Bellevue Downtown Link light rail station. The north BRT line would operate between the Bellevue Transit Center and the Lynnwood City Center transit center, and the south BRT line would operate between the Bellevue Transit Center and the Burien Transit Center. Together, the I-405 BRT lines (north and south) would serve 11 stations, including one new transit center in Renton and one new park-and-ride garage in Kirkland. In addition, a park-and-ride lot would be constructed to increase park-and-ride capacity in the I-405 corridor (NE 44th Street, Renton).

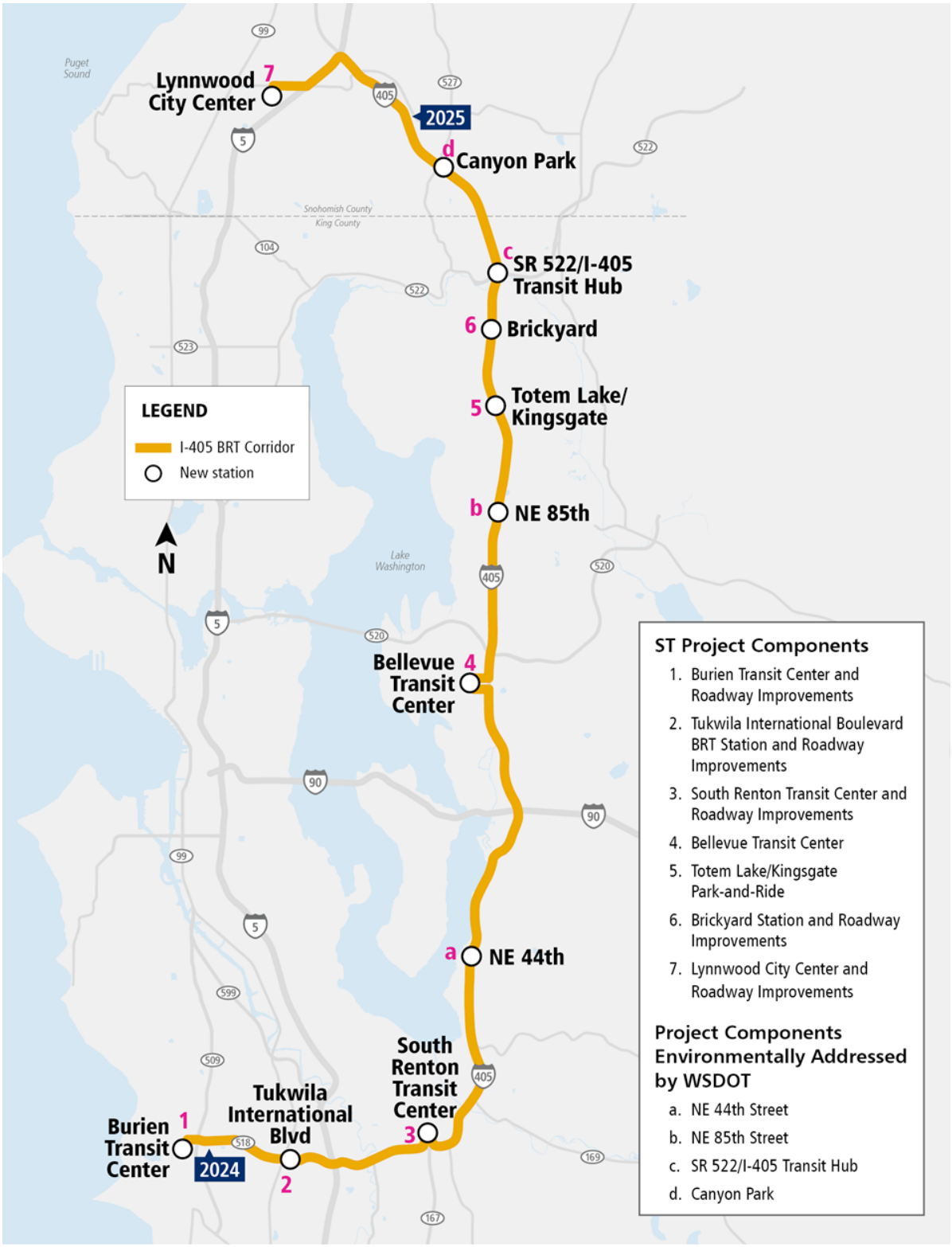
In large part, the project would operate in express toll lanes (ETLs) along I-405, including segments of existing ETLs and segments of ETLs that the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) will construct between Bellevue and Tukwila (WSDOT 2018a) and between Canyon Park and Brickyard. Along SR 518, the project would operate primarily in general-purpose lanes, with bus-only lanes approaching and leaving the BRT station. Buses would move along local arterial roads to access transit facilities in Burien, Renton, Bellevue, and Lynnwood. It should be noted that WSDOT, in partnership with Sound Transit, has completed the environmental analysis, including evaluation of visual and aesthetic resource impacts, for:

- NE 44th Street Station and Park-and-Ride
- NE 85th Street Station
- SR 522/I-405 Transit Hub
- Canyon Park Station

This document does not provide any additional information about these four locations.

Figure 1-1 shows all BRT project components, including the four locations with environmental analysis completed by WSDOT, for reference, and also shows the following project components for which Sound Transit is completing environmental analysis and which are discussed in this memorandum:

- Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements
- Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements
- South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements
- Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover
- Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage
- Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements
- Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 1-1 I-405 Bus Rapid Transit Project

1.2 Purpose of technical memorandum

The project components would be seen by motorists traveling along the I-405 and SR 518 corridors and local roads; commuters on Sound Transit's, King County Metro's, and Community Transit's transit systems; bicyclists and pedestrians; and community members and neighbors. This Visual and Aesthetic Resources Technical Memorandum follows the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects (FHWA 2015) for an abbreviated visual impact assessment. It identifies the viewer groups that would see the changes to the visual environment from each specific BRT project component, documents how they would perceive those changes to the visual environment, and assesses whether it would result in changes to the existing visual quality. This memorandum also suggests how changes to the visual environment may be mitigated to reduce negative changes in visual quality and enhance the visual experience of travelers and neighbors.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 I-405 BRT operations

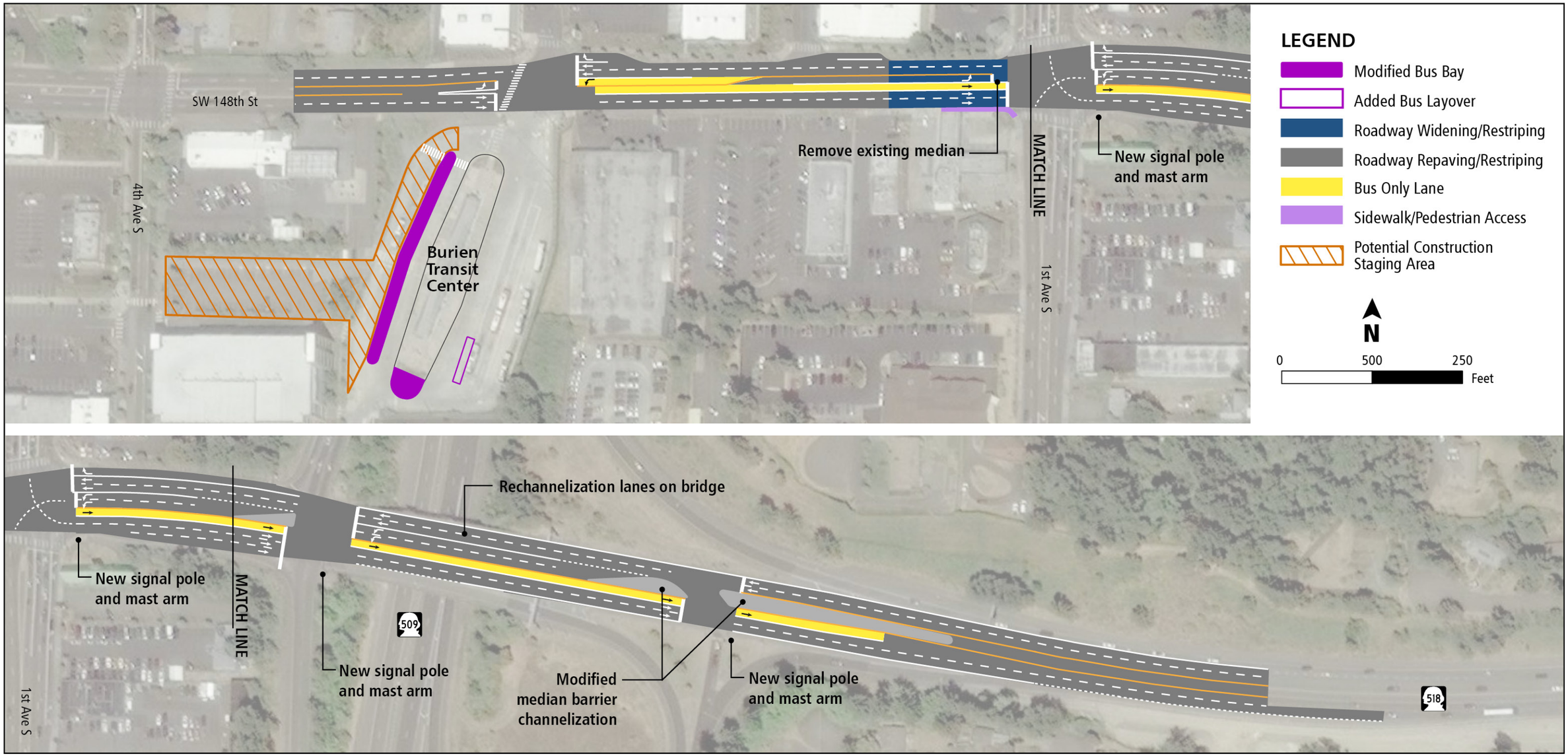
The new BRT service is planned to operate as two high-capacity transit lines, inter-connecting at the Bellevue Transit Center near the future Bellevue Downtown Link light rail station. The north BRT line would operate between the Bellevue Transit Center and the Lynnwood City Center transit center, and the south BRT line would operate between the Bellevue Transit Center and the Burien Transit Center. BRT service would have 10-minute headways during peak periods and 15-minute headways the remainder of the day and on weekends. Assuming a similar pattern to the Sound Transit Express and Sound Transit service standards, peak periods would be from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays. During peak periods when travel time has more variation, the level of bus service could vary to maintain 10-minute headway service. The span of service would be 19 hours on weekdays and Saturday and up to 17 hours on Sundays.

2.2 Project components

All project components would include a proposed BRT-branded (Stride) uniquely identifiable pylon (decorative column) at the transit station to alert BRT riders to the service access point. The pylon may be internally illuminated to be identifiable in the evening and during hours of less light. In addition, all project components would likely include ticket vending machines (TVMs), security cameras and real-time bus information signs at stations for passengers. These are considered to be standard elements for all project components.

2.2.1 Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

Figure 2-1 provides a graphic representation of the proposed Burien Transit Center and associated roadway improvements.



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-1 Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

To access the Burien Transit Center, westbound vehicles would turn left into the existing transit center driveway access, circulate south around the main transit center island and then west to the west transit center island. Within the Burien Transit Center, the existing main transit center island would be extended approximately 20 feet south to provide additional bus bay capacity; the height of this transit center island would remain at 6 inches. The west transit center island would be reconstructed to provide 9-inch-high platforms and would be lengthened to the south approximately 60 feet and to the north approximately 50 feet; the northern portion would also be shifted slightly to be angled to the east. The BRT service would use the northern portion of the west transit center island. The station would include a BRT-branded shelter and benches, in addition to the amenities at all project component stations.

New crosswalks may be added at the northern end of the west transit center island, one connecting the pedestrian path from the sidewalk on SW 148th Street to the west transit center island and a second extending east to connect to the main transit center island. The BRT vehicles would use the layover area in the Burien Transit Center. This project component may add one layover space to the southwest portion of the existing layover area. To exit the Burien Transit Center, BRT vehicles would circulate around the transit center islands to the existing driveway access and then turn right to travel eastbound on SW 148th Street.

To improve transit speed and reliability, a bus-only lane would be added east of the transit center entrance for eastbound buses along SW 148th Street that would extend east across the SR 509/SR 518 interchange and along SR 518 for approximately 400 feet. For westbound buses, a new bus-only left-turn pocket would be added beginning approximately 240 feet east of the transit center driveway access. Between 1st Avenue S and the Burien Transit Center, the bus-only lane and the bus-only left-turn pocket on SW 148th Street would be accommodated by converting the center two-way turn lane and, in the southeast section, slightly widening the existing roadway. Between the Burien Transit Center and 1st Avenue S, driveways would become right-in/right-out only. To accommodate the eastbound bus-only lane on the SR 518 bridge over SR 509, the existing lane striping would be rechannelized. Transit signal priority (TSP) would be added to the existing traffic signals at the intersection of SW 148th Street and 1st Avenue S, at the intersection of SW 148th Street and the SR 509 southbound on- and off-ramps, and at the intersection of SR 518.

2.2.1.1 Utilities and connections

Anticipated utilities needed to serve the BRT station include electric power, communications, and possibly water, which would be connected to utilities currently available in the transit center site or within SW 148th Street.

For this project component, all stormwater would be collected underground and detention would be provided as required. For the Burien Transit Center, flow control and water quality treatment would meet the requirements of the *King County Surface Water Design Manual* (King County 2016) and agreements between the King County Metro Transit Division, the property owner, and the City of Burien Public Works Department. Roadway modifications to SW 148th Street would comply with City of Burien requirements, which follow the *King County Surface Water Design Manual*, for flow control and water quality treatment. Stormwater facilities would ultimately tie into the existing conveyance systems. For the roadway modifications along SR 518, stormwater would meet the requirements of WSDOT's *Highway Runoff Manual* (WSDOT 2019) for flow control and water quality treatment. Stormwater facilities also would ultimately tie into the existing conveyance systems.

2.2.1.2 Site work

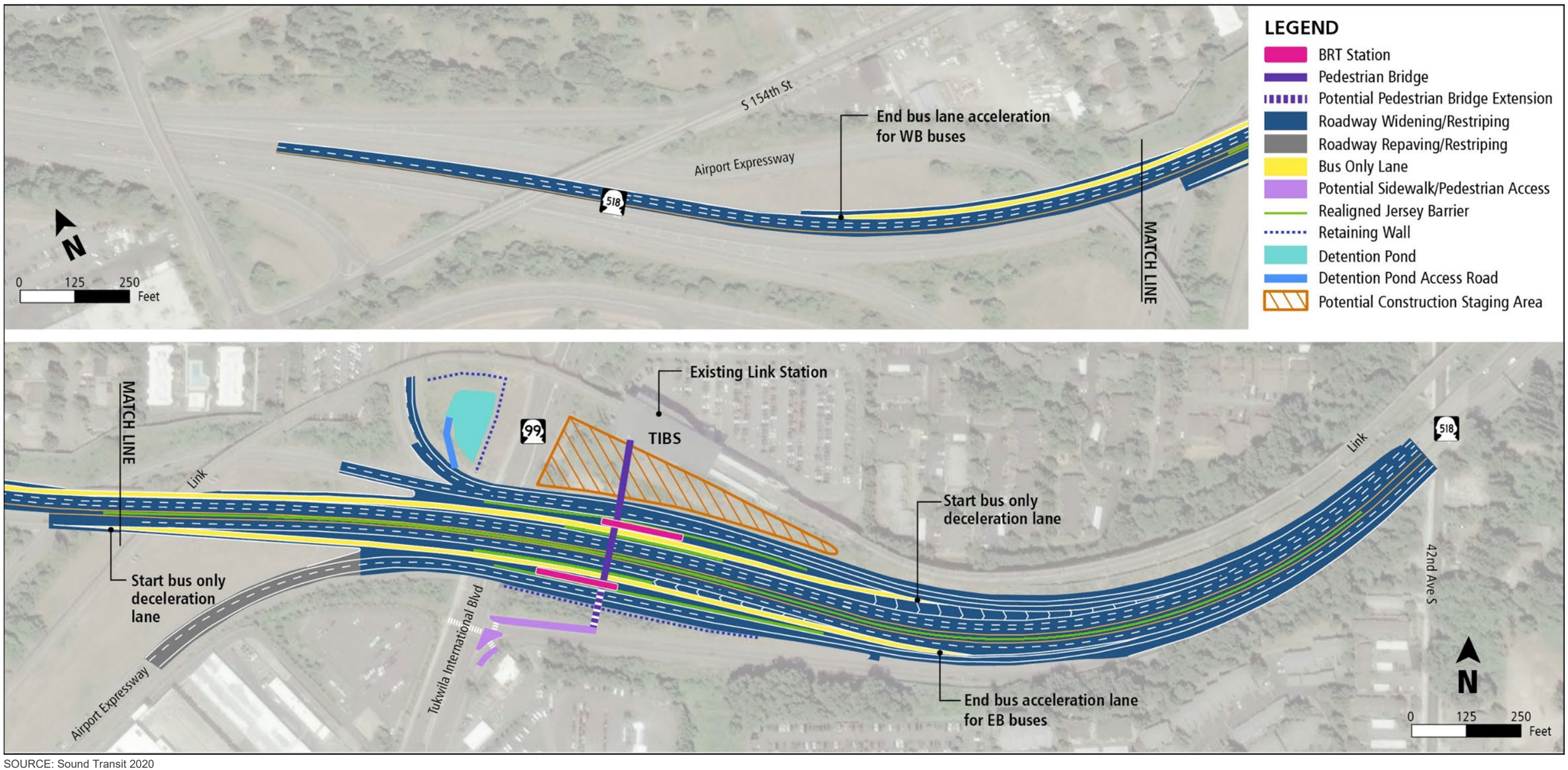
It is anticipated that the contractor would stage the necessary construction equipment and materials within the Burien Transit Center, including potentially using adjacent parking areas also owned by King County Metro.

2.2.2 Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements

Figure 2-2 provides a graphic representation of the proposed Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station, the new pedestrian bridge, and associated roadway improvements. The proposed BRT station would be accessed by a new pedestrian bridge that would be constructed from the mezzanine level of the Tukwila International Boulevard Link light rail station and extended south across SR 518, connecting to the eastbound and westbound BRT station platforms. The walking surface of the pedestrian bridge would be level with the mezzanine floor level of the Link station and roughly level with the existing Tukwila International Boulevard bridge over SR 518. From the pedestrian bridge, access down to each BRT station platform would be provided by stairs and an elevator. The pedestrian bridge is also anticipated to extend to the south and connect at grade to an existing sidewalk on the eastbound on-ramp to SR 518 that connects to sidewalks on Tukwila International Boulevard.

The proposed BRT station (eastbound and westbound station platforms) would be located at-grade within the SR 518 right-of-way in an existing area between the SR 518 travel lanes and the on- and off-ramps to SR 518. In addition to the standard elements, the BRT station would include a branded shelter, benches, and raised platforms (approximately 9 inches) for level or near-level passenger boarding. Approaching both the east and westbound BRT station platforms, bus-only lanes would be added (for a total length of approximately 1,900 feet eastbound and 2,800 feet westbound) to allow BRT vehicles to safely decelerate to pick up/drop off at the station platform and accelerate from the station platforms and merge back onto SR 518 with general-purpose traffic. The addition of these bus-only lanes would require realigning the center jersey barrier, regrading, and repaving a portion of the existing SR 518 travel lanes and ramps to and from the interchange of SR 518 with Tukwila International Boulevard. In the westbound direction, the bus-only lane would also require widening the existing westbound SR 518 bridge that passes over the SR 518 off-ramp heading south to Airport Expressway.

A new retaining wall for fill would be constructed along the west side of the eastbound bus-only deceleration lane for approximately 900 feet, with a maximum height of 6 feet. On the south side of SR 518, adjacent to eastbound SR 518, there would be a new retaining wall for a length of approximately 730 feet, with a maximum height between 10 and 15 feet.



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-2 Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements

2.2.2.1 Utilities and connections

Anticipated utilities needed to serve the BRT station include electric power, communications, and possibly water, which would be connected to utilities currently available in or near SR 518 right-of-way.

Additionally, a stormwater detention facility would be constructed inside the westbound SR 518 off-ramp loop. The detention pond would include an adjacent retaining wall with a maximum height of 11 feet. Stormwater would be collected underground and detention would be provided as required. Flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by WSDOT's *Highway Runoff Manual* (WSDOT 2019), and stormwater facilities would ultimately tie into the existing conveyance systems.

2.2.2.2 Site work

During construction, dewatering is anticipated near the Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station area for construction of new retaining walls.

For this project component, the contractor would be expected to stage the necessary construction equipment and materials within the existing right-of-way for SR 518, likely in the area between westbound SR 518 and the existing Tukwila International Boulevard Link light rail station, outside of the active travel lanes and the on- and off-ramps.

2.2.3 South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

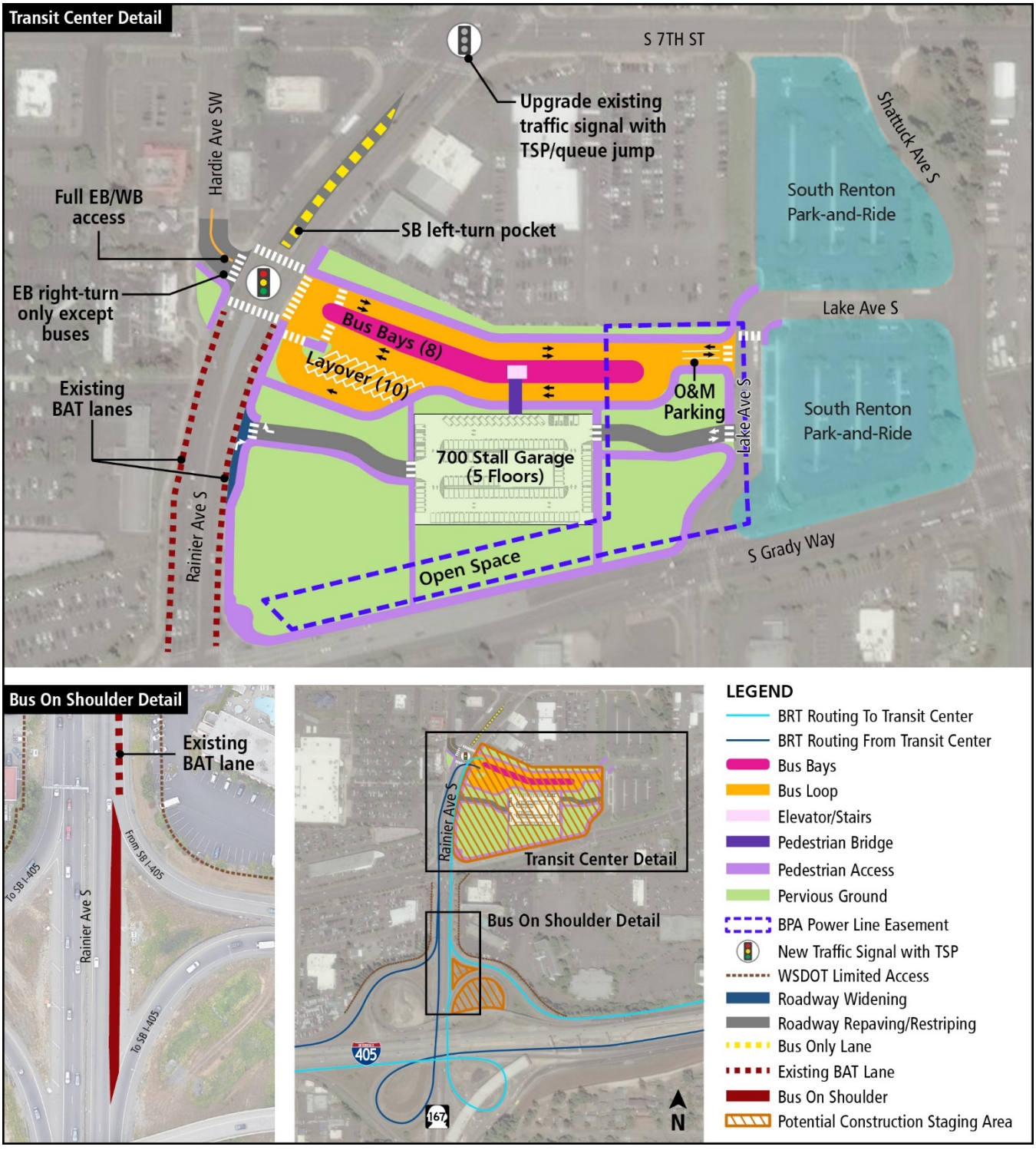
Figure 2-3 provides a graphic representation of the proposed South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements.

The South Renton Transit Center would be located on the north side of I-405, in the northeast corner of the intersection of S Grady Way and Rainier Avenue S. This new transit facility would be developed on an 8.3-acre site. Facilities at the South Renton Transit Center would include the following:

- A new transit center island with eight 120-foot active bus bays with operational space provided for both BRT and other bus transit service (operated by King County Metro, with the assumption that they will use 6 active bays) using this facility. In addition to the standard elements, the BRT station in the transit center island could include a branded BRT shelter (if the entire transit center island is covered by a single, large shelter there would only be the pylon) and 9-inch raised platforms for near-level passenger boarding.

- Ten bus layover bays in the bus loop area.

- A 700-stall, 5-floor park-and-ride garage with drop-off and pick-up stalls on the first floor. Access to the park-and-ride garage would be from a separate right-turn-only entrance and exit from Rainier Avenue S, located south of the access to the transit center bus loop. A second access to the park-and-ride garage would be from Lake Avenue S; this access would not be restricted to right-in/right-out turns.



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-3 South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

- From the third floor of the park-and-ride garage, a pedestrian bridge would potentially connect the garage to a staircase and elevator connecting to the middle of the transit center island.

- Pedestrian access to the transit center site would be from the existing and reconstructed sidewalks along Rainier Avenue S and S Grady Way. A new sidewalk would be constructed along the eastern side of the transit center, along the frontage of Lake Avenue S. Pedestrian sidewalks would also be constructed within the transit center site along the north and south sides of the bus loop, from Rainier Avenue S and Lake Avenue S to the park-and-ride garage, from S Grady Way north into the site, and between the park-and-ride garage and the bus loop.

To access the South Renton Transit Center from I-405, BRT vehicles heading in a westerly direction (southbound) on I-405 would use the exit onto SR 167 N/Rainier Avenue S into an existing northbound, curbside business access and transit (BAT) lane. BRT buses would stay in the existing BAT lane across S Grady Way along Rainier Avenue S. BRT vehicles heading in an easterly direction (northbound) on I-405 would access the South Renton Transit Center using the existing exit onto SR 167 N/Rainier Avenue S. To improve transit speed and reliability, northbound BRT vehicles would use a new short section of a bus-only, bus-on-shoulder lane on northbound SR 167 that would be constructed starting at the existing loop ramp from SR 167 to southbound I-405 and extending north approximately 200 feet to connect with the existing BAT lane.

Once across S Grady Way, BRT vehicles heading northbound would turn right into the transit center's bus loop from a new signalized intersection at Rainier Avenue S and Hardie Avenue SW. This new intersection would also be the exit point for buses leaving the transit center and would be the primary ingress and egress location for the buses. Within this intersection, the existing raised, landscaped median in Rainier Avenue S would be removed to allow for turning movements, and crosswalks would be provided at each of the four roadway crossings. North of this intersection, the existing center median within Rainier Avenue S would be removed for a new southbound bus-only left-turn pocket that would allow buses to turn left into the transit center; a small section of a center median may remain at the southern end of the bus-only left-turn pocket. At the connection to Rainier Avenue S, Hardie Avenue SW would be reconstructed to realign the southbound lane adjacent to the northbound lane. This shift would require removing the northern portion of an existing raised, landscaped island. In place of the existing southbound lane on Hardie Avenue SW, a landscaped curb would be constructed, connecting with the remaining portion of the existing island. For general-purpose traffic, the southbound lane on Hardie Avenue SW would be right-turn only. Buses on Hardie Avenue SW would be able to travel through the intersection into the transit center.

A secondary bus access into the transit center's bus loop would be from the east side of the site from Lake Avenue S. This secondary access would also provide connectivity to the bus bays and layover spaces at the existing South Renton Park-and-Ride located just east of the South Renton Transit Center. Access from Lake Avenue S provides bus circulation and access from S Grady Way, Shattuck Avenue S, and S 7th Street. Parking for operation and maintenance vehicles would be located parallel to the Lake Avenue S access to the bus loop.

In the southern portion (adjacent to S Grady Way) and the eastern portion of the site (adjacent to Lake Avenue S) there is an existing Bonneville Power Administration power line easement. Along the south boundary, the easement is approximately 100 feet in width. In the eastern portion of the site the easement is approximately 200 feet in width. Prior to the start of

construction, Sound Transit would coordinate with the Bonneville Power Administration, and utility providers as needed, to ensure construction activities would not interfere with their facilities and service. Once constructed, the transit facilities would not alter, affect, or interfere with this existing 240 kilovolt transmission line across the site. The easement area under the transmission lines would primarily be green space (where existing pavement would be removed) or would consist of ground-level improvements, such as the driveway into the park-and-ride garage off of Lake Avenue S and the eastern portion of the transit loop. In addition, the existing sculpture located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Rainier Avenue S and S Grady Way, adjacent to the southwest corner of the transit center site, would remain.

BRT vehicles leaving the South Renton Transit Center would turn left onto Rainier Avenue S into an existing, southbound curbside BAT lane and then onto either northbound or southbound I-405 using existing on-ramps. Signal-timing improvements would be made, including adding TSP to the traffic signal at the intersection of S Grady Way and southbound SR 167 and at Rainier Avenue S and SW 7th Street.

2.2.3.1 Utilities and connections

Anticipated utilities to serve this project component include electric power (transmission and distribution), storm drainage, sanitary sewer, water, public agency telecommunications, and commercial telecommunications. Electric power and telecommunications would be tied into utilities currently available near the project component, such as either from S Grady Way or Rainier Avenue S. Electrical service would be coordinated with the local electrical service provider (Puget Sound Energy) who would extend service to the site. Construction within the existing power line easement would be limited to equipment that would not interfere with the high voltage, overhead power lines. Potential conflicts may exist between existing utilities and structure foundations, which would require relocating the existing utilities.

For this project component, stormwater within the transit center site would be collected underground and detention would be provided either above grade or below grade as required. Currently, three compost amended biofiltration swales are proposed on-site upstream of existing catch basins and would tie into the existing catch basins. Flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by the *City of Renton Surface Water Design Manual* (City of Renton 2017). Stormwater facilities would ultimately tie into existing conveyance systems. Within the Rainier Avenue S/SR 167 right-of-way, stormwater would be collected underground and detention would be provided either above grade or below grade as required. Flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by WSDOT's *Highway Runoff Manual* (WSDOT 2019), and stormwater facilities would tie into the existing conveyance systems.

2.2.3.2 Site work

For construction of the South Renton Transit Center, the contractor would likely stage the necessary equipment and materials on the site. For construction of the bus-on-shoulder lane along SR 167, the contractor may stage equipment and materials in the area to the east of SR 167, within the existing, unpaved right-of-way for I-405.

Dewatering is potentially anticipated at the South Renton Transit Center depending on the type of foundation used for the parking garage.

Prior to construction, the existing buildings on-site would be removed and properly disposed of and on-site remediation would be completed as identified in the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (Shannon & Wilson 2018). The site would be cleared and graded as needed for the proposed transit center features and to provide adequate drainage.

Concrete paving would be used for all driveways and bus and large maintenance vehicle parking areas. Limited areas of asphalt paving would be provided in areas trafficked by personal vehicles. A retaining wall with a maximum height of 5 feet would be constructed along the northern edge of the site. The site would be equipped with lighting to support operations and as needed for security. Landscaping would be provided in designated areas and in accordance with City of Renton requirements, including regulations relating to maintenance and irrigation.

2.2.4 Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover

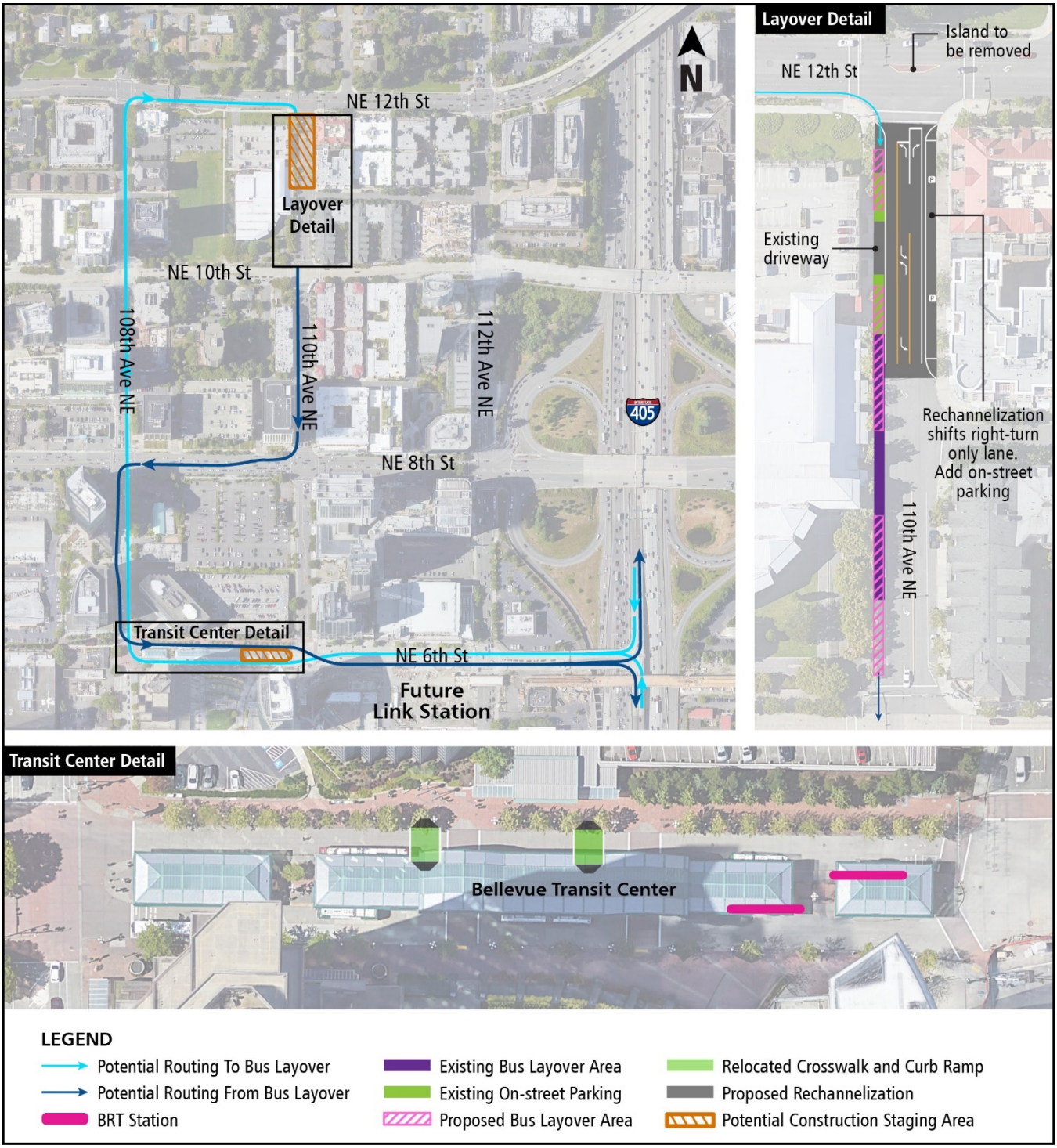
Figure 2-4 provides a graphic representation of the proposed Bellevue Transit Center improvements, off-site layover space, and potential BRT routing to and from the improvements and I-405.

At the Bellevue Transit Center, two existing bus bays would be modified with the standard station elements for the BRT service. The existing height of the transit center island would remain, as would the shelter over the transit center island; a BRT-branded pylon would be installed to identify the bays used for the BRT service. On the north side of the transit center island, two existing crosswalks across NE 6th Street would be relocated (shifted slightly west from their current locations). To maintain Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility at these relocated crosswalks, the existing curb ramps on the transit center island and on the north side of NE 6th Street would be re-graded. This regrading would be coordinated with the City of Bellevue's Downtown Bellevue Exceptional Intermodal Connections project to raise the intersections east and west of the transit center (Bellevue 2020).

The BRT vehicles would have on-street layover along 110th Avenue NE in front of the Bellevue Library, which is less than one-half mile north of the transit center. To access the layover space from the transit center, BRT vehicles would be anticipated to turn right onto 108th Avenue NE, then right onto NE 12th Street, and then right onto 110th Avenue NE.

In the northern portion of 110th Avenue NE, the roadway cross-section would be modified. On the west side of 110th Avenue NE the existing on-street parking would be removed to provide additional bus layover capacity north and south of the existing driveway into the library parking garage. The one existing southbound through lane would remain. In the northbound direction, the rechannelization includes shifting the right-turn-only lane slightly west to provide on-street parking spaces along the east side of the street to replace what was removed along the west side of the street. Through re-striping, the existing painted median would be replaced with a left-turn-only pocket from 110th Avenue NE to NE 12th Street. No changes to the existing sidewalks are proposed. The existing raised island in the middle of the intersection of 110th Avenue NE and NE 12th Street would be removed. In the southern portion of 110th Avenue NE, the existing bus layover space just north of NE 10th Street would remain.

From the layover space, BRT vehicles would be anticipated to access the Bellevue Transit Center by heading south on 110th Avenue NE, turning right onto NE 8th Street, left onto 108th Avenue NE, and then left onto NE 6th Street into the transit center.



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-4 Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover

2.2.4.1 Utilities and connections

Anticipated utilities needed to serve the BRT station include electric power, communications, and possibly water, which would be connected to utilities currently available in the transit center site.

For this project component, flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by the City of Bellevue. Stormwater would ultimately tie into the existing conveyance systems. For the work at the Bellevue Transit Center, the contractor would likely stage the necessary equipment and materials all within the existing transit center.

2.2.4.2 Site work

For the layover area, construction staging would be expected within the existing right-of-way for 110th Avenue NE. Off-site staging areas are not anticipated.

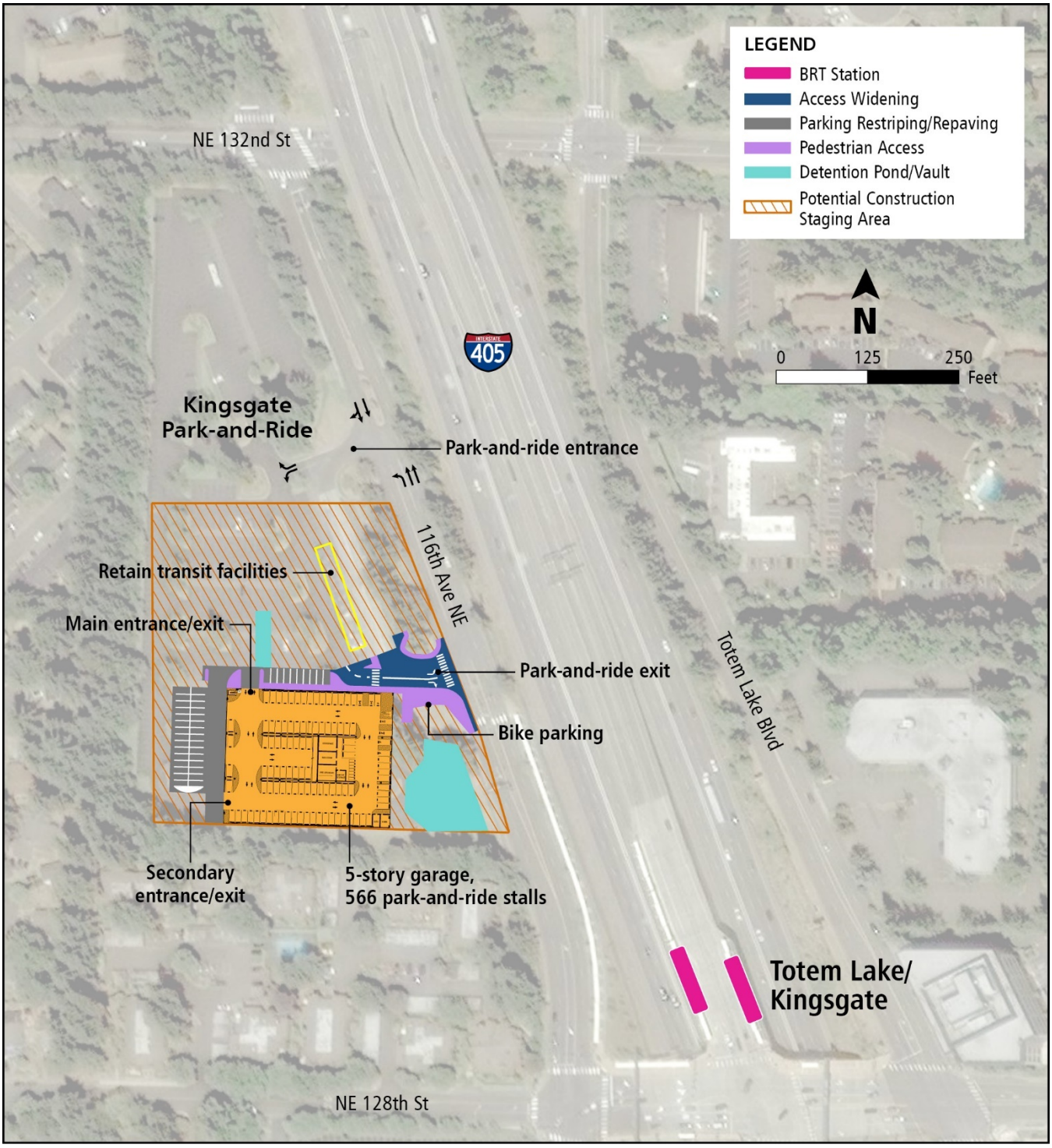
2.2.5 Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage

Figure 2-5 provides a graphic representation of the proposed Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage.

The existing Totem Lake Freeway Station is located on the in-line direct access ramps that extend from the center of I-405 up to the NE 128th Street overcrossing of I-405 (on the north side of NE 128th Street). For the Totem Lake/Kingsgate BRT Station, one bay of each existing station pair would be transformed into a BRT station with the standard station elements. TVMs may be installed at the station platform or they may just be located at the Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage. At this station, the existing 6-inch height of the platforms and the existing shelter over the station platforms would remain. TSP would be added at the intersection of the in-line ramp terminal and NE 128th Street.

The existing Kingsgate Park-and-Ride lot is located west of the Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station along 116th Avenue NE. The Kingsgate Park-and-Ride site is approximately 8 acres in size and consists of 502 surface park-and-ride spaces and an existing bus transit loop currently used by Sound Transit express routes, several King County Metro routes, and one Community Transit route. The site is owned by WSDOT, considered to be right-of-way for I-405, and is operated and maintained by King County Metro.

This project component includes adding 400 park-and-ride spaces at the Kingsgate site by constructing a garage structure in the southern portion of the existing surface park-and-ride lot to create a total of approximately 900 park-and-ride spaces on the site. Sound Transit would construct a 5-story park-and-ride garage with approximately 566 park-and-ride stalls. The 566 park-and-ride stalls would replace 166 surface park-and-ride spaces that would be displaced by the garage and would provide an additional 400 park-and-ride spaces. The park-and-ride garage would be equipped with lighting to support operations and as needed for safety and security. Landscaping would be provided in designated areas in accordance with City of Kirkland and Sound Transit requirements, including maintenance and irrigation. Security cameras are anticipated to be used in the vicinity of the garage structure.



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-5 Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage

Access to the Kingsgate site would continue to be through two driveways from 116th Avenue NE, and the existing on-site circulation would not change. The northern driveway along 116th Avenue NE would remain as is and would continue to be the only entrance to the park-and-ride lot, with vehicles southbound on 116th Avenue NE turning right and vehicles northbound on 116th Avenue NE turning left. To access the park-and-ride garage, vehicles from 116th Avenue NE would use this northern driveway and then circulate through the surface park-and-ride aisles to the main garage entrance/exit on the northwest corner of the structure or the secondary access on the southwest corner of the structure.

Vehicles exiting the garage would turn right immediately past the proposed single row of park-and-ride stalls located along the northern side of the garage, drive along the aisle, and exit the site using the southern driveway to 116th Avenue NE. The existing southern driveway would be shifted slightly north to accommodate the garage structure. This shift in the driveway location would result in a slight modification to the existing bus loop, located just north, that uses this driveway. The existing bus loop would remain on-site. The two lanes of this driveway would continue to be one right-turn-only and one left-turn-only to exit the site. Asphalt paving would be provided in areas trafficked by personal vehicles. Additional work within the Kingsgate site includes providing sidewalks for pedestrian access from 116th Avenue NE along the north side of the garage to the main entrance. This sidewalk would connect to the existing crosswalk across 116th Avenue NE to the covered walkway along the east side that continues south and then east to connect to the Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station.

2.2.5.1 Utilities and connections

Anticipated utilities to serve this project component include electric power (transmission and distribution), storm drainage, sanitary sewer, water, public agency telecommunications, and commercial telecommunications. Electric power and telecommunications would be tied into utilities currently available near the project component. Electrical service would be coordinated with the local electrical service provider (Puget Sound Energy) who would extend service to the site from 116th Avenue NE. Potential conflicts may exist between existing utilities and the proposed garage structure foundation, which would require relocation of the existing utilities.

For this project component (both the Totem Lake Station and the Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage), stormwater would be collected underground and detention would be provided either above grade or below grade as required. Stormwater management facilities would include modifications to the existing detention pond in the southeast corner of the site, a bioretention swale along the south side of the garage, and a detention vault that would be located underground, below the surface park-and-ride stalls (**Figure 2-5**). Flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by WSDOT's *Highway Runoff Manual* (WSDOT 2019). Stormwater would ultimately tie into the existing conveyance systems.

2.2.5.2 Site work

For the work at the Totem Lake Station and the Kingsgate Park-and-Ride, the contractor would likely stage the necessary equipment and materials on the Kingsgate site. The Kingsgate Park-and-Ride lot was constructed with FHWA funds. A requirement of this funding is to maintain the existing 502 park-and-ride stalls associated with the lot. During construction of the Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage, a number of the existing surface stalls within the footprint of the garage and areas needed for construction staging would be inaccessible. Prior to construction, nearby temporary parking spaces would be identified for use as temporary replacement parking during

construction. These temporary parking spaces are anticipated to be from existing, nearby properties with underused parking that could be leased through temporary construction easements.

Prior to construction, the southern portion of the Kingsgate Park-and-Ride lot where the garage would be located would be cleared of existing trees/vegetation and pavement, and would be graded as needed for the garage structure and the drainage vault. The existing trees along the southern and western site boundary would remain, as would the existing raised berm along the western site boundary.

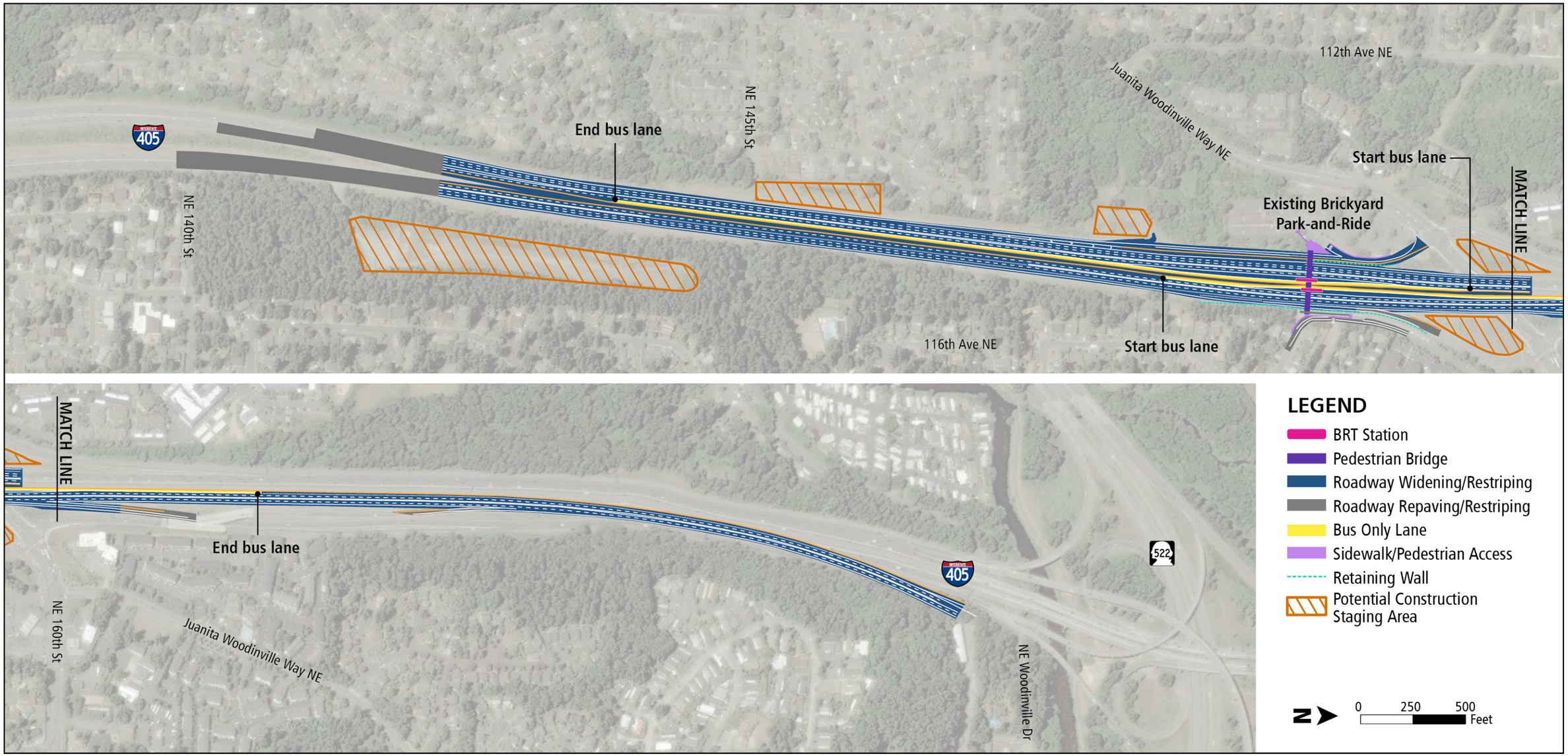
Concrete paving would be used for all driveways and bus and large maintenance vehicle parking areas. Asphalt paving would be provided in areas trafficked by personal vehicles. The park-and-ride garage would be equipped with lighting to support operations and as needed for safety and security. Landscaping would be provided in designated areas in accordance with City of Kirkland requirements, including maintenance and irrigation.

2.2.6 Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements

Figure 2-6 provides a graphic representation of the proposed Brickyard Station, the new pedestrian bridge, and associated roadway improvements.

The proposed new BRT station (northbound and southbound station platforms) would be located at-grade within the center of the I-405 roadway and right-of-way. A bus-only lane would be added in both the northbound and southbound direction (for a total length of approximately 4,000 feet southbound and 3,000 feet northbound), to allow BRT vehicles to safely decelerate to pick up/drop off at the BRT station platform and to accelerate from the station platforms and merge into I-405 traffic. The addition of these northbound and southbound bus-only lanes and the BRT station platforms would require realigning and widening the existing I-405 roadway to the east and west. The BRT station would include a branded shelter, benches, and raised platforms for level or near-level passenger boarding, in addition to the standard elements.

A pedestrian bridge over I-405 would connect the two BRT station platforms and would connect the BRT station to the Brickyard Park-and-Ride lot to the west. Between the I-405 roadway surface and the bottom of the pedestrian bridge, the proposed vertical clearance would be approximately 17.5 feet. From each BRT station platform, access to the pedestrian bridge would be provided by stairs and at least one elevator. Stairs and an elevator would be provided from the pedestrian bridge to access the Brickyard Park-and-Ride lot. Although funding is not currently available, WSDOT, Bothell, Kirkland, and Sound Transit are currently considering an extension of this pedestrian bridge to the east side of I-405, with a stairway and ramp, and possibly an elevator, connecting to 116th Avenue NE.



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-6 Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements

2.2.6.1 Utilities and connections

Anticipated utilities needed to serve the BRT station include electric power, public agency telecommunications and commercial telecommunications, and water, which would be tied into utilities currently available near the project component.

Stormwater would be collected underground and detention would be provided as required. Flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by WSDOT's *Highway Runoff Manual* (WSDOT 2019), and stormwater facilities would ultimately tie into the existing conveyance systems. Near the BRT station platforms, where the I-405 widening would be greatest, new noise walls may be needed along the east side of I-405. A new retaining wall would be constructed along the west side of I-405 for approximately 1,110 feet in the northbound direction and 465 feet in the southbound direction, with a maximum height of 6 feet, from the pedestrian bridge north along the I-405 on-ramp from Juanita Woodinville Way NE.

2.2.6.2 Site work

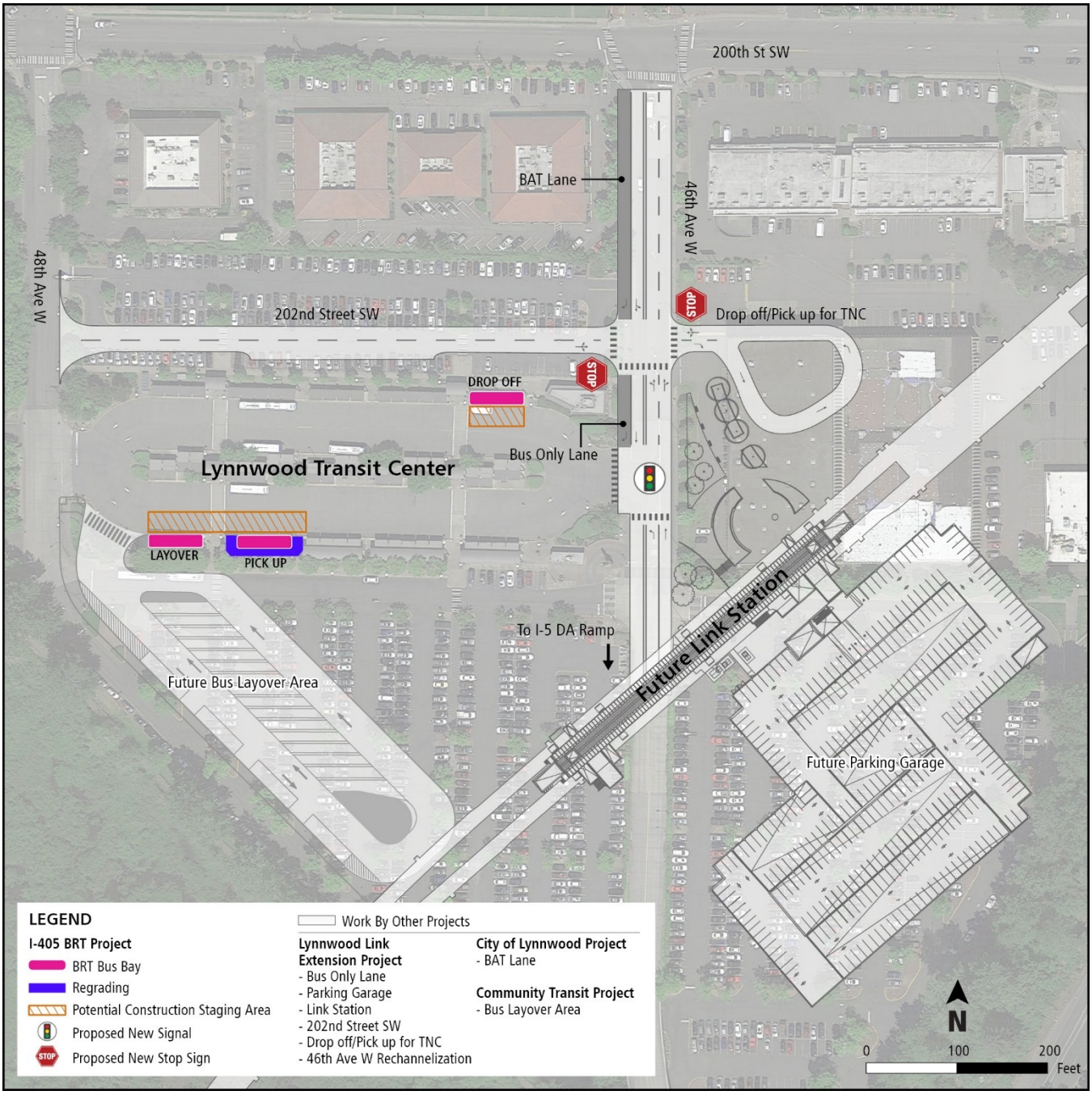
For this project component, the contractor would be expected to stage the necessary construction equipment and materials within the existing right-of-way for I-405 and, potentially, the Brickyard Park-and-Ride lot.

2.2.7 Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements

Figure 2-7 provides a graphic representation of the proposed Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements. **Figure 2-7** also shows the Lynnwood Link light rail station, transit center bus layover area, and roadway improvements that will be constructed as part of Sound Transit's Lynnwood Link Extension project. **Figure 2-8** shows the proposed roadway improvements that would be constructed as part of the I-405 BRT Project on Poplar Way and the loop ramp onto I-5 northbound.

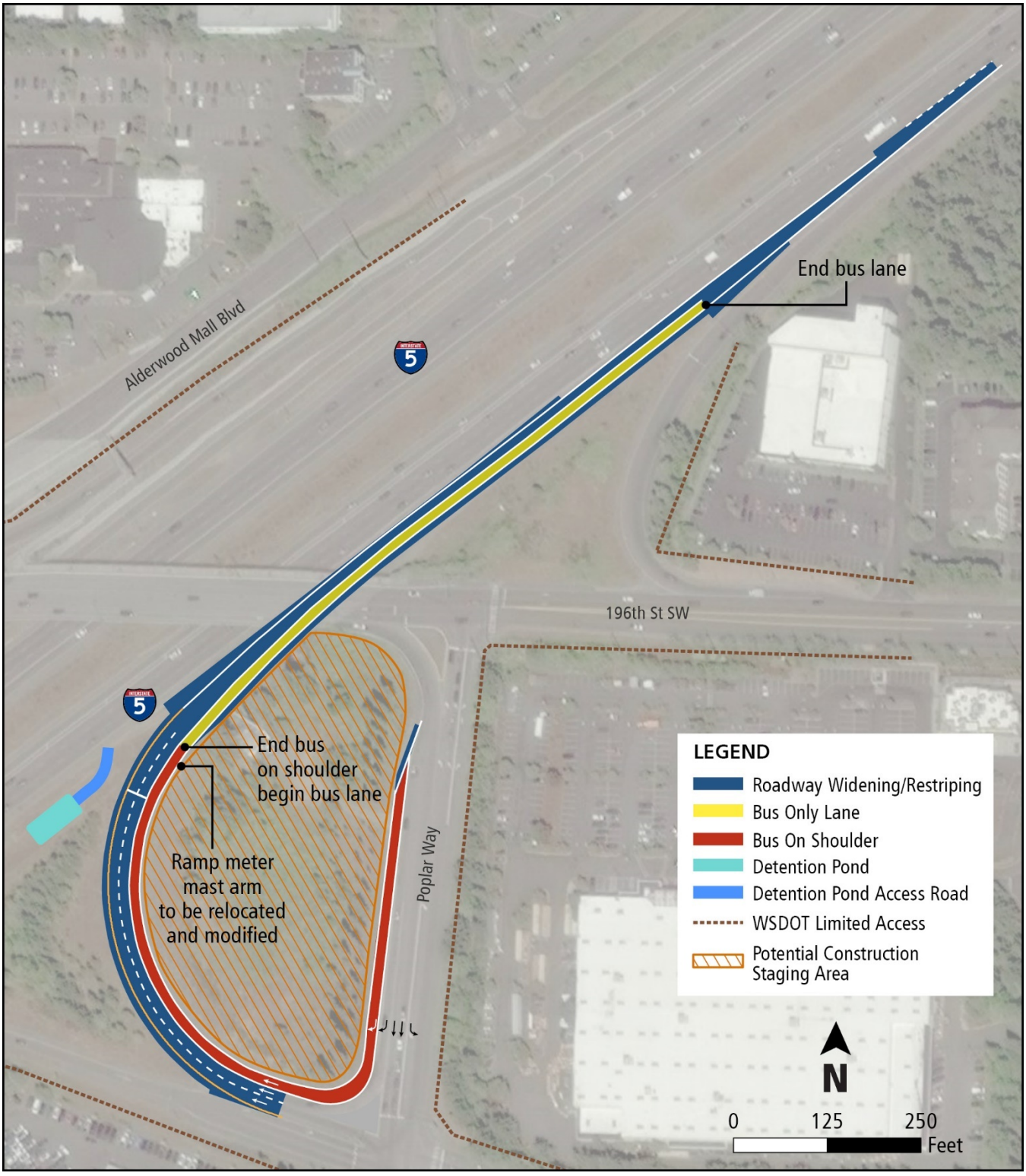
BRT buses would access the Lynnwood City Center transit station by using the existing Alderwood Mall Boulevard exit from I-5 south, traveling along 196th Street SW, turning left at 44th Avenue W, right at 200th Street SW, left onto 46th Avenue W, and then into the transit center. Along this routing, TSP would be added to existing traffic signals. To improve access to and from the transit center, modifications would be made at two intersections along 46th Avenue W. The first intersection, just north of the transit center, would include two northbound and two southbound lanes with stop signs controlling the east and west legs of the intersection. The second intersection, at the entrance to the transit center, would be modified to include a new traffic signal and to include crosswalks.

At the existing transit center, one bay in the northeast portion of the transit center loop would be modified to accommodate the BRT station as a drop-off bay with a 6 to 9 inch curb height. In the southwest portion of the transit center loop, one bay would be modified to accommodate BRT pick up and one bay would be converted to a layover space. At the BRT pick-up bay, in addition to the standard station elements, the platform and adjacent area would be re-graded for near-level passenger boarding. The existing shelters over the bays would remain.



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-7 Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements



SOURCE: Sound Transit 2020

Figure 2-8 Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements: Poplar Way Loop Ramp Roadway Improvements

Leaving the transit center, BRT vehicles would follow the same routing to 196th Street SW and then would use the Poplar Way on-ramp to access I-5 north and then I-405 south. Along Poplar Way (south of 196th Street SW) and the I-5 northbound on-ramp, the roadway and ramp would be widened for a bus-only bus-on-shoulder lane for BRT vehicles to use to bypass congestion.

Leaving the transit center, BRT vehicles would follow the same routing to 196th Street SW and then would use the Poplar Way on-ramp to access I-5 north and then I-405 south. Along Poplar Way (south of 196th Street SW) and the I-5 northbound on-ramp, the roadway and ramp would be widened for a bus-only lane for BRT vehicles to use to bypass congestion. The existing ramp meter mast arm would be relocated and modified.

2.2.7.1 Utilities and connections

Anticipated utilities include electric power, storm drainage, public agency telecommunications, and commercial telecommunications. Electric power and telecommunications would be tied into utilities currently available near the project component.

At the Lynnwood Transit Center, stormwater would be collected underground and detention would be provided as required. Flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by the Washington State Department of Ecology *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* (Ecology 2019). Stormwater would ultimately tie into the existing conveyance systems. For the Poplar Way ramp modifications, stormwater flow control and water quality treatment would be provided as required by WSDOT's *Highway Runoff Manual* (WSDOT 2019).

2.2.7.2 Site work

For construction at the Lynnwood City Center transit station, the contractor would likely stage the necessary equipment and materials within the transit center. For construction of the bus-only lane along Poplar Way and the I-5 on-ramp, the contractor may stage equipment and materials in the existing, unpaved right-of-way within the center of the Poplar Way loop ramp onto I-5.

2.3 Project component visual design features

Several visual design features and actions would be included with the project components. These design features would ensure that project components would comply with local codes and regulations, enhance visual quality and aesthetics, and promote safety and security. Design features include the following:

- Plant suitable vegetation where appropriate within each project component site and in adjoining rights-of-way, per local landscape codes, to provide visual screening between neighbors and travelers and the project site.
- Work with Sound Transit's security team to incorporate crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) strategies during subsequent design phases to confirm that security and visual quality are complementary to one another.
- Use shielding in exterior lighting to ensure that light sources (such as bulbs) do not shine directly toward residential, recreational, or sensitive natural areas.

- Aesthetic treatments: The aesthetic treatments and visual character of project components have not been determined and are not shown on photosimulations; however, project components would be designed to be compatible with the existing cultural order of adjacent commercial/retail/residential areas within the visual environments, would comply with the applicable local design standards, and would enhance the cultural environment. These could include façade treatments, pedestrian plazas, public art, screening, TVM integration, retail space, and the use of colors and finishes such as stainless steel, glazing, brick or rock, and concrete that would provide long-lasting, low-maintenance visual elements. Each project component would be designed to reflect site-specific situations. **Figure 6-1** illustrates aesthetic features associated with existing Sound Transit facilities. Concept and final aesthetic treatment design for the park-and-ride garages would be presented to the public and local agencies, for design review approval, prior to construction.

- Ensure consistency with WSDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions approach for project components within WSDOT right-of-way.

3 METHODOLOGY

This section summarizes the regulatory context of the project, identifies the project's Area of Visual Effect (AVE), summarizes coordination and data sources, and describes the methodology used to assess impacts to visual quality and aesthetic resources.

3.1 Regulations, criteria, and guidelines

The following summarizes the federal, state, regional, and local regulatory context for this visual impact assessment.

3.1.1 Federal

This project uses FHWA's *Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects* (FHWA 2015) hereafter referred to as the "FHWA guidelines." The FHWA guidelines are a broadly-accepted approach to analyzing visual impacts, particularly for transportation projects. The FHWA guidelines use changes in visual character and viewer group sensitivity to assess changes in visual quality. For this project, an abbreviated visual impact assessment generally following FHWA guidelines was conducted because:

- The project components are not expected to result in a notable change in the physical characteristics of the existing environment within the I-405 corridor.

- The project components would be expected to be compatible with the existing visual character.

- Based on public engagement activities to date, there has been a low level of local concern regarding the project components and construction activities.

- Conventional mitigation, such as landscaping and architectural treatment, is expected to address visual changes.

- No adverse cumulative impacts are anticipated.
- Project components' aesthetic approach is expected to be compatible with local plans and permits.

3.1.2 State

The following is the state regulatory context for this abbreviated visual impact assessment:

- Washington State Environmental Policy Act
- Washington State Highway Beautification Act (Revised Code of Washington [RCW] 47.40.010)
- Washington State Open Space Land Preservation Act (RCW 84.34)
- WSDOT *Environmental Manual*, Section 459 (WSDOT 2018b)
- WSDOT *I-405 Corridor Program Final Environmental Impact Statement* (WSDOT 2002b)
- WSDOT *Roadside Classification Plan* (WSDOT 2011)
- WSDOT *Roadside Policy Manual* (WSDOT 2015)
- WSDOT *I-405 Urban Design Criteria* (WSDOT 2016)

3.1.3 Regional

The following is the regional regulatory context for this abbreviated visual impact assessment:

- King County *2016 Comprehensive Plan* (updated 2018)
- Snohomish County *2035 Comprehensive Plan* (adopted 2015)

3.1.4 Local

The following is the local regulatory context for this abbreviated visual impact assessment:

- *City of Lynnwood Comprehensive Plan* (updated 2015)
    - *City of Lynnwood City Center Design Guidelines* (updated 2019)
- *City of Bothell Comprehensive Plan* (adopted 2015
- *City of Kirkland Comprehensive Plan* (adopted 2015)
- *City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan* (amended 2019)
- *City of Renton Comprehensive Plan* (amended 2018)

- *City of Tukwila Comprehensive Plan* (adopted 2015)
- *City of Burien Comprehensive Plan* (updated 2018)

3.2 Establishment phase

Using FHWA guidelines, the visual impact assessment process is carried out in four phases: Establishment, Inventory, Analysis, and Mitigation. The primary purpose of the establishment phase is to define the AVE or the study area. The AVE is the area that can be seen from the project (limits of human sight), which is influenced by the physical constraints of landform, land cover, and atmospheric conditions (FHWA 2015). In addition, the establishment phase sets an understanding of the character of the proposed project.

3.2.1 Area of Visual Effects

As described below, the AVE for the project considered visual distance zones and existing physical limitations. In addition, a desktop analysis and field visits were conducted to understand the limits of visibility from each project component.

For the project, the AVE is defined as the area within 0.25 mile from each project component. As the individual project components are not contiguous to each other, and each has a unique set of existing visual conditions, a single AVE for the entire project was not produced. Instead, each AVE includes a single landscape unit, or “outdoor room.”

Some views of proposed project components are static and are what a neighbor would see from a single stationary location. Other views are dynamic and refer to a series of views available as a viewer travels through a landscape. Dynamic views are directional and can be quite different for viewers traveling in different directions. Dynamic views are also affected by whether a viewer is a driver whose primary focus is on driving or a passenger who has more discretion to look in other directions.

3.2.1.1 Visual distance zones

In general, there are three distance zones:

- Foreground: Comprises views from 0.0 mile to 0.25 mile. Changes to the visual environment are mostly discernible in this zone. Foreground views tend to be the most affected by changes in visual quality and views are generally not limited by atmospheric conditions.
- Middle ground: Comprises views from 0.25 mile to 5.0 miles. In this zone, most views are greatly reduced by landform (hills and mountains) and land cover (such as buildings, structures, signage, and other physical objects), as well as existing vegetation that limits the line-of-sight for viewers. In the middle ground, changes in visual details are generally not discernible and may be obscured by atmospheric conditions.
- Background: Comprises views beyond 5.0 miles. Project details and changes to visual quality are generally not discernible from this distance, and atmospheric conditions can easily affect or obscure views.

3.2.1.2 Physical constraints

For each project component, the existing land cover and vegetation limit the available views. Land cover along the I-405 corridor includes expansive pavements, bridges and overpasses (with heavy congestion), noise and retaining walls, and signage. Surrounding land cover also includes structures ranging from single-story suburban residential homes to the high-rise structures of downtown Bellevue. These land cover elements are characterized by concrete, metal, glass, bright colors, and electrical lighting, and include overhead utility lines, rail lines, adjacent roadways, and parking lots. Existing vegetation consists of both evergreen and deciduous trees and undergrowth typical of the Pacific Northwest and the I-405 corridor. Much of the corridor is lined with such trees, which limit most views outside of the roadway corridor. There are several high points along the corridor where the road rises above surrounding areas, but there are no prominent points and most views are obscured by vegetation and human-made features. Atmospheric conditions typical of the Pacific Northwest include low clouds, fog, filtered light, and precipitation, which can obscure visual elements; however, atmospheric conditions generally affect distant objects the most.

The Cascade Mountains lie to the east and south of the corridor. While views of mountains, including views of the iconic Mt. Rainier, are briefly available in some areas, most views of these scenic features are completely obscured by the gently rolling hills between the Cascade Mountains and the I-405 corridor or atmospheric conditions. Similarly, views of Lake Washington to the west are primarily obscured by landform, existing vegetation, and human-made features.

3.2.2 Project visual character

The visual character of the project is primarily defined by I-405 and SR 518, which is a major transportation corridor connecting the communities of Burien, Tukwila, Renton, Bellevue, Kirkland, Bothell, and Lynwood and other areas of eastern King and Snohomish Counties. The I-405 corridor traverses the gently rolling hills east of Lake Washington and includes up to 10 travel lanes, interchanges (including on- and off-ramps and direct access ramps for transit service and high-occupancy vehicles) and connections to the regional transportation routes. The SR 518 corridor extends west from where I-405 intersects with I-5 and includes up to three travel lanes, interchanges, and connections to Sea-Tac Airport and other transportation routes.

The Burien Transit Center, South Renton Transit Center, Bellevue Transit Center, and Lynnwood City Center transit center are park-and-ride lots and/or transit transfer points closely linked via existing roadway networks to the I-405 corridor and are located in urban developments served by the I-405 BRT system. Each location has a unique visual character but can be characterized by mixed-use commercial, retail, and high-density residential developments, surface roads, parking lots, and signage. The Kingsgate Park-and-Ride, while located in a mixed-use area adjacent to the I-405 corridor, is located adjacent to lower-density residential developments and would more appropriately be characterized as suburban. Each site has varying degrees of natural visual elements, but vegetation plays an important role in the visual character of surrounding areas and of the region.

4 INVENTORY PHASE

The inventory phase examined the existing visual quality, or what people like or dislike seeing. It provided a description of the existing affected environment and visual character and the affected population or existing viewers, as presented in the following sections.

4.1 Affected environment

The affected environment is the existing visual character of the AVE for each project component. The visual character for the AVE was assessed through an inventory of visual resources, divided into three categories (FHWA 2015):

- **Natural**: Land, water, vegetation, animals, and atmospheric conditions (devoid of build environment) determines the natural environments. Viewers evaluate if the environment is harmonious or inharmonious.
- **Cultural**: Buildings, infrastructure, structures, artifacts, and art determines cultural environments. Viewers evaluate if the environment is orderly or disorderly.
- **Project**: Constructed elements, grading, vegetation, and ancillary visual elements associated with the project development. Viewers evaluate if the environment is coherent or incoherent.

The natural, cultural, and project environments were assessed based on the landscape unit for each project component. The eight landscape units and their affected environments are described in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1 Affected environment of the AVE for each project component

Project component	Affected environment of the AVE	
Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements	**Natural**	Land within the AVE of the Burien Transit Center ranges from 335 to 360 feet in elevation. Parcels immediately northwest of the project component are on a small berm. The AVE is highly developed urban land. Natural environment elements (such as trees and landscaping) are primarily associated with human development. A small, wooded park of approximately 3.5 acres, Dottie Harper Park, is located about 500 feet northwest of the project component.
	Cultural	Development within the AVE is almost entirely commercial. The only residential land uses are north and northwest of the transit center. These residences are on a small hill with views toward the transit center screened by a fence. Development includes both small and large box retail, commercial and restaurants, fuel stations, hotels, industrial, and churches. The Burien Community Center is approximately 900 feet west of the transit center. Overhead utility lines, street and parking lights, electric and non-electric commercial signage, and advertisements are also visible.

Project component	Affected environment of the AVE	
	Project	The project component is an existing transit center located on a parcel between 4th Ave SW and 1st Ave S in Burien. The entire transit center development includes a four-story parking garage with 504 parking spaces and electric vehicle charging stations, as well as an island-style, covered station platform. A sidewalk along SW 148th St provides bicycle and pedestrian access. A few trees and shrubs are located around the perimeter of the site. The Burien Transit Center is mostly visible to nearby viewers.
Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements	**Natural**	The natural environment of this AVE includes gently rolling hills; SR 518 slopes to the east toward the I-405 and I-5 interchange. Mature evergreen and deciduous trees and shrub vegetation are common along the medians and sides of SR 518 and limit views to primarily those that are immediately adjacent. Vegetation associated with the Link light rail station and park-and-ride is relatively young and will continue to grow, which will limit more views from surrounding areas in the future.
	Cultural	Tukwila International Boulevard directly to the west serves as the boundary between the cities of SeaTac and Tukwila. Within the AVE commercial areas largely include the existing Link light rail station and park-and-ride and parking and rental car facilities for Sea-Tac Airport, including the six-story consolidated rental car facility southwest of the site. Residential areas include large two- to three-story apartment complexes and some small pockets of medium and low-density development. Views of SR 518 are mostly obscured for residents by existing vegetation and land cover.
	Project	The project environment is a vehicle-oriented environment and the visual/aesthetic experience of pedestrians in most of the viewshed is diminished by traffic. The proposed project component would be on SR 518 near the Tukwila International Boulevard light rail station and parking areas. The station is approximately four stories high and is accessed by an approximately 50-foot-high elevated rail line and a 600-stall surface parking lot. Areas within the viewshed include SR 518, Airport Expressway, on- and off-ramps between the two roadways, and an interchange with S 154th Blvd. Pavement widths can reach approximately 250 feet. The viewshed also contains an overpass where Tukwila International Boulevard crosses over SR 518 and noise walls north and south of SR 518. Transportation signage and signalization, street lighting, and high-capacity overhead utilities create a high degree of visual clutter.

Project component	Affected environment of the AVE	
South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements	**Natural**	Land within the AVE of the South Renton Transit Center is virtually flat ranging from 18 to 22 feet in elevation. The area is highly developed urban land uses with little to no natural landscape. Vegetation is primarily confined to ornamental landscape areas, such as parking islands and right-of-way plantings or stormwater treatment facilities. Some hillsides surrounding the site, particularly to the east, are visible.
	Cultural	Development within the AVE includes both small and large box retail, commercial and restaurants, car dealerships, hotels, and industrial uses. Most development is one- to two-story commercial structures; however, a six-story hotel structure is within the AVE. An estimated 90 percent of the viewshed is impermeable pavement or rooftops. A small area of high-density multi-family residential housing is located in the AVE northeast of the project component, but existing vegetation and land cover obscures views. The AVE also includes numerous overhead utility lines and towers. Main north-south and east-west lines cross through the viewshed. Street and parking lights, electric and non-electric commercial signage, and advertisements are abundant.
	Project	The project component is approximately 1,000 feet north of the I-405 and Rainier Ave S interchange and is bounded by arterial streets: S Grady Way to the south and Rainier Ave S to the west. Local Lake Ave S, which services the existing South Renton Park-and-Ride, is located to the east. Transportation signage and signalization, street lighting, and high-capacity overhead utilities create a high degree of visual clutter.
Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover	**Natural**	Land within the AVE of the Bellevue Transit Center ranges from 170 to 190 feet in elevation. The area is highly developed urban land, including modern, multi-story office towers with little to no natural landscape. Vegetation is primarily confined to ornamental landscape areas such as planters and street trees in sidewalk grates.
	Cultural	Development within the AVE is high-density downtown commercial. Most structures are multi-story office towers, ranging from the 3-story library to the 26-story City Center Plaza Building. Nearly all of the viewshed is impermeable pavement or rooftops. Within the AVE there are some residences located east, and northeast of the project component, with views of the 110th Avenue improvements. Changes to the transit center are obscured by office towers, parking garages, and other structures. Street-level development includes office, retail, mixed-use residential, restaurants and cafes, library, the local street and transit network, and I-405 which is approximately 350 feet east of the transit center. Street and parking lights, interior office lighting, electric and non-electric commercial signage, and advertisements are abundant.
	Project	The project component is an existing transit center that comprises an entire city block along Bellevue Transit Center Access Road between 110th Ave NE and 108th Ave NE. The transit center has stops located along a center median with a covered awning. Sidewalks and street trees border the project component along the north and south sides of Bellevue Transit Center Access Road. The project also includes lane realignment and a BRT layover lane adjacent to the existing Bellevue Public Library on the west side of 110th Avenue. Land use on the west side of the street is mixed-use high-density residential.

Project component	Affected environment of the AVE	
Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage	**Natural**	Landforms in this AVE generally slope to the south and east. Tributaries of Juanita Creek both north and south of the Kingsgate Park-and-Ride cut through the slope approximately 50 feet below the site's elevation. The AVE is relatively flat, between approximately 171 and 174 feet in elevation. Mature vegetation is abundant in the viewshed and limits most views of the site. The south and west sides of the Kingsgate site have an approximately 6-foot-high berm with dense, mature evergreen trees that screen the Kingsgate site from adjacent properties. An open, vegetated stormwater facility is located on the southeast corner with a depth of approximately 6 to 8 feet.
	Cultural	Within the AVE land use is primarily residential. High-density residential developments to the north, south, and across I-405 to the east range from two to three stories high. Medium-density two- to three-story housing developments lie directly to the west and southwest, and one- to two-story low-density residential areas lie adjacent to the west and northeast across I-405. As noted in the description of the natural environment, land cover and mature vegetation limit views of the Kingsgate site from adjacent properties. Similarly, views from the office and commercial land located within the AVE to the south along 166th Way and NE 128th St are obscured due to vegetation and land cover. Commercial buildings east of I-405 range from one to six stories high. The Evergreen Medical Center just outside the AVE is 10 stories and may have views of the Kingsgate site over existing land cover and vegetation. Street and parking lights, electric and non-electric commercial signage, and advertisements are abundant in commercial areas but are primarily obscured from the site by existing vegetation. Eight pieces of public art are associated with pedestrian shelters along 116th Ave NE.
	Project	The existing surface park-and-ride lot is served by King County Metro and provides access to the existing bus stops on the Totem Lake direct access ramps. The existing direct access ramps are grade-separated from I-405 and include a covered pedestrian walkway to the Kingsgate site. I-405 pavement widths range from 200 to 250 feet. Where 116th Ave NE is directly adjacent to I-405, pavement is nearly contiguous for more than 300 feet. In addition to the direct access ramps, structures associated with I-405 include the overpass at NE 128th St, retaining walls, and photo toll system structures. Freeway and park-and-ride signage is abundant and presents a high degree of visual clutter.

Project component	Affected environment of the AVE	
Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements	**Natural**	Landforms in the Brickyard AVE generally slope down from east to west and from north to south. A tributary of Juanita Creek lies approximately 600 feet west and 50 feet below the elevation of the site. Mature vegetation is abundant in the AVE and limits most views. Existing stormwater facilities are located south and southwest of the project component, below the adjacent park-and-ride location south of Transit Access Road. Views of the project component would be limited both by elevation difference and extensive existing vegetation.
	Cultural	Land use adjacent in the AVE includes one- to four-story retail/commercial uses located east of I-405 along NE 160th St. The majority of the adjacent development is two- to four-story-high residential uses and single-family residential areas. These areas to the west are approximately 30 and 50 feet below the elevation of the project component. Development to the east is slightly elevated and may have views of I-405; however, direct views are primarily blocked by existing vegetation and an existing noise wall.
	Project	The project environment includes the existing I-405 roadway, including travel lanes, HOV lanes, and on- and off-ramps that range from approximately 220 to 330 feet wide. An existing 450-stall surface park-and-ride lot serves existing bus stops on the on- and off-ramps to I-405. In addition to the I-405 lanes, retaining and noise walls, traffic barriers, park-and-ride signage, street lights, and utilities are abundant and present a high degree of visual clutter.
Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements	**Natural**	Landforms surrounding the Lynnwood City Center transit station are generally flat. The elevation in the AVE ranges from 330 to 380 feet. Scriber Creek and Scriber Creek Park are west of the transit center and contain dense mature vegetation and walking trails. Tall mature trees prevent views of the existing transit center from the park. Sprague's Pond Mini Park is farther west of the transit center. Mature leaf-bearing trees are interspersed around the transit center visually softening the border of the transit center. Southeast of the transit center is another stand of mature, leaf-bearing trees. Land cover and mature vegetation limit views of the site primarily to adjacent properties.
	Cultural	Land use within the AVE is a mix of city center, business/technical park, and residential (medium and high-density). Residential and commercial buildings range from one to three stories. Street and parking lights, electric and non-electric commercial signage, and advertisements are abundant in commercial areas but primarily visually obscured from the transit center by existing vegetation. Two public art installations—beacons of fabricated steel, epoxy paint, and mercury halide and sodium vapor lights—are located at the eastern border of the transit center. Heritage Park and the South Snohomish County Visitor Center are located diagonally southeast from the northbound I-5 on-ramp at Poplar Way. The on-ramp is also adjacent to parcels zoned for commercial and planned commercial.

Project component	Affected environment of the AVE	
	Project	The Lynnwood City Center transit center has 1,368 park-and-ride spaces, bicycle racks and lockers, restrooms, pay phones, public art, and a RideStore. The site is an east-to-west rectangular parcel with bus stops and awnings on the north and south borders, and an island of bus stops in the center. There are no existing elevated platforms on the transit center. The northbound I-5 on-ramp at Poplar Way is two lanes. There is a communications tower on the parcel between the on-ramp, Poplar Way, and 196th Street SW.

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019
NOTES: AVE = Area of Visual Effect; BRT = bus rapid transit; HOV = high-occupancy vehicle

4.2 Affected population

Viewers can generally be categorized into two distinct groups: travelers and neighbors. Both travelers and neighbors may be further subdivided to establish viewer preference and their sensitivity to changes in visual resources (FHWA 2015). Although each viewer will have individual preferences and sensitivities, FHWA guidelines recognize three basic responses to visual environments:

- When viewing the natural environment, viewers evaluate the natural harmony of the existing scene, determining if the composition is harmonious or inharmonious.
- When viewing the cultural environment, viewers evaluate the cultural order, determining if the composition is orderly or disorderly.
- When viewing the project environment, viewers evaluate the coherence of the project components, determining if the project's composition is coherent or incoherent.

4.2.1 Types of neighbors

The AVEs for the project components include the following types of neighbors (FHWA 2015):

- **Residential**: Residential neighbors include single-family, multi-family, and others. Their visual preference tends toward maintaining existing landscape character and they are not generally interested in change. Depending on location, residential viewers prefer natural harmony and cultural order.
- **Recreational**: Recreational neighbors participate in recreation and tend to be transitory. Their visual preference tends to be the status quo and they are leery of changes that may cause adverse impacts to their activity, although they may be willing to entertain improvements if they improve or enhance recreational experience. Recreational viewers prefer natural harmony with some project coherence.
- **Institutional**: Institutional neighbors provide and receive services from a variety of institutions such as schools and hospitals. Workers and employees can be considered permanent, while visitors and those who receive services are transitory. Views to and from the institution may be critical to the impression they desire and they often prefer to maintain

or improve visual conditions. Institutional viewers strongly prefer cultural order but may also be interested in project coherence.

- **Civic**: Civic neighbors provide or receive services from a governmental organization, such as a local, state, or federal agency or the military. Workers and employees can be considered permanent, while visitors and those who receive services are transitory. Depending on the agency mission, views to and from the institution may or may not be desirable. If agencies have substantial public interactions, views may be important and their visual preferences tend to be similar to institutional neighbors. Civic viewers strongly prefer cultural order but may also be interested in project coherence and natural harmony depending on civic agency and project location.

- **Retail**: Retail neighbors are merchants or shoppers that sell goods or services to the public. Merchants tend to be permanent while shoppers are transitory, although shoppers may frequent the same location. Shoppers tend to focus on the shopping experience with few distractions. Retail viewers depend on good project coherence and natural harmony.

- **Commercial**: Commercial neighbors occupy commercial property and use office buildings, warehouses, and other commercial structures. Visual preference varies depending on the business, but those with many visitors mimic retail customers. Commercial viewers depend on cultural order and good project coherence.

- **Industrial**: Industrial neighbors mine or harvest raw materials, and manufacture and/or transport goods and services. Workers tend to be permanent but primarily focus on their activities. Industrial areas generally have few visitors. They tend to require large tracts of land but limit space and activities exposed to public view. Visual preference is to be left alone except for the exposed public views. Industrial viewers prefer cultural order, project coherence, and natural harmony but do not depend on these attributes.

4.2.2 Types of travelers

The AVEs for the project components include the following types of travelers (FHWA 2015):

- **Pedestrian**: Pedestrians use self-propelled means (walking, wheelchair, or other mobility aid) to move through a site on roadways, sidewalks, or trails. Pedestrians have a slight preference for cultural order over natural harmony and project coherence.

- **Bicyclist**: Bicycles or other similar self-propelled devices, or electric bicycles and electric scooters, that travel through a site at a higher speed than pedestrians but much slower than vehicular travel. Bicyclists also have a slight preference for project coherence.

- **Motorist**: Motorists travel in vehicles propelled by engines such as cars, trucks, buses, or motorcycles. A variety of engine types, sizes, and fuel sources help propel travelers at higher speeds in comparison to other modes. Drivers primarily focus on activities associated with driving and prefer project coherence. Passengers are typically less engaged with driving tasks and prefer natural harmony and cultural harmony.

Table 4-2 describes the affected populations within the AVE for each project component.

Table 4-2 Affected populations within the AVE for each project component

Project component	Affected population within the AVE		Visual preference
Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements	**Neighbors**	Commercial/Retail	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Residential	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
	Travelers	Motorist – Local	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Bicyclist/Pedestrian	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements	**Neighbors**	Commercial/Retail	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Residential	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
	Travelers	Motorist – Interstate	Project Coherence
		Motorist – Local	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Bicyclist/Pedestrian	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements	**Neighbors**	Commercial/Retail	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Residential/Industrial	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
	Travelers	Motorists	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Bicyclist/Pedestrian	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover	**Neighbors**	Residential	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
		Commercial/Retail	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Institutional	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
	Travelers	Motorist – Local	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Bicyclist/Pedestrian	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage	**Neighbors**	Residential	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
		Commercial/Retail	Cultural Order, Project Coherence
	Travelers	Motorist – Interstate	Project Coherence
		Motorist – Local	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Bicyclist/Pedestrian	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements	**Neighbors**	Residential	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
		Commercial/Retail	Cultural Order, Project Coherence
	Travelers	Motorist – Interstate	Project Coherence
		Motorist – Local	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Bicyclist/Pedestrian	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements	**Neighbors**	Residential	Cultural Order, Natural Harmony
		Commercial/Retail	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
	Travelers	Motorist – Local	Project Coherence, Cultural Order
		Bicyclist/Pedestrian	Project Coherence, Cultural Order

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

4.3 Existing visual quality

This section describes how professional judgment was applied to describe what viewers within each AVE for the project components would be expected to like and dislike about the existing environment and their perceptions of visual quality.

4.3.1 Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

Figure 4-1 is a photograph of SW 148th Street near the Burien Transit Center. As shown, the natural environment in this highly developed area is limited to landscaping associated with the roadway and adjacent development and the grass play areas and fields and stands of mature trees at Dottie Harper Park northeast of the project site. The terrain is mostly flat, although there are some small hills and berms. The limited natural environment is harmonious, especially at Dottie Harper Park. The cultural environment is orderly and consistent with viewer expectations for a developed area near a freeway interchange with mixed uses such as commercial, retail, residential, and transportation uses. The project environment includes the well-maintained, four-lane SW 148th Street and the existing Burien Transit Center. The project environment is coherent with the context of the AVE.

PHOTO SOURCE: Google Earth 2019

Figure 4-1 Burien Transit Center and SW 148th Street: Existing street view photograph

4.3.2 Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements

Figure 4-2 is an aerial photograph of the Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station AVE. The natural environment consists of large, mature existing trees and regularly mowed grass. The AVE exhibits natural harmony. The cultural environment consists of the light rail station and park-and-ride and adjacent development, such as the six story Sea-Tac Airport car rental facility and apartment complexes and single-family residences. The visual composition of the cultural environment is orderly as the size, form, and scale of development are consistent with a suburban environment surrounding a major interchange and Sea-Tac Airport. The project environment is dominated by a large interchange where SR 518, Airport Expressway, Tukwila International Boulevard, and the light rail guideway meet. The project environment is coherent with signs providing clear wayfinding and well-maintained paved travel lanes.

PHOTO SOURCE: Google Earth 2019

Figure 4-2 Tukwila International Boulevard Station: Existing aerial photograph

4.3.3 South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

Figure 4-3 is a street view photograph of the existing conditions at the South Renton Transit Center site. Very few elements of the natural environment exist. Natural elements include some street trees and planted medians along Rainier Avenue S and SW Grady Way and parking islands, buffers, and stormwater facilities at the adjacent South Renton Park-and-Ride lot. Natural resources appear harmonious within the context of this highly developed, urban area. The cultural environment is disorderly, visually cluttered with commercial, retail, industrial, and residential land uses. Street signs, advertising, and vehicle movement are ubiquitous and electrical lighting is abundant. High-capacity overhead utility lines are also significant in the existing visual environment. Public art includes a small pedestrian plaza with sculptural elements at the corner of Rainier Avenue S and SW Grady Way. While visually cluttered with site lighting, utility lines, signage, and vehicular traffic, the project environment is coherent with the existing surrounding urban area.

PHOTO SOURCE: Google Earth 2019

Figure 4-3 South Renton Transit Center: Existing street view photograph

4.3.4 Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover

Figure 4-4 is a street view photograph of the existing Bellevue Transit Center. The project component itself contains no natural environment as it is a paved street block with a transit platform located along its median. Street trees are located on both sides of Bellevue Transit Center Access Road. Adjacent to the transit center to the south is a multi-story office tower with a large manicured lawn and ornamental trees and shrubs. Natural resources appear harmonious within the context of this highly developed, urban city center. The cultural environment is highly ordered, well maintained, and visually organized, consisting primarily of modern commercial and residential towers with street-level retail, an organized, well-signed road network, and public art within and near the transit center. Public art at the transit center includes a mid-block bronze and steel pavement treatment and a sculptural light made of granite and aluminum. The project environment is also highly organized and, therefore, visually coherent. Aesthetic treatment at the transit center and other transportation facilities and art features combine to create a pleasing and coherent streetscape for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

The project also includes lane realignment and BRT layover space adjacent to the Bellevue Public Library on 110th Avenue NE. Natural elements include ornamental maintained planting beds north and south of the library and a large grass area south of the library. Natural visual elements are naturally harmonious within this urban context. The ornamental landscape, art, and public areas associated with the library help institutional viewers perceive cultural order. The urban streetscape is coherent for neighbors and travelers.

PHOTO SOURCE: Google 2019

Figure 4-4 Bellevue Transit Center: Existing street view photograph

4.3.5 Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage

Figure 4-5 is an aerial photograph of this AVE. The natural environment is dominated by mature trees, shrubs, and ground cover, including around the perimeter of the Kingsgate site that help to screen the site from adjacent residential neighbors. Mature trees similarly dominate the views of surrounding land uses. Viewers would consider the composition of the resources of the natural environment as harmonious. The cultural environment includes commercial buildings and multi-family housing units ranging from one to six stories tall. Development on individual parcels exhibits a visual balance between size, scale, and form. Therefore, the cultural environment is orderly and consistent with viewers' expectations. The project environment consists of the existing Totem Lake transit stop, Kingsgate Park-and-Ride, I-405, and local streets. The street network is organized and well-signed for motorists, and there is a connected sidewalk network to and from the transit stop and park-and-ride. Public art sculptures are located along the pedestrian areas to and from the transit stop at the I-405 interchange. The project environment is visually coherent with the context of the AVE; viewers would expect these features in a freeway environment.

PHOTO SOURCE: Google Earth 2019

Figure 4-5 Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride: Existing aerial photograph

4.3.6 Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements

Figure 4-6 is an aerial photograph of this AVE. Landform around the Brickyard Park-and-Ride generally slopes down from east to west and from north to south. A tributary of Juanita Creek lies approximately 600 west and 50 feet below the elevation of the site. Existing stormwater facilities are located south and southwest of the site below the adjacent park-and-ride location south of Transit Access Road. Mature vegetation is abundant in the viewshed and limits most views to and from the site.

Land use adjacent to the site and I-405 is zoned General Mixed-use. Some 1- to 4-story retail/commercial uses are located east of I-405 along NE 160th Street, but the majority of the adjacent area is high-density residential 2 to 4 stories high and undeveloped and green space areas, including the existing stormwater facilities. Remaining areas outside the General Mixed-use within the 0.25-mile viewshed are single-family residential. Residential areas west of the site are between approximately 30 feet and 50 feet below the elevation of the existing site, and views of the site would be limited both by elevation difference and extensive existing vegetation. Areas east of I-405 are approximately 10 feet above the site and may have views of the site; however, direct views are primarily blocked by existing vegetation and an existing noise wall along the freeway.

The existing 450-plus stall park-and-ride serves the Brickyard transit station. The I-405 pavement with travel lanes, HOV lanes, and on- and off-ramps range from approximately 220 to 330 feet wide. Freeway, interchange, ramps, retaining and noise walls, traffic barriers, park-and-ride signage, street lights, and utilities are abundant and present visual clutter.

PHOTO SOURCE: Google Maps 2019

Figure 4-6 Brickyard Park-and-Ride: Existing aerial photograph

4.3.7 Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements

Figure 4-7 is an existing aerial photograph of this AVE. The natural environment is limited to mature street trees, shrubs, bushes, and grass planter strips. Near the Lynnwood City Center transit center are two small parks, one consisting of an intact, dense stand of mature trees. Viewers would consider the composition of the resources of the natural environment as harmonious and consistent with their expectations for a highly developed, suburban environment. This project component is located in a highly developed, suburban environment surrounded by local streets and parking lots. Commercial buildings and multi-family housing units range from one to three stories tall, and developments on individual parcels exhibit a visual balance between size, scale, and form. The cultural environment is visually orderly and consistent with viewers' expectations. The project environment consists of the existing transit center plus a short segment on 44th Avenue W between 196th Street SW and 200th Street SW and the Poplar Way on-ramp to northbound I-5. Street and business signs, signals, and lights are prevalent, and wayfinding is clear. Public art sculptures are located at the entrance to the existing transit center. The street network is organized and well-signed for motorists, and there is a connected sidewalk network near the transit center. The project environment is visually coherent with the context of the AVE.

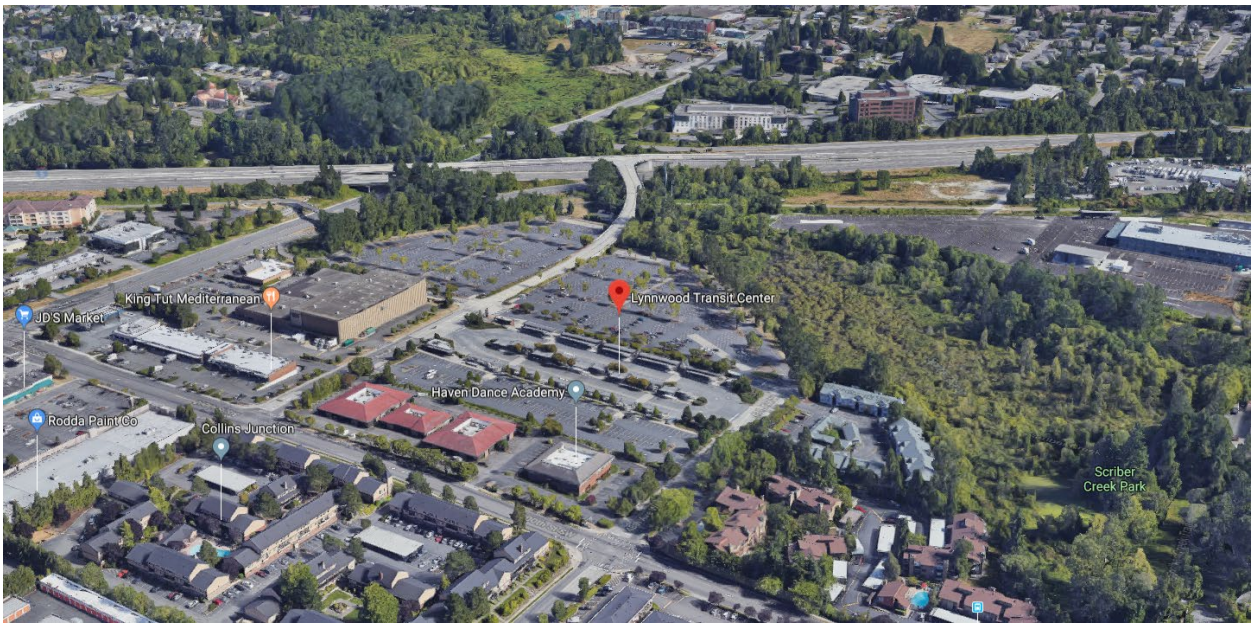


PHOTO SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

Figure 4-7 Lynnwood City Center: Existing aerial photograph

5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This section describes the visual changes anticipated to occur as a result of the project components, and specifically any changes to the overall visual quality of the AVE for each project component. Impacts to visual quality are discussed in terms of activities during construction and long-term impacts once the project is built.

5.1 Construction impacts

For each project component, construction equipment and activities would be noticeable throughout the active construction period. For this project, construction equipment is likely to include excavators, loaders, lifts, backhoes, bulldozers, compactors, mixers, pump trucks, and cranes. This equipment is often brightly colored to promote visibility and safety. Other sources of visual changes during construction would include staging areas, material storage, trailers, fencing, vehicular and pedestrian detours, construction signing, flashing safety lights, and work lighting. Lights may be used to safely illuminate the workspaces, which could cause spillover light onto adjacent parcels. Visual detractions from construction activities would be removed upon completion of project construction. Specific temporary construction visual impacts for each project component are discussed below.

5.1.1 Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

Construction of this project component is expected to last approximately 12 months. Construction would occur primarily within the Burien Transit Center and existing roadways. Temporary construction activities would occur outside of the existing roadway right-of-way for SW 148th Street during construction of the proposed BAT lane in SW 148th Street. A small amount of vegetation would be removed in the southwest portion of the transit center for bus turning movements around the modified transit center islands and at the edges of SW 148th Street for roadway widening. To reduce potential street closures that would disrupt daytime traffic, construction may occur during the night and on weekends. Nighttime hours would likely require construction and safety lighting (including flashing lights); however, existing nighttime lighting is already pervasive in this area from the street and adjacent development.

Construction activities would be visible to both neighbors and travelers in the AVE, primarily within the visual context of the existing roadway. Lighting, human-made structures and materials, bright colors, and vehicle movement would be visible within the AVE. While these visual changes are typical of construction activities, they would contribute to a perception of a disorderly cultural environment and a project environment that is seen as incoherent. Therefore, during construction of this project component, both neighbors and travelers would perceive that the visual quality of this AVE would be temporarily degraded. In particular, residential neighbors who prefer maintaining natural harmony and cultural order would perceive construction activities as degrading the existing visual quality.

5.1.2 Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements

Construction of this project component is expected to last approximately 24 months. Other than construction vehicles using adjacent roads for haul routes, construction activities would occur within the right-of-way for SR 518. Some brush and vegetation would be cleared along SR 518 adjacent to the existing paved mainline and ramps. Vegetation may also be removed to provide a clear and level area for staging, including 10 trees with trunks between 4 and 30 inches in diameter. Construction activities would be associated with SR 518 and improvements, including bus-only lanes and the BRT station, retaining walls, grading for stormwater features, and the pedestrian bridge. These activities would be primarily visible to travelers on SR 518. Some neighbors may have views of construction activities; however, much of the construction would occur at or near the level of SR 518, which is below the line of sight for neighbors. In addition, existing vegetation, land cover, and development would be expected to obscure construction areas from viewers north and south of SR 518. To reduce potential street closures that would disrupt daytime traffic, construction may occur during the night and on weekends. Nighttime hours would likely require construction and safety lighting (including flashing lights); however, existing nighttime lighting is already pervasive in this area from the street and adjacent development.

From a neighbors' perspective, construction activities would be barely visible and would not be expected to change their perception of the existing project coherence. Therefore, for neighbors, construction would be expected to have a neutral effect to visual quality in this AVE.

Construction activities would be very visible to travelers on SR 518 and a small segment of Tukwila International Boulevard. Visual changes from construction would include lighting, human-made structures and materials, bright colors, and vehicle movement. The temporary addition of these visual elements would reduce the project coherence as viewed by travelers. Therefore, during construction of this project component, travelers would perceive that the visual quality of this AVE would be temporarily degraded.

5.1.3 South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

Construction of this project component is expected to last approximately 24 months. The first phases of the South Renton Transit Center would involve the demolition and clearing of existing structures and pavement at the existing Sound Ford site. The small amounts of existing vegetation within the proposed transit center property would be cleared. Approximately 34 trees with a trunk diameter between 4 and 30 inches are estimated to be removed, 14 street trees within City of Renton right-of-way and 20 trees within WSDOT right-of-way. The demolition of the existing buildings would open views of the construction site to neighbors and travelers within the AVE. Human-made materials, lighting, bright colors, and vehicle movement are common elements in the AVE. The presence of high-capacity overhead utility lines and large transmission pole structures would add to the perceived visual clutter of vertical construction elements such as cranes, pump trucks, and scaffolding. Temporary lane closures would likely occur to construct the new bus-on-shoulder lane on northbound SR 167/Rainier Avenue S.

Commercial, retail, industrial, and residential neighbors who have a preference for cultural order and maintaining the existing visual character would perceive the construction activities as temporarily degrading the existing visual quality of the AVE.

Travelers along Rainier Avenue S and S Grady Way who have a preference for project coherence would only experience minor visual changes from construction of the BAT lane and modifications to Hardie Avenue SW. The temporary addition of these visual elements would reduce the project coherence as viewed by travelers. Therefore, during construction of this project component, travelers would perceive that the visual quality of this AVE would be temporarily degraded.

5.1.4 Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover

Construction of this project component is expected to last approximately 12 months. Construction activities at the transit center would be very minimal and of short duration. It is not expected that either neighbors or travelers would perceive these activities as affecting the cultural order or project coherence. Therefore, there would be a neutral effect to visual quality during construction.

Construction of the BRT layover in front of the Bellevue Library, where 110th Avenue NE would be modified to remove existing on-street parking and provide two new layover bays, would be visible to both neighbors and travelers. Lighting, human-made structures and materials, bright colors, and vehicle movement are common elements in the existing viewshed and would be visually cohesive with construction activities; however, traffic-control devices, lane changes, sidewalk closures, and other temporary changes would not be cohesive with the expectations of travelers, bicyclists, or pedestrians and would be perceived as reducing the project coherence. Therefore, during construction of this project component, travelers would perceive that the visual quality of this AVE would be temporarily degraded.

5.1.5 Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage

Construction of this project component is expected to last approximately 6 months for the station construction and 24 months for the park-and-ride garage. At the Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station, construction activities would be very minimal and of short duration. It is not expected that either neighbors or travelers would perceive these activities as affecting the cultural order or project coherence. Therefore, there would be a neutral effect to visual quality during construction.

Construction of the Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage would begin with clearing approximately 17 of the mature trees with trunk diameters between 4 and 30 inches within landscaped areas in the park-and-ride lot and demolition of existing surface parking. Mature trees along the western and southern site boundaries would remain, which would screen much of the construction activities from adjacent residential areas. Sound Transit would place construction screens or barriers to limit the visibility of work areas where practical. Vegetation and land cover are also expected to obscure views of most non-adjacent neighbors. Construction equipment would be noticeable throughout the active construction period, whether moving within the site or to and from the site on local roads. Efforts would be made to reduce nighttime and weekend construction, primarily adhering to local ordinance restrictions; however, some nighttime work is likely to occur to accommodate potential street closures or to limit traffic disruption during the day.

At the Kingsgate site, the construction and staging areas would add visual clutter to the AVE, which would be perceived by residential neighbors as temporarily creating cultural disorder and degrading the existing visual quality of the AVE. Travelers along I-405 may have views of the construction site, particularly construction cranes, but heavy traffic, existing vegetation, retaining walls, pedestrian

structures along 116th Avenue NE and other elements would obscure views for most viewers and the attention of drivers would be primarily associated with driving. Construction would not be expected to change their perception of project coherence. Therefore, for travelers, construction would be expected to have a neutral effect to visual quality in this AVE.

5.1.6 Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements

The construction schedule, duration, and hours would be determined by WSDOT. Construction activities associated with the Brickyard Station would begin with site clearing and demolition. Demolition would primarily involve adjusting lane striping and removing existing pavement within the I-405 corridor. Some brush and vegetation, including some trees (with trunk diameters between 4 and 30 inches) from forested areas on each side of I-405 on the north end of the study area, would be cleared. Construction activities would be visible to both neighbors and travelers. However, much of the construction would occur at or near ground level of the freeway, which is cut approximately 20 feet lower than the elevation of Juanita Woodinville Way NE, and would be below the line of sight for most neighbors. In addition, existing vegetation and land cover would completely obscure work areas for most viewers west of I-405.

Construction activities would primarily be viewed by travelers on I-405 and, to some extent, Juanita Woodinville Way NE. These activities would include demolition of travel lanes; clearing and grading for the roadway widening; construction of the elevated pedestrian bridge, elevators, and stairs; placement of traffic-control devices for construction detours and lane closures; and constructing cut slopes and retaining walls.

Existing vegetation and land cover, including noise walls along I-405, obscure most views of roadway improvements for neighbors to the east; however, construction of portions of the pedestrian bridge may be visible above the noise wall. Additionally, the construction of the pedestrian bridge stairway and ADA ramp improvements would be visible east of the noise wall along NE 155th Street as it curves east and becomes NE 153rd Street; however, direct views of construction activities would have minimal effects on the visual character perceived by most travelers and neighbors.

To avoid potential impacts to the commute period and traffic congestion, construction working hours would likely require nighttime and weekend construction. Nighttime hours would likely require project work, safety lighting, and flashing lights; however, existing street lighting, parking lot lighting, light emanating from commercial/retail buildings, electric signage, and lights from vehicles are pervasive in the existing viewshed.

Lighting, human-made structures and materials, bright colors, and vehicle movement, including large semi and box delivery and shipping vehicles, are common elements in the existing viewshed and would be visually cohesive with construction activities; however, traffic-control devices, reduced speeds, lane changes, and other temporary changes would be additional visual elements and would not be cohesive with travelers' expectations. These changes would constitute moderate visual impacts for travelers.

5.1.7 Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements

Construction of this project component is expected to last approximately 12 months. At the Poplar Way loop ramp, construction activities would include minor brush and vegetation clearing, including approximately 15 trees with trunk diameters between 4 and 30 inches, for widening for the bus-only lane, which also includes a retaining wall and stormwater facilities. Construction activities would be visible to both neighbors and travelers; however, the construction would occur in the existing roadway visual context. Lighting, human-made structures and materials, bright colors, and vehicle movement are common elements in the existing viewshed and would be visually cohesive with construction activities; however, traffic-control devices, reduced speeds, lane changes, and other temporary changes would add visual elements that would not be cohesive with the expectations of travelers. Therefore, during construction of this project component, travelers would perceive that the visual quality of this AVE would be temporarily degraded.

At the Lynnwood City Center transit center construction activities, including the installation of two new traffic signals, would be minimal and of short duration. It is not expected that either neighbors or travelers would perceive these activities as affecting the cultural order or project coherence. Therefore, there would be a neutral effect to visual quality during construction.

5.2 Long-term impacts

Analysis of the potential for long-term impacts to visual quality considered the visual compatibility of the project component, viewer sensitivity, and the overall degree of impacts to visual quality.

5.2.1 Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

This project component would be consistent and compatible with the existing visual conditions. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual changes and the project would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation would be unaffected, and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes of the project component would be similar to existing visual elements within the AVE. Significant adverse impacts are not expected.

5.2.1.1 Visual compatibility

The Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements project component would be compatible with the cultural environment of the AVE as the new BRT station would be constructed at an existing transit center within the existing paved facility. The roadway improvements on SW 148th Street, SR 509, and SR 518 would not be visually discernable over time from the existing conditions and would be compatible within the context of an existing four-lane road in a suburban environment and a state route. The project components would have similar visual characteristics such as materials, colors, form, height, and shape to the existing transit center and roadway features. Thus, the project would visually blend with the existing environment and would be visually consistent and compatible with the existing visual environment.

Table 5-1 identifies the expected viewer sensitivity (in terms of exposure, awareness, and distance) to the visual changes.

Table 5-1 Viewer sensitivity: Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

Viewer type		Viewer sensitivity		
		Exposure	Awareness	Overall sensitivity
Neighbor	Residential/ Industrial	A few residences are located in a neighborhood approximately 200 feet north of the project component; however, these houses are located behind a fence that shields views toward the transit center. Since there are no residential neighbors with direct views, their exposure would be limited.	Attention and focus would not be high as views would become routine.	Low
	Commercial/Retail	Commercial and retail viewers would be as close as 100 feet but would be focused on their activities, and views are primarily screened by existing land cover and vegetation. Viewers would have low sensitivity to the visual changes that would occur as a result of the project component.	Attention would be low as most viewers focus on work.	Low
Traveler	Motorist	The overall visual experience of motorists would be similar to the existing condition, as the project would only result in minor lane modifications and the addition of a traffic signal. Travelers would use roadways that are a part of the project component, and the visual environment with the project would be consistent with their expectations.	Motorists would be aware of the project component but would be focused on driving. Passengers may be more aware but would have short-duration views.	Low
	Bicyclist/ Pedestrian	While bicyclists and pedestrians are generally characterized as having higher sensitivity due to their proximity, activities, and expectations, within the AVE, they are accustomed to views being composed of dense urban development along a major arterial street and their expectations would already be established. The visual environment with the project component would be consistent with their expectations.	Bicyclists and pedestrians using the project component would primarily be focused on traveling and would be less sensitive to visual changes.	Low

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

5.2.1.2 Visual quality

The Burien Transit Center and Roadway Improvements project component would not result in a change to the existing natural harmony within the AVE. The project would not degrade sensitive natural visual resources in the AVE such as mature trees at Dottie Harper Park, would not substantially change landform, and would not obstruct desired views. The cultural environment would remain orderly as the project, and in particular the BRT platform and shelter, would be

designed to be consistent with the type, scale, size, shape, and form at the existing transit center. Roadway improvements and signal modifications would be minor and within the existing paved right-of-way so the project environment would remain visually coherent. Therefore, the overall impact to visual quality would be neutral.

5.2.2 Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements

This project component would be consistent and compatible with the existing conditions. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual changes and the project would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes of the project component would be similar to the existing roadways, bridges, light rail line and station, and buildings adjacent to the site within the AVE. Significant adverse impacts are not expected.

5.2.2.1 Visual compatibility

Changes to visual resources associated with this project component would mainly be viewed by travelers along SR 518, the interchange with Tukwila International Boulevard, and Airport Expressway. Existing vegetation along the sides of SR 518 obscures views from adjacent residential, retail, and commercial viewers. For this project component, only lower growing and immature roadside vegetation would be removed for roadway widening. Approximately 10 trees would be removed; however, these tree removals are not expected to alter the existing natural visual character; therefore, the overall natural environment would be visually compatible.

The light rail station and track guideway rise nearly 100 feet over SR 518 and are visually dominant for many viewers.

The proposed BRT station and pedestrian structure would add new visual elements; however, the project would be compatible with existing cultural order as viewed by travelers and commercial/retail viewers. This project component would include similar materials and character to the existing light rail infrastructure and the Tukwila International Boulevard overpass.

Proposed roadway modifications, BRT lanes, pedestrian bridge, lighting, signage, and utilities would add visual elements to the project environment. These elements would be similar in visual character and compatible with the existing project environment.

Large numbers of travelers and viewers from the commercial/retail areas would see the changes in visual resources with the project component. However, once constructed, the project component would be compatible with the existing visual character and both travelers and commercial/retail neighbors would have low sensitivity to the change.

Table 5-2 identifies the expected viewer sensitivity (in terms of exposure, awareness, and distance) to the visual changes. **Figure 5-1** shows the existing view for motorists traveling west on SR 518 and a photosimulation of the view with the construction of the project component, including the addition of bus-only lanes approaching the BRT station and the elevated pedestrian bridge connecting the BRT stations and the adjacent Link light rail station.

Table 5-2 Viewer sensitivity: Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements

Viewer type		Viewer sensitivity		
		Exposure	Awareness	Overall sensitivity
Neighbor	Residential/ Industrial	Residents with views of the project component may be within 600 feet north of SR 518, but views are obscured by the light rail station and tracks. Viewers south of SR 518 would be a minimum of 1,000 feet south and east. Existing vegetation and land cover obscure most views. The number of residents with long-duration views of the project component would be low.	Attention and focus would not be high as views would be only minimally changed and would become routine.	Low
	Commercial/ Retail	The number of retail viewers may be high, but views would be of short duration. Worker numbers, with moderate to long-duration views, would be low. Available views within the viewshed would primarily be from south of SR 518 in north-facing buildings. Views from surface lots are approximately 300 feet away and 900 feet to parking structures. Existing vegetation and land cover obscure most views.	Attention would be low as viewers focus on work and commercial/ retail activities. Most views would be over SR 518, within the visual context of a state route.	Low
Traveler	Motorist	Large numbers of motorists would have views of the project from SR 518 and Tukwila International Boulevard. Motorist views would be of short duration.	Motorists, particularly drivers along SR 518 and Tukwila International Boulevard, would primarily be focused on driving. Motorists would be aware of the project component but focused on driving.	Low
	Bicyclist/ Pedestrian	Existing vegetation and land cover obscure ground-level views except for bicyclists and pedestrians using the BRT system. Views would be of short duration.	Bicyclists and pedestrians using the BRT system would be focused on traveling and would expect to see the features of this project component.	Low

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

Existing view

NOTE: Photo simulations are provided to convey general massing of structural elements only. See Section 6 for aesthetic treatment discussion.

Figure 5-1 Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station and Roadway Improvements: Existing view and photosimulation from SR 518 westbound

5.2.2.2 Visual quality

The AVE of the Tukwila International Boulevard BRT Station is highly developed. Existing vegetation is primarily located along SR 518 and in the residential areas northeast and southeast of SR 518. Small areas of roadside vegetation along SR 518 are expected to be removed for the project component but would not result in a change to the existing natural harmony in the AVE.

New visual elements would be added to the cultural environment of the AVE. These elements, including the pedestrian bridge and BRT station shelter, would be consistent with the scale, materials, and visual character as the existing large parking structures, light rail station, and commercial/retail structures. The visual character of the cultural environment would remain orderly.

The BRT stations, roadway modifications to SR 518, and new pedestrian bridge would add new visual elements to the existing project environment. Directional and roadway signage, traffic lights, street lighting, parking lot lighting, retail/commercial advertising and signage, and utilities are also ubiquitous in the existing project environment. New visual elements introduced by the project would not change the existing project coherence. Therefore, the overall impacts to visual quality would be neutral.

5.2.3 South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

This project component would be consistent and compatible with the existing conditions. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual changes and the project would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation would improve existing conditions, and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes of the project component would be similar to the existing roadways, utility lines, and buildings adjacent to the site within the AVE. Significant adverse impacts are not expected.

5.2.3.1 Visual compatibility

The existing visual setting of the South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements project component is highly urbanized with very little natural visual character. Existing planting islands in adjacent parking lots and along Rainier Avenue S are and would remain the main source of natural visual elements.

Extensive green space under the existing utility lines along S Grady Way is proposed and stormwater treatment facilities, parking islands, and other green spaces would introduce new natural elements into the AVE. All City of Renton landscape requirements, including street trees and interior landscaping, would be provided. The proposed project component would enhance the harmony of the existing natural environment.

The scale, form, materials, and visual character of the park-and-ride garage and transit center facilities would be compatible with the existing cultural order of commercial/retail areas within the AVE. While the existing architectural elements of the park-and-ride garage have not yet been identified, the design would comply with the applicable City of Renton design standards. This could include screening of the parking structure or façade treatments that would be compatible with adjacent commercial/retail areas. Other aesthetic treatments could include the use of colors and finishes such as stainless steel, glazing, brick or rock, or concrete that would

provide long-lasting, low-maintenance visual elements that would enhance the cultural environment. Refer to Appendix A for typical aesthetic features that may be used.

Proposed site lighting, signage, pedestrian connections, and utilities would be similar to existing conditions in commercial/retail areas. While the project component would introduce new visual elements for residential viewers, the transit center would be located within an existing retail/commercial area and would replace existing structures of similar materials and construction. Overall the project component would increase the cultural order of the AVE.

To improve transit speed and reliability, eastbound BRT vehicles would use a new short section of a bus-only lane on SR 167 that would start at the existing loop ramp from SR 167 to westbound I-405 and would extend north to connect into the existing BAT lane. Other local roads would have only minor changes with this project such as a traffic light along Rainier Avenue S at Hardie Avenue SW. Signage, street lighting, and other roadway elements would be compatible with existing visual elements and light levels. The visual character of the roadway improvements would be compatible with the existing project environment and would not change the project coherence.

Large numbers of travelers along surface streets would see visual changes with the project. Similarly, there may be large numbers of viewers from the commercial/retail areas; however, both the travelers and commercial/retail neighbors would have low sensitivity to change and the visual changes from the project component.

Table 5-3 identifies the expected viewer sensitivity (in terms of exposure, awareness, and distance) to the visual changes. Three viewpoints, with views toward the South Renton Transit Center, were used to evaluate the potential visual compatibility and impacts. **Figure 5-2** shows the locations of these three viewpoints. **Figure 5-3** shows the existing view from residential locations (photo location 1) and shows a photosimulation of the view of the proposed South Renton Transit Center with a garage structure that uses an open floor architectural treatment. **Figure 5-4** shows the existing view from photo location 2 at the intersection of Rainier Avenue S and Hardie Avenue SW and a photosimulation from this view with an open garage architecture. **Figure 5-5** shows the existing view from photo location 3 and a photosimulation of this view with an open garage architecture.

Table 5-3 Viewer sensitivity: South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements

Viewer type		Viewer sensitivity		
		Exposure	Awareness	Overall sensitivity
Neighbor	Residential/ Industrial	Existing land cover and vegetation obscures views for most residential viewers. A small number of residential viewers located approximately 800 feet northeast of the parking structure may have affected views of the parking structure.	Attention and focus would be high at first and then would become routine.	Low
	Commercial/ Retail	The number of commercial/retail viewers would be high but would have short-duration views. Workers may have moderate to long-duration views. Views are primarily obscured by existing land cover for all but adjacent neighbors that are generally 200 to 1,000 feet away.	Attention would be low as most viewers would focus on work and shopping.	Low
Traveler	Motorist	Large numbers of motorists would have views of the project component from I-405, S Grady Ave, Rainer Ave. S, Lake Ave. S, Shattuck Ave. S, or S 7th St. Motorist views would be of short duration.	Motorists, particularly drivers along I-405, would primarily be focused on driving. Motorists on surface streets would be aware of the project but mostly focused on driving and not sensitive to visual changes.	Low
	Bicyclist/ Pedestrian	Most bicyclists and pedestrians travel along immediately adjacent surface roads and use sidewalks that are part of the project component. Views would be of short duration.	Bicyclists and pedestrians would primarily be focused on traveling and are not expected to be sensitive to visual changes.	Low

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

Figure 5-2 South Renton Transit Center photograph location key

NOTE: Photo simulations are provided to convey general massing of structural elements only. Final design of the proposed park-and-ride structure will include aesthetic features and finishes including architectural elements and screens, railings, lighting, site furniture, textures, colors, and required landscaping. See Section 6 for aesthetic treatment discussion.

Figure 5-3 South Renton Transit Center location 1: Existing view and photosimulation

NOTE: Photo simulations are provided to convey general massing of structural elements only. Final design of the proposed park-and-ride structure will include aesthetic features and finishes, including architectural elements and screens, railings, lighting, site furniture, textures, colors, and required landscaping. See Section 6 for aesthetic treatment discussion.

Figure 5-4 South Renton Transit Center location 2: Existing view and photosimulation

NOTE: Photo simulations are provided to convey general massing of structural elements only. Final design of the proposed park-and-ride structure will include aesthetic features and finishes, including architectural elements and screens, railings, lighting, site furniture, textures, colors, and required landscaping. See Section 6 for aesthetic treatment discussion.

Figure 5-5 South Renton Transit Center location 3: Existing view and photosimulation

5.2.3.2 Visual quality

The South Renton Transit Center AVE is highly developed. Very little vegetation and almost no natural visual character, exists. The extensive green space, stormwater treatment, parking islands, and other landscaping required by the City of Renton would substantially increase natural elements. The overall impact on the natural character would increase and benefit natural harmony.

Existing buildings in commercial/retail areas are constructed of similar materials, have similar scales, and similar visual characteristics. The project component would be visible to a small number of residential viewers; however, due to the existing visual context, residential viewers would likely have low sensitivity. Therefore, the project component would maintain the existing cultural order.

With few visual changes to the I-405/SR 167 interchange, S Grady Way, Rainier Avenue S., other local surface streets, or associated signage and lighting structures, the visual character of the project component would maintain the existing project coherence. Therefore, the overall impacts of the South Renton Transit Center and Roadway Improvements project component would be to enhance the existing visual quality of the AVE. No indirect or cumulative impacts would be anticipated.

5.2.4 Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover

This project component would be consistent and compatible with the existing conditions. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual impacts and the project would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes of the project component would be similar to the existing transit center, roadways, and buildings adjacent to the site within the AVE. Significant adverse impacts are not expected.

5.2.4.1 Visual compatibility

The Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover project component would be compatible with cultural environment of the AVE as the new BRT station would be constructed within the existing transit center facility. There would be changes to elements of the natural environment. The project component, including the layover area adjacent to the Bellevue Library, would have similar visual characteristics, such as materials, colors, form, height, and shape, to the existing transit center and roadway. Thus, the project would visually blend with the existing cultural order and project coherence. **Table 5-4** identifies the expected viewer sensitivity (in terms of exposure, awareness, and distance) to the visual changes.

Table 5-4 Viewer sensitivity: Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover

Viewer type		Viewer sensitivity		
		Exposure	Awareness	Overall sensitivity
Neighbor	Residential/ Commercial/ Retail	Residential, institutional, civic, retail, and commercial neighbors would be in close proximity (foreground) but would have low visual sensitivity to project changes because they are already accustomed to the existing transit center within this densely developed urban environment.	Commercial/retail and industrial viewers would be primarily focused on their work activities rather than viewing scenery, and would have low sensitivity to visual change. Residential viewers who have long-term views from their residences would have the highest sensitivity to visual change.	Low
	Recreational	The AVE is a densely developed urban city center and views beyond the immediately adjacent areas are limited. Recreational viewers would be in close proximity.	Those traveling through the AVE would be expected to have low sensitivity to visual change because their surrounding environment is already extensively developed.	Low
Traveler	Motorist	Motorists would be in close proximity (foreground) and would already be accustomed to the existing transit center within this densely developed urban environment. Motorists would have low visual sensitivity to project changes because they already accustomed to the existing transit center within this densely developed urban environment.	Motorists would be expected to have low sensitivity as they would mostly be paying attention to navigating the road network safety.	Low
	Bicyclist/ Pedestrian	Bicyclists and pedestrians in the AVE are in close proximity to the project elements. They would be surrounded by dense, urban development, including numerous high-rise buildings and an urban transportation network including many intersections.	Bicyclists would likely be focused on moving safety through the AVE and pedestrians would be focused on navigation and accessing the many street-level businesses and transit.	Low

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

5.2.4.2 Visual quality

The Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover project component would not result in a change to the existing natural harmony within the AVE. The project component would not remove natural resources and existing vegetation, such as ornamental landscaping in the right-of-way or fronting residential and commercial high-rise buildings. The natural environment would remain harmonious.

The cultural environment is comprised of the AVE's built elements and would remain orderly as the project, and in particular the BRT platform, would be designed to be consistent with the type, scale, size, shape, and form of the existing transit center.

Roadway improvements associated with the layover area would occur within the existing paved right-of-way. The project environment would remain visually coherent. Therefore, the overall impact of the Bellevue Transit Center and Off-site Layover project component to visual quality would be neutral.

5.2.5 Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage

The Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station part of this project component would be consistent and compatible with the existing conditions. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual changes and the project would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes would be similar to the existing roadways, overpasses, transit stations, and buildings adjacent to the station within the AVE. Significant adverse impacts are not expected.

Viewers would have a moderate to high sensitivity to visual changes. The park-and-ride garage would primarily blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes would be similar to the existing nearby commercial/retail buildings within the AVE; however, the scale would be inconsistent with the existing two-story residences to the south of the site.

Significant adverse impacts are not expected for these viewers; however, the scale and distance to the park-and-ride garage would cause adverse impacts for adjacent residential viewers. Aesthetic building treatments, opaque fencing, and vegetative screening included in the project would reduce the visual incompatibility of the scale.

5.2.5.1 Visual compatibility

The Totem Lake Station would be compatible with the existing natural harmony, cultural order, and project coherence.

Within the Kingsgate site approximately 17 of the existing mature trees would need to be removed for the park-and-ride garage structure. Trees removed within the interior of the Kingsgate site would be replaced in compliance with WSDOT's tree replacement and mitigation ratios. The majority of the existing mature trees around the perimeter of the Kingsgate site would be preserved and protected and would continue to be visually compatible with the natural environment in surrounding residential and commercial/retail areas. The mature vegetation and perimeter berm along the south site border, in particular, would maintain the existing visual screening for the majority of viewers, with the possible exception of residential neighbors directly adjacent to the south. Stormwater treatment

areas associated with the park-and-ride garage would comply with the City of Kirkland landscaping requirements and would preserve existing natural elements and introduce new natural visual elements for these viewers. Overall, the proposed Kingsgate Park-and-Ride garage would be compatible with the harmony of the existing natural environment.

The Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage would be a new structure on an existing paved park-and-ride lot. The new structure would be compatible with the scale and materials of existing commercial and retail buildings on the east side of I-405, which include a parking structure of similar scale and size. Proposed site lighting, signage, pedestrian connections, and utilities would be similar to existing conditions in commercial/retail areas and along 166th Avenue NE and I-405.

The Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage structure would contrast in scale, form, materials, and character to adjacent residential structures. While the park-and-ride garage structure would contrast in scale and form with these residential structures, it would not be visible from the majority of residences. It would not be visible to residences located to the west of the Kingsgate site as these views are limited by the existing vegetation and land form, which includes a raised berm, along the western boundary of the site. It would not be visible to residences to the north of the site because these residences would be approximately 1,600 feet from the park-and-ride garage and their views are screened by existing mature trees. Therefore, for most residential viewers, the park-and-ride garage would have a neutral effect on views and visual quality.

However, moving west to east along the southern boundary of the Kingsgate site the existing vegetation of tall, mature evergreen trees thins and the existing berm diminishes, resulting in minimal existing visual screening between the Kingsgate site and the residential neighbors directly adjacent to the south. To address this potential compatibility issue, landscape enhancements would be provided where possible to provide additional visual screening and would help to maintain natural visual elements. Enhancements would be in keeping with CPTED and Sound Transit security standards. Enhancements would include additional small trees and shrubs along the existing berm that would provide visual screening at lower levels that would obscure as much of the proposed parking structure as possible for adjacent residential neighbors. Landscape enhancements would also help to screen lighting emanating from the structure for the same neighbors. This additional landscaping would help soften and screen the visual contrast and massing of the park-and-ride garage structure as viewed by the residences to the south; however, from the perspective of these few residential viewers there would still be an adverse effect to visual quality.

Architectural screening for the park-and-ride garage structure would also be implemented to provide visual interest and serve as a design response to surrounding areas.

Architectural screening and other aesthetic building treatments would use colors and finishes such as stainless steel, glazing, brick or rock, or concrete that would provide long-lasting, low-maintenance visual elements that would enhance the cultural environment, limit headlight glare, reduce the visual impact of ramped floors, and minimize visual impacts. Refer to **Figure 6-1** in Chapter 6 for samples of typical aesthetic features that may be used.

Lighting levels are expected to increase with the parking structure compared to existing site light conditions; however ambient light conditions resulting from light spilling from I-405, BAT lanes, local roads, and retail/commercial areas is high and would decrease residential viewer sensitivity. I-405, BAT lanes, the interchange, and all local roads would not change. Additional traffic, signage, and other constructed elements would remain.

Table 5-5 identifies the expected viewer sensitivity (in terms of exposure, awareness, and distance) to the visual changes. Two viewpoints, with views toward the proposed Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage, were used to evaluate potential visual compatibility and impacts. **Figure 5-6** shows the locations of these two viewpoints. **Figure 5-7** shows the existing view from location 1, at the entrance to the exiting park-and-ride on 116th Avenue NE, and a photosimulation of the view from this location with a park-and-ride garage structure.

Figure 5-8 shows the existing view from photo location 2, which illustrates the perspective of residential viewers on the south side of the existing parking lot and a photosimulation of the view with a park-and-ride garage structure.

Table 5-5 Viewer sensitivity: Totem Lake/Kingsgate Station and Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage

Viewer type		Viewer sensitivity		
		Exposure	Awareness	Overall sensitivity
Neighbor	Residential	Residential viewers would be small in number with long-duration views. Existing vegetation and land cover obscure most views; however, adjacent residential views of the project component would be in very close proximity (approximately 70 feet from parking structure in some locations).	Attention and focus would be high at first and then would become routine over time.	Moderate to High
	Commercial/ Retail	Available views within the viewshed would primarily be from east of the freeway in west-facing buildings an average distance of 600 to 1,000 feet away. Existing vegetation and land cover obscure most views. Available views would be of short duration for a low number of viewers. Workers may have moderate to long-duration views.	Attention would be low as most viewers focus on work and shopping.	Low
Traveler	Motorist	Large numbers of motorists would have views of the project component from I-405. Views along I-405 would be from a distance of 300 to 500 feet, mostly from an angle. Some would view the project from the adjacent 116th Ave NE. Motorist views would be of short duration.	Motorists, particularly drivers along I-405, would primarily be focused on driving. Motorists on 116th Ave NE would be aware of the project component; many would access the park-and-ride.	Low
	Bicyclist/ Pedestrian	Existing vegetation and land cover obscure ground-level views except along 116th Ave NE. Most bicyclists and pedestrians access the park-and-ride. Views would be of short duration.	Bicyclists and pedestrians would primarily be focused on traveling and would be less sensitive to visual changes.	Low

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

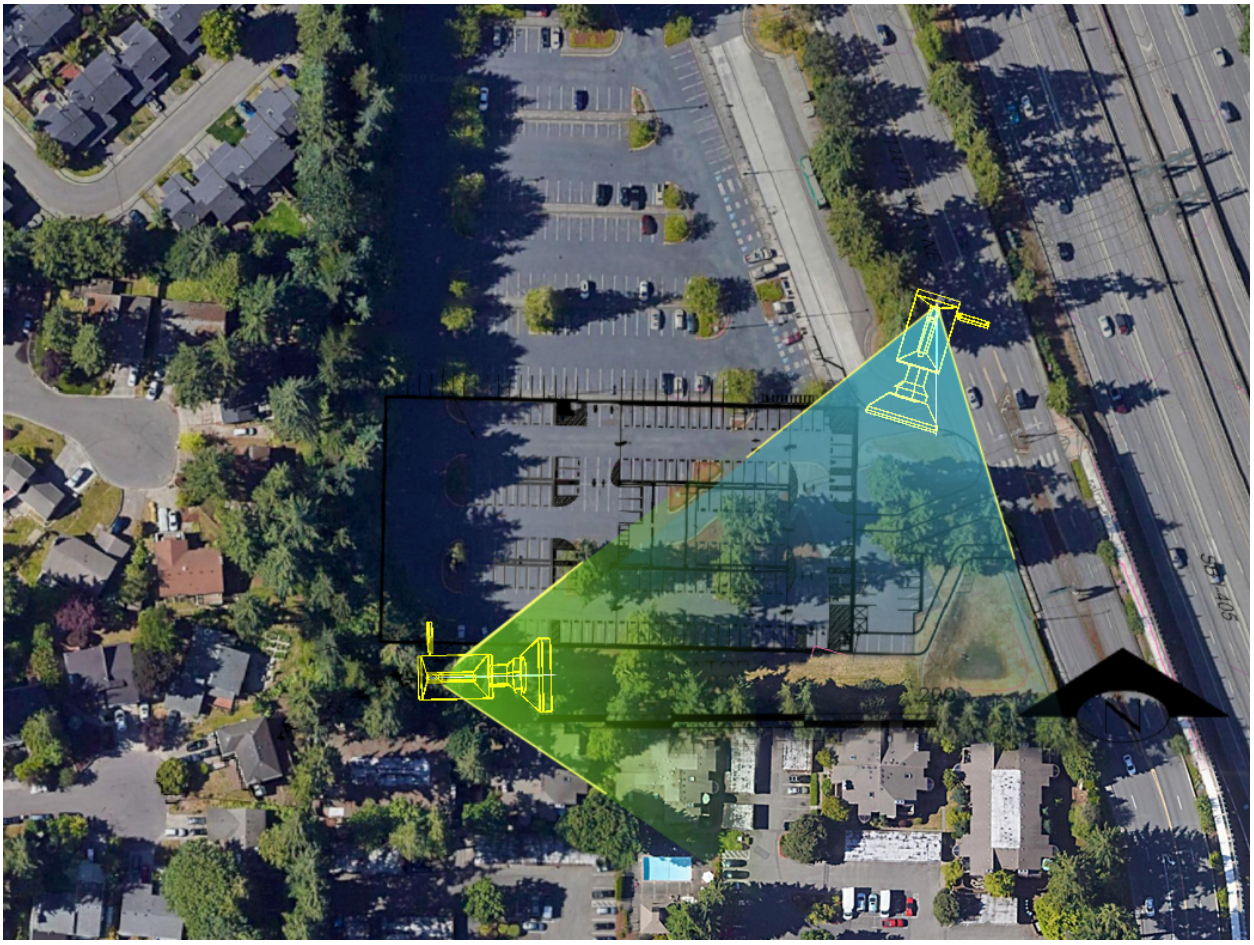


Figure 5-6 Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage photograph location key

NOTE: Photo simulations are provided to convey general massing of structural elements only. Final design of the proposed park-and-ride structure will include aesthetic features and finishes, including architectural elements and screens, railings, lighting, site furniture, textures, colors, and required landscaping. See Section 6 for aesthetic treatment discussion.

Figure 5-7 Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage location 1: Existing and photosimulation

NOTE: Photo simulations are provided to convey general massing of structural elements only. Final design of the proposed park-and-ride structure will include aesthetic features and finishes, including architectural elements and screens, railings, lighting, site furniture, textures, colors, and required landscaping. See Section 6 for aesthetic treatment discussion.

Figure 5-8 Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage location 2: Existing view and photosimulation

5.2.5.2 Visual quality

The Kingsgate Park-and-Ride Garage would cause minimal change to the visual resources of the natural environment. Approximately 17 mature trees in existing parking islands within the interior of the WSDOT-owned Kingsgate site and along the perimeter would be removed for construction of the garage. WSDOT's *Roadside Policy Manual* requires that trees removed be replaced, and such replacement is expected to be required on the Kingsgate site. This would be accomplished as part of the proposed additional landscaping along the southern site boundary. Most of the existing mature trees around the outside of the existing site are expected to remain. These trees form a visual buffer between residential areas and the proposed park-and-ride garage structure and would continue to provide natural elements and visual screening. The development of the park-and-ride garage structure and stormwater treatment infrastructure would comply with City of Kirkland landscaping requirements and would add natural elements. Proposed landscape enhancements and stormwater features would also introduce additional natural elements. The project component would be expected to maintain the existing natural harmony in the AVE.

Slight visual changes would occur to the existing Totem Lake/Kingsgate freeway station with the addition of the proposed BRT station. These changes would occur within the existing I-405 visual context and would be neutral to project coherence. Existing commercial/retail buildings in the AVE are constructed of similar materials and scale as the proposed parking garage structure and the cultural order would remain.

Most views of the proposed structure would be obscured for residential viewers, and due to the existing park-and-ride, these viewers would perceive the parking structure as having cultural order. However, a limited number of immediately adjacent residential neighbors would perceive the scale and material of the proposed parking structure as being much larger and incompatible with existing views or residential visual character. They would have a moderate to high sensitivity to visual changes. Enhanced landscaping and aesthetic treatments incorporated into the project would help to mitigate impacts for these viewers over the long-term. The overall long-term impacts on visual quality for these residential viewers would be neutral to moderate.

5.2.6 Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements

This project component would be consistent and compatible with the existing conditions. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual impacts and the project would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes of project components would be similar to the existing roadways, overpasses, park-and-ride, and buildings adjacent to the site within the AVE. Significant adverse impacts are not expected for these viewers. The proposed pedestrian bridge would be visible for some adjacent residential viewers; however, it would be within the roadway visual context, including the noise wall. Residential viewers would have a low to moderate sensitivity and the project component would not have an adverse effect on visual quality.

5.2.6.1 Visual compatibility

The majority of existing mature trees around the perimeter of the Brickyard Park-and-Ride and I-405 would be preserved and protected, and the existing trees located in the green spaces, mixed-use residential, retail, and commercial areas would remain. This mature vegetation would maintain the visual conditions of the natural environment. The elevation differences between proposed changes and the surrounding areas and the existing land cover would also limit the visibility for most neighbors. Additionally, the existing stormwater facilities and open areas would remain, and site landscaping would maintain natural visual elements. The overall natural environment would be visually compatible with existing visual conditions for most viewers.

Large numbers of travelers would experience changes to their visual environment associated with the proposed bus-only lanes, BRT station pair, pedestrian bridge with elevators and stairs, signage, and other human-made elements. However, all changes would be within the existing visual context of I-405 which includes overpass structures, retaining walls, noise walls, traffic-control barriers, and extensive pavement. Proposed lighting, signage, and utilities would be similar to existing conditions. The scale, form, materials, and visual character of the BRT lanes and road improvements would be culturally cohesive in the existing I-405 viewshed and would be implemented consistent with WSDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions approach.

A small number of residential viewers east of I-405 along NE 153rd Street and travelers along NE 153rd and NE 155th Streets would experience changes to their visual environment as the east end of the pedestrian bridge would be visible above the noise wall. The stairway and ADA ramp adjacent to the wall would also be visible; however, most residences face north or south. Most viewers would not have direct views of the improvements. Structures would not contrast with the existing visual character of the roadway, noise wall, or other visual elements in the roadway context. **Figure 5-9** shows the existing view from residential areas along NE 153rd Street and a photosimulation of the view from this location with the pedestrian bridge, stairway, and ADA ramp structure.

Pedestrian connections to the BRT stations and the existing park-and-ride lot would be improved by the proposed pedestrian bridge. The visual character of the project would be compatible with the existing visual environment. The proposed pedestrian bridge would also provide a safe off-street pedestrian connection for users of the Tolt Pipeline Trail with little deviation from the existing trail corridor. Users of the Tolt Pipeline Trail currently have to detour north approximately one-quarter mile to cross I-405 at Juanita Woodinville Way NE and approximately one-quarter mile back south to reconnect with the trail. The proposed pedestrian bridge would provide a safe off-street pedestrian connection for trail users with little deviation from the existing trail corridor and would be a benefit to the cultural environment.

Table 5-6 Viewer sensitivity Brickyard Station and Roadway Improvements

	Viewer type	Viewer sensitivity		
		Exposure	Awareness	Overall sensitivity
Neighbor	Residential	Residents with views of the site would be small in number in foreground proximity. Viewers would have long-duration views but existing noise walls, vegetation, and land cover obscure most views. A small number of residential viewers east of the noise wall would experience new visual elements associated with the pedestrian bridge, stairs, and ramp.	Attention and focus would not be high as views would be routine and in the existing I-405 visual context.	Moderate
	Commercial/retail	Existing vegetation, land cover, and elevation change obscure most views. Available views would primarily be from upper stories of commercial buildings north of Juanita Woodinville Way NE and east of I-405. Buildings average from 900 to 1,400 feet away from improvements. Views would be of short duration for a low number of viewers. Workers may have moderate to long-duration views.	Attention would be low as most viewers focus on working. Additionally, views would be over I-405 and local roads and would be impacted by this visual context.	Low
Traveler	Motorist	Large numbers of motorists would drive through the project area and would have views of the project from I-405. Some would view the project from Juanita Woodinville Way NE. Motorist views would be of short duration.	Motorists, particularly drivers along I-405, would primarily be focused on driving. Motorists on Juanita Woodinville Way NE would be aware of the project but most would view the project through the existing park-and-ride and would be less sensitive.	Low
	Bicyclist/ pedestrian	Most bicyclists and pedestrians access the park-and-ride on surface roadways and the proposed pedestrian bridge. Views would be of short duration.	Bicyclists and pedestrians would primarily be focused on traveling and would be less sensitive to visual changes. The proposed pedestrian bridge would improve connectivity to the BRT stations, park-and-ride, and residential areas to the east.	Low

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

NOTE: Photo simulations are provided to convey general massing of structural elements only. Final design will determine ramp and bridge structural configuration and aesthetic treatments. See Section 6 for general aesthetic treatment discussion.

Figure 5-9 Brickyard Station east pedestrian bridge connection: Existing view and photosimulation

5.2.6.2 Visual quality

The existing noise walls, elevation changes, land cover, and mature vegetation would obscure views for most neighbors, and the project would have little impact on the overall visual character of the AVE. The east leg of the pedestrian bridge would extend over the existing noise wall to NE 155th Street where it curves east and turns into NE 153rd Street. Several residences would be close to the pedestrian bridge and stairway/ramp; however, the residences are located on NE 153rd Street and face generally north-south. Residential views are primarily blocked by existing trees and vegetation. There would be a small number of residential viewers who would have moderate sensitivity to visual changes; however, there would be an overall low sensitivity to visual changes.

Natural harmony: The project would cause minimal change to visual resources of the natural environment. Existing vegetation influences most views within the viewshed and few mature trees are anticipated to be removed for construction. The visual character of this project component would be viewed within the existing I-405 visual context. There would be natural harmony in the viewshed with the existing natural environment.

Cultural order: This project component would introduce new visual elements into the existing viewshed but they would be of similar scale and materials as the existing roadways, overpasses, and signage. Because built structures are common for both neighbors and travelers in the existing visual environment, there would be little additional changes to the cultural order. This project component would have a neutral effect to the experience of cultural order in the viewshed.

Project coherence: The two new BRT stations, roadway modifications, and new pedestrian bridge would add new visual elements to the existing project environment; however, the area has 10 lanes of through traffic, on- and off-ramps, the Juanita Woodinville Way NE interchange, overpasses, noise walls, and the park-and-ride. Directional and roadway signage, traffic lights, street lighting, parking lot lighting, retail/commercial advertising and signage, and utilities are also ubiquitous in the existing project environment. New visual elements introduced by this project component would have little effect within the existing visual setting and would be neutral to the experience of project coherence.

Therefore, the overall change to visual quality would be neutral.

5.2.7 Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements

This project component would be consistent and compatible with the existing conditions. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual changes and the project component would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes of the project component would be similar to the existing transit center, roadways, and adjacent buildings within the AVE. Significant adverse impacts are not expected.

5.2.7.1 Visual compatibility

The Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements project component would be compatible with the surrounding cultural environment as the new BRT station would be located within the existing transit center facility and road improvements would be mostly made within existing road rights-of-way. The project component would have similar visual characteristics such as materials, colors, form, height, and shape to the existing transit center. There would be no changes to resources of the natural environment at Scriber Creek, Scriber Creek Park, or Sprague Pond Mini Park. Road improvements would add a bus-only bypass lane for buses heading southbound on Poplar Way and continuing along the Alderwood Mall Parkway I-5 northbound on-ramp. These road improvements would only slightly expand paved surfaces and would be visually consistent with the existing road network. Thus, the project component would visually blend, and would be visually consistent and compatible with, the existing visual environment.

Exiting visual conditions will change at the transit center with construction of the Lynnwood Link Extension of light rail, which is expected to be completed in 2024. Visual impacts associated with the Lynnwood Link Extension are not associated with this project and have been evaluated separately; however, visual elements are expected to be urban in character and compatible with the existing visual character. Therefore, this project component would be compatible with the visual character and quality of the elements of the Lynnwood Link Extension project.

Table 5-7 identifies the expected viewer sensitivity (in terms of exposure, awareness, and distance) to the visual changes. **Figure 5-10** shows the existing view for motorists traveling on 48th Avenue W and a photosimulation of the view with the construction of the BRT station.

Table 5-7 Viewer sensitivity: Lynnwood City Center Transit Station BRT and Roadway Improvements

Viewer type		Viewer sensitivity		
		Exposure	Awareness	Overall sensitivity
Neighbor	Residential	Residents at the adjacent Park Five apartment complex have direct views of the existing Lynnwood Transit Center. Residents near roadway improvements, such as those living in the neighborhood south of Poplar Way, would not be able to differentiate the project changes over time because the on-ramp already exists and would only be slightly widened.	Although residents typically have high visual sensitivity, these residents are already accustomed to the transit center and the BRT platform would be designed to be visually complementary to the existing facility.	Low
	Commercial/ Retail	Existing land cover obscures most views. Available views would be in the foreground proximity and of short duration for a low number of viewers. Workers may have moderate to long-duration views.	Commercial and retail viewers would be focused on their activities and have low sensitivity to the visual changes that would occur in this already developed suburban commercial and retail area.	Low
Traveler	Motorist	Large numbers of motorists would have views of the project component from I-405 from a minimum of 1,250 feet. Motorists would directly experience changes on the Poplar Way loop ramp and from adjacent local roadways. Motorist views would be of short duration.	Motorists, particularly drivers along I-405, would primarily be focused on driving.	Low
	Bicyclist/ Pedestrian	While bicyclists and pedestrians may be characterized as having higher sensitivity due to their close proximity and activities within the AVE but their expectations are already established and they are accustomed to views of suburban commercial, retail, and residential development, the existing transit center, and the extensive road and highway network. Some bicyclists or pedestrians may also view the project component from the Interurban Trail to the south.	Bicyclists and pedestrians would primarily be focused on traveling and would be less sensitive to visual changes.	Low

SOURCE: Sound Transit 2019

Figure 5-10 Lynnwood City Center: Existing view and photosimulation of the proposed BRT station

5.2.7.2 Visual quality

The project component would not result in a change to the existing natural harmony within the AVE. The project component would not degrade sensitive natural visual resources such as Scriber Creek and mature vegetation at Scriber Creek Park and Sprague's Pond Mini Park. The cultural environment would remain visually orderly. Roadway improvements would be minor and visually coherent with the transportation network of a developed, suburban area. Therefore, the overall impacts to visual quality would be neutral.

6 MITIGATION

In general, the project components associated with the I-405 BRT project would be consistent and compatible with the existing visual and aesthetic resources. Viewers would have a low sensitivity to visual changes, and project components would blend visually with the existing natural, cultural, and project environments. Natural elements such as vegetation would largely be unaffected, and materials, colors, forms, heights, and shapes of project components would be similar to the existing roadways, overpasses, transit stations, and adjacent land uses. Significant adverse long-term impacts are not expected.

In WSDOT rights-of-way, the project would comply with WSDOT's tree replacement requirements in the WSDOT *Roadside Policy Manual* (WSDOT 2015) which separates trees into three categories based on their diameter and provides replacement requirements as follows:

- **Category 1:** Mature, old-growth, large specimen, or heritage trees greater than 30 inches in diameter, measured at 4.5 feet from the ground. Appropriate, project-specific restoration is determined in consultation with WSDOT Headquarters' Design Landscape Architect.

- **Category 2:** Moderate-sized trees (excluding alder [*Alnus rubra*] and cottonwood [*Populus balsamifera*]) between 4 and 30 inches in diameter, measured at 4.5 feet from the ground. Category 2 trees are to be replaced at a ratio of one 1-gallon replacement tree for each 1 inch of trunk diameter. If larger container sizes are used, the plant quantity can be adjusted down.

- **Category 3:** Small coniferous and other late successional species trees less than 4 inches in diameter, measured 6 inches from the ground. Category 3 trees are to be replaced to replace disturbed functions, considering a 1:1 ratio.

Information on the potential number and category of trees within WSDOT rights-of-way that would be removed for each project component is provided in the *I-405 BRT Ecosystems and Wetlands Technical Memorandum* (Sound Transit 2020).

6.1 Mitigation measures for construction impacts

No mitigation for construction impacts would be warranted due to the short-term nature of construction for this project. During the construction phase of all components, Sound Transit would implement the following actions to minimize temporary impacts on visual quality and aesthetics:

- Preserve existing vegetation and minimize the clearing of mature trees. Use existing hard/paved areas for project staging where practical.
- Limit construction to daylight hours as practical. Include directional work and safety lighting to direct lights toward work areas and away from residential areas where nighttime construction is necessary. Shield light sources to avoid light spillover.
- Screen views of construction equipment and materials from pedestrians and residential areas, as practical.
- Restore landscaping disturbed by construction-related activities after completion of work.

6.2 Mitigation measures for long-term impacts

No long-term visual quality and aesthetic impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed project components. **Figure 6-1** illustrates aesthetic features associated with existing Sound Transit facilities that could be used for the project. Concept and final aesthetic treatment design for the parking garages would be presented to the public and local agencies, for design review approval, prior to construction.

Parking Structure Aesthetic and Visual treatments

Star Lake Park & Ride
- Visual screening
- Vertical elements
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian facilities
- Stormwater features

Source: www.Hewittseattle.com

Redmond Technology Station
- Pedestrian plaza
- Warm colors
- Landscaping
- Glazing
- Retail spaces

Auburn Parking Structure
- Vertical elements
- Brick finishes / Warm colors
- TVM Integration

Source: www.ckcps.com.com

Kent Parking Structure
- Visual screening
- Vertical elements
- Glazing
- Landscaping

Angle Lake Park & Ride
- Off-plane facades
- Visual screening
- Vertical elements
- Pedestrian facilities

Source: www.Hewittseattle.com

Mercer Island Station
- Visual screening
- TVM Integration
- Vertical elements
- Pedestrian facilities
- Permeable Pavements

Issaquah Station
- Visual screening
- Transit structures
- Vertical elements
- Glazing

Source: www.Hewittseattle.com

Lakewood Station
- Visual screening
- Public art
- Pedestrian plaza
- Vertical elements
- Landscaping

Figure 6-1 Typical aesthetic treatment options for Sound Transit facilities

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soundtransit.org/i405brt

brt@soundtransit.org
206-398-5470

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Sound Transit plans, builds, and operates regional transit systems and services to improve mobility for Central Puget Sound.
401 S. Jackson St. | Seattle, WA 98104-2826 | 1-800-201-4900 / TTY Relay: 711 | brt@soundtransit.org | soundtransit.org